

# **Action Research**

ETEC 5430 Fall 2024

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## Abstract

Fourteen students in a 100-level Photoshop class were given the opportunity to redesign the final project with five weeks remaining in the semester. A real-world, iterative process was implemented, requiring students to create one image in Photoshop each week and to conduct peer reviews of four of their peers' work using the Canvas LMS. At the end of the four weeks, the completed artwork was printed and displayed during a final "reception," where the process was reflected upon.

The determination of weekly prompts was assigned to the students, who brainstormed a list of 50 one-word prompts to choose from for their responses. At the conclusion of the four-week project, a 300-word reflection was assigned to the students. Overall, the response was positive, with students reporting improved confidence in both the application and the creation of art. However, it was noted that additional effort is needed to foster a better environment for more informative peer feedback.

## Theoretical Framework

Peer review plays a critical role in fostering critical thinking and skill development in art education. To design an effective peer review assessment framework adaptable to both online and in-person modalities, it is essential to draw upon research that addresses group work challenges, the benefits of peer and self-assessment, and strategies for fostering constructive feedback and community engagement.

Group work in online settings often encounters significant barriers, including communication breakdowns, role ambiguity, and uneven contributions. Chang and Kang (2016) identify these challenges as central to the difficulties of online group work. To address these, structured systems such as shared platforms—discussion boards or critique-specific software—are crucial. These systems should emphasize clear roles and responsibilities while fostering a supportive learning community. Building such a community in both online and in-person art critiques ensures that students feel accountable not only to their own learning but also to their peers' growth.

Structured peer assessment has been shown to enhance critical thinking skills by encouraging students to engage deeply with their peers' work. Jiang et al. (2023) emphasize the value of repeated, structured peer feedback in knowledge-building communities, noting that it enables students to move beyond surface-level observations. This is particularly relevant in art critique, where deeper engagement with artistic processes and conceptual development is necessary. Providing examples of high-quality feedback can guide students in developing these skills and ensure that critiques are constructive and meaningful.

Research by Li et al. (2010) highlights that students benefit more from providing feedback than receiving it. Acting as assessors encourages critical reflection, helping students identify areas of improvement in their own work. In an art critique context, this means creating opportunities for students to actively evaluate and critique their peers' work. For reticent students, particularly in face-to-face settings, structured critique roles can help them engage without feeling overwhelmed. Encouraging these students to focus on analytical aspects of critique—such as composition, technique, or conceptual intent—may lower barriers to participation.

The effectiveness of peer assessment lies in its formative use. Sridharan et al. (2019) caution against relying on summative peer assessments, as they can lead to grade inflation and bias. Instead, formative assessments, where feedback is used for growth and improvement, are more beneficial. Coupled with self-assessment, as outlined by Sendziuk (2010), formative peer

critiques allow students to align their evaluations with professional standards and develop a deeper understanding of quality work. This approach is particularly effective in art education, where process and reflection are often as important as the final product.

To create a productive feedback culture, students must be guided in giving and receiving critiques. Romeu Fontanillas et al. (2016) stress the importance of ongoing formative assessment and student involvement in the evaluation process. For art critiques, this means embedding regular feedback cycles throughout the course rather than relying solely on end-of-project evaluations. Structuring critiques with a clear rubric and providing examples of constructive feedback can help students refine their skills over time.

Yu and Sung (2016, 2019) explore the role of anonymity in peer assessment, finding that assessors tend to focus on the quality of work rather than the identity of their peers. While anonymity may not significantly alter the dynamics of peer feedback in art critiques, it could be useful in specific contexts, such as sensitive feedback or evaluating class performance. However, fostering an environment of trust and community may reduce the need for anonymity in most cases.

## My Action

I teach digital art at a 4-year university and at a 2-year community college. Since the pandemic lockdown, I've been frustrated by my inability to create an online analog to in-person art critique. Art critique is considered the most important assessment for any art educator, as it serves as the primary way in which learners develop their vocabulary in composition and design. Art education is inherently a hands-on and iterative process, with critique functioning as the assessment phase where feedback from the cohort and facilitator is applied by learners to improve their artwork.

### The Problem

Not only has frustration been felt regarding the efficacy of online art critique, but similar frustration has also been experienced due to low engagement levels in in-person art critique, which are often influenced by the composition of the cohort—when a high percentage of introverts is present, initiating class discussions about artwork becomes very challenging. One of the opportunities for the students to give and get feedback in my Digital Imaging class at the University is called “First Thirty.” During the first thirty minutes of every class session, the floor is opened for questions about their work, display of their work, feedback of their work. Because this is a 100-level course, the tools of getting and receiving feedback are not developed in this cohort. Many times, the class sits in silence until asked if they would rather move on. I reviewed the literature for studies related to asynchronous, online peer review and how we might be able to apply that to create an effective, student-centered art assessment that could be used for online and in-person modalities.

### My Solution

In my Digital Imaging class at the University, I used the beginning of a class period to bring up my concerns about low engagement in “First Thirty” and in the previous two critique sessions earlier in the semester. Then I said, “I’m canceling the final project. Let’s create something better.”

The idea, based on prior research, was briefly explained, and assistance was requested from the students to collaboratively create a new and improved final project. Canvas was proposed as the peer review tool, as it was believed that this platform would allow those uncomfortable with speaking in class during critiques to participate in a less stressful environment. To establish a

real-world context, it was determined that weekly submissions would be required instead of waiting four weeks for results. This requirement was aligned with the iterative process discussed by Jiang et al. (2023). Students were asked to create one piece of art each week using Photoshop and to submit it for peer review by Friday at midnight. Canvas was configured to automatically assign four peer reviews per student at the submission deadline.

It was explained to the students that working from a similar prompt often helps cohorts view a design problem from multiple angles, and it was suggested that the class decide on the prompts to be used. A suggestion for “one-word prompts” was made by a student, and the class readily agreed. Approximately 50 one-word prompts were brainstormed collaboratively (as shown below).

You will base your piece on a single word prompt that we brainstormed in class:

euphoria	society	war	utopia	5 senses
division/unity	creativity	anxiety	media	technology
wonder	seduction	motion	zen	calm
guardian	nature	music	space	adventure
trial	superhero	love	childhood	crisis
mystery	college	window	angst	confusion
psychedelic	global	tribbles	sports	delusion
passion	simulation	adolescence	renaissance	consciousness
hate	food	pizza	self	question
conscience	guilt	interpretation	illusion	tropical

A robust rubric was created for the students to evaluate their peers work and instructed them to also provide written assessments of the work as well. The rubric created is shown here:

Criteria	Ratings				
<b>Composition and Visual Balance</b> Looks at the effective use of space, focal points, and the organization of visual elements to guide the viewer's eye through the piece.	5 pts Masterful Composition Composition is visually balanced, shows intentional organization of elements, and leads the viewer's eye effectively.	4 pts Needs Minor Improvements Composition is balanced and organized, with minor improvements possible for optimal viewer engagement.	3 pts Lacks Balance Composition shows some organization, but lacks balance or clear focal points.	2 pts Little Sense of Composition Composition is difficult to follow or has little sense of visual balance.	1 pts Disorganized Composition appears random or disorganized, with no clear structure.
<b>Creativity and Originality</b> Assesses the uniqueness and inventiveness of the work. Rewards pieces that present fresh perspectives, explore ideas in distinctive ways, or use unexpected visual elements to engage the viewer.	5 pts One in a Million Work demonstrates unique and original ideas, exploring the subject matter in a fresh way.	4 pts Room for Further Exploration Work shows some originality and creativity, with room for further exploration of ideas.	3 pts Somewhat Conventional Work has some creative elements, though ideas feel somewhat conventional.	2 pts Lacks Originality Work lacks originality, with minimal personal interpretation of the subject matter.	1 pts Copy/Pasted Work shows no apparent creative effort or interpretation.
<b>Technique and Use of</b>	5 pts	4 pts	3 pts	2 pts	1 pts

Criteria	Ratings				
<b>Photoshop</b> Assesses the skillful use of Photoshop tools (such as layers, masks, and adjustments) to enhance the visual quality of the image. Looks at how effectively and seamlessly these tools are used to achieve the desired effects and refine the image's overall appearance.	Photoshop® Jedi Demonstrates highly skilled use of Photoshop tools (e.g., layers, masks, adjustments) to enhance the image's impact; edits are seamless and intentional.	Photoshop® Padawan Shows strong technical skills with Photoshop, effectively using tools and adjustments with only minor areas for improvement.	Photoshop® Youngling Adequate use of Photoshop tools, though some techniques or adjustments could be refined for consistency or clarity.	Photoshop® Jar Jar Minimal understanding of Photoshop tools; edits are present but lack polish or impact.	Photoshop® Stormtrooper Little to no skill demonstrated in Photoshop; edits appear basic, unrefined, or unintentional.
<b>Interpretation of Theme or Prompt</b> Evaluates how thoughtfully and thoroughly the work responds to the chosen one-word prompt. Looks at the depth of understanding, creativity, and personal perspective applied to represent the concept, showing a clear connection to the intended topic.	5 pts Fully and Thoughtfully Work interprets the theme/prompt thoughtfully, fully addressing its aspects.	4 pts Minor Gaps in Interpretation Work addresses the theme/prompt well, with minor gaps in interpretation.	3 pts Lacks Depth Work partially addresses the theme/prompt, though interpretation lacks depth.	2 pts Misses Key Elements Work minimally addresses the theme/prompt or misses key elements.	1 pts Unrelated Work does not address the theme/prompt or is unrelated.
<b>Emotional/Conceptual Impact</b> Assesses the strength of the image in conveying emotion or concept, aiming to evoke a response in the viewer. Rewards pieces that show depth, provoke thought, or create a memorable emotional experience through effective visual choices.	5 pts Strongly Evocative Image evokes strong emotional or conceptual responses, demonstrating depth.	4 pts Needs Deeper Engagement Image creates an impact but could benefit from deeper engagement with concept/emotion.	3 pts Lacks Strength Image has some emotional/conceptual elements but lacks strength or clarity.	2 pts Appears Superficial Image has little emotional or conceptual impact, appearing superficial.	1 pts Not Evocative Image evokes no clear emotional or conceptual response.

For the next four weeks, the students created one piece each week based on a one-word prompt that they selected, and peer reviewed four pieces for their classmates. During the final week of class, they printed out all the heretofore digital only art and had a final showing of all the art on the last day of class.

On the penultimate day of class, the students were asked to provide feedback in the form of a private journal entry explaining how they felt about the activities they participated in over the last four weeks. They were also asked to provide a grade for their final project and a 200-word justification for that grade.

Write a 200-word reflection on your self-graded final project. Discuss the strengths and areas for improvement you identified in your work. Reflect on why you assigned the specific grade and how it represents your effort, creativity, and technical skills throughout the project. Additionally, consider what you learned from the project and how it has helped you grow. Would you approach any part of it differently if given the chance?

Finally, mention any skills or concepts you feel more confident in after completing this work and how they might apply to future projects.

The students were assigned the students a 300-word written evaluation of the last four weeks on the penultimate day of class:

This reflection will help you assess your participation and growth during the last four weeks of peer-reviewed art critiques. Your feedback will also provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of our critique process and help refine future sessions.

This reflection is not graded for accuracy but for thoughtfulness and depth of insight. Your feedback is critical for evaluating the success of our peer-review critique model and identifying areas for improvement.

Write a 300-word reflection addressing the following aspects of your experience during the critique sessions. Reflect on your level of engagement, including how actively you participated in providing feedback and whether you applied the feedback you received to improve your work. Consider what you learned through both giving and receiving critiques—how the process has influenced your artistic skills, conceptual thinking, or ability to evaluate art.

Think about the sense of community within the critique sessions. Did you feel supported and encouraged by your peers? Were the critiques constructive and respectful, fostering a positive learning environment? Additionally, evaluate the process and structure of the critiques, such as the use of rubrics, discussion formats, or other tools. Did these elements help you provide meaningful feedback, or were there challenges that impacted your ability to engage fully?

Finally, assess your personal growth over the past four weeks. Have you noticed improvements in your ability to critique and respond to critiques? If so, what specific areas have improved? Use specific examples from your experiences to illustrate your points.

The essays will be used as qualitative data to determine the efficacy of this action research about peer review in the face-to-face modality.

## Results

The student reflections provided a nuanced view of their experiences with peer critiques, revealing valuable insights into their thoughts on feedback, engagement, personal growth, and challenges. Feedback quality was a dominant theme, with students expressing appreciation for detailed and constructive comments that offered actionable insights. As one student noted, *“People seemed to give more detailed and honest comments... which gave me specific points to think about when reflecting on my work.”* However, frustrations arose when feedback lacked clarity or depth. Another student reflected, *“When they took off points and left no comments, it left me a bit puzzled on what I needed to change.”* This highlights the importance of consistent, meaningful feedback in fostering improvement.

Engagement was another critical area, with students valuing the supportive atmosphere fostered through peer critiques. One student remarked, *“There was still a supportive vibe in how everyone gave feedback.”* However, some felt that participation was uneven, with limited contributions from peers during critiques. *“Peer review was surface-level, and sometimes I felt like I kept*

*talking while no one else would speak,*” a student shared, emphasizing the need for stronger community-building and more active involvement from all participants. Personal growth emerged as a recurring theme, with students reporting significant gains in their ability to critique and create art. Many described improvements in critical thinking, technical skills, and confidence. *“I feel I can better assess specific elements of an art piece, such as use of Photoshop, interpretation of prompt, originality, etc.,”* shared one student, while another reflected, *“Looking back, I can see how I’ve become more comfortable with both giving and receiving feedback.”* These reflections underscore the transformative potential of the critique process.

Students also expressed mixed feelings about critique methods, particularly online versus in-person formats. While the convenience of online critiques was appreciated, some preferred the immediacy and depth of face-to-face discussions. *“The Canvas setup worked well for sharing our thoughts, though I think I still appreciate in-class critiques a bit more,”* one student shared. Additionally, rubrics were widely praised for providing a structured framework, with one student noting, *“The rubric helped me respond to critiques in depth.”* Clearer guidelines and additional opportunities for discussion could further enhance the critique process.

Challenges highlighted by students included inconsistent feedback and time management. Some struggled with the effort required for thorough critiques, as one admitted, *“I found myself getting lazy and not responding as much as I would have if the critiques were in person.”* Others wished for more actionable feedback, with one student commenting, *“I wish the critiques would be more open and actual critiques instead of compliments.”* These challenges point to a need for clearer expectations and strategies to foster engagement.

Despite these challenges, students overwhelmingly described their experiences as rewarding and enjoyable. Many highlighted the inspiration they drew from their peers’ work, with one stating, *“I loved the emotion that came with the pieces I saw. Some were very moving and inspiring.”* Others appreciated the fun and learning that came from the process, as one student reflected, *“Overall, I had a positive experience in critiques, and I wish some other aspects of my life were treated the same.”*

In conclusion, the reflections underscore the transformative potential of peer critiques, particularly when feedback is thoughtful, structured, and engaging. Students valued the opportunity for growth, collaboration, and creativity but identified areas for improvement in engagement and feedback clarity. Addressing these issues through clearer guidelines, more interactive critique environments, and a blend of online and in-person methods could further enhance the learning experience.

## Reflection

The themes that emerged from the student reflections about the online peer-review process are “increase quality of feedback in peer reviews” and “increase engagement in peer review.” Some ways I might increase the quality of the feedback is to require a minimum word count for each review, provide a better example of how a good peer review is conducted, create a rubric specifically for the peer reviewers to follow, and even create a module dedicated to giving quality peer review in Canvas.

Lin et al. showed that “social loafing” could be attenuated using Peer Assessment with Group Awareness tools (Lin et al., 2021). Social Loafing was illustrated in this project by students *getting lazy* when it came to providing peer feedback. Building in Group Awareness Tools to raise the quality of written feedback might increase the quality of peer review. This Group

Awareness could take the form of a scoreboard for peer reviewers, with the top reviewers earning some distinction within the cohort or extra credit in the course. Perhaps making the peer reviews worth more points than the activities being reviewed could increase participation and is in line with Li et al.'s findings that assessors benefit from the activity even more than the assessee (Li et al., 2010). Creating a rubric to allow the assessee to review the assessor's assessments could bear fruit as a Group Awareness Tool (See Appendix B.)

### Moving Forward

For the most part, the students enjoyed the process and found it to be a fruitful use of time giving them the opportunity to create better and better work in Photoshop. The use of Canvas' online peer review tool will be included in future courses that align with the creative process whether they are fully online or in person. I'm already revamping this course to take advantage of the things I've learned during this research by expanding the window of the iterative "create review create" process to 10 weeks of the 14-week semester. I'm also working on building in some type of Group Awareness Tool to increase quality of and engagement in the peer review process itself.

I'm going to allow a 48-hour gap between when the assignment is due and when the peer review is assigned when using Canvas' automatic peer review assignment. There is really only one reason for this—it is really convenient to have Canvas assign reviewers automatically and it won't work if the student is even a minute late posting the assignment.

In the reflective discussion that the students and during the last class period, we discussed creating some framework that requires the students to be working on the same prompt at the same time. In this example, they were able to pick any of the 50 one-word prompts to create their artwork. They all agreed that the feedback and the learning would have more depth and quality if they were all working on the same prompt at the same time. This would allow them to compare and contrast the visual problem solving of the cohort with their own. During in-person classes, I'll set aside a monthly in-class critique session that will hopefully translate the peer reviewing skills learned in Canvas to the analog classroom.

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## Appendix A: Student Feedback

Student	Reflection
Student01	These last four weeks of doing peer reviews on Canvas have been a different but valuable experience for me. While it was a change from our usual in-class critiques, I made sure to stay engaged by leaving thoughtful comments on everyone's work. I found myself taking more time to think about what I wanted to say since I was writing my feedback rather than just speaking it in class. When looking through others' work on Canvas, I tried to really take in each piece before commenting. Getting feedback

	<p>on my own work through this format was interesting too. People seemed to give more detailed/honest comments vs what they might have said in person, which gave me specific points to think about when reflecting on my work. Even though we weren't meeting face-to-face like earlier in the semester, there was still a supportive vibe in how everyone gave feedback. The Canvas setup worked well for sharing our thoughts, though I think I still appreciate in class critiques a bit more. I've noticed that I've gotten better at explaining my thoughts in writing during these four weeks. Since I couldn't just explain things verbally or have a back-and-forth conversation like in class, I had to be clear and more specific in my written comments. This has actually helped me get better at giving constructive feedback in a way that's both helpful and easy to understand. Looking back, I can see how I've become more comfortable with both giving and receiving feedback.. It's taught me how to adapt to different ways of critiquing while still having meaningful conversations about art with my classmates.</p>
<p>Student02</p>	<p>The peer review art critiques were indeed helpful, I felt as if it gave everyone the opportunity to truly express their honest opinion when giving feedback. However, there was many peer reviews I received where I did not get much comments which was fine when I received full points. But, when they took off point and left no comments it left me a bit puzzled on what I needed to change or focus more on. Perhaps if it was made a requirement to make a comment I would feel more supported. Although I did not receive too much feedback I did try to push myself to use different tools in my images and trying to be neater along with making my point for the image clear. I often had the rubric side by side with my work to make sure I was meeting the criteria. The rubric also helped me respond to critiques in depth. I have to admit the peer reviews were convenient but I found myself getting lazy and not responding as much as I would have if the critiques were in person. Personally since people were not giving me much responses I felt as if it affected my creativity but, I can not speak for everyone else.</p>
<p>Student03</p>	<p>Throughout the process of our critique sessions, both in-person as well as online, I remained attentive to any moments where I could offer a critique of a piece that reflects over the artist's perspective and their goal along with the reception from my opinion and bias as well as the reflection that should be considered from others. I believe that the critique that I received was generally insightful as it allowed me to understand my art from a different perspective and how it was overall received. This also allowed me to understand what portions of my artwork were not perceived or even considered, reasoning of symbolism, color, line, etc. other attributes that require the viewer to retain an attentive eye, a critical eye. This aspect of my art allows me to enjoy a form of mystic grace to the abstractness and metaphorical application to my medium. I felt supported by my peers and took what I felt connected to learning. The matter of critique requires the individual to address the setting in a subjective manner and require a format to work from when approaching critique; forms of critique vary and can range from their form of analysis and the material that they analyze, this also considers the perspective and content that is overlooked or their reception being loose. As for my personal growth, I've felt as if I have been able to obtain a widened perspective of art in terms of analysis, judgement, observation, and internalizing material. In terms of technical skill, I've been able to understand at a function-able level the software of Photoshop and can adapt to learn more skills through practice. I have improved both in my critique and how to observe an image or media thoroughly and through a critical eye that is formed through my attention to action of detail.</p>
<p>Student04</p>	<p>These peer reviews helped me see if what I imagined my images portray did get to the viewer. Some things I left for interpretation which then helped me with other projects and seeing what I can fix and position to make them think what I tried to portray. I think since we all were learning we wanted to be positive and only found positive things to say about our pieces, therefore we had a little to say after every positive thing was said. I wish the critiques would be more open and actual critiques instead of compliments and things they notice. I liked interpreting other people's work, and seeing my eye could open up a more creative viewpoint to see if I was close to</p>

	<p>their thinking. It was hard for me to talk openly about how I viewed things because I was afraid to be wrong but when I was wrong then they would say that it was a good viewpoint and then clarify. I applied the feedback I would receive, not to the current work but to the following one to see if I could improve and change what they would say. I would respond to critiques casually because it is fun to see how people interpret my art, because there are no wrong answers when it comes to someones opinion on their viewing of someone else's art without actually knowing what it means. When we did the self-portrait assignment, my external piece was interpreted as internal, and that is when I realized I never shared enough in that class and it made me want to get to know some classmates better. Overall I had a positive experience in critiques and I wish some other aspects of my life were treated the same, and that I could participate more in them.</p>
<p>Student05</p>	<p>Using an online source to provide critiques was new to me but I found more positives than negatives to it. At first I wasn't too sure about using it because in every art class we would always hold critiques in person but it honestly would take up quite a lot of time in every one of those classes. I liked this method because i found it helpful in cases when people would comment but I also think people should comment at least once on everyones they are critiquing. Although I wasn't a huge fan on the colors I still felt encouraged with my work. Overall I think the this was helpful and helped create a positive learning environment besides what I had previously mentioned because I had gotten a 3 here and there with no explanation which wasn't helpful. My growth in the class is probably the most I've seen myself advance in my personal life as well. Before taking the class I had little to no experience with computers and this class being pretty much strictly on computers... well I honestly was nervous to start. After I had gotten a little bit more familiar with the computer I started to get a little more confident even though I honestly wasn't really fast and still am not but at least now I know what and how to use the tool bar, lol. Aside from using photoshop, since it was okay to use procreate on some things that pushed me to use my ipad in a way i hadn't yet and I also knew the bare minimum with that. Now that I've used also procreate those are skills that I will always carry. I think based off of my peer reviews I should get a %96 or %97 and I think I should get that grade because just within those assignments I've seen significant improvement with using either photoshop or procreate.</p>
<p>Student06</p>	<p>Throughout the peer review process, I made sure to engage fully in giving the peer reviews, making sure to make comments whenever I could for the 1-5 number assessments, in order to give my best and provide my peers with helpful information. In terms of receiving feedback, I was not very active; I read my peer reviews but didn't make much of an effort to go back and look at what was being recommended. I only did this on one piece of feedback, but I didn't make any changes. This process has influenced my ability to evaluate art most. I was able to, by having specific criteria, look at images while searching for specific elements in order to assess how effective the piece was in conveying that specific criteria. I need to still improve in this ability to break an image down one idea at a time, but I became more comfortable in doing this as I reviewed more work. I also may have improved in conceptually thinking about art, interpreting meanings for certain art, but I am not sure. I did like hearing what other students thought about my work, as it allows me to have more opinions on my work besides my usual opinion givers, myself and my dad. The peer reviews are also effective for reminding you that not everything you make will be good art, getting critiques of your work helps keep you humble. The peer reviews didn't feel very community oriented, but did offer constructive, respectful feedback. I feel that encouraging students to write longer explanations for grades, or possibly requiring at least one sentence for every criteria score would help give the artist a more complete evaluation, and would help the process feel more community oriented. I like the format of the rubric, however the fact that the text boxes are shown under each criteria as a place to add additional comments makes them seem unimportant, even though I would argue that the actual writing is the most important part of the peer</p>

	<p>reviewing. I felt I was able to engage with the material well and give feedback I wanted to give. I do recommend adding a "final comments" section if someone has something to say that does not fit a specific criteria. I do also agree with the students about the color issue with the greens, oranges, reds, etc. However I do not find this issue very influential in my peer reviewing experience. Over the past four weeks, I have gotten to practice critiquing art work, and I feel I can better assess specific elements of an art piece, such as use of photoshop, interpretation of prompt, originality, etc. This may be because I was critiquing online and not in person. When online, I am less afraid to say what I want to say, because I do not have to worry about the person being angry towards me or self conscious about their art piece. I can also more carefully craft sentences the way I want to. I tend to point out minor imperfections online, in order to help the artist, when in person I may not mention that specific small imperfection to avoid seeming nitpicky or overly critical. I must be improving in my critiquing, and I feel more comfortable with doing it now, however I can not point to a specific way that I am better at critiquing now. However I do notice that on average I wrote more comments on the pieces I peer reviewed in Image 4 than I did for images 2 and 3. However my image 1 peer review comments were similar in length to my image 4 peer review comments.</p>
<p>Student07</p>	<p>I have really enjoyed looking at my classmates' art work and I definitely saw really amazing and creative pieces. I would say my level of engagement was high and I gave my honest feedback. I also liked seeing the feedback on my work so that I can use that to improve the next time around. I think looking at my classmates' art and really studying it made me appreciate art more and it also was practice for more critiquing in the future. The critiques that I received really made me think more about my piece and what I can do to make it better and more exciting to look at. A lot of my critiques I felt supported and appreciated but a few of them I felt like were kind of harsh. The harsh ones I appreciated though because I know they were just trying to be helpful with their feedback. The project rubric definitely helped me and in general rubrics have always been a good guide for me. Overall I have enjoyed this final project and it was fun creating a new art piece every week and getting to look at what others created as well. Some of the pieces I saw were very moving and inspiring and I loved the emotion that came with it. I feel like I have definitely improved over the last four weeks. My second image was the one that wasn't people's favorite so I took that into account and made my next image more emotional and more pleasing to look at. Based on the critiques I received for that image, people liked it alot more so I'm glad I was able to successfully improve my work. In the future, I will be better at critiques because of the practice I got from over these four weeks which is great because being able to critique is important in the art world.</p>
<p>Student08</p>	<p>Art 159 has definitely been a fun run as a "refresher" course. I understand that this is an introductory course, appealing and curating its material to suit those who have no or have little experience with the Photoshopping elements. This course I can't say has done anything for me, but it did allow me to check out the levels of creativity, the different "flavors" if you will, of the various talents that exist in this class. It's honestly a breath of fresh air to see people, in the face of new technological advents (A.I. and LLMs), still trying to break out of their creative shells and break the mould of contemporary art. I'm not conceited by any means. If I come off condescending that's because my attitude towards art takes on a laissez-faire tone. I phone in lots of work because there's no one who can tell me this it's "phoned-in" without the whole "casting stones from a glass house" fallacy kicking in. Typically, I have issues with "Imposter syndrome" but I escaped that psychosis by becoming more comfortable within my own limits and abilities. If I could leave any advice to my fellow peers it would be: "Yeah, that's good." I tried to make any critique as valuable on an introspective level as possible. I don't personally care about evaluating one's technique as an artist can easily decide whether they're capable or not. I hunger to understand the unconscious drives that pushes people to make art. For instance, I make art because I like getting praise for making neat drawings. I used to think they</p>

	<p>were terrible and I hated my drawings. So much so, that I gave up on seriously attempting the skill. Of course, I couldn't. I love drawing. Been drawing for years. But my desire to have a drawing I can show to the world with pride, a drawing that will inspire others to create. I was inspired by Akira Toriyama as well and my old weeb middle school friends that drew webtoons-style trash. Couldn't let any of the homies think they were better than me (AT ANYTHING) and to catch up to your heroes is the most cliched goal a young man can have, no? Bottom line, while I didn't learn anything here, I know that I'm going to move onto the future with even more confidence and experience than I did not having taken this course.</p>
Student09	<p>Regarding the peer-reviewed art critiques throughout this course and this past month, I submitted all of them and attended all the relevant classes. I engaged in class and online discussions because I wanted to give other classmates feedback, and I wanted them to do the same for me. The peer review opportunities expanded my exposure to artworks; the many perspectives presented by my peers are things I would never have come across on my own, but simultaneously expanded my potential conceptual ideas. Yet many classmates didn't necessarily engage with my pieces and offer constructive commentary. Peer review was surface-level, and Jeff sometimes had to encourage and push the class to chime in during in-class critique, which was annoying because I felt like I kept talking and no one else would speak. However, the environment was friendly and inviting. I loved that everyone maintained professional standards of critique and there were no unnecessary comments; however, I wanted more discussion—and critical discussion—from more people, as we'd all be able to push one another further. I learned a lot, and as a non-critiquer who has never really gone through critique, I enjoyed the rubrics and documents; they made it easier to figure out what was going on. Everything was cohesive and made sense, so I knew where I'd be best fit to provide feedback. I honestly felt my critiquing abilities developed by the end of the course. The first project left me at a standstill, but I found my groove and felt solid when we got to the Nightmares project critique, continuing to our final project critiques. I am excited that I can more quickly evaluate a piece by determining the effectiveness of stylistic choice compared to the use of composition or color. With our final project, I like the ability to pick my prompts to create art because people are passionate about all different things, and choosing your own words gives different perspectives on various topics. What frustrated me with the peer review was that most of the time, when someone didn't give a perfect score, they didn't provide reasoning, so it left me to question and wonder why that specific grade was given to me. For almost all of the artwork I produced, I felt proud of my work, and not getting much feedback on why others didn't like my artwork left me disappointed. Ultimately, this experience made me a stronger art critic and an improved communicator. Aside from a few criticisms I have on the critical engagement setting—which I feel was that way because of the people in this class—I feel much more confident giving critical feedback should the opportunity arise for any future pieces while simultaneously genuinely appreciating the art on a deeper level.</p>

## Appendix B: Peer Review Rubric as a Group Awareness Tool

One way I could create a Group Awareness Tool in the confines of a Canvas shell would be to create a rubric that would guide peer reviewers when they are reviewing and provide group feedback about who in the cohort is providing good feedback. This might create enough of a feedback loop to increase the over all effectiveness of the peer review process.

Category	5 (Exceptional)	4 (Proficient)	3 (Adequate)	2 (Needs Improvement)	1 (Insufficient)
<b>Depth of Feedback</b>	Comprehensive, detailed feedback covering all key elements; critical thinking and actionable insight	Thorough feedback covering most elements; clear suggestions but lacks deep insight	General feedback on surface-level aspects; limited specificity	Minimal feedback; addresses few aspects; no actionable suggestions	Vague, overly generic, or absent feedback; no critique or suggestions
<b>Constructiveness</b>	Highly constructive, balancing praise and critique; positively framed with actionable suggestions	Constructive feedback with praise and criticism; less balanced or subtle	Somewhat constructive; limited actionable suggestions	Overly critical or overly positive; lacks constructive elements	Dismissive, overly critical without solutions, or unhelpfully vague
<b>Specificity</b>	Includes specific examples to support comments; highly actionable	Mostly specific with occasional lack of concrete examples	Some specific points but often general or lacking detail	Largely generic feedback with little to no reference to specifics	Entirely generic or unrelated to the work; no specific examples
<b>Engagement</b>	Deep engagement with context, purpose, and audience; nuanced commentary	Consistent engagement with purpose and audience; less reflective	Some engagement but lacks consideration of context or purpose	Minimal engagement; limited understanding of intent or context	No evidence of engagement; feedback disconnected from the work