

Task 3.2 Reflecting on and Practicing Peer Review

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Before reading these guides, my opinion on peer review was a bit mixed, and to be honest it was leaning more towards skeptical. In the past, I've had experiences where feedback was either too vague to be useful... like 'good job', 'I liked it', or even 'great post' in some discussion threads'... or, on the other hand, it felt like the person was just pointing out grammatical errors without engaging with my actual ideas. It sometimes felt like a required task we had to get through rather than a genuine opportunity to improve our writing. These experiences made me feel like the only feedback that really mattered was the teacher's.

After going through the readings, my view has shifted a bit. The biggest thing that stood out to me was the idea of thinking of the reviewer's role not as a teacher or an editor, but as an 'actual reader.' The Peer Review Guide made a great point that getting honest reader feedback from someone who isn't grading you can be a great opportunity'. I had never really thought about it that way before, and to be honest sort of thought about it in the reverse. This definitely reframes the process from just finding mistakes to getting the reader's reaction, which feels much more helpful.

I noticed another important point was the idea of peer review as a form of collaboration. One of the readings mentioned that even the best writers create multiple drafts and work with others (like famous authors with their editors or publishers), which made me realize both how normal and necessary reviewers are in the writing process... not just for students.

Admittedly I'm still a bit hesitant of the value, mostly about the quality of the feedback. I'm worried about receiving superficial comments again, or that my own feedback might not be helpful enough for my classmates. The readings also mentioned that 'neither harsh criticism nor over-friendliness is likely to help,' and finding that perfect balance of being supportive yet constructive seems hard. I'm guessing that's just part of learning to give good feedback (and ultimately the purpose of this exercise).

For my projects in this class, I would love to get feedback that focuses on the bigger picture. I value most when a person can tell me what my main point seems to be and whether my evidence and stories actually support it. It's incredibly helpful when someone points out that they got confused in a certain section or that a point I thought was clear actually wasn't. That kind of feedback (that window into the reader's thought process) is likely only something a peer can really provide. To which, optimistically speaking, could help me see my own writing from that outside perspective and help identify those gaps between my original intent and how the story/draft actually reads!