

Peer Editing Assignment

General Instructions

As a peer editor, your role is to help the writer identify weaknesses of your peer's paper in a constructive manner. Therefore, you should provide specific feedback/suggestions to help the writer understand what specific areas need improvement. General statements (e.g., Your paper does not make sense) are not useful because the writer does not know how to make the necessary changes. Your role is also not to rewrite your peer's paper by making changes in every sentence.

Read through the entire paper to get a sense of the whole thing and then address the following topics as you reread through the paper/outline more carefully:

1) Thesis

- a. Does this paper have a "main theme" or research topic that is being explored with supporting arguments? The "main theme" should be specific (e.g., the effectiveness of the death penalty as evidenced by X, X, and X; the unethical nature of the death penalty due to X, X, and X) and not too general (e.g., the pros and cons of the death penalty). The paper should "teach" you something with its focus and not merely restate commonly known information. If the paper doesn't go beyond what you already learned in class, then it's probably not "teaching" you anything.
- b. The thesis statement should provide a "road-map" for the reader, so the reader understands the main points used to support the thesis or the "teaching points" of the paper
- c. Although not every paper will be in a traditional "lit review" format because it might be addressing a case study or a court case, there should still be a main idea that ties the paper together. Every paper should have a topic that has a particular focus/direction and suggests some sense of significance.
- d. A paper that simply summarizes several different articles will likely not have a main thesis statement or "main theme."

2) Organization

- a. As a reader who has not done the research on this topic, do you believe the writer has presented the information in a way that is understandable and logical?
- b. Does the writer utilize informative headings to transition smoothly between topics? If not, suggest helpful headings.

- c. Would the paper make more sense if the sections were presented in a different order? If so, provide some feedback on how to reorganize.

3) Content

- a. Does the writer cite sufficient sources to support the main ideas of each paragraph? This is not only referring to them having the 10 required sources. Within their main ideas, are they only referencing one source? If so, that's probably not enough to support a main idea.
- b. Are the sources integrated into the writer's main ideas or merely resummarized?
- c. ***Is there an explanation (in the author's own words) for why the source is significant or how it contributes to the main idea of the paragraph/thesis?***
- d. Are any of the writer's paragraphs based on faulty logic or not supported by research?
- e. Does there appear to be any "gaps" in the paper or information that is missing that would help the reader better understand the topic? After reading the paper, are you left with lots of questions about the topic or confusion as to the goal of the paper?
- f. Is the paper largely based on other's quotes? Quotes should be used minimally and ONLY to convey information that is difficult to paraphrase or carries special significance.
- g. Have opposing ideas/arguments been addressed and appropriately rebutted, if appropriate? Did you have a counter idea at any point that was not addressed?

4) Introduction/Conclusion

- a. Does the paper have an opening paragraph that clearly sets the context for what the paper is about?
- b. Does the paper have a conclusion paragraph that summarizes the main ideas that support the thesis?
- c. Does the conclusion suggest any implications/reforms for the thesis/main argument? In other words, does the conclusion summarize the significance of what the reader has been taught?

5) Clarity

- a. Is the writing clear? Do you have to re-read a paragraph or a sentence several times before you understand what the writer is trying to say?
- b. Is the writing concise and "reader-friendly" or is it bogged down with lengthy sentences and lot of jargon (e.g., words that are specific to a certain profession).
- c. Is the writer saying a lot without saying anything (i.e., the author gives lots of general/circular/fluff statements without exploring specific ideas)