

Peer-Review Guidelines

You know that when you read another student's paper with a view to offering helpful feedback, you should look for clarity, good organization, grammatical correctness, substantive accuracy, and other familiar virtues of paper-writing. I'd like for you to pay further, and particular, attention to *signposting*—the practice of giving the reader explicit information about the overall structure of the paper. Signposting, when done well, appears both at the beginning of the paper and at various places throughout. Here are some questions to consider in order to guide your assessment of the paper for good signposting:

1. Near the beginning of the paper, does the author say anything like the following?

“The main point of this paper is that . . .”

“The goal of this paper is to show that . . .”

2. Soon after that, does the author say anything like the following?

“This paper is organized in the following way: . . .”
[followed by an account of the tasks to be completed]

“In order to accomplish this goal, I will do the following: . . .”
[followed by an account of the tasks to be completed]

3. At various points in the paper, does the author say things like the following?

“Having just [description of task just completed],
I will now proceed to [description of task to be done next].”

“I have just finished [description of task just completed].
Now I want to turn to [description of task to be done next].”

Also, answer the following questions (and give this sheet to the author). Your answers will help the author assess the extent to which he or she has managed to convey his or her points clearly.

1. What is the author's main point? What is the main claim the author is trying to establish?
2. In brief, how does the author establish his or her main point? What are the main reasons the author gives and/or the main objections that the author anticipates and tries to refute?