Reader responses to Paper 1
Chris Potts, Writing 1, Spring 2003
April 14, 2003; due in class on April 16, 2003

Reader’s name:

Author’s name:

Please answer the following questions after you have read the author’s paper carefully.

Your answers should be written with the aim of improving the author’s work. It might be useful for you to be critical, but be sure that the criticism is constructive. Perhaps imagine yourself receiving whatever criticism you offer. If it sounds as though the criticism would do you more harm than good, then rework it or get rid of it. As Donald Murray says in his Read to Write (3rd ed.): “At first, most people experience responses to their writing as painful”. Our goal is to minimize any pain so that we can concentrate on improving our work.

It might be helpful to both you and the author to make notes on the draft itself. But be sure to answer the following questions as well. If this sheet doesn’t provide you with enough space, or you prefer to type, feel free to answer on a different sheet of paper.

1. As you understand the paper, what is its main position?

2. Which parts of the paper are particularly memorable?
3. What kind of evidence (personal experiences, insights from the reading, etc.) does the author use to support the main position? What kind of evidence is most effective in the context of this paper?

4. Did you find any specific passages (or sentences) confusing? If so, where were these passages, and how might the author go about attempting to improve them?

5. Please offer one suggestion to the author about how to improve the large-scale structure of the piece. The suggestion might concern the transition between two paragraphs, the success to which the prose remains true to the paper’s position, or any number of other things that concern how well the piece hangs together.