

# Writing Conferences: Guidelines and Expectations

## Purpose

Before scheduling a writing conference with your teacher, you first need to spend some time reflecting on your draft and making a list of the areas that are challenging you the most. A writing conference should have a specific purpose, and, most of the time, this will be determined by you. Typically, the purpose you identify should be a larger issue. For example, you may find you're having trouble organizing your thoughts coherently in a paper. Organization strategies could be the purpose for a writing conference. Try to avoid asking for a conference focused on smaller issues such as identifying which example to use in a paragraph.

The purpose should also reflect a thorough reading of your teacher's comments. Use the comments to guide your understanding of where to go next in the revision process. If you need further clarification of your teacher's comments or are unsure of how to proceed, this could be the purpose for your conference.

## Length

Typically, a conference should last 10-15 minutes. If you've done your homework and really thought deeply about the purpose, the time you spend in a conference should be targeted and focused.

## Structure

1. First, you will sign up for a conference with a specific purpose in mind.
2. Be sure to come to the conference with all related materials and asks the teacher questions that reference the purpose of the conference. If the answer to one question isn't clear, you should continue to ask clarifying questions.
3. The teacher should also ask questions to help you understand what should be happening next in your writing process.
4. Feedback from the teacher should be focused on helping you get to the next level with the writing piece. For example, the teacher might suggest you look at another scene in the text or explore other characters to develop your ideas, but you will have to decide what those characters are and how best to use the details from that scene.
5. You should take notes during the conference and share them with the teacher at the end of the conference to make sure you both leave the conference with the same understanding.