

## Writing-responding

These ideas come from Rick Reis at Stanford University. Your group may want to play with different approaches during your sessions together. You can fix time limits on these activities.

Source: Rick Reis, 940 Ways to Teach Peer Writing and Response, in *Any Course and Any Size Class*. Retrieved from: <http://cgi.stanford.edu/~deptctl/tomprof/posting.php?ID=940>

### Favourite Sentence

Ask the writer to look over their own piece and mark their favourite sentence; this motivates careful re-reading. Ask the student giving a response to do the same; this is a simple way to bring about encouraging feedback.

### Juicy Verbs

Students trade drafts, circle all the verbs in a section or passage, and suggest more informative ones. Sharpening verbs sharpens thinking and also helps develop a vocabulary appropriate to the discipline.

### Curiosity Response

Students read each other's work, marking places that provoke a desire or need for more information or discussion. In the margin near such moments of curiosity, the reader should say or ask what she'd like to know more about.

### Quicksand Moment

Have students trade short drafts, read them, and identify the most difficult part, the one that's confusing, dense, gets them stuck. In a paragraph, the reader should reflect and write on what causes the difficulty. The most difficult passage in a text may be the paradoxically promising site where the student's thinking can be seen developing.

### Cross-disciplinary sharing

Seek and share resources and exercises on peer writing and review not only among colleagues in your field but across disciplines as well. Because most disciplines teach thinking through writing of some kind, helpful techniques for using student writing may come from almost any field.

### References

Bean, John C. (1996). *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*. Jossey-Bass.

Dartmouth Writing Program (2007). *Collaborative Learning/Learning With Peers. Materials for Faculty*. December 2007. Retrieved from: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/materials/faculty/methods/collaborative.shtml>

Elbow, Peter & Belanoff, Patricia (2000). *Sharing and Responding*, 3e. McGraw-Hill, 2000.

Pei, Lowry (2007). *Uses of Informal Writing. Materials on Teaching Writing, Simmons College Writing Center, October 2007*. Retrieved from: <http://my.simmons.edu/academics/writing-center/wac/teaching-writing.html>