

Peer Conferencing for Revision Writing Module

Teacher Masters

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TM#1: Engage Prior Knowledge— Silent Warm-Up

Directions: Silently answer the question below. Write as much as you can, even if you're not sure your answer is correct.

1. Sharing the first draft of a composition with someone can help you improve your writing. What kinds of things can you learn about your writing by sharing it with someone else? List as many as you can think of.

TM#2: Demonstrate—Peer Conferencing Notes

1. In a peer conference, students share writing with each other in a small group, and give and receive feedback on what they wrote.
2. Feedback is a response to a piece of writing that can help the writer make improvements.
3. Today we will use peer conferencing during the revising stage of the writing process, when the writer has finished a first draft but isn't ready to proofread or fix small details like capitalization or spelling. Your peer conference feedback today should be about the ideas or words in writing. The writer reads the writing out loud, but the group members do *not* look at the paper.
4. Although we might sometimes think that the purpose of reading someone's writing is to find mistakes, feedback in a peer conference can also be about what the writer has done well.
5. Feedback in a peer conference must be respectful and helpful. The most important thing to remember about peer conferences is that the feedback must be specific.

TM#3: Demonstrate and Practice— Sample Composition for Feedback #1

John Doe
Sample Composition for Feedback #1

I saw the basketball sink into my opponents' basket and felt my heart sink, too, like it was speeding down the highest hill of a roller coaster. We had played hard all season for this moment, the final game of the tournament. But none of our hard work paid off. Or did it?

The final game was against our longtime rivals, the private school across town. The energy during the game was intense.. The stands were overflowing with our friends and family. The crowds were shouting and stomping in the bleachers, and our team caught their enthusiasm. We came into the game playing our best, and by the end of the first half, we were up by ten points. We lost the whole lead in the second half, though, and in the end we lost by just three points.

In the locker room after the game, some of my teammates said that we had worked all season for nothing. But my best friend turned to me with a smile and said, "Next year!" and I knew he was right: We'd be the best players in the state our senior year.

TM#4: Demonstrate and Practice—Specific Feedback

One thing you'd like to know more about:	
Not specific enough:	Specific (what do you want to know more about, and at what part of the composition?):
Need to add more detail	Include details that show the coach's emotions when your team lost.
Bad introduction	In your introduction, I want to know who you were playing.
The conclusion is not great	
How the game was	

One thing you liked:	
Not specific enough:	Specific (what part of the composition, and what did you like—you might use a quote):
Good detail	I liked it when you wrote that your heart sank "like it was speeding down the highest hill of a roller coaster."
Good introduction	I liked that you started the introduction with action.
Great conclusion	
The way you wrote about the game	

TM#5: Demonstrate and Practice—Specific Feedback Answer Key

One thing you'd like to know more about:	
Not specific enough:	Specific (what do you want to know more about, and at what part of the composition?):
Need to add more detail	Include details that show the coach's emotions when your team lost
Bad introduction	In your introduction, I want to know who you were playing.
The conclusion is not great	<i>I'd like to hear the exact words of the teammates who said you worked all year for nothing. (Answers will vary.)</i>
How the game was	<i>Add some more details to show the emotional excitement of the game. (Answers will vary.)</i>

One thing you liked:	
Not specific enough:	Specific (what part of the composition, and what did you like—you might use a quote):
Good detail	I liked it when you wrote that your heart sank "like it was speeding down the highest hill of a roller coaster."
Good introduction	I liked that you started the introduction with action.
Great conclusion	<i>I liked that you included a quote from your friend, because I can imagine someone saying that. (Answers will vary.)</i>
The way you wrote about the game	<i>I liked when you described the crowds as "shouting" and "stomping" with enthusiasm. (Answers will vary.)</i>

TM#6: Practice—Sample Composition for Feedback #2 Answer Key

Jane Doe
Sample Composition for Feedback #2

To me, nothing helps me get rid of difficult emotions like a long bike ride. Almost every day after school, before I can sit down to do homework, I take my bike out and ride around my neighborhood. It clears my head and makes my whole afternoon better.

Like most people, I learned how to ride a bike when I was little. Back then, we lived in the country, and a bike was necessary if my sisters and I wanted to go anywhere. Sometimes we'd ride to a friend's house down the road, and sometimes we'd ride to the nearby lake, where we could sit by the edge of the water and talk.

Now a bike is necessary to me in a different way, because it's my favorite way to relieve stress. When I'm flying down a hill with the wind whipping my clothes and whistling in my ears, I feel free, like nothing and no one can touch me. Biking is my great escape.

Specific Feedback:

1. One thing I liked about this composition: *Answers will vary, but should be specific.*

2. One thing I'd like to know more about: *Answers will vary, but should be specific.*

Name: _____ Date: _____

TM#7: Independent Practice Answer Key

Part 1: Review the Strategy

Directions: Fill in the blanks below.

1. Feedback is a response to a piece of writing that can help the writer make improvements.
2. Today we used peer conferencing during the revising stage of the writing process, when the writer has finished a first draft but isn't ready to proofread or fix small details like capitalization or spelling.
3. The most important thing to remember about peer conferences is that the feedback must be specific.

Part 2: Apply the Strategy

Directions: Read the following student composition and provide specific feedback by answering the questions that follow.

In school, the two words that strike the most fear into my heart are “group project.” I know I’m supposed to love working in a group, because it’s fun to be able to talk and helpful to get others’ ideas. But the challenging part for me is to put the needs of the group ahead of my own. No matter how I feel about it, though, sometimes putting others’ needs ahead of my own needs is a fact of life.

Working with a group requires compromise. Sometimes during a group project, I’m sure I have the best idea—the solution to a problem, the best design idea, or the most creative approach—but my teammates have other plans. If I kept fighting with them and trying to force things to go my way, we would never finish. So I put the needs of the group ahead of my need to be “right” and accept their proposals.

Being able to set aside our own feelings, beliefs, or desires for the sake of a group is a skill that we all must learn as we get older.

TM#7: Independent Practice Answer Key (cont.)

Specific Feedback:

1. One thing I liked about this composition: *Answers will vary, but should be specific.*

2. One thing I'd like to know more about: *Answers will vary, but should be specific.*