

# Grammar Feedback In Action

The following page shows effective teacher feedback on a student narrative. The numbers below lead you through the key features of the model.

## 1. Personal Note

Start or end with a personal note that connects with the writer and summarizes your big-picture impressions of the work. Begin the note with a positive, affirming statement. Then suggest a roadmap to improvement.

## 2. First Instance of Error

Explain how to correct the issue and show an example. Use highlighting or bolded text to direct students to key parts of the correction.

## 3. No Comment

Marking every error is time consuming for the teacher and overwhelming for the student. Instead, comment only on a few chosen concepts or recurring errors. In the sample feedback, the instructor purposefully ignores a missing apostrophe to keep the writer's focus on punctuation near dialogue.

## 4. Second Instance of Error

When you see a repeated error, refer students back to a previous comment for advice. In the sample feedback, the teacher also politely challenges the writer to find the next error and offers a resource for further support.

## 5. Praise

In between suggestions, praise students for the things they do well. In the sample feedback, the instructor praises the writer for correctly applying a relevant punctuation rule.

## 6. Optional Comment

While it is wise to narrow your feedback focus to just a few concepts, you will inevitably notice other issues worth commenting on. When you reach these moments, weigh your options: Is the issue important enough to have a major positive impact on the writing? Could you save the comment for later in the writing process? Do you have time to offer quality feedback? In the sample, the teacher decides to comment on a higher-order writing trait (ideas).

## 7. Positive Reinforcement

Positive reinforcement boosts students' confidence. Balance suggestions with praise.

## 8. Third Instance of Error

Avoid marking more than two instances of the same error. Instead, encourage students to work independently, applying what they learned in previous feedback.

## 1 Departure

My brother and I were watching TV when my dad called, “Anna, Patrick, we’re having a family meeting. Come to the kitchen.”

My brothers eyes met mine. Family meeting? We never had one before. And that gave me a very odd feeling. As soon as we arrived, my dad started, “we’ve stayed in this country—I mean house—our whole life. And there are times that we have to leave and go on”.

I really didn’t understand what my dad was saying—*country* and *leave*?

“What your dad is saying is that his company is transferring him to the United States,” my mom clearly explained.

“What!” I stood and exclaimed.

“Anna, sit down. You’re the oldest, and you should understand. We’re all going to leave. Tomorrow we’re going to the embassy for the papers and that is final,” my dad said in anger and left.

We were approved at the embassy and granted visas, and we were leaving June 10. We spent our last ten days packing up things and selling some of our appliances. We also found someone who would rent our house.

On June 10 my mom woke me up early. She said, “we have to leave early or the traffic might catch up on us”.

“Well, I hope so,” I told myself.

We placed all our baggage on top of the van and headed for Ninoy Aquino Airport. I was the last one in the car. As we moved farther along, I could see my home fading away. And in that moment, I felt a part of me would still be there.

**Commented [KT1]:** Anna, you made some wonderful updates to your narrative. I especially like the new dialogue, which feels very authentic. My feedback below will show you how to apply a tricky punctuation rule.

**Commented [KT2]:** When closing a sentence with quoted material, put the period *inside* the closing quotation mark. Here is how this part should look:

“Anna, Patrick, we’re having a family meeting. Come to the kitchen.”

**Commented [KT3]:** Apply the same fix to the end punctuation as above.

The same error appears one other time in your narrative. Can you find and fix it? Check out page 492 of *Write on Course* for more help.

**Commented [KT4]:** You do a great job of placing commas near punctuation marks. Here you correctly place it inside the end quotation mark before introducing the speaker.

**Commented [KT5]:** This moment seems very meaningful, for both you and your father. As a reader, I’m interested to know what happened between this time and your departure. Did you and your father speak more about the move?

**Commented [KT6]:** Great job, again, with your comma placement!