

Analyzing Famous Speeches as Arguments—Peer Response Guide

Writer's Name _____

Your Name _____

Your job is to help the writer think through the quality of the argument, support, and structure of his or her draft. Please do the best you can to help the writer by being supportive, critical, and (most of all) specific in your feedback.

You may write on the essay. Circle any words that you feel the writer should reconsider. The circle will indicate to the writer that you think there's a better word out there that could be used. Underline any grammatical problems you observe. It's the author's job to find alternative diction and to investigate the grammatical question. Don't spend time doing this for the writer.

1. Identify the thesis and write it below. If the essay does not have a thesis, what points does the author discuss that might be consolidated into a thesis?
2. A thesis must contain an assertion that argues a point. The thesis is a promise to the reader, an agreement to prove and support this claim. State what he/she is promising to support.
3. Is the thesis challenging and interesting? Explain why or why not.
4. What rhetorical devices are discussed? What "purpose" or "intent" is given for each one?

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5. Do the paragraphs have transitions that connect each paragraph together? Does each paragraph support and develop the thesis?
6. How could the introductory paragraph be improved?
7. How could the conclusion be improved?
8. Is there enough research to support the thesis? Does the research support the thesis, or does the research dominate the essay? (Make sure there's more commentary than concrete details.)
9. What could the writer add to this essay?
10. What additional information could the writer eliminate from this essay?
11. Is the diction eloquent and sophisticated? Repetitive? Identify improvements that the author could make to improve the diction of this essay.
12. Did the author vary his/her syntax to keep the writing from being monotonous?

Finally, on a scale from 1-10, how much did you enjoy reading this essay? (A rating of 10 means it was very enjoyable and interesting. A rating of 1 means it was uninteresting or a challenge to read.)

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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