Peer Review Exercises (Advice, Suggestions, and Tips): Kimberly D. Thompson

1. Mock Peer Review: the point of this exercise is for them to have a chance to practice their abilities to peer review before actually peer reviewing a student’s work. It also allows for you to calibrate them during the following class period. Finally, it gets them comfortable in providing feedback and understanding the rubric. A way for them to tap into meta-cognition.

-Using the Pirate Papers, pick out a student example for students to read. Ask them to peer review the piece for homework. Here are some questions I normally ask them to answer:

 - What are two strengths in the piece? Be specific and concrete.

 - What are two weaknesses in the piece? Be specific and concrete.

 - What resources might you suggest the student to use?

-During class, get them into groups where they share areas of weaknesses and strengths in the piece. Also have them come up with ways they would possibly provide the student who wrote the piece feedback.

-On some occasions, I have asked students to assess the work using the rubric. I might ask them to do that for HW after reading the piece, or I might ask them to do it in class.

1. Peer Review (1 or 2): the point of the exercise is to allow students to get feedback from their peers, to practice giving feedback to peers, and to help them analyze and evaluate their writings and the writings of their peers. A way for them to tap into meta-cognition. To think about writing as an ongoing process (can find this in Pirate Papers in the Preface).

-I ask them to bring two hard copies and a copy of the rubric. Sometimes I ask them to bring one hard copy, one electronic copy, and a copy of the rubric.

-I then ask them to get into pairs or groups of three and to spread out as much as possible.

-I post the questions on the projector. I will then ask them to read each other’s drafts. Once they have read the draft and provided feedback, I ask the reviewers to sign the draft they have read. Here are the questions that I use:

 - What are strengths in the piece?

 - What are weaknesses in the piece?

 - What resources do you suggest your peer to use?

-Other variations:

 -Underline thesis statement. Underline topic sentences.

 -Conclusion: So what?

 -Read out loud. Read silently.

 -Do a reverse outline of a peer’s draft.

 -If editing: read the paper from conclusion to introduction.

 -Bring in highlighters, colored markers, or pencils.

 -Peer review all of their drafts while they are reviewing drafts.

 -Peer review online.

 -Flash feedback-using post-it notes.

1. Instructor Performance: what do you do when they peer review?

-Don’t smother them. Give them a chance to work. (5 to 10 minutes)

-Go around the room. Ask them if they have any questions. Bring a different colored pen. Be a model for them.

-Make certain you include time for them to provide feedback to each other.

-Make certain they are taking notes on something, notebook, laptop, tablet, phone, etc.

1. Other Tips:

-You can ask them to fill out a form and require them to turn it in.

-If someone is absent, it is not your job to hunt the student down to get peer review. It is the student’s responsibility to get the draft peer reviewed: come see you, go to the Writing Center, or ask a peer in class, not one outside of class.

-Students will get better at peer review as the semester progresses.

-Provide models for them to follow: you providing feedback to other students, having chances to practice their peer review abilities throughout the semester, showing examples of the feedback you get from your own drafts.

-Request a Writing Center consultant to come by during peer review to help you.