PEER EDITING Editor’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

SENIORS Author of paper: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Interviewer:* How much rewriting do you do?
*Hemingway:* It depends. I rewrote the ending of *Farewell to Arms*, the last page of it, 39 times before I was satisfied.
*Interviewer:* Was there some technical problem there? What was it that had stumped you?
*Hemingway:* Getting the words right.
(Ernest Hemingway, "The Art of Fiction," *The Paris Review* Interview, 1956)

Peer editing, and editing in general are incredibly important skills to have. Being able to tell another writer how to make their paper better is actually harder than one might believe. You must adapt your thinking to their writing style, but still give them good advice on how to improve. Telling someone their paper is great, isn’t helping them at all. You have to dig deep to take a good or great paper and make it even better. Check out the following two writing samples by E.B. White. Look how much it changes from first to sixth draft. Great writers take good writing and make it better.

Draft 1:

The moon still influences the tides and the tides lap on every shore, right around the glode. The moon still belongs to lovers, and lovers are everywhere – not just in America.

Draft 6:

Like every great river and every great sea, the moon belongs to none and belongs to all. It still holds the key to madness, still controls the tides that lap on shores everywhere, still guards the lovers that kiss in every land under no banner but the sky.

\*Peer editing work sheet

Read the paper

Take 8 minutes

 If you finish, read it again. Finish again? Read it again.

Overall questions

1. Can you summarize what the paper is about? Write what you believe the paper is about in one sentence

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1. Is the paper coherent? Does it make sense?

1st paragraph

1. What technique does the writer use to grab the reader’s attention? Does it work?

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1. Does the writer explain what the paper is going to be about? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**\*Honors:** You must edit two essays, and have your essay peer edited by two different people (two sheets).

Whole paper

1. Are there transitions in each paragraph? Does each paragraph flow into the next? If not, make a note.
2. Are there any vague ideas, parts that you weren’t sure about, didn’t understand? Mark them by writing “?” or “AWK”
3. What is the most interesting part of the paper? Why?

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1. What is the best paragraph, or your favorite paragraph/section? Why?

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1. Which paragraph/section needs the most revision? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Does the conclusion have a ‘so what’? Does it summarize, or retell what the paper is about? What is the “so what?” to the paper? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Marking the paper

1. Draw a line (\_\_\_\_\_) under words or images that strike you as effective. Strong verbs, specific details, memorable phrases
2. Draw a wavy line (~~~~~) under words or images that are weak or unconvincing. Put these lines under words that the writer repeats too often, or things that seem unnecessary.
3. Put brackets ([ ]) around sentences or groups of sentences that you think should be combined.
4. Put parentheses ( ) around sentences that are awkward or don’t make sense.
5. Circle words that might be misspelled.

Marking the paper 2.0 (Use a different color pen)

1. Find the be-verbs in the paper and circle them, the writer should eradicate them.

Be verbs are bad verbs, boring verbs, bewildered verbs

 Be, being, been, was, were, is, am, were

1. Find the noun (person, place, or thing) that is repeated most often. Underline this so the author can see how often they use this word. Is it effective or is it repetitive?
2. What about the title? Is it a good one? Give them another option or two. Titles are fun, help out your peer.
3. Check for possession. Look for apostrophes, are they used correctly? Look for words ending in “s” should there be an apostrophe or is the word plural? Help!
4. Cross out the word “that”.
5. Look for words like “always and never” these are almost always never true. Circle those words.
6. Look for and eliminate words like, “a lot, very, and really” These words have nothing they can be compared to, and therefore have no meaning. Tell the writer to be specific.
7. Look carefully for tense changes, past to present, present to past, through the paper. The tense should usually remain the same throughout the paper. Most of these papers should be written in the past tense.