GIVING USEFUL PEER FEEDBACK

IF YOU REMEMBER NOTHING ELSE, REMEMBER...

Approach all suggestions with compassion. We are all in the process of learning and growing our writing, thinking, and communicating skills together.

BASIC STEPS

1. Understand Goals

Begin by getting an understanding of the project goals. What does the writer hope to accomplish? What does the writer hope their readers will take away from this piece of writing? What kind of feedback are they looking for?

2. Work through First-Priority Questions

Organization. Does the writing move logically through ideas to guide readers toward a central claim or idea?

Thesis / Argument / Claims. Does the writing have a clearly stated central claim? Would this claim be clear to their target audience? If they are making an argument, can you tell what position the writer is taking?

Support / Development. Are their ideas supported by evidence or developed to the point that they're clearly understood? Is their evidence relevant to their topic? Is that evidence explained and connected to their central claim?

3. Suggest Final Touches

Grammar / Mechanics. Are there any patterns in grammatical mishaps that could be distracting to the reader? How would the writer go about fixing those? Is there any unclear phrasing that could be made more clear through revision?

Syntax. Does their writing use a variety of sentence forms? Are there any places where they use strong, effective words, and are there any places that they could use more of those? Can you hear the writer's voice in the writing, and is that effective for the style they're writing in?

TIPS AND TRICKS

- If you are giving a **critique**, offer a **suggestion** or helpful question to help the writer address it.
- Never critique the **writer themselves**.
- Keep the **writer in control** of their own work.
- **Validate** the writer's **strengths** in addition to giving suggestions.
- **Respect the writer's language** in your feedback - there isn't just one "right" way to speak, write, or think.
- Give feedback from your perspective and **experience as a reader and writer**.
- **Read out loud** if the writer is okay with that and it feels helpful for the project you're giving feedback on.