Guidelines for Student Feedback

Getting and giving good feedback doesn't happen by accident. Thinking carefully about what you as a writer wants to know as well as what you think the writer whose work you are reviewing needs to know will make the experience more beneficial.

Meaning

The purpose of any product or performance is to communicate an idea to an audience. Ask students to give feedback about the meaning they are getting from the work.

- What is the main point?
- Is there adequate information or evidence to support the main point? Is the information credible?
- Is the author's point of view on the topic clear?
- Are there any parts that are confusing?

Organization and Structure

Encourage students to look for the "big picture" when they review a piece of work.

- Are the parts in the right order?
- Do they connect to each other?
- Is the structure easy to see?
- Are all of the important pieces included?
- Are there irrelevant parts that should be deleted?

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Audience

Digital products can have an infinitely wide audience, but students create products to address a specific group. How well does the work meet the expectations and experiences of the intended audience?

- Is the content (language, graphics, and features) appropriate for the audience? Are unfamiliar words defined?
- Is there enough detail to meet the audience's needs?
- Will the audience be interested? Why or why not?

Graphics and Other Digital Features

Digital tools enable design elements that can enhance or detract from a message. Ask students to think about the role that graphics and design play in communicating meaning.

- Do the graphics and digital features support the meaning of the product?
- Are they well done—attractive and functioning properly?
- Does the design support the message of the product? Does it emphasize what is important?

Mechanics and Language Usage

Most students think of feedback as little more than looking for mistakes in spelling or punctuation. For this reason, it might be worthwhile to separate this kind of review for more substantive feedback. In any case, looking for mistakes in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and language usage is an important part of giving feedback.

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