

HOW TO USE RECORDED COMMENTS

1. Find a quiet place to listen without interruptions. Try to listen to the comments as soon as possible after receiving your folder back.
2. Listen to the recording straight through without pausing. At the end of the comments, I'll talk about whether the draft is an **"early," "middle,"** or **"late"** draft. An early draft is one that could benefit from significant rethinking and rewriting. A middle draft has some solid and interesting ideas but still could benefit from serious revision. A late draft probably needs some polishing and editing, but not major revisions. Your goal should be to move your drafts through the writing/rewriting process until they have reached the point of becoming "finished" or "portfolio drafts," the ones you want to present in your final portfolio. **"Early," "middle," and "late" do not represent grades; they are designed to let you know how much more revising each paper needs. Generally, early and middle drafts are two drafts away from being finished while late drafts may only be one draft away, but that's not a rule by any means. See the rubric on the other side of this page.**
3. Listen again to the recording with your draft and memo in front of you. **Note:** If your CD or tape doesn't work, bring it to the next class along with your paper so I can try again.
4. Pause the recording to write down notes of things you want to remember or **discuss with me**, either in my office or in your class letter. Jot your notes right on the draft, at the appropriate points in the text if possible. **Note: I don't plan to give you a "prescription" that lists exactly what to say in your revision. I also don't plan to point out every single thing I see in every draft because that can be overwhelming. I "fry the biggest fish."**
5. Listen carefully for positive comments—they will be there! I hope you will feel good about your draft and want to revise it. (I *always* find more things to suggest, however!)
6. Think about the suggestions and questions you've heard. **Free write for five minutes about your reactions—ideas that occur to you, questions you might have for me, plans for revision.** These notes will be helpful when you do revise or come to see me.
7. Leave your tape set at the conclusion of my comments so that I can record the next set of comments when you hand in the tape again. (If you're using a CD, you'll need a new one for the revision comments.)
8. Make an appointment to see me to discuss my comments if you don't understand them or you don't agree with them or you're angered by them.*

9. Finally, when you've revised the draft and want to resubmit it, follow the instructions on the back of this sheet. Is revision necessary in this course? Only if you want to earn more points and possibly a higher grade!

* In my comments, I try to be positive, enthusiastic, honest, and tactful. Most of us are very sensitive about our writing, however, and often anything less than total praise can be upsetting. Sometimes we get upset because we're hearing things that we already knew but were trying to deny, and sometimes anxiety makes us hear things in the wrong way. If you're upset, wait a couple of days and listen again to see if you still feel the same way. If you do, then come see me. **MANY PAPERS THAT AREN'T QUITE ON TARGET HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO BECOME VERY GOOD FINAL DRAFTS, BUT YOU HAVE TO REVISE THEM FOR THAT TO HAPPEN. WHEN YOU'VE REVISED EFFECTIVELY, YOU'LL EARN MORE POINTS, AND I'LL ASSIGN THE PAPER A GRADE IF YOU WISH.**