



Add A Feedback Loop

Once students have answered reflection questions, create a feedback loop. Students can compile answers over weeks or months and then review them to see how their answers have changed. If their answers haven't developed, they can adjust their practices or you can suggest new practices:

"I notice that you remarked on the weakness of your argument on three of the last four self-evaluations. Have you considered playing the So What? Game with me or one of your classmates? Have you tried adding a subordinate clause to your thesis idea? Please write back to let me know what techniques you're applying to improve in this area."

How It Works

Two Spaces Beneath Your Self-Evaluation Questions

Even a single self-evaluation can be very useful. I tell students that I will not read their self-evaluations until I have read and graded their essays because they worry that naming their weaknesses will draw my attention to them. After reading their work, I read their self-evaluations to see where we agree and disagree. The entirety of my comments might be written on the self-evaluation form. To do this, you can leave two spaces beneath each self-evaluation question, like this:

Do you believe your points sufficiently support your thesis?	
Student answer:	Teacher answer:

Or, as with a rubric, you can use an identical template to the student's that contains your answers.

Why It Works

Self-evaluation gives students a greater sense of agency; their writing is not just a mysterious thing they submit to receive feedback they couldn't possibly have anticipated. And that independent understanding – a recognition of their own ability to anticipate areas for improvement – helps them to feel their own power as writers.