

Building a Framework for Creative Peer Critique

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Vision

How do we create a framework so students engage with peer critique in meaningful, constructive ways?

Let's begin with the Creative Writing Workshop





Students learn to practice peer critique in a Creative Writing Workshop through enquiry-based learning.

I give a range of questions to my students when preparing for workshop.





Asking
Questions

I ask my students: What are your **initial observations?**

What is this story **about?** What questions does the **opening** bring to mind? Do you want to **read on?** How does the **formatting** look? Does it **follow guidelines?**



Asking
Questions

I ask: Can you describe **how the story is told?**

How would you describe the use of language? Does the story **flow naturally?**



Asking Questions

I ask: Can you describe **your response** to the story?

Did you get so **caught up in the story** that you **lost sight** of the fact that you were reading? Can you go back and **pinpoint where** in the story that happened for you?

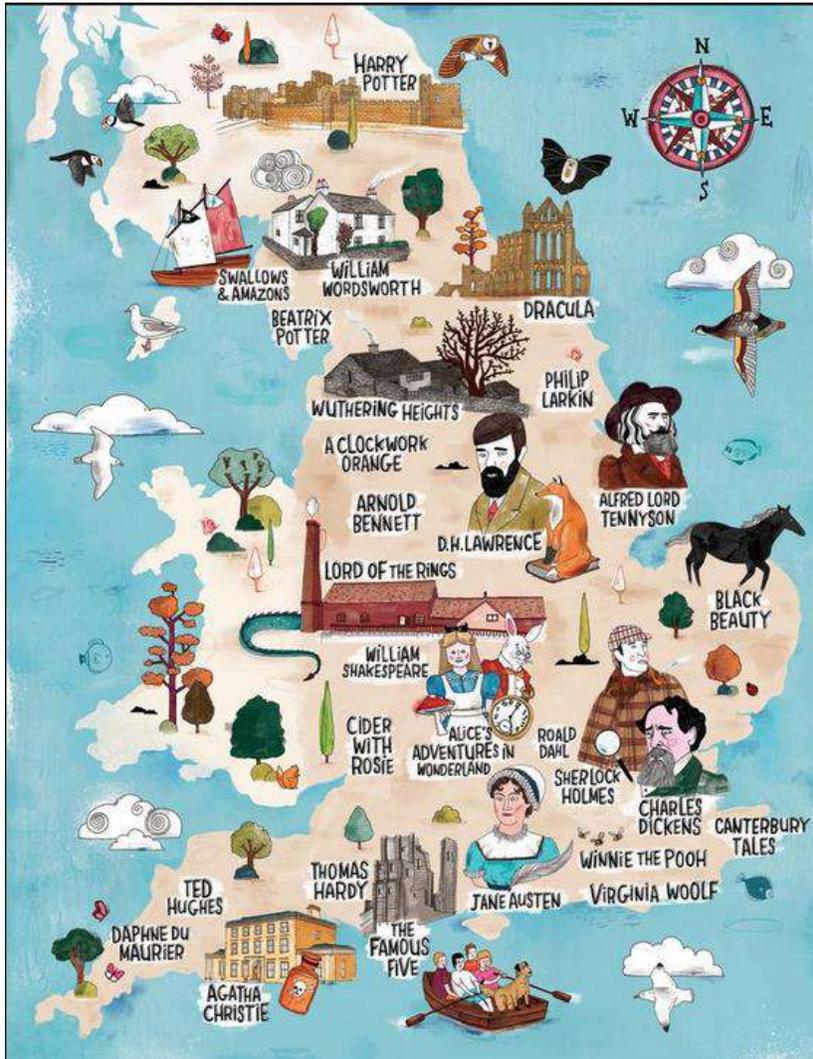


Asking
Questions

I ask: Can you describe the use of **tools of the craft?**

Does the story make use of **sensory details**?
Is there any use of **interiority**, or **interior monologue**? How would you describe the ratio of **showing to telling**? What is your sense of **characterization**? Briefly describe the **character arc**, the **narrative arc**.

Asking Questions



I ask: Can you make **connections?**

Does the story remind you of **anything else you've read**? Do you have any suggestions for **books or short stories** the student might want to read?



Asking
Questions

I ask: Can you take meaning from the story?

If this story is **arguing** something about **the way the world works**, what is that argument? If this story is arguing for some kind of **change in the world**, what is that change?

How can **your students** apply questions from Creative Writing Workshop for peer critique?





initial observations
how the story is told
their response
tools of the craft
connections
meaning



Applying the
questions



What are their
initial
observations?



Applying the
questions

Initial Observations
acknowledge that the
student-critic has
engaged with the
work to be critiqued.





Can the student-critic describe
‘how the story is told’?



Applying the
questions

**Describing
'how the story is
told' or
the media it relies
on defines the
mode and the
parameters of the
project.**





Their response:
what did the
student-critic
feel?



Applying the
questions

**Conveying how
the work
made the student-
critic feel
helps the student-
artist understand
how well they've
carried out their
intentions.**





What **tools of the craft** were used?



Applying the
questions

Pointing out **tools of the craft** helps the student-critic and student-artist become familiar with terminology from the discipline and how to use it appropriately.





What **connections** are there between **this and other work** already produced?



Applying the questions

Seeing **connections** between the **student-artist's work and other creative work** in the same discipline helps the student-critic and the artist see how the work is **part of a larger conversation.**





What **meaning** or **message** can be taken from the student-artist's work?



Applying the questions

Identification of the **meaning** or **themes** within a work-in-progress by the student-critic can help the student-artist see what they might be **arguing for or against** in their creative work.





Given tools for peer critique, students will begin to see creative work with new eyes.

Additional Resources

- Gray, C. (2013) 'Informal peer critique and the negotiation of habitus in a design studio'. *Art, Design & Communication in Higher Education*. 195-209.
- Hastings, D. (2017) ' "With grace under pressure": How critique as signature pedagogy fosters effective music performance'. *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education*. 252-265.
- Heinert, J. (2017) 'Peer critique as a signature pedagogy in writing studies'. *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education*. 293-304.
- Schrand, C. and Eliason J. (2012) 'Feedback practices and signature pedagogies: what can the liberal arts learn from the design critique?' *Teaching in Higher Education*. Routledge: London: 51-62.
- Stukenberg, J. (2017) 'Deep habits: Workshop as critique in creative writing'. *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education*. 277-292.



Contact me for further ideas and conversation about peer critique and enquiry-based teaching.

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