

## Peer Responses: Elbow and Belanoff's *Sharing and Responding*

Begin by modeling the peer-response process for the entire class, using a volunteer's paper. Ask that everyone take notes as they listen, then make sure you also model how to encourage the author to initiate feedback from the auditors. Add that every time an auditor offers little more than "It's really good / I liked it / You're sure to get an A" somewhere, someone's cat barfs up a hairball on a freshly made bed.

Make sure to take group dynamics into consideration. Give clear verbal and written instructions. Establish a clear and demonstrable outcome, and limit time allowed so that students stay on task. Circulate, ask questions, check progress, and make suggestions.

### Useful in the beginning stages

#### Sharing: No Response

- Student reads work out loud to peers
- Peers do not respond but only listen attentively
  - *Useful in the early stages because articulating their words aloud enables them to catch inconsistencies and 'hear' what's lacking.*

#### Pointing

- Identify striking words, phrases, and/or powerful moments in the text.

#### Center of Gravity

- Points out the primary theme / the 'essence' of the text (what peers identify as the center of gravity often a surprise to the author).

#### Say Back

- Peers describe they think the writer is getting at.
- Helps writer see whether main idea is coming across or helps writer establish what he or she is really trying to say.
- Useful in early & late stages. Particularly useful in early stages when writers ideas may still be vague.

#### The Almost Said

- Writer ask peers questions about what they hear implied but not stated.
- Asks if there is something the auditor would like the writer to address or expand upon.
  - This helps author find or develop missing details, and assess if subtle details are working as intended.

## Useful in middle to late stages.

### Contradict

- Readers challenge author's assertions (a discussion of content, not composition).
- Discussion can generate problems with topic/view, reveal counterarguments that need to be made, or provide ideas that writer hadn't considered

### Voice

- Peers help assess tone and language of the work – feelings and attitudes expressed, trustworthiness, vividness, uniqueness and individuality. This allows peers to describe what they're hearing without deploying technical language.

### Movies of the Mind

- Peers describe what they are thinking while they listen to or read the composition.
- Writer might stop responders in the middle or ask for "I" statements about readers' feelings.

## Useful in later stages, when writer is fairly confident about composition and is looking for effect on the auditor.

### Metaphorical Description

- Peers build metaphors for the author's text.
- These can be written or drawn responses, e.g., sometimes a 'doodle' can reveal a lot of an auditor's response.

### Skeleton

- Peers identify composition's outline: main & sub points, evidence, assumptions, etc.

### Descriptive Outline

- Peers break up the composition into "says" and "does" statements: "says" statements summarize sections of the composition; "does" statements describes each sections purpose for the whole composition (rhetorical effect, function for the rest of the piece, etc.).