

Composition
Sample Peer-Review
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The sample critique below will give you a sense of what a “satisfactory” response to a peer’s rough draft might be. Feel free to be pointed and specific when offering your commentary. Refer to the draft directly. Offer alternatives. Give as you would like to receive! And, of course, be respectful of your writing partner’s efforts.

THE SAMPLE The author requested assistance in the areas noted.

INTRODUCTION It’s hard to tell where the introduction begins and ends. The introduction needs to be more separate and emphatic—different from the rest of the body paragraphs. It seems to blend into the heart of the paper, and this tends to weaken both the introduction AND the body. Since the introduction is quite long (2 pages), it may benefit your paper to make the opening set the appreciative tone of your draft and make it distinct from the “beefy” informational sections about your Mom’s past. I think you should grab your reader with a more emotional focus in the intro. or an attention-getting first sentence that puts the reader directly into your shoes as a child of a messy divorce.

PUNCTUATION I made corrections on your draft where I sense punctuation is needed. I am no expert! On a stylistic level, I made several notes where some sentences are short and choppy or repetitive in their phrasing. On pages 2 and 3, you use the word “responsible” very often. Got any synonyms? How about on page 2, in sentence 2, saying, “I took the initiative to find a job to help support my Mom and me”? Overall, most punctuation looks well-placed, as far as I can see.

READABILITY I could read this draft comfortably. The paper moves well from incidents to your reflection about the meaning of that incident. I do suggest incorporating more details about your Mom’s achievements towards the end of the paper. There is a kind of consistency in doing that. And where is your conclusion? I didn’t hear one yet. I have no room to talk about this myself, by the way! I have trouble writing endings. In terms of flow from sentence to sentence—surface readability—sometimes your sentences are very subject-verb in their structures. The same pattern again and again. This isn’t a big deal, but varying your word order often makes a piece flow more nicely and not be so choppy.

MISCELLANEOUS Many sentences start “I . . . I . . . I . . .” Try to switch this structure up a bit. This is a great start, B.! I was really touched by this story—sounds like my life. I was wondering if you could add more about your mother’s influence and what she did to help you out as well. The beginning seems to emphasize that, although I realized that you also wanted to focus on your father. Be more emphatic about your direction there. I respect your story, and I understand it. Keep up the hard work!!!!