

Peer Review Workshop: Evaluating the Structure of Arguing Essays

Contributed by Mike Palmquist

Goals: To help students conduct a peer review on an argumentative essay

In a copy of one of your classmate's papers, use the commenting feature in your word processing program to suggest ways in which the writer could improve his or her arguing essay. Please read the draft through once before responding to the following points. Please address the following questions in your comments.

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1. In what ways does the introduction used by the writer prepare you for the argument? How effectively does it frame the issue?
2. Is there an essay map in the introduction? If so, suggest ways in which the essay map in the introduction could be improved.
3. Suggest ways to make the framing of the issue, review of alternative approaches, and the main point advanced by the writer more consistent with each other.
4. Identify areas in the paper where brief overviews would make the argument easier to follow.
5. Identify arguments that would run counter to the writer's argument. Suggest ways the writer could respond to and/or refute these arguments.
6. If the writer is advocating a particular solution, suggest ways in which it could be described more clearly.
7. If the writer is advocating a particular solution, suggest ways in which the implementation of that solution could be described more clearly and completely.
8. Consider the writer's use of evidence. Is it appropriate? Are there points at which additional evidence would be useful? Where different evidence might be used more effectively?
9. How effective is the conclusion? Does it do more than simply restate the content of the essay? How might it be improved?