

4. Peer Review

After you finish your draft, you will work with a partner to review each other's drafts. Here is a draft of the mentor text. Read it with your partner. Together, answer the questions in the boxes. Then we'll see how the writer's classmate evaluated the draft.

An Early Draft:

INTRODUCTION In her draft, the writer does not include a clear main idea. What is the main idea of the text?

SUPPORTING PARAGRAPHS The third paragraph talks about Asian elephants. Does this information support the main idea?

CONCLUSION The conclusion does not really summarize the main idea of the text. How could the main idea be better summed up?

The Woolly Mammoth

The woolly mammoth was a huge animal that lived in Europe, North America, and Siberia 10,000 to 250,000 years ago. It had shaggy fur and thick layers of fat. It weighed six tons and towered almost eleven feet high. That makes the mammoth one of the largest mammals to ever walk the earth.

Everything about the mammoth was gigantic. Its molars were shaped like bricks and weighed ten pounds each. The trunk was six feet long. The tusks were also impressive. They twisted and curved and could grow up to thirteen feet long. Scientists have found tusks that weigh almost 200 pounds. Adult woolly mammoths were not in danger from many predators.

Mammoths needed to eat all day long to maintain their size. Mammoths were herbivores, or vegetarians. Their diet consisted of grasses, plants, tree buds, and bark. Scientists think mammoths used their tusks to dig up plants, or rip off tree bark. The Asian elephant resembles the woolly mammoth. It has tusks like a mammoth, but they are shorter and curve only slightly. They also like to eat grass and sugarcane. Asian elephants live in Southeast Asia.

The woolly mammoth died out 10,000 years ago. As oceans rose, the mammoth's habitat disappeared. Therefore, the mammoth had a difficult time finding food. The mammoths died out in great numbers 10,000 years ago.

Scientists have studied mammoths for a long time. Maybe they will learn why the woolly mammoth disappeared.

An Example Peer Review Form

This peer review form gives an example of how a classmate evaluated the draft of the mentor text shown on the previous page.

The introduction states the topic in an interesting way.

You did a good job of getting the reader's attention.

The main idea of the text is clear.

You could improve your informative/explanatory text by including a main idea.

The writer supports the main idea with at least three strong supporting details.

You did a good job of giving three supporting details.

The writer includes explanations, details, and facts.

You could improve your informative/explanatory text by deleting facts that do not support the main idea and adding more explanations and facts to the supporting paragraphs.

The writer uses linking words and phrases correctly.

You did a good job of using "therefore" in the fourth paragraph.

You could improve your informative/explanatory text by using more linking words and phrases to connect ideas.

The writer includes a satisfying conclusion.

You did a good job of including a concluding paragraph and giving the reader something to think about.

The conclusion sums up the text and gives the reader something to think about.

You could improve your informative/explanatory text by adding one or two sentences that briefly sum up your text.

Try It!

Peer Review with a Partner

Now you are going to work with a partner to review each other's drafts. You will use the peer review form below. If you need help, look back at the mentor text writer's peer review form for suggestions.

The introduction states the topic in an interesting way.

The main idea of the paper is clear.

You did a good job of

You could improve your draft by

The writer supports the main idea with at least three strong supporting details.

The writer includes explanations, details, and facts.

You did a good job of

You could improve your draft by

The writer uses linking words and phrases correctly.

You did a good job of

You could improve your draft by

The writer includes a satisfying conclusion.

The conclusion sums up the paper and gives the reader something to think about.

You did a good job of

You could improve your draft by

Try It!

Record Key Peer Review Comments

Now it's time for you and your partner to share your comments with each other. Listen to your partner's feedback, and write down the key comments in the left column. Then write some ideas for improving your draft in the right column.

My review says that my introduction	I will
My review says that my supporting details	I will
My review says that my use of details and explanations	I will
My review says that my use of linking words	I will
My review says that my conclusion	I will

Use the space below to write anything else that you notice about your draft that you think you can improve.