Research, Write, Present | Expository Essay

Peer Review

Key Concept
Congratulations! You have completed the first draft of your expository essay. Have you informed your audience with an interesting explanation of your topic? The best expository writers revise their first drafts to create the most interesting and informative essays they can write.

Does your introduction make your essay so compelling that it must be read? Do your body paragraphs include all the main points, supporting points, and transitions needed to explain your topic thoroughly? Is your conclusion memorable and thought-provoking?

Revising is about looking at your writing from different points of view. The most effective way to get another point of view is to ask someone else to read your essay. You can ask a peer to read your essay with fresh eyes and offer suggestions to improve your exposition.

Word processing applications usually provide research and collaboration tools. You can use research tools such as a thesaurus to improve your word choice. You can use collaboration tools to track changes during revision and make suggestions during peer review.

Look Ahead

Task: Use a peer review to revise your expository essay.

Goal: Give your readers the most interesting and informative essay you can write.

You may want to review an example of a peer review before you begin.

See the example: Peer Review
Vocabulary

Words to Remember
This page gives basic definitions for some important terms that can help you learn about using peer review to revise an essay. You can get a more complete definition of each term from Fact Monster*.

New Words
**Antonym**: A word that means the opposite of a particular word.

**Peer**: A person who is similar to another, as in age, grade, or career.

**Point of View**: The way a person tends to think about people, places, and events based on individual experiences.

**Revise**: Carefully review and improve the content of a creative work.

**Synonym**: A word that has the same meaning as another word.

**Thesaurus**: A reference that contains lists of synonyms and antonyms.

Review Words
**Body**: The main content of a written work, not including parts with specific purposes.

**Conclusion**: A judgment, decision, or solution reached for specific reasons.

**Draft**: An unfinished version of a creative work.

**Essay**: A short written work that makes an important point about a particular topic.

**Expository**: A type of writing that explains a topic or informs an audience.

**Introduction**: The beginning of a work that leads into the main body of the work.

**Objective**: Able to put aside personal feelings and opinions.

**Paragraph**: A group of sentences focusing on one idea or concept, which begins on a new line and ends with a return to a new line.

**Summarize**: Explain the main points and important details of an author’s ideas.

**Synthesize**: Produce something new by combining existing information to form a new idea or concept.
Transition: Movement from one idea or concept to another in a creative work.
Exploration

Learning from the Web
Peer review is one of the most effective strategies for revising an essay. The best expository writers use suggestions from their peers to improve their essays. They also provide helpful suggestions to help their peers revise their essays. Explore some Web sites about reviewing and revising and learn how to make your exposition as interesting and informative as it can be.

While you explore the following Web sites, think about the guiding questions. You may want to take notes to help you answer the questions. If you think of other questions about using peer review to revise an essay, keep those in mind too.

Guiding Questions
- How can you put yourself in the minds of your readers?
- How can you identify the strengths and weaknesses of your expository writing?
- What can you do to improve your writing?

Web Sites
Revising an Essay
- Revising Your First Draft* from Fact Monster*
- Writing Workshop: Revise* from Scholastic*

Peer Review
- Write It: Giving Meaningful Feedback* from Scholastic*
- Write It: Handling Feedback* from Scholastic*

Word Processing Tools
- Track Changes Made to Word Documents* from About*
- Inserting Comments* from About*
- Changing the Markup View* from About*
- Saving Document Versions* from About*
Information

What to Know
This page summarizes some of the information from the Web sites you explored. This information helps you learn what you need to know for this activity about using peer review to revise an essay. You may want to take notes to help you remember the most important points. You can return to the Web sites for more exploration if you want to learn more.

Using Peer Review to Revise an Essay
The purpose of revision is to make your essay as good as it can be. When you revise an essay, you need to be as objective as possible. Revising is about looking at your writing from different points of view. You can use word processing tools to help you revise your essay.

Revising an Essay
When you are revising, you want to focus on content. Do not worry about grammar, spelling, or punctuation yet. That comes later.

Complete the following tasks when you revise your essay:

- Make sure you have included all information needed to explain the topic
- Rewrite or rearrange paragraphs that are too long or too short
- Remove main points if they are not needed to explain the topic
- Rewrite or rearrange sentences if the paragraph structure is not logical
- Remove supporting points if they are not needed to explain a main point
- Add transitions if the flow from one paragraph to another is not smooth
- Take out unnecessary words and replace generic words with more specific terms
- Add additional facts, data, or quotes if needed to explain or illustrate a point
- Make sure you have cited all of your sources

Peer Review
One of the most effective ways to get another point of view is to ask someone else to read your essay. You can ask a peer to review your essay with fresh eyes. A peer is someone who is similar to you, such as someone who is in the same grade in school. When you review an essay, you point out the parts that are especially well-crafted as well as any parts that may need to be revised. The most effective peer reviews offer specific suggestions for improvement.

When you review an essay for a peer, you should look for the same types of problems you look for when you revise your own essay. When you ask a peer to review your essay, tell them if you do or do not want any specific kind of feedback.

When you read a peer review or your essay, you need to put aside personal feelings and opinions. You are wasting time if you argue with the reviewer or defend your essay.
Consider each suggestion carefully from the reviewer’s point of view. Then decide whether, and how, you want to use the suggestion to revise your essay. If you are not sure whether to use the suggestion, you may want to ask another person for an opinion.
Task

What to Do
Complete the following task to show what you have learned about using peer review to revise and essay. While you work through the task, think about whether you are achieving the goal. You may want to review an example of a peer review before you begin.

Task: Use a peer review to revise your expository essay.

Goal: Give your readers the most interesting and informative essay you can write.

See the example: Global Warming Peer Review

1. Exchange essays with a peer and review each other’s expositions. Your teacher may assign you a partner or may ask you to find a partner.

2. Review your peer’s essay. Make sure you clearly understand any specific kind of feedback that your peer does or does not want. In your review, point out the parts that are especially well-crafted and the parts that may need to be revised. Try to offer specific suggestions for improvement.

3. Read the peer review of your essay. Remember to put aside personal feelings and opinions. Consider each suggestion carefully from the peer’s point of view.

4. Open the document containing your expository essay.

5. Save the document with a new filename. The new filename should indicate that the document contains your revised expository essay.

6. Use the peer review to revise your expository essay. Try to put yourself in the minds of your audience and read your essay from their point of view. Try to make your essay as interesting and informative as possible.

7. Remember to save your document often while you work.

8. Use the thesaurus feature in your word processing application to help select specific terms.

9. Share your revised essay.
Global Warming

No one knows for sure why the dinosaurs disappeared, but many theories suggest that a change in environment may have played a significant role. What do dinosaurs have in common with global warming? As a result of global warming our climate is also changing, and if we do not heed the warning of scientists, we too, could become extinct. According to a new report released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in Paris, scientists have agreed that global warming is very likely caused by human activity, particularly the burning of fossil fuel. Global warming occurs when the gasses from the burning of fossil fuels causes the gasses that are released to become trapped resulting in the greenhouse effect. If the greenhouse effect becomes stronger, it could make the Earth warmer than usual. If the earth becomes even slightly warmer than normal it may cause problems for humans, sea life and the animal kingdom.

Ironically, global warming, enhanced by human activity, is causing serious problems for people around the world. One of the problems caused by global warming is the melting of the Polar Ice Cap and glaciers. When the ice melts it flows into the seas causing them to rise. Over the last 100 years the seas have risen 6-8 inches worldwide. When the seas heat up they take up more space and they overflow their banks. This can cause serious flooding of homes, eroding shoreline and destruction of crops. The warming of the sea water also causes storms to become more severe. The increasing number of hurricanes is blamed by some on the warmer waters which fuel the storms. The heat waves that have affected the world of late can also be traced to a warming earth. Thousands of people around the world have died from the unusually hot weather. Last, but not least, droughts have become more common around the world because of global warming. The increased droughts around the world threaten our food source because people in some parts of the world may not have enough to eat because they cannot grow the crops they need.

The warming water also affects sea life. Coral, which is vital to sea life, can become bleached out which causes it to die off. It is important to note that coral reefs harbor more than 25% of all known marine life. Other marine life may be affected when their habitat becomes not fit to live in and their food source disappears. According to a study conducted by Stanford’s Institute for International Studies, polar bears, walruses and seals are finding their usual homes are no longer comfortable places to live as the Arctic sea ice melts. The warmer waters are affecting their food supply, breeding and nesting habits and in some cases causing them to die off. If something isn’t done soon these delicate ecosystems will be altered forever.
Scientists have examined about 1,200 animals of various species and have found that these animals have shown temperature-related changes consistent with global warming. This is causing many species of animals and birds migrating northward to avoid the warmer weather, and as a result, they are running into human barriers, or other serious difficulties. When the cold-hardy arctic fox moved northward, to escape the warmer weather, it ran into larger more aggressive animals that it couldn’t compete with. Equally important, some mammals are breaking hibernation sooner which can also cause serious problems.

In all, global warming is already having a devastating effect on the animal kingdom. We now know that humans are disrupting and increasing the natural warming of the earth by the burning of fossil fuels. It is going to be the responsibility of all countries around the world, to do their part. Global warming has been blamed on everything from the melting of the polar ice caps to the increase in devastating storms, the loss of coral to the changing migration habits of the animal kingdom. According the IPCC report, even if people stopped burning the fossil fuels today, which are responsible for global warming, the effects would not go away in our lifetime. Therefore, if we do not want to go the way of the dinosaurs, it is going to be the responsibility of all of us, to do our part, to slow down the warming of our planet.