

Assignments to Help Students Do Revision:

Peer Review of Essays: Developing structured peer review sessions with detailed instructions and response sheets helps teach students what to look for in revision, not only in their colleagues' papers, but also in their own. For further ideas about how to run these sessions and how to create review sheets, see the presentation and handout on the Writing across Emory website. <http://emorywae.org/workshops/peer-response/>

Revision Plan: Asking students to create a revision plan can create an environment in which they incorporate peer review and instructor feedback in useful ways. The teacher can, upon reviewing the revision plan, see quickly if the students understand the nature of revision generally, and particularly has fruitfully identified areas of focus for their revision. The assignment could include the following:

- A statement about how the peer review session went and what was learned (Note that training and practice early in the semester could lead to less teacher involvement and more reliance on peer response groups later in the semester)
- Good use of class time for such training early could also lead to peer groups functioning outside of class later in the semester). Identifying what is good about their papers, the strengths
- Identifying the areas that need improvement—expanding, defining, analyzing, providing more evidence or examples, using sources, restructuring the paper, etc. The teacher can set criteria to address or leave it open as suits the assignment.
- Setting up a plan to address the needs—what action to take first, second, etc. Students should show awareness of the major, more global concerns, coming first.

Editing Session: Letting students know that they will be given some time to do editing later on towards the end of the assignment period for the paper might relieve them of the need to do excessive editing while they are trying to revise. Teacher might try one of the following:

- On the class day papers are due or just before, have students read aloud their papers in class quietly to themselves. Reading aloud is an activity which has been shown to facilitate student “hearing” of the “noise” in their drafts—things such as punctuation errors, dropped words, misspellings, repeated words, subject/verb agreement, and tense errors. Allow them to make corrections right on the paper and hand it in. Depending on length of project, this should only take about 15 minutes of class time.
- Ask students, over the course of the semester, keep a log of their normal errors (each student's will be different). Then using that list, allow students time to read over their papers looking specifically for those errors. Teacher can roam the room assisting those needing help or having questions. Students finishing early with the exercise can also assist as time allows. This exercise should only take 10-15 minutes or so.