

Encouraging Peer Feedback With Sticky Notes

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Students engage in a meaningful, low-stakes peer review activity.

Levels	All
Aims	Develop peer review skills using multiple model texts Decrease anxiety over offering feedback in L2
Class Time	10–30 minutes
Preparation Time	5 minutes



The peer review process provides language learners with the opportunity to analyze model texts created by their peers and receive feedback. However, students often struggle with peer review tasks because they do not understand how their peers whose use of language is not that much better than theirs could offer valuable insights on their work (Hansen & Liu, 2005). Additionally, students feel uneasy criticizing other students' work (Hu & Lam, 2010). This peer review activity was developed with the goal of increasing anonymity and efficiency in the peer assessment process. The activity provides students with an opportunity to comment on their peers' work and consider examples while allowing the teacher to monitor the task and offer guidance as needed. Language learners have evaluated this activity positively over the years. They appreciate the low stakes nature of this particular peer review task—rather than having to complete a lengthy form with many questions, they can focus on locating one specific strength and weakness. Students have also reported that they like this form of peer review because it allows them to consider examples from more than one peer, as is the case with most peer review formats.

PROCEDURES

1. Students bring to class a draft of their writing assignment (e.g., résumé, essay, paragraph)
2. Students tape their assignments on the wall, around the classroom.

3. Each student receives five sticky notes and, on each one, writes down two observations—one being a positive comment and one a constructive comment—and sticks a note to five different assignments on the wall.
4. Teacher monitors and offers guidance.
5. Provide specific sentence frames to prime students' commentary. For example, ask students to write, "One of the biggest strengths of your assignment is . . ." and "One thing I would add/leave out/change is . . ."
6. Depending on the length of the assignment, you can provide students with fewer or more sticky notes.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Hansen, J. G., & Liu, J. (2005). Guiding principles for effective peer response. *ELT Journal*, 59(1), 31–38. doi: 10.1093/elt/cci004
- Hu, G., & Lam, S. (2010). Issues of cultural appropriateness and pedagogical efficacy: Exploring peer review in a second language writing class. *Instructional Science*, 38, 371–394. doi: 10.1007/s11251-008-9086-1