PEER CONFERENCES: USE THESE GUIDELINES ALONG WITH RUBRICS:

**What Do Writing Partners Do?**  
  
**1. Read partner’s piece thoroughly and carefully.**  
  
**2. Find the particular thing that you liked in someone’s writing and make a positive comment about it.**  
  
**3. Ask a question about something you didn’t understand or something you are curious about.**  
  
**4. On post it, share with your partner some suggestions you might have but remember they must choose what to do with their pieces.  Things to look for: (Discuss)**  
  
·     **Clear angle/big idea/thesis**  
  
·     **Good, engaging lead**  
  
·     **Big bang ending**  
  
·     **Interesting, non empty quotes that support angles**  
  
·     **Enough details/elaborations on angle**  
  
·     **Smooth transitions/bridges**  
  
·     **Evidence of research**  
  
·     **Evidence of observation**  
  
·     **Sub headings**  
  
·     **Catchy title and subheading that reveals “heart and soul” of the piece**  
  
·     **Good, logical order/organization**  
  
·     **At least two photos with captions**  
  
·     **Sidebars**

MORE GREAT STUFF ABOUT LEADS AND ENDINGS:

**LEADS**  
  
The *lead*or an intro is the beginning paragraph for a story that sets the tone and introduces the reader to the rest of the story. The lead should be accurate, short and crisp and should reflect the mood of the story. For news reporting and writing, the lead sentence usually contains one idea and follows the subject-verb-object sentence structure for clarity, and it should not exceed 35 words.  
  
**Functions of the Lead:**  
  
1.    Grabs the reader’s attention;  
  
2.    Tells something about the subject of the story;  
  
3.    Shows the significance of the story;  
  
  
4.    Shows what kind of story it is (news, feature, profile, research, etc.); and  
  
5.    Establishes pace and tone.  
  
**Two Basic Types of Leads in News Reporting and Writing**  
  
A.    Direct lead – tells the important aspect of the story at once. This is usually used on breaking news or straight news. There are four essential elements in a direct lead including the *specific*which is the heart of the event, the *time*element, the *source* of the information or action, and the *place* of the action. (What, when, who, where)  
  
Ø  Straight lead or summary lead – incorporates the inverted pyramid style with the most important facts first.  
  
B.    Delayed lead – entices the audience into the story by hinting at its contents. This is often used in features and news features. It usually sets a scene or evokes a mood with an incident, anecdote or example.  
  
**Types of Leads**  
  
1.    Punch lead – The audience attention is attracted by concentrating with a brief, to-the-point lead sentence and developing details later in the story  
  
2.    Cartridge lead – brief and contains one single news incident to be expanded later in the story  
  
3.    Descriptive/description lead – three kinds: site, event, and person. Usually used in features. This uses vivid word choice to create an immediate sense of setting, plot, or person.  
  
4.    Quotation lead – a verbatim quotation that in itself is very important or interesting. This usually adds element of interest such as drama, humour, astonishment, etc.  
  
5.    Question lead – provocative questions that can be used as leads.  
  
6.    Delayed lead or suspended interest lead – used in exploiting a situation or incident in such a way that an ordinary item stands out. The reporter delves into several paragraphs to find out what happened and the reader must get the story by reading until the end.  
  
7.    Delayed identification lead – the name of the subject is stated but the person’s title or identification is withheld for the next paragraph. This is usually used to avoid long leads in the first paragraph.  
  
8.    Immediate identification lead – relies on subject prominence i.e. if the subject is popular.  
  
9.    Blind identification lead – the name of the subject is not given in the lead but the title or identification is provided. The subject is usually not well-known  
  
10.  Scene-setter/scenic lead – describes a scene or puts a character in a setting that sets the story in motion. Usually used in stories where the setting is very prominent.  
  
11.  Parody Lead – mimics a well-known proverb, quotation or phrase.  
  
12.  Literary allusion lead – relates a person or event to some character or event in literature.  
  
13.  Historical allusion lead – relates a person or event to some character in history  
  
14.  Astonisher – same as Punch or Cartridge  
  
15.  Contrast and comparison – usually used in features and profiles written in a saga form. The saga is split into two sentences: the first refers to the humble beginnings and the second refers to the success. Also, compares extremes e.g. big and little, rich and poor, etc  
  
16.  Diary – The diary technique, keeping a daily record for a period of time, is sometimes used to dramatically begin a feature  
  
17.  “You” lead or direct address lead – the second person approach usually used in features. It intends to make a personal appeal to the audience involved in a complicated situation  
  
18.  Prediction – predicts a future event  
  
19.  Startling statement/assertion lead – the reader is confronted with an unexpected fact or statement that shocks or startles them  
  
20.  Personal lead – involves the use of the first person singular in the lead. Usually used by a columnist or such privileged writers.  
  
21.  Anecdotal/narrative lead – contains dialogues, characters, a plot, scenes and essential actions in the story. It adds a human element to the lead. Usually used in profiles, news features, or travel stories.  
  
22.  Gag or funny lead  
  
23.  Roundup or bullet leads – usually used in stories with trends with assorted information given out as bullet-like  
  
24.  Wordplay leads – involves a clever turn of phrase, name or word  
  
25.  Staccato leads – consists of a series of jerky, exciting phrases, separated by dashes or dots.  
  
26.  Explosive – similar to staccato but consists of grammatically complete sentences; usually used in features  
  
27.  Dialogue – consists of the dialogue between two people and then followed by a summary or play-by-play account of the event; usually used for minor court stories with strong human interest  
  
**ENDINGS**  
  
Functions of an ending:  
  
1.    Tell the reader the story is over;  
  
2.    Nail the central theme of the story to the reader’s mind; and  
  
3.    Resonate – stick with the reader and make them think.  
  
**Types of Endings in News Feature**  
  
1.    Summary – summarizes the points made in the story and usually keys on effects, outcomes, or impact;  
  
2.    Tie-back – plants an idea, a fact or a scene in the lead and completes it at the end;  
  
3.    Wrap-up – ties up loose ends, answers questions or solve problems posed in the lead;  
  
4.    Climax – provides a natural ending for the story told in a chronological order;  
  
5.    Unending – leaves a key question unanswered to stimulate reader thinking and involve them in the situation posed in the story;  
  
6.    Stinger – a surprise ending designed to jolt the reader; and  
  
7.    Combination – combines two or more of the above.  
  
**Other types of Endings**  
  
1.    Opinion/strong statement/judgement  
  
2.    Conclusion/Wrap-up  
  
3.    Recommendation/Call to action  
  
4.    Quotation – from a well-known or not a famous person  
  
5.    Restate the beginning/circle ending/lead replay – going back to the lead, revisiting the issue and reviewing what the readers learned  
  
6.    Question that involves the reader/Unending  
  
7.    Personal comment – personal conclusion or a lesson learned by the writer through his experience in writing the article  
  
8.    Open conclusion/unending – lets the readers draw their own conclusion  
  
9.    Anecdotal ending – in profiles, this ending can be a short but significant story that shows the person’s character; can be something significant a person said  
  
10.  Detail ending – uses a specific, concrete detail, fact, or statistic to conclude the story  
  
11.  Face ending – focuses on the unique point of view of a person central to the story-similar to the detail ending, but with a personal touch  
  
12.  Scenic ending – describes a physical setting, letting the reader “see” the story-almost the way the camera pulls back at the end of a movie  
  
  
  
Read more: <http://writinghood.com/writing/types-of-leads-and-endings-news-and-feature-writing/#ixzz2FQYhaKyz>

<http://www.writing-world.com/dawn/dawn07.shtml>

LEADS AND ENDINGS (FEATURE ARTICLES):

**Writing workshop-Leads and Endings**  
  
**Writing a Narrative Lead**  
  
Link:  There is a difference between a lead and an introduction. In an introduction, we tell a reader what we will tell them, tell it to them—then tell them what we just told them. That puts your reader to sleep. We have to engage the reader by getting them into the material right away. We can’t wait. Today we will think about our leads. This is the first tempting bite your reader gets of your writing. But if it is boring, the reader will move on.  
  
Teach:  There are many different ways to begin a feature. Think of your writing as a river that goes up a big waterfall. Often when we write, we start too far upstream of important information. You can sharpen your lead by starting it closer to the waterfall by revealing the most important information. Many effective leads include the following:

* *Anecdote:*a brief story that reveals the essence and the heart of your subject.
* *Quotation:*  a quote lead can give additional authority and a fresh voice to the story.
* *Question:*  involves the reader in the basic issue/focus of the story.
* *Historical lead:*  places story in a historical context.
* *Reader identification:*  shows reader how story relates to them.
* *Problem:* sets up problem that will be solved
* *Narrative:* Brings face to the story and gives the reader a person with whom to identify with during the reading of the story. It establishes the story as the form of the article.

Today, we will practice writing narrative leads. Shared reading of *She’s Got a Dead Bird On Her Head!*All about how the Audubon Society got started.  
  
Review:  A story or anecdote is a great way to start your writing. It let’s us hear the character speaking. It makes us feel like we are right there. Today, you will practice writing a narrative lead. Look through your notes and see if there is a brief story that might kick off your piece. The story should be brief and no more than a paragraph or two. First, look through Newsday and find a good feature and describe its lead and why it works. After practice writing a narrative lead and two others. You can later decide which one works best for your feature..  
  
   
  
**Writing workshop:  Big bang ending. Revisit: Bacteria, the Good, the Bad and the Stinky (from Scholastic Read aloud—ask I have it!).  Link:  You have been working on crafting strong leads for features. Ending is just as important as the beginning. It will echo in the reader’s mind when he or she is finished. We don’t want to run out of gas…**  
  
**1.  Features do not have to be dead serious. Some subjects lend themselves to get the reader to relax, have fun and learn at the same time. Today we will revisit the bacteria article which takes a seemingly boring topic and presents it in an interesting way. A challenge is to do it without getting silly. So you may want to include a joke a pun or a brief aside where you talk directly to the reader. Listen as I read the story. In your notebook, jot down what you notice that the writer does well in terms of presenting the information. Also, pay attention to the ending. Turn and talk. What do you notice? Today as you write, think about your ending. You may want to consider saving some fact, quote, story or image for a strong ending. You may want to end with something fascinating or a question to give your reader something to think about. Consider suing humor but remember even when you are being funny, the factual information you share/teach must be accurate.**

SHARED READING (MENTOR TEXT): <http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1995-08-01/features/9508010020_1_rattlers-rattlesnakes-swallow>

WHAT IS AN ANECDOTE?

**Anecdotes are short, brief stories that create drama. They are used to share information. They are small scenes and used in features for several reasons:**

1. **To make a point without being overbearing.**
2. **To use an example helping to clarify a position or point of view.**
3. **To encourage and inspire others.**
4. **To promote laughter.**
5. **To remember an historical event and or person.**
6. **Anecdotes are used to take factual information and get it to stand up and reveal the essence and heart of your story!**

LINK TO FEATURE ARTICLE IDEAS: <http://isite.lps.org/akabour/web/FeatureStoryIdeas.htm>

FEATURE ARTICLE PRESENTATION:   
<http://www.slideshare.net/methlal/feature-writing-7683475>

ANATOMY OF A FEATURE: <http://www.spawn.org/editing/anatomyofarticle.htm>

**ALSO: BEGINNING:**

* **IN YOUR FIRST ONE OR TWO SENTENCES TELL WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE AND WHY**
* **TRY TO HOOK YOUR READER BY BEGINNING WITH A FUNNY, CLEVER OR SURPRISING STATEMENT**
* **GO FOR VARIETY; TRY BEGINNING YOUR ARTICLE WITH A QUESTION OR A PROVOCATIVE STATEMENT**

**IN THE BODY:**

* **GIVE THE READER DETAILS. INCLUDE AT LEAST ONE OR TWO QUOTES FROM PEOPLE YOU INTERVIEWED.**
* **WRITE IN THE THIRD PERSON (HE, SHE, IT, THEY)**
* **HOWEVER, KEEP IN MIND THAT YOU WANT TO USE SECOND PERSON NARRATIVE THROUGHOUT THE PIECE AS WELL TO KEEP THE READER ENGAGED (YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE...)**
* **BE OBJECTIVE (DON'T COME RIGHT OUT AND STATE YOUR OPINION.--I THINK THIS OR THAT). HOWEVER, YOUR FEATURE IS ANGLED WITH FACTS AND QUOTES THAT DO INDEED SUPPORT HOW YOU FEEL AND HOW PASSIONATE YOU ARE ABOUT SOMETHING.**
* **USE QUOTES TO EXPRESS OTHERS OPINIONS**

**ENDING:**  
**WRAP IT UP SOMEHOW (DON'T LEAVE THE READER HANGING)**

* **PLEASE DON'T SAY, IN CONCLUSION OR TO FINISH (YAWN)**
* **TRY ENDING WITH A QUOTE OR CATCHY PHRASE**
* **USE ACTIVE WORDS (VERBS THAT SHOW WHAT'S REALLY HAPPENING)**

FEATURE ARTICLE POWERPOINT (WITH EXPLANATION OF A NUT GRAF):<http://www.slideshare.net/methlal/feature-writing4832>

Link to correct usage of dialogue-punctuation marks: <http://www.be-a-better-writer.com/punctuate-dialogue.html>

A PLETHORA OF REVISION STRATEGIES:

RULES FOR PARAGRAPHING:

PLEASE FOLLOW THESE AS YOU REVISE YOUR MEMOIRS-**When to use paragraphs in narrative writing:**

* **New characters come along**
* **New event happens; new idea is introduced**
* **New setting**
* **New person is speaking (new paragraph is needed everytime someone speaks and you use dialogue)**
* **Movement in time (forward or backward)**
* **Movement in place**

Why do we revise?:

:  Why do we revise?  We must ask ourselves several questions as we go through these stages:

* What is the message or big idea of this piece?
* Where do I get the message across?
* What are the best parts?  Be specific.  Find best lines or sections.
* Where is it confusing?
* How can it be changed?

DIALOGUE:

**Adding Details/Dialogue**  
  
Link:  Today we will continue revising by using these two strategies:  adding details and dialogue.  
  
Teach:  Listen to first paragraph vs. the second:  
  
*The cat fell off the roof.*  
  
*The little kitten was shivering. The ice storm caught it by surprise. It had climbed up onto the slate roof. It was hard to get a footing and it slid right off.*  
  
  
  
Details:  Slowing down action. Think about it in a certain way. Details of the shivering kitten. We can see it unfold in front of us.  Think about a time or day.  What was the weather like?  Describe sounds, smells. Describe what things looked like and who was there. Sensory imagery is important. Do what you can to bring your reader into the story. Try adding details to a paragraph of a previously written piece of add something you are in the middle or just starting.  
  
**Using Dialogue**

* Dialogue is used to recreate conversation
* It tells us how people treat each other
* Reveals the personality of the characters by the way they talk
* Creates immediacy
* Dialogue uses real expressions as close to the truth as possible
* Try finding a place in your story to add dialogue to enhance the big idea or show your characters’ personalities

**Adding Narrative:**

* Find places where you have too much dialogue
* Stop the conversation
* Describe the setting/scenery.
* Tell us more about the problem/conflict
* Describe the characters with more details
* Go inside the character’s head and describe what the main character is thinking/feeling and why!
* Return to the conversation when you think you have provided enough background information/details!

CRACKING OPEN WORDS:

:  Writers want to crack open words in order to get to beautiful, hidden crystal. Words like fun, nice, pretty, wonderful and scary are generic, tired and overused words. They don’t say anything specific. They don’t paint a picture in the reader’s mind. We want to wake up these tired words. We can crack open sentences to change the tone. We can add concrete description in order to bring the writing alive. In each case, cracking open the known reveals the unknown. And, in most cases, it leads to something better, more exciting, more useful, more colorful, more surprising. Often in our manuscripts—especially early drafts—we may have non-descriptive words, phrases, and sentences that need to be cracked open and elaborated to really get to the good part. Consider these rather boring sentences:  
  
·   It was a pretty morning.  
  
·   He was a good boy.  
These are all *telling* sentences and we know that good writing shows and does not tell. And even though they tell, they sure don't tell much. The reader is left with questions and uncertainty because of a lack of details. When we crack open words and phrases we're trying to get to the*show* of the sentence. The process is easy. When you find a word, phrase, or sentence that *tells*, stop; envision the person, place, or thing; and give words to what you see in your mind. Then use the words that describe what you envision as you rewrite. Let me show you some examples and let you practice a couple of examples, too.  
  
**Word/Phrase/Sentence**  
  
**What I Envision**  
  
**Cracked Open Rewrite**  
  
It was a pretty morning.  
  
·        Sun/clouds  
  
·        Palms/sway  
  
The palms swayed as the sun rose in the cloudy sky.  
  
He was a good boy.  
  
·        Trevor  
  
·        A boy scout  
  
·        Trustworthy  
  
Trevor was as good as a boy scout (and just as trusthworthy).  
  
Teach:  fun (adjective). Amusing, merry, enjoyable, lively, pleasant, diverting, festive, delightful  
  
Fun (noun). Ball, blast, enjoyment, escapade, frolic, high jinks, merriment, recreation, romp, treat, merrymaking, horseplay, game, festivity, delight, entertainment  
  
Thing:  object, material, item, tool, utensil  
  
Smile:  beam, grin, laugh, smirk, glow  
  
Walk:  hike, stroll, step, stride, plod, stomp, glide, gallop, trudge, trample  
  
Independent:  

1. Crack open at least one sentence. Use a post it to create interesting one.
2. Begin your own personal thesaurus (word treasury) by finding at least two tired over used phrases/words and begin listing alternative words/phrases. (You may use a thesaurus).
3. Try re-visiting your own pieces and cracking open sentences and words that are overused and fixing them.
4. Begin collecting your own word treasury and keeping in your notebooks:
   * Words you love the sound of
   * Don’t know the meaning of but would like to find out
   * Words you have seen in books that look interesting
   * Words that give a strong image
   * Words that evoke a memory
   * Words you love to say out loud
   * Words that have special meaning

Try using them in your own writing (see if they make sense).  
  
Also, try keeping a list of words you over use and find alternatives. Use a thesaurus and your imagination.  
  
Ex:  nice—sweet, friendly, appealing, kind, gracious, caring, empathic, docile, delightful, delicious  
  
Beautiful-  handsome, lovely, graceful, exquisite, elegant, delicate, radiant, charming, beaming  
  
Revisit writing--  
  
·        find tired, over used words/phrases  
  
·        words with no images  
  
·        vague  
  
·        overly used they have lost meaning  
  
·        obvious words  
  
·        clichés  
  
Replace with:  
  
·        specific, picture painting language that provides strong images  
  
·        use sensory imagery and details to describe stretched moments  
  
·        use a thesaurus to use a more unusual, different word  
  
·        words that have special/personal meaning  
  
·        may evoke memory in your mind and leave a mark/memory in the reader’s mind