

Author's Notes Guidelines

An Author's Notes gives Buddy responders the context they need to have in order to know how to respond to your writing. It should include the following information:

1. A statement of the purpose and audience of the text. What am I trying to say and for whom? (EX: this is my entire first draft for you to read and give me feedback; or: this is my introduction. I am trying to set up my project with _____ and _____ as the main ideas).
2. A statement of where the text is in the process of development. How far along is this? (EX: my first draft, ninth draft, based on an idea I got last night, second half of a draft you've already seen).
3. Your own writer's assessment of the piece. (EX: I like this because . . . ; I'm worried about this because . . . ; I know this part needs work, but I'm not sure, I really like x and want to incorporate more of this idea but don't know how, etc.)
4. A sense of the revision strategies you have already tried. (EX: I had my roommate read this piece and she suggested these changes. I asked my students to proofread it for extra credit and they suggested _____. I have tried outlining my paper and I see gaps between my first and second idea but don't know where to go from here)
5. The kind of response you want, specifically. *What do I want help with?* (EX: I am having trouble understanding and explaining what I see as the intersection of homework completion and attitude. Can you point to places where my explanation doesn't make sense? The first paragraph on page 2 isn't working for me, what are some strategies I can use to revise? I want you to look at my overall organization do you understand my main claims? I want you to look at my word choice and paragraph structure, specifically on page 1 and 3. etc.)

Author's Notes are the primary way you, as the writer, establish the kind of response your writing receives. Using Author's Notes means knowing ahead of time where you are with a piece and what kind of plans you have for it. As you become more accustomed to thinking about your drafts in this way, Author's Notes become easier to write and more effective reflection and response tools.

Research Buddy Responses to Authors' Notes

As a research Buddy, you will be responding to your buddy's drafts for the final paper. Here is what you should include in your response:

1. Consider how well what you are reading aligns with the specifications in the assignment. Are any parts missing? Basically: did the paper answer the questions?
2. Specifically address the issues raised in the Author's Notes in #5.

3. Proofreading marks to help with grammar, word choice, spelling, typos, and APA formatting. We suggest you use the Track Changes or Comment feature in Word to do this type of editing. You can highlight some text, then click on Insert... Comment, then type in your comment. Or, click on Tools... Track Changes... and then make changes to their text (it should show up a different color on the screen). If you are on a mac, after you click on Track Changes, check all the boxes on the little menu that pops up.
4. Consider the paper as a whole. What do you see as the strengths? The weaknesses? What could the author add to make his/her assertions stronger? Do you see any other possible assertions the author could make based on his/her data? Offer any other comments you want...Remember warm feedback is received more happily than cool feedback, but also that your peer has an interest in improving his/her paper. Comments like, "I wasn't sure what you were trying to say here" or "I don't see the link between what you're saying here and what you said earlier that you were trying to accomplish" or "I can read this two ways [offer ways], which did you intend?"

Author's Response to Buddy Notes

At the end of your final draft (i.e., the one you turn in), please append brief answers to the following five questions.

- a. How did your draft change from start to finish? Please explain the rationale for the changes you made.
- b. To what concerns did you pay particular attention as you revised your draft? (Ideas? Structure? Use of research? Grammar and usage?)
- c. How did you integrate your peer's feedback into your revision? Which feedback was especially helpful and why? Which feedback did you decide to reject and why?
- d. What do you see as the strengths in your paper? What were your key challenges as you wrote? With more time and energy, what would you continue to develop?
- e. Rate your peer reviewer on the following scale: 0-didn't do anything; 1-tried to help, but didn't really; 2-quite helpful. Write a sentence or two to explain each of your ratings.

NOTE: For your final action research paper, you will turn in your first draft with Author's Notes, the Buddy response, and your Author's Response to Buddy Notes, in addition to your final draft that you turn in. For your action research paper, it is expected that you and your buddies have more than one exchange of notes/responses.