



Question-Based Feedback to *Encourage Student Revision*

Why use questions to give feedback

- **Question-based feedback** encourages students to think of their writing as a series of active decisions that they are making.
 - When working on a written assignment, students should think of it as problem-solving and exploration; in other words, the assignment criteria functions as a problem to be explored and addressed in students' written responses. Instructors can model the inquiry process by asking students questions about their ideas.
- **Question-based feedback** motivates students to critically think through their writing choices and understand how to fundamentally improve their writing, rather than just addressing instructor feedback without fully understanding why.
 - Plus, it shows students that you're trying to understand them to better assist them in their writing.

How to use questions to give feedback

- **Think of questions while you read student writing:**
 - These initial reactions while you're reading students' work can provide invaluable feedback for how to improve tone, structure, voice, etc. What piqued your interest? What do you want to know more about? What do you think could be added/changed? What do you think could be taken away?
- **Try to imagine the student's thought process:**
 - Empathize with the student and try to put yourself in their shoes to more fully understand why they made the writing decisions they did. This can help show

you in what areas the student needs clarification on or further guidance.

- For example, why do YOU think a student chose to structure their thoughts that way? Could it be because they need further explanation?

Question-Based Feedback Examples

- Who is your target audience?
- What is your main idea?
- What do you think you do well in this piece?
- What are you struggling with/need help understanding?
- How do you want your audience to feel reading this?
- How do you feel you can make your work more engaging for the reader?
- Do you have a personal anecdote that you can use to make your ideas more relatable to the reader?
- Do you feel your supporting ideas are arranged in a way that most effectively supports your thesis?
- How can you summarize your ideas into a clear and concise thesis statement?
- And so many more!

Example of Question-Based Feedback

Sample student work*: “I had learned the hard way that studying for exams was the best idea anyone could ever have. I remember my senior year I had a Humanities exam, in which I failed because I did not study. Well, not in college. If you choose not to study and you fail your exams, you fail the course for the semester and have to retake the course again. In result, your grade point average is hurt by your failing grade. You definitely want to study for every exam you have, to prevent from failing the course and hurting your grade point average.”

Example of instructor feedback using questions: I think it was a really good idea to use a personal experience like your humanities class to

illustrate your ideas. I wonder if we could take that a bit further to make it even better. How do you think you can paint a clearer picture of what happened for the reader? What feelings were you having, and what senses do you remember experiencing? Do you think experimenting with different sentence structures could make your work stronger? Do you think you could experiment with word choice and sentence order to make the writing clearer and more engaging?

***Sample found at**

<https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/wac/downloads/bwsample5.pdf>*