Template for Feedback

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About this resource: This is a resource on how to provide feedback in a way that supports well-being and learning. The resource considers linking comments to resources and using descriptive rather that prescriptive comments.

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Jennesia suggests the following reminders for giving feedback:

1. Feedback is needed in addition to assessment (these are not the same thing)
2. Feedback should be descriptive not prescriptive
3. Embed resources into comments with feedback

[NAME], below is my feedback on your [NAME OF ASSIGNMENT]. In addition to my comments, I've provided you with links to resources that I think will be helpful when working on your final draft. [It helps if your template corresponds with any comments made throughout the assignment.]

Strengths

[Note at least one of the strengths of the student's writing. A good hook? Strong transitions? Tone? A good sentence? An effective use of evidence? We learn as much from what we do well as we learn from what we do wrong.]

Thesis

[Organize your template into the areas you'll focus your feedback (ex. Thesis, Organization/Structure, Use of evidence, Grammar/Style) in order of most important (higher order concerns) to least important (lower order concerns) for the particular assignment. You can tell your students about these general areas in advance so they know to expect from their feedback.]

[Insert a brief comment on the quality of the thesis. As the reader, can you summarize the paper's main point for the writer? Then consider adding a mini-lesson and resource like the ones below to help the student if improvements are needed.]

Sample mini-lesson:

A thesis needs to make more than a simple claim. For example, Cats make the best pets. <–this is a claim.

Cats make the best pets because they're independent, quiet, and inexpensive. <–this presents an argument and shows the reader specifically how you make that argument. The reader now knows that your essay will argue this point by providing evidence and support that cats are independent, quiet, and inexpensive.

Think about developing logical relationships with your thesis.

For example,
X because of Y
Even though X may be the case, Y needs to be considered
X may be the case, but Y needs to be considered because of Z

Resources

[Add links to additional resources. Pointing a student in the direction of additional information can improve their confidence when making improvements and may encourage them to seek out additional resources for themselves in the future.]

Here's a helpful link on writing a thesis statement:
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/545/01/

Organization/Structure

Here's a link on using essay outlines in case you haven't been using one:
http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/planning-and-organizing/organizing

At this point in the writing it's really helpful if you try reverse outlining to evaluate what you have already written to ensure that it is supporting the argument in your paper's thesis:
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/689/1/

On average a paragraph is between 5-7 sentences long. If you find your paragraphs have fewer than 5 sentences, it may be underdeveloped. If you have find a paragraph exceeds 7 sentences, you should check to ensure you're still on the same topic. Each paragraph should focus on developing one idea. Here is a link on paragraph structure:
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/606/01/

Have a look at this link on introductions: http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/introductions/

Something to think about as you write your conclusion:http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/conclusions/

Use of Evidence

[Customize your headings, topics, mini-lessons, and resources for the type of assignment you assigned. Create as much 'stock material' as you need to fill your template. As you're giving feedback, delete the information that doesn't pertain to the student and elaborate on the areas that do.]

Sample mini-lessons

Remember that this is an academic research paper and that I require a minimum of 7 academic, peer reviewed sources (books, book chapters, and journal articles from academic journals) and

that at least 5 must come from outside the course content. To make this a really strong paper, you need to have done your research and be using it actively as support for your paper's argument.

There are points in the writing where you could strengthen your argument by fully explaining the implications or significance of your evidence. This handout explains how and why you should explain your use of sources:http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/evidence/

I recommend this handout on integrating quotes:http://academics.smcvt.edu/writingctr/Quotes.htm

Techniques for paraphrasing can be found here: http://www.lib.sfu.ca/sites/default/files/12333/quotingparaphrasingandsummarizing.pdf

Formatting citations according to MLA: http://wiki.ubc.ca/images/f/f9/Mlastyle.pdf OR APA: http://wiki.ubc.ca/images/6/6f/Apastyle.pdf

Clarity, Style, and Flow

There are places in the writing where sentence structure becomes confusing. I have noted some of these for you in the text, but you can proofread the writing yourself watching for short or overly complex sentences. Reading out loud is often a good way to catch these problem sentences. Reviewing the common types of sentence patterns and how to properly punctuate them will also help you while proof-reading.

Here is a link to sentence structure: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/600/01/

Avoid the use of contractions (ie. don't, can't, haven't) in academic writing. It is okay to use contractions when they appear in quotations cited from your sources.

Avoid the use of informal sayings and informal language to keep the tone of the argument academic

Subject/verb agreement: Remember that the number of the subject determines the number of the verb: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/599/01/
Controlling shifts in verb tense: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/601/04/
Articles: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/540/01/
Active and Passive Voice: http://www.towson.edu/ows/activepass.htm
Punctuating Sentence Types: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/604/1/
Plurals: http://www.grammar-monster.com/lessons/plurals_forming_table.htm

[Don't forget to check your links to ensure they're not broken.]