Praise, Question, Suggest Protocol

Purpose: This protocol can be used to offer each other critique and feedback for revision of products. It should be used after a draft phase of what will become a finished product. This process will help participants see what is working and then ask questions and offer suggestions, leading to revision and improvement. It is important participants understand that the focus should be on offering feedback that is beneficial to the author/creator. Explicit modeling is necessary for this protocol to be used successfully.

Materials: Provide product descriptors and rubrics as clear guidelines of the expectations and criteria for the product. If the product is written, copies for the critique group are helpful.

Procedure
- As a whole group, create or refer to a list of revision questions based on the criteria for the product.

- Model the procedures with the whole group several times before allowing small independent feedback groups.

- Participants work in groups of 2-5.

- The first participant presents/reads the draft of her piece. She may ask peers to focus on a particular revision question or two that she is struggling with from the list.

- Feedback is best written on Post-it notes and given to the creator. Peers first focus on what is praiseworthy or working well. Praise needs to be specific. Simply saying "This is good" doesn't help the creator. Comments such as "I notice that you used descriptive picture captions" or "You have a catchy title that makes me want to read your piece" are much more useful.

- Next, ask questions and offer helpful suggestions. "This part is unclear. I wonder if it would be better to change the order of the steps?" or "I can't tell the setting. Maybe you could add some details that would show the reader where it is taking place?" or "I wonder if adding a graph to highlight your data would be effective?"

- Feedback should relate to the revision questions identified by the group or presenter.

- After each member of the group has offered feedback, the presenter discusses which suggestions he wants to implement and thanks the group.

- Others then present their work in turn and cycle through the feedback process.

Debrief: Some whole-group discussion about the kinds of feedback that are beneficial as well as the kinds of comments that are too general or negative to be helpful is important. Again, it is critical for the facilitator to have modeled and scaffolded participants in the process for a successful peer critique session.