

MS Word Features for More Effective Feedback on Student Writing

Teaching Effectiveness Program / (541) 346-3226

Emphasize Text by Highlighting It

The highlight feature marks text so it stands out from the surrounding text. When important text is highlighted, it's easier for you and your students to see the text as your eyes scan the document.

Microsoft Features

- * Track Changes
- * Highlighter
- * Insert Comments
- * Macros



The How

Open the document you wish to edit using Microsoft Word. Once the document is open:

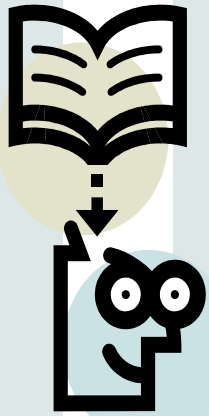
1. Click and hold on the **View** menu.
2. On the **Reviewing** toolbar, click the **Highlight** icon.



3. **Select the text** you want to highlight.
4. To turn **off** highlighting, click the **Highlight** icon again.

Tips

- Highlighting parts of a document works best when recipients will be reviewing the document **on the computer**. When you highlight parts of a document that you intend to print, use a **light color**.
- To **change the highlighter color**, click the arrow next to the Highlight icon, select the color you want, and then select the text or graphic you want to highlight.



Insert Comments

You can make annotations on the screen without changing the document text by using the Insert Comment feature. When a comment is added, Word numbers it and records it in a separate comment pane. Word then inserts a comment reference mark in the document and shades the text that's commented on.

The How

1. Click and hold on the **View** menu.
2. **Select the text** or item you want to comment on, or click at the end of the text.
3. On the **Reviewing** toolbar, click the Insert Comment icon.



4. Type the comment text in the **comment pane** that appears.
5. After you've finished typing your comment, click **Close**.

Track Changes to a Document

When change tracking is turned on, Microsoft Word uses revision marks to indicate tracked changes. After viewing tracked changes, students can accept or reject each change. You can also choose to show or hide tracked changes on the screen or in the printed document.

NOTE: Mac users can follow the instructions below. Windows users can find instructions for different versions attached to this handout

The How

1. Click and hold on the **View** menu.
2. Pull down to **Toolbars** and find **Reviewing** on the submenu that appears. If it does **not** have a checkmark next to it,

"What we see depends mainly on what we look for."

-John Lubbock

select it from the submenu. A new toolbar should now appear on your screen.

3. **Open the document** you want to revise.
4. Pull down the **Tools** menu and hold on **Track Changes**.
5. Select on **Highlight Changes** from the submenu that appears.
6. Check **Track changes while editing**. Check **Highlight changes on screen** and **Highlight changes in printed document**.
7. Click the **Okay** button and begin editing, adding and deleting text as necessary.

Accepting or Rejecting Comments and Changes

1. You can chose to accept or reject changes made by others to your document.
2. Pull down the **Tools** menu and hold on **Track Changes**.
3. Click **Accept or Reject Changes** from the submenu that appears.
4. The box that appears will display who made the change, when, and what type of change it was. You can choose a number of ways to view the changes:
 - **Accept All** - makes all changes tracked in the document.
 - **Reject All** - clears tracked changes from document, leaving you with an unmarked original.
 - **Find** - allows you to move through comments one at a time to accept or reject.
5. Click on **Changes with highlighting**.

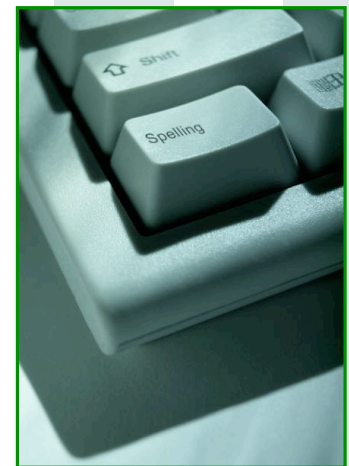
Merging Tracked Changes

If you have received changes on a document via multiple versions, you can merge all of the changes into the original document and then review each change from that document. Word displays each reviewer's tracked changes in a different color.

1. Open the **original document** into which you want to merge the changes.
2. Using the **Tools** menu, click **Merge Documents**, then choose the file containing the changes you want to merge.
3. **Repeat** until all document copies are merged.

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"You cannot solve a
problem at the same
level of consciousness
that it was created."
.....

-Einstein



Using Macros

In essence, a macro is a customized command you create in Microsoft Word. Actually, a macro is a series of commands grouped together as a single command to accomplish a task automatically. So, instead of manually performing a series of time-consuming, repetitive actions in Word, you can create and run a single macro — in effect, a custom command — that accomplishes the task for you.

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"Every student should have a person who wants to help him or her become the person he or she is capable of becoming."

-Louis Schmier

.....

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"What grows is what gets watered."

-Anonymous

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Constructing Comments

1. **Brainstorm some of the most common comments you include in feedback on student papers.** Make choices about which comments could be developed further and are frequent enough to justify using a macro.
2. **Create a new word document for each comment.** From within Microsoft Word:
 - a. Pull down the **File** menu to **New Blank Document**.
 - b. **Type each selected comment into a developed paragraph.** Take the time to think about and develop quality responses. Be sure to include things like:
 - References to readings by page number if appropriate
 - Examples of correct and incorrect usage
 - Location of the problem in relation to the larger challenge of the writing process
 - Web or library resources
 - c. **When finished with the paragraph move the cursor out two spaces from the last period** so that the macro will record with the cursor at the end. This way any additional comments that may be needed can be typed in without any additional keystrokes.
 - d. Pull your **File** menu down to **Save**.

- e. In the dialogue box that appears, **name the file** with a **descriptive** name, one that is useful and easy to recall when grading.
 - f. Choose a **location** to save the file to and click the **Save** button.
3. **Repeat** number 2 for **each comment** you wish to develop.

Creating Macros

Once the paragraphs have been created and saved as separate files, you can create a macro for each. To record a macro in Microsoft Word 2000...

1. Pull the **File** menu down to **New Blank Document**.
2. Pull down the **Tools** menu and slide over and hold on **Macro**. Then choose **Record New Macro** from that submenu.
3. In the dialogue box that appears, **name your macro** using a short code name that corresponds to the document file to be inserted.
4. Click **OK** to start recording.
5. Pull the **Insert** menu down to **File**.
6. Browse to locate the appropriate **comment file** (one that you saved in the **Constructing Comments** section).
7. Click once on the **file name** to select it.
8. Click **Insert**.
9. Click the **Stop** button. The Macro has now been recorded and saved

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit."
-Aristotle

Using Macros for Feedback on Student Writing

To make effective use of this tool you have two options:

- Insert the comments into an electronic copy of the students paper
- Create a comments sheet to hand back with paper copies of the writing assignments

Let's take a look at both...

Insert Comments into Electronic Documents

1. Pull down the **File** menu to **Open**.
2. **Browse** to locate the student paper and click **Open**.
3. **Click once** in the text where you wish to **insert** the macro you created in the **Creating Macros** section.
4. Pull down your **Tools** menu and slide over and hold on **Macro**. Choose **Macros...** from the submenu that appears.
5. In the dialogue box that appears, **select the name** of the macro you wish to insert and click **Run**. The macro text should appear in the student's paper.

Creating a Comments Sheet for Hard Copy

1. Pull down the **File** menu to **New Blank Document**.
2. Pull down your **Tools** menu and slide over and hold on **Macro**. Choose **Macros...** from the submenu that appears.
3. In the dialogue box that appears, select the names of all the macro you wish to insert and click **Run**. The macro text should appear in the new document you opened.
4. **Print** the file and attach it to the student's paper.

"Real knowledge is to know the extend of one's ignorance."

- Confucius

Online Resources

Evaluating Student Writing

<http://www.swc.utexas.edu/evaluation/index.shtml>

This site, developed by the Substantial Writing Component Resources office at University of Texas at Austin, includes information on evaluating student writing including tips on: grammar and mechanics, commenting on drafts, grading final drafts, and student self-evaluation. This site also contains information on developing writing assignments, helpful planning tips, and sample handouts and assignments.

Commenting on Students' Writing

<http://www.nd.edu/~fwriting/seminars/comment.shtml>

The University of Notre Dame has developed a collection of material for faculty teaching University Seminar courses. These two pages offer a quick read and maybe a little insight.

How Do I Respond to Student Writing?

<http://writing.colostate.edu/references/teaching/fys/respond.cfm>

The Writing Center at Colorado State put this website together as part of their Teaching Writing in First-Year Seminars online information. The site is designed to help you make the most of the time you spend commenting on student writing, benefiting you by increasing your efficiency and benefiting your students by directing them toward areas in which they can experience the greatest growth as writers.

Writing Across the Curriculum Homepage

<http://flightline.highline.edu/wac/>

Among other things, Highline Community College's Writing Across the Curriculum site includes a top ten list of ways to improve student writing, examples of low stakes writing activities that will prepare students for high stakes assignments, information on responding to student writing using peer response, written comments, and assessment rubrics.

"Imagination is more important than knowledge, for knowledge is limited while imagination embraces the entire world."

-Albert Einstein

"Nothing goes by luck in composition. It allows of no tricks. The best you can write will be the best you are."

-Henry David Thoreau

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Be Free To Teach

Additional Tools to Consider

Other teaching tips you might consider for use with student writing:

Assessment Rubrics can help make expectations clear for students, save grading and commenting time, and present your evaluation of students' written work in an "objective" fashion.

Blackboard offers ways to collect electronic documents from students.

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The Teaching Effectiveness Program offers a variety of activities and services to engage the academic community in viewing, assessing, and improving undergraduate instruction. TEP services are free to faculty members, graduate teaching fellows (GTFs), and university departments.