

ASSESSING STUDENT WRITING

From <http://www.english.emory.edu/WC/content.html>

Reading for Content

- State the writer's claim and the premises on which it is based. Comment on the validity of this reasoning, and make any suggestions for revising the reasoning that would make it clearer to the reader.
- What assumptions is the writer making about the audience's relationship to the issue being argued? Should the writer make these assumptions about the audience's knowledge and experience? Explain your answer.
- Comment on the quantity and quality of the evidence the writer has selected to support the claim. Make suggestions for adding or deleting information, keeping in mind the appropriateness of the material for the audience's needs.
- Describe the arrangement of the information. Where does it begin and where does it lead? Using broad categories, outline the arrangement on the back of this sheet. Then make suggestions for rearrangement, if needed.
- Has the writer achieved credibility through his or her persona? Describe how. If necessary, make suggestions that would increase the writer's ethos.
- What do you feel is the strongest feature of the paper?
- What do you feel is the weakest feature of the paper?
- If you were the intended audience, how would you respond to the paper?

Reading for Style

- What effect does the title have on the intended audience?
- Has the reader designed the piece for high readability? Explain.
- How does the introduction engage the intended reader's interest?
- Describe how the writer has paced the content for the reader.
- Describe how the writer has paced the language for the reader. Consider the use of tension in diction and sentence structure.
- List some uses of language you find particularly engaging.
- Comment on the effectiveness of the writer's choice of persona and tone.

Reading for Documentation

- Has the writer documented all quotations? Read through the paper, stopping wherever quotation marks are used. Note below any pages where parenthetical citation or endnote numbering is needed or needs to be revised in some way.
- Has the writer documented all paraphrased material? If there are sections that do not seem to be in the writer's own voice, note the page and section below. If paraphrases are documented, check the accuracy of the form.
- How well has the writer used acknowledgement phrases to introduce sources? Note places where this material is awkwardly expressed or where the credentials of the authority are not established well.
- Does the writer need more documented sources to support his or her claim? Explain where and why more sources are needed. What kind of sources would you suggest?
- Has the writer used too many sources? Is the flow of the information interrupted too often? Where?
- How accurate are the external documentation sections (works cited, bibliography, references, endnotes)? Read each entry carefully, checking it against the style format the writer chose.
- Comment on how the writer's use of documentation affects his or her ethos.