

The Self-Evaluation Essay: Workshop Questions

Exchange papers with your partner. You should aim to spend about 35 minutes reading through the paper and answering the following questions. You should answer the questions by both writing on a separate sheet of paper, and by marking your copy of the essay. Try to be as detailed and as thorough as possible. Make sure that your comments are both constructive and helpful.

You should use the last 15 minutes or so to discuss these responses with the person who wrote the paper. Make sure that they understand your comments and suggestions.

Finally, on the top of each paper that you read, and on any extra paper that you use, write the author's name and your name. Make sure you label them "author" and "reader" respectively.

Focus and Purpose:

1. Is the thesis of the essay clear? Does the writer forecast the criteria they will use and address them in the same order that the introduction indicates? Mark on the essay where the student has done this.
2. Has the writer selected three suitable criteria? Are the criteria specific to Expos II, rather than just general criteria for what makes a good student? If you think that any of them are inappropriate or misguided, mark this on the paper and say why.
3. Are the subject, category, and function made clear in the introduction? Is the function adequately explained? Mark these areas on the paper and underline anything that needs more explanation or development. Try to offer suggestions about how this could be done.
4. Does the writer use the criteria as a framework for evaluating the essay, or do they simply use their examples as criteria? Make sure that there is a clear criterion, and that the writer has then matched the essay to that criterion. Mark anywhere that this is not the case.
5. Does the conclusion re-state the claim and the criteria? Is it more than a simple cut-and-paste from the introduction?

Development:

1. Does the writer fully define each criterion? Underline anything that needs more explanation or development.
2. Does the writer fully justify and defend each criterion? Do they say why it is important for success as an expos II student? Is this justification linked back to the function of the category? Underline anything that needs more explanation or development.
3. Is each criterion matched to at least **two** examples from essays? Are these good examples? Could you suggest better/further ones?
4. Is each example thoroughly explained so that the match is clear, and so that the significance of that match on the evaluation of the essay as a whole is clear? Underline anything that needs more explanation or development.
5. Is it clear how each example and explanation relate to **both** the criterion **and** to the claim? Underline anything that needs more explanation or development.
6. Does the writer show how these examples have enabled them to fulfill (or not fulfill) the function of the category? Does the writer explain what this means in terms of their evaluation?

Organization:

1. Does the essay follow the structure laid out in the introduction? If not, try to make some suggestions for re-organization so that it does.
2. Are there clear topic sentences that restate the claim and introduce each criterion? Are these sentences well placed? Mark all of the topic sentences that you can find.
3. Are there transitions between sentences, paragraphs, and sections so that the paper reads smoothly? Try to make some suggestions where the writer does not do this.

Tone and Style:

1. Make sure that the writer has specified an audience. Is the tone used appropriate and persuasive to them? Mark any places where it becomes too informal or too informational.
2. Does the tone attack the course or the instructor? Does the student treat the course, the class, and themselves respectfully? Mark any places where they are inappropriate, and suggest how the writer could avoid doing this.
3. Is the style dull and repetitive in places? If so, mark them and try to make some suggestions for improvement.

Editing and Conventions:

1. Is the paper correctly laid out in accordance with the guidelines in the Course Policy Statement: one inch margins, double-spaced, twelve point Times New Roman font, running header with name and page number (not on first page), correct information in top left-hand corner? Does the paper meet the minimum page requirement (three **full** pages)?
2. Does the writer realize that “criteria” is plural and that “criterion” is singular? Mark any changes that need to be made.
3. Are there any other glaring spelling, grammar, or editing errors? Remember your punctuation sheet. Read the paper through with this guideline. If you confidently identify mistakes, make changes.

General:

1. Name one thing that the writer does well in the essay.
2. Mark **two** places where the essay could be more explicit. Explain why you think this and suggest how the writer could improve.
3. Mark **two** places where the essay could be further developed. Explain why you think this and suggest how the writer could improve.
4. Make any other suggestions or comments that you think would help the author to improve their work.

Discuss your response to all of these questions with the rest of your group