

Improving Student Writing Through Metacognition

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Metacognitive Reflection Assignments

First Study

- Reread your essay. Reflect on what you did well, why you think you did well, and what process you used to write the paper. Explain your thinking.
- With a critical eye, look at two areas where you could still improve the paper. In detail, discuss how you would go about doing it.
- Remember, your response is reflective and personal, not analytical and formal in nature. Your typed, double-spaced response should be 1-2 pages long.
- You will be assessed on the quality and depth of your reflection.

Interim Metacognitive Reflection

1. Describe your planning processes in writing this piece. Consider discussing how you chose your topic, your planning process, and how you went about composing your first draft.
2. What about the peer revising process was helpful? You may comment on the peer revising you did and/or on the peer revising comments you received.
3. How did you revise your piece? How did you get from rough draft to final draft?
4. What did you most enjoy about this writing project?
5. What did you find challenging about this writing project?
6. If you had more time, what would you have done differently? Explain.

Second Study

1. Describe your early processes in writing this essay. Consider discussing how you chose your topic, thesis, or how you went about composing your first draft.
2. What about the peer revision process was helpful? You may comment on the peer revising you did and/or on the peer revising comments you received.
3. Look at the rubric; pick a bulleted description that accurately describes a strength.
 - a. Explain why you did well with this aspect of writing. For example, did something else you have written this year help prepare you for this? Reading you've done? Writing? Be specific.
4. Pick a bulleted description that accurately describes an area you need to improve.
 - a. Explain why you need to improve on this aspect of writing. For example, has this always been an area of growth for you? Is this a new skill? Be specific.
 - b. What will you do differently on the final draft to address this area for improvement? Explain.
5. How will you go about revising your essay? In other words, what steps will you go through to get from your rough draft to your final draft? Include at least three separate steps.
6. What aspects of essay writing do you need more help with? Be specific.

Rubric for Formal Writing (Second Study ACP)

CATEGORY	Target (5)	Acceptable (3)	Inadequate (1)
Thesis/ Argument (15%)	There is one clear, well-focused claim with supporting points. Thesis stands out and is supported by detailed information. Argument is strong and focused throughout, with several references to the ideas stated in the thesis.	Thesis is clear but the argument sometimes veers off-topic or is not clearly connected back to the thesis statement.	The thesis is not clear. There is a seemingly random collection of information.
Organization(15%)	Details and information are placed in a logical order and the way they are presented effectively keeps the interest of the reader. Each paragraph is clearly introduced with a topic sentence. Transitional phrases are employed throughout.	Details and information are placed in a logical order, but the way in which they are presented/introduced sometimes makes the writing confusing or uninteresting. There may not be clear topic sentences or transitional phrases.	Many details are not in a logical or expected order. There is little sense that the writing is organized.
Support (20%)	Ample support is provided to strengthen the writer's argument. This goes beyond obvious, general remarks and makes use of direct quotations which are fully explained, analyzed, and tied to the thesis statement.	Adequate support is provided to support the argument, however it is sometimes vague or general. Direct quotations are used but sometimes require further explanation and analysis.	Little to no support is provided. Quotations are either non-existent or not explained at all.
Style (10%)	The writer uses advanced vocabulary and varied sentence structure to make reading enjoyable. The paper has excellent flow and quotations are integrated organically.	Standard vocabulary is used and sentence structure or phrasing is sometimes repetitive. Quotations are integrated, but the flow of the paper could be improved.	Basic vocabulary is used and much of the paper is repetitive. Quotations are not integrated.
Mechanics (10%)	Writer makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes few errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes pervasive errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.
<i>The Following Categories Were not Included in Scores for Study</i>			
Revision Effort (5 %)	Writer actively participates in peer-revision and seeks out opportunities for further revision. Several improvements are made from the rough draft to the final draft.	Writer participates in peer-revision but does not seek out opportunities for further revision. Some improvements are made from the rough draft to the final draft.	Writer does not actively participate in revision. Little to no changes are made from the rough draft to the final draft.
MLA format (5%)	Writer follows the conventions of MLA format	Writer follows the conventions of MLA format with a few mistakes	Writer does not follow MLA format
Planning (5%)	Writer submitted their thesis statement, outline (if applicable), and rough draft on time.	Writer submitted most of the work on time.	Writer did not submit work in preparation for the final draft.
Rough Draft (15%)	Writer showed excellent effort in submitting a complete rough draft on time.	Writer showed acceptable effort in submitting a complete rough draft on time (or submitted an excellent rough draft late).	Writer did not submit a rough draft, or the rough draft submitted was incomplete.

Peer Revising

Peer Reviewer's Name _____ Author's Name _____

Directions: Answer #1. Read your response aloud and then trade sheets with your partner.

Answer in complete sentences. Be specific!

1. (*Answered by the author*)

a. What do you think is your greatest strength in your essay? Try to reference language from the rubric.

b. What do you most need to improve? Please reference language from the rubric.

c. In your own words, what are you trying to argue?

Directions: After listening to the piece aloud, read again silently and answer all of the questions in complete sentences.

2. How did the author begin the essay? Write the first sentence below.

3. According to the introduction, what is the thesis?

4. **Circle** all of the transition words/phrases on the rough draft, and then write them below.

5. Is there direct text evidence in the essay? Yes No How many separate pieces of textual evidence? _____

6. Is there a transition to begin the conclusion? Yes No If, yes, write the transition below.

7. Write the final sentence of the essay below.

8. Does this final sentence extend the thesis? Yes No
If yes, how?

9. Pick a paragraph that needs revision. Mark the paragraph in the piece. Don't worry about proofreading or editing. Revise this paragraph together with the author and write the new version below.

TREAT

When you write an essay, you want to be sure to TREAT your reader



- TREAT is an acronym for how to organize a body paragraph.

T stands for Topic sentence

- The first sentence of each body paragraph should be a Topic sentence.
- It should be a strong sentence that identifies what the paragraph will prove.
- It should NOT be a quote.
- It should link directly back to your thesis.

R stands for Reason

- The second sentence of your body paragraph should be a reason that supports your topic sentence.
- It should NOT be a quote.

E stands for Evidence

- The third sentence of your paragraph should be Evidence from the text.
- It should be a short, well-selected quote.
- It should be properly integrated with your own language.
- It should include the page citation.

A stands for Analysis

- The next TWO or more sentences should be Analysis of the quote you have included.
- Analysis is not merely restating the quote; it needs to address what the quote means.
- Pay attention to what lies within and beneath the language.

T stands for Transition

- The final sentence of your body paragraph should be a Transition sentence.
- It should prepare the reader for what will come next.

TREAT

- Remember to TREAT your reader!
- Let's practice.

TREAT

An acronym for how to organize body paragraphs

T stands for _____.

Explanation:

R stands for _____.

Explanation:

E stands for _____.

Explanation:

A stands for _____.

Explanation:

T stands for _____.

Explanation:

Analytical Essay Rubric (Second Study SCP)

Name: _____

Final Grade: _____/98 =

A = 14 points

Thesis/Overall Argument: insightful, focused, and convincing analysis of subject.

Organization: is entirely logical with excellent topic sentences and transitions.

Support: is effective, ample, and well-chosen. Direct quotes are smoothly integrated.

Style: is sophisticated and a sheer pleasure to read.

Mechanics: no errors.

MLA format: no errors.

Revision Effort: all global and local errors fully addressed; issues no longer evident.

B = 12 points

Thesis/Overall Argument: is an accurate, mostly convincing analysis of subject.

Organization: is mostly logical with attempted transitions and topic sentences.

Support: is sound. Direct quotes are integrated, but could be smoother.

Style: is clear and highly readable.

Mechanics: a few minor errors.

MLA format: a few minor errors.

Revision Effort: all global and local errors addressed; a few issues may still exist.

C = 10 points

Thesis/Overall Argument: is inconsistent in terms of persuasiveness or clarity.

Organization: is simplistic or slightly confusing.

Support: is evident but minimal. Direct quotes are present but may not be integrated properly.

Style: is readable but wordy with limited vocabulary or sentence variety.

Mechanics: errors are frequent.

MLA Format: significant errors.

Revision Effort: some global and local errors addressed.

D = 8 points

Thesis/Overall Argument: is unclear or inaccurate.

Organization: has major flaws.

Support: is lacking or mistaken for summary. Direct quotes are “dropped.”

Style: has major flaws such as wordiness, repetition, or lack of clarity.

Mechanics: errors exist throughout or interfere with meaning.

MLA Format: less than half correct.

Revision Effort: limited to local errors.

F = 6 points

Thesis/Overall Argument: is absent.

Organization: is illogical or absent.

Support: is not evident or incorrect. Direct quotes are absent.

Style: is seriously flawed and significantly interferes with meaning.

Mechanics: errors exist throughout and significantly interfere with meaning.

MLA Format: completely incorrect.

Revision Effort: no evidence of revision.

Name: _____

Literary Analysis Rubric (Proposed)

	A- Excellent (5)	B- Good (4)	C- Adequate (3)	D- Inadequate (2)	F (1)	SCORE
Introduction	Begins with insightful general statement(s) related to topic to convey relevance/ Concise background information/ Includes title and author	Background information is efficient but not as compelling as an A/ Flows from general to specific/ Includes title and author	Background information may not relate to the thesis/ Too little or too much summary/ May not flow from general to specific/ Title & author	Background information is lacking or has unnecessary information/ Does not flow from general to specific/ Missing title or author	No intro	
Thesis	Compelling, organized, and thought-provoking thesis	Thoughtful, well-organized thesis/ Provides sense of organization for essay	Common thesis/ may be awkward or not fully developed	Thesis is too general or cannot be proven through analysis	No thesis	
Quotes and Lead-ins	Skillful lead-ins with plenty of contextual information/ Appropriate-length quotes support topic sentence	Effective lead-ins that provide context but not as skillful as an A/ Appropriate-length quotes support topic sentence	Has lead-ins, but not enough context / May be awkward or choppy/ Quote may be too long	Some lead-ins missing/ Quote does not support topic sentence	No lead-ins/ All quotes begin a sentence/ No quotes	
Commentary and Analysis	Insightful commentary that analyzes each quote relating directly to the thesis/ Delves beneath the surface	Thoughtful commentary conveys evidence of close reading	Basic commentary that may stay on surface/ Points out basic facts/ May lack critical insight or repeat as opposed to develop argument	Commentary does not analyze/ Too much plot summary	No commentary All plot summary	X2
Conclusion	Conclusion restates thesis and makes connections outside of text/ Provides profound relevance to essay topic	Conclusion restates thesis/ All commentary conveys relevance of topic	May not restate thesis/ May include plot summary/ Relevance of topic remains questionable	All plot summary	No conclusion paragraph	
Organization	Essay is clearly organized with thesis, topic sentences, and transition sentences	Thesis, topic sentences, and transition sentences connect although not as seamlessly as in an A	May lack a clear, direct connection between thesis & topic sentences / May lack transitions	No topic sentences/ One or more TSs are not opinions/ Little evidence of “shaping”	Lacks any organization	
Conventions and Grammar	Powerful diction/ Balanced & varied sentences / Virtually no grammatical errors	Effective diction/ Clear sentences/ Few grammatical errors that do not inhibit ideas	Common diction/ Some wordy or awkward sentences/ Some grammatical errors that may inhibit ideas	Incorrect diction/ Many wordy or awkward sentences/ Serious grammatical errors that distort ideas	Severely lacks clarity	
MLA Formatting	No errors in formatting	One error in formatting	A few formatting errors	Many formatting errors	Formatting completely incorrect	
Revision Effort	All global and local errors addressed; no issues remain	Global and local errors addressed; a few errors remain	Only some global and local revisions addressed	Revision limited to local errors	No revision effort evident	

TOTAL SCORE: _____ x2 = _____ /100

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