English 110 Faculty Development Workshop

Supporting Peer Response
October 11, 2006

Goals
- To share techniques for teaching students strategies for soliciting peer response.
- To examine ways to model successful peer response for students.
- To discuss a variety of in-class and out-of-class peer response activities.
- To identify strategies we can teach students for responding to peer response feedback.

Instructional Goals based on Assessment Results
In both 2005 and 2006, students reported engaging in one or two strategies for peer response and revision using feedback but not a variety of strategies. By helping them identify multiple strategies and build a repertoire from which they can choose, we help students prepare to manage their future writing projects. As a result, one of our 2006-2007 instructional goals is to present a variety of invention, drafting, revising, and editing strategies in our classes.

Teaching Strategies for Requesting Feedback
1. Model question writing for feedback requests
2. Student-generated peer response questions
3. Generating feedback questions following a self-assessment
   - Using the evaluation criteria
   - Using an evaluation rubric

Modeling Successful Peer Response
1. Whole-class workshop
2. Modeling with one paper or a sample (Example: Kim Pyne’s Role-Play—See Handout)
   - Get a group of volunteers to sit in a circle. One person ("Sally") should have a draft of a paper to read. You can provide a mock-paper or they can read from their own. I usually provide one.
   - Give each person a strip of paper that defines their "character." (Don't give the whole sheet; it's too much to think about.)
   - Make sure they understand their roles, then let the workshop play out for five minutes - or until they run out of steam or interesting interactions.
   - The remaining class members watch and take notes on what they see.
   - Debrief with the class by letting them talk about what happened - and why it might be problematic.
In-Class and Out-of-Class Peer Response Activities

1. Tita Ramirez’s full-class workshop

2. Barbara Gordon’s whole-class modeling → Pairs peer response (See Handout)

3. Kim Pyne’s oral and written response
   a. Oral introduction to purpose and audience
   b. Oral reading of paper
   c. Written response
   d. Oral response

4. Ashley Holmes’ focused peer review (See Handout)
   Students work in groups of 3 or 4 through three rounds of written review (usually one on aspects of content, one on structure, and one on editing/citation). Then, the fourth round of review is an oral review, where they focus on one writer's paper at a time workshop style.

5. Small group conferences

Teaching Strategies for Revising with Feedback

1. Composing revision plans (A Meeting of Minds, 2nd ed., example on p. 341)

2. Writing reflective responses to peer feedback

3. Modeling how to select feedback to incorporate or respond to

4. Distinguishing between revising and editing

   - Excerpt from “Strategy: Revising an Essay” (A Meeting of Minds, 2nd ed., p. 25)
     1. Add new material to develop or connect paragraphs or paragraph sequences.
     2. Delete material that does not add specifically to the progression of ideas.
     3. Reorder ideas within and among paragraphs.
     4. Connect ideas within and among paragraphs.
     5. Substitute or transform ways of expressing ideas for clarity, vividness, emphasis, or interest.


Next workshop:
November 8th, 12:10 – 1:10 PM, Ward Octagon
Pitfall Personalities for Writing Groups
SIMULATED WRITING WORKSHOP/PEER REVIEW (KIM PYNE)

Don’t be a Self-Deprecating Sally or Personalizing Pete!

Self-Deprecating Sally (or Stephen)
- You are the writer of the paper currently under discussion and will be reading it out loud to your group. Before you start reading, you apologize for your work. “I am really not a good writer.” “I did not spend a lot of time on this paper.” “I don’t really know what I am doing.” “I know there are a lot of things wrong with my writing.”
- As you read, you stop periodically to point out mistakes that you made in your writing or things you think you should change.
- When you finish, you continue to make negative comments about your work.
- When people give you feedback, you take it very, very personally.

Silent Suzie (or Sam)
You do not say a word. You are often looking down rather than looking at the reader.

Condescending Carla (or Carl)
You interrupt the reader in intimidating, condescending, and inappropriate ways before, during, and after the reading (e.g., “That part of the narrative that you just read sounds a little like Hemingway,” or “Maybe you should read the classics to help you as a writer” or “Maybe if you READ more you would be a better WRITER”). You also reference your own wonderful writing that you have published or submitted for publication, talk about the writing group to which you belong outside of class, or give condescending feedback or advice.

Personalizing Polly (or Pete)
You frequently interrupt the writer to make personal connections, such as “You know that part of your paper where you were writing about your team? Well, that reminded me of this time when I was on a team! See, what happened was . . .”

Nit-Picking Ned (or Nadine)
You continually give “nit-picky” feedback to the writer—and nothing else. You may concentrate on punctuation or other lower-level “skills” of writing. You’re the grammar-Nazi who is great for final proofreading, but useless beforehand.

General George (or Ginny)
You continually make general comments about the writing—calling it “good” or “nice” or “neat.” You don’t bother to say why you feel any of these things specifically.

Distractible Donna (or Don)
You pay no attention to the reader. You try to talk with the person beside you in the writing group. You get up several times when the writer is reading to stretch. You get up to talk to the instructor and/or to get a snack or sharpen a pencil.
### Peer Review: Structure and Paragraph Focus, Coherence, and Development (Ashley Holmes)

Read through the entire paper once before evaluating/commenting.

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<tr>
<th>Criteria with Room for Comments Below</th>
<th>Strength of Paper</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
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<td><strong>Thesis</strong>: Underline what you consider to be the thesis. Does the thesis reveal the writer’s stance/perspective and preview specific parts of the response? How might the writer clarify the thesis? Does the thesis serve as a “road map” for the rest of the paper?</td>
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<td><strong>Focus</strong>: How focused are each of the paragraphs? How well does the topic sentence (usually the 1st sentence) of each paragraph prepare the reader for the information in the rest of the paragraph?</td>
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<td><strong>Coherence</strong>: Does each sentence flow easily into the next? Does the paragraph include transitional expressions (however, because, in addition, moreover, for example, etc.)? Make suggestions for where the writer might include more transitional expressions to improve coherence?</td>
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<td><strong>Development</strong>: Based on the topic sentence of each paragraph, has the writer fully developed the point being made? Has the writer provided enough examples? Are there ways the writer might add more or improve the development by narrating, describing, comparing/contrasting, defining, analyzing, etc.?</td>
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<td><strong>Structure</strong>: How effectively does the structure work to convey the writer’s claim? Do they save a point for the end that you think should be moved earlier in the paper? Do the paragraphs and argument seem to progress in a logical manner?</td>
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Barbara Gordon’s Whole-Class Response with Modeling ➔ Pairs Peer Response

I do some preparation for peer response days in my class that has been successful in generating plentiful, helpful response from students, though it may be hard to do the activity in a class that does not last an hour and forty minutes. It goes like this.

I get a volunteer from class to email a draft a day before we do peer response. I make enough copies of the volunteer’s draft for the class.

I hand out and go over the response sheet, which is tailored to that assignment. (The response sheet only addresses content. We have a separate day for editing.) We talk about how to adopt the shoes of the intended audience and how to respond in writing and speech as that audience, not as a teacher. I go over a few examples of ways to, and not to, do this; this largely involves showing them the difference between using “I” statements, as opposed to “you” or “you” implied statements.

I hand out the volunteer writer’s paper and encourage students to begin writing their responses while the writer reads the paper aloud. After the paper is read aloud, there is about ten minutes of quiet while students write responses on the writer’s draft using the response sheet.

We then sit in a circle. Each student must offer one, and only one, unique content/audience response to the writer, when she or he feels moved to do so. I mention that they need to talk directly to the writer, not me. During this process, when needed, I draw students’ attention to helpful audience based responses as a way to encourage more of this kind of feedback. I help those who have lapsed into “telling the writer what to do” revise their responses. The writer is advised to “eat like an owl,” meaning to listen to the response, then cast off what she or he believes is not going to enhance the piece. I emphasize that the writer is in charge of making any revisions and needs to make wise decisions based on the response, sometimes taking no action on certain comments.

The students are aware that we have been modeling what they will now do with a partner. Their partners are different each time. I use some kind of random assignment to mix up whom they work with; for example, when they come in the room they each get a card, and they need to find who has the counterpart of their card and work with that person (ex. The king of hearts looks for the king of spades, queen of hearts, queen of spades, etc.).

I emphasize that they read their drafts aloud to their partners and that they do not speak nor give their partners their written response until I give them the go ahead. When I do give that go ahead, I mention how they need to talk through their responses to each other before handing over the written comments on the draft. I encourage them together to discuss possible ways to revise and to take time answering the questions they have posed to each other. (The response sheet prompts the responder to question the writer.) These conversations are key to the response. (BTW the volunteer/writer does not converse with class responders when we do the whole class response.)

If there is time, I ask everyone to write out what they plan to revise based on their partner’s response. That’s it in a nutshell.