

# KQED Perspectives Unit Curriculum

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## REVISING AND EDITING

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### Lesson 10: Peer Conferencing

Objective:

- Students will understand how to use a rubric to assess a Perspectives essay.

Estimated time: One 50-minute class period

Materials:

- Handout: Peer Conference Perspectives Rubric. Pdf at <http://www.kqed.org/radio/programs/perspectives/sfsp-resources.jsp>.
- Stopwatches to time Perspectives.

As students start to finish their rough drafts, they are ready for a peer conference. Because writing for an audience is the central focus of this project, it's essential that writers have practice presenting their work to an audience. Establishing a regular practice of sharing writing, along with community building and establishing clear classroom norms, will make it easier for students to take risks and to share these personal pieces. Since students will be finishing at different points, they will peer conference as they are ready. However, I teach this process to the class as a whole beforehand to ensure that everyone understands it.

Steps:

1. Brainstorm the following questions with the class, recording responses on the board: What is difficult about sharing writing? Why do authors share their writing?
2. Create a safe place: If the students don't suggest it, bring up the idea that it's important to share writing to get feedback. I let students know that they will be giving each other feedback on their essay drafts. We then refer to the list of what's hard about sharing writing and discuss what they will need to do to create a safe environment so that people are comfortable reading their pieces, and peer editors are comfortable giving constructive feedback.
3. We then go over the directions on the Peer Conference Rubric, which is based on the essay rubric they are now familiar with.
4. Peer edit: When students have completed the drafting stage, I have them sign up on the board for a peer conference. They then pair themselves up and take a

stopwatch and their essays to the hall for their conference. Since it is important to maintain a quiet and focused writing environment in the classroom, I have students leave the room for the conference, and I check on them regularly. If this doesn't work in your situation, I recommend creating a conference corner in the room. This keeps the conversation to one area and makes it less tempting for others to talk.

Next steps:

**Editing:** After peer conferences, writers check over their work one more time for grammar conventions. In my course, students maintain an editing checklist that they add to throughout the year as new rules are introduced. We also use the acronym C.O.P.S. (Capitals, Omissions, Punctuation, and Spelling).

**Teacher Conference:** Once students have had a peer conference, revised, and edited their work, writers sign up for a teacher conference. This is the final overview of their piece where I comment on content, craft, conventions, what is working, and what could be improved. I use the essay rubric to guide my feedback. After making these final changes, students make final revisions and then sign up to record their pieces!