**Giving feedback on writing: ideas and suggestions**

Effective feedback engages with ideas expressed by the author. The reviewer or reader does not have to agree with the ideas of the text, yet she or he needs to engage with the arguments and feel out why they are important to the author.

This means that giving feedback needs to signal interest and regard for the experience of the author. With this frame in mind the reader can identify strengths and potential in what the author has put on the page, helping the author to deepen their description of the scene, the narrative embodiment of underlying arguments and analyses.

Our goal as readers and reviewers is to inspire revision, so the writer feels motivated to go back to the earlier draft and to make it more compelling and thought-provoking. One way to do so is by posing questions. Why does a certain event happen, what caused or preceded it? What were the smells and sounds, how did it taste, feel, look? Posing such additional questions can open the depths of the author’s own curiosity about the memories behind the scene, and can reveal more than the author initially remembered.

Finally, reader’s feedback can facilitate a more critical engagement of the author with their story, helping the author to question the initial assumptions and possibly leading to a deeper understanding of what the narrative means for the author herself or himself.

It takes work to write. And it takes work to be a good reader. We need both!