

Peer Writing Conference



Author: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Title of Piece: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 (Yes! Insert your name here! You’re the author! ☺)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Conference Partner: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Dear Conference Partner, I would specifically like help with the following:**

*\*\*Please circle up to 2 items ONLY that give you the most trouble. Focusing well on a few things will lead to greater understanding and better quality results than trying to tackle everything all at once!\*\**

creating a lead that “hooks” correcting fragments and run-ons in my writing

narrowing my idea and staying focused organizing my ideas

paragraphing sentence variety

word choice VOICE: personality and heart of the paper

painting a clear picture in the reader’s mind creating a satisfying ending

basic editing other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any additional comments/suggestions about my paper that we didn’t discuss during our conference? Please write it below.

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Two specific changes I am making in my paper based on our conference:

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Teacher Tip Sheet**



* Each student is to receive their own sheet to go along with his/her paper.
* Both the author of the writing piece and their partner are meant to interact on the sheet during the conference.
* Remember, you want both students engaged and focused together on the same piece of writing at a time during the conference. Don’t try to have each student working on the other’s paper—this is meant to be a collaborative activity in which both are focused on the same paper, reading through the writing together, and working through suggestions and such as a unit.
* Peer conferencing is a VERY powerful tool in the classroom, but it's definitely not something to just throw out there without any modeling. Without strong examples given for what a successful writing conference should look like/sound like, conferences will most likely result in surface level thinking with little progress gained.

Set the stage for the prior to the activity! Take a few minutes to brainstorm with students the benefits of working with a peer to improve their writing. Go over some characteristics of how good peer conferences might look and sound. Then, grab a student or two and demonstrate a few examples of peer writing conferences in action! Remember, some of the most powerful demonstrations are often WHAT NOT TO DO during a peer conference, and these examples will often produce a few good belly laughs along the way, too. ☺ Though the modeling and such sounds like a lot to do, but it's not! In fact, it's a time saver and fun, too! It will make a HUGE difference in student engagement, and it will help lead to the successful outcomes you are seeking.
* It’s extremely important to walk around the room as conferences are in session with an eye and ear out for any possible problems. If you see a pair of students with difficulty in getting started, jump in for a moment and personally demonstrate starter conversation/tips/techniques for them, and then try to hang with them until you see them able to take off on their own. Sometimes a gentle push is all that it takes to get things flowing! Walking the room also keeps students on task, of course! ☺
* Activities such as this one are most often beneficial in the repetition of their use. Try having students use this conference sheet for all or most of their writing assignments throughout the year. Simply modify to either fit the genre of the writing piece assigned, or customize to mirror the language used in your writing classroom.