Writing Workshop Feedback Protocol

Developed by Peggy Silva, Souhegan High School, NH, 2007.

Process
1. Writer brings copies of draft for the group. (I limit feedback groups to 3 or 4 writers)
2. Writer asks someone to facilitate and states the type of feedback requested.
3. Facilitator reminds all that the goal of the session is to help the writer with the work, not to impose our
   own thoughts on the writing.
4. Writer either reads work aloud or asks someone to read aloud.
5. Participants first notice a strength of the piece. This has to be an authentic affirmation; it is not okay to
   say, “I like it. It’s good.” We never use the word ‘but’ in this phase of the feedback.
6. We then address the writer’s questions. The depth of our feedback depends on the help the writer has
   asked for, and whether we are looking at a first draft or something that has been looked at before. We
   ask the writer to listen more than speak. The writer may clarify information, but we find it most helpful
   for the writer to take notes on the discussion about the writing.
7. We avoid offering edits of typos or grammar. That we reserve for an editing session. This session is about
   the writing itself.
8. If we stumble in our feedback, we expect a member of the group to stop and rewind and rephrase. We
   know that we are all struggling to learn a respectful way to respond to another’s work.
9. We then listen to the writer respond to the feedback. The writer only addresses thoughts that made him/
   her think more about the writing. The writer understands that (s)he does not have to explain anything to
   the group.
10. We return the drafts to the writer, especially if we have made notes on the pages.
11. The writer thanks the group and offers to facilitate the next session.
12. In a written reflection that accompanies the final draft, the writer discusses the specific role of
    feedback in the writing process.