**PEER REVIEW QUESTION BANK**

Here is a list of questions that may be helpful to draw from as you plan your peer review. Please see the main page for model peer reviews.

***Ideas***

* What is the author’s argument? Rewrite in your own words.
* What is the thesis? Is it debatable? Before continuing through the paper, come up with one counterargument you might make to this thesis.
* Underline the thesis statement. In the margin, list the nouns in the thesis. After you’ve read the paper, return to this list of nouns – are all of the topics of the paper covered there? If not, what should be added?
* What is one limitation you expect to find in this study?
* Does the author include a counterargument?
* Where? What evidence answers this? What evidence could the author add?
* Where does the author provide context? Is this context appropriate to the audience? What is one thing that could be cut? What is one thing that could be added?
* Underline the topic sentence of each paragraph.
* Does each topic sentence work to back up the thesis? Mark (at least) one topic sentence with a relationship to the thesis that is clear to you. Mark (at least) one topic sentence that you’re unclear about.
* Does each topic sentence explain what the paragraph is about? Mark at least one topic sentence that forecasts the content of the paragraph that follows. Mark at least one topic sentence that doesn’t seem to explain what follows.
* Indicate a transition that you think clearly moves the paper from one focus to the next.
* Choose a moment when the author uses a “weak” transition (also, furthermore, additionally, and). Suggest a stronger transitional phrase.
* What argument do you find most convincing? Why?
* What argument do you find least convincing? Why? What does the author need to add to convince you?
* Are there any factual errors? If so, mark them!
* Is there a final “so what”?

***Evidence***

* Does the author make any broad generalizations? Where?
* Where is one moment where the author provides enough detail to convince you of the argument?
* Where does the author fall short of detail?
* Choose one claim where you’re unconvinced by the evidence. What kind of evidence did you expect to see/would you like to see here?
* Is there any evidence that seems out of place?
* Does the author misrepresent any theories or arguments?
* Are the sources credible? How do you know?
* List each topic sentence. Beneath it, list the evidence that the author uses to convince you of that claim. Which two topic sentences are best supported? Which are least supported?
* Evaluate the idea density of the paper. A dense paper is full of specific details, claims and support and the writing style is concise. A loose paper has several general ideas and the writing style is wordy and repetitious.

Circle one of these descriptions:

Loose and General

Somewhat Loose and General

Somewhat Concise and Detailed

Very Concise and Detailed

Identify two moments in the paper where the writer should add or remove detail:

***Organization***

* After you read the thesis, predict the organization of this paper.
* Reverse outline your partner’s paper. In the margin of each paragraph, write the topic of that paragraph in less than three words. Then, make a list of the topics, in order, at the end of the paper. Suggest one other possible order for these ideas.
* If the paper is longer than four pages, where does the author “signpost,” or tell the reader the organization of the paper itself?
* Where do you get lost?
* Before you start to read, draw an arrow in the margin next to a random line on each page. When you hit the arrows, do you remember how the argument you’re reading relates to the thesis? If not, circle the arrow.
* Is the introduction clear? What is one change the author should make to improve the introduction?
* Does the conclusion offer a useful judgment, or is it a summary of the main points of the paper? What is one change the author can make to improve the conclusion?
* Evaluate the tightness of the organization of this paper. A ***tight*** paper states and carries out a plan for a connected series of points. As the reader, you pretty much know what topics are coming next. A ***loose*** paper may or may not state a plan for the points discussed. It is not immediately obvious why the points have been chosen or how one relates to the next--even if they all have to do with the main topic. As the reader, you're not sure what's coming next.

Circle one of these descriptions:

A Loose Collection

Some Tight Sections

Most Parts are Tight

Very Tightly Constructed

Which parts of the paper are tightest*?* What is one section that might be tightened?

***Use of Sources***

* Are quotations properly introduced? Mark (at least) one place where a quotation could be introduced more smoothly. How would you rewrite this?
* Mark one sentence where quotations or sources are integrated smoothly into the paper.
* Mark one sentence where there seems to be a disconnect between the author’s voice and the source material.
* Are there any moments where the voice shifts strangely? Help your classmate identify moments of potential accidental plagiarism.
* Identify one citation or quotation that you’re not sure why the author chose.
* Are there quotes that could be cut down? Quotes that you didn’t understand?
* Are all sources properly cited? Mark places where they’re not.

***Language***

* Read aloud. Where do you trip? Mark it.
* What are three words the author uses that show an awareness of audience? Mark one place where the author’s language seems inappropriate to the audience.
* Where is the author longwinded? Mark two places to tighten.
* Are there any typos? It’s not your job to proofread, but if you happen to notice them, please mark the margins.
* Is the sentence structure varied? Mark one paragraph where the sentence structure helps keep you interested. Mark one paragraph where the sentence structure starts to get a little repetitive.
* What is one error that the author made more than once?
* Provide one word that you question the use of, and explain how/why the word confuses you.
* What is your favorite sentence in this paper? Why do you like it?