Here are three really good examples of peer comments. Notice that the commenter describes what is unclear or not-fully-baked about the thesis in a couple of papers, and describes what is interesting about the ones he does find to be strong. These comments also refer to markings that were made on the paper itself, which isn’t necessary but can be a useful way to explain more fully what you might write in the margins as you read.

1.

**Thesis:**
Just from the introduction I thought the thesis of this paper was about how Chaucer’s story was effective because of the way he mixed references to Roman gods and Christianity. However after reading the evidence presented and rereading the introduction I thought the thesis could also have been how each character relates to a certain god in order to develop their character more fully (this sentence is also mentioned in the introduction). Overall, the paper seems to give more clear evidence for the later. To summarize it in my words the thesis would describe Chaucer’s use of god’s and/or religious references as a way to develop the character/storyline. I think that it’s also possible that the paper intended one of these sentences to be evidence for the other, but it is unclear because of the organization of the introduction and the evidence presented.

Both topics seem interesting to me because they would add to my knowledge of Chaucer and his writing style, as well as how he used religion and its references as a tool and why. Both of the theses also do a good job of presenting something new about the work, that isn’t obvious. They both are effective at getting past the “so what” question and going deeper because, this is a new way to look at religious references. I think it will provide insights and perspectives into understanding Chaucer and his motivation. However the evidence used to support it could go a little deeper and may have a little too much summarizing.

**Textual Support/Quotations**
The third textual citation I felt provided a good example of how Chaucer slipped in a Christian reference. The first text quotation describing Mars, was a little vague and I think some text more specific to your argument could be used. Also, it would be a good idea to insert a couple more short text examples to support your case. The paper has stars where I noticed examples paraphrased that could easily contain incorporated text. This will make the paper argument stronger.

**Transitions**
The paper had strong transitions which helped to show the evidence presented in the paragraph. They also related back to the thesis and helped to draw the paper together. Two good examples are underlined on page 3.

Overall the strengths of the paper are its very intriguing thesis that takes a new and exciting look at religious references and the way Chaucer uses them. As well as, the effective transitions used help to connect and strengthen the argument. Some things to improve on are including more textual support, organizing the introduction to match the body, and improving the title to make it reflect the interesting thesis.
2.

Thesis:
From my understanding the thesis of the paper is that there are big differences in the original miller’s Tale and Chaucer’s version of the tale. This thesis is clearly addressed throughout the paper and can be easily identified by readers. One thing that is not clear is how similarities are used within the body of the paper. Similarities are not mentioned in the introduction and their purpose could be more clearly identified. The thesis written in the introduction could also be lengthened to include an explanation of why Chaucer deviated from the original tale. Continue to expand on the ideas of why mentioned in the body, which I highlighted in green. If you take these good ideas a step further the paper’s thesis will be more insightful and allow readers to gain more knowledge of Chaucer’s use of other tales.

Transitions:
The paper used very effective transitions. The transitions showed what the paragraph was going to talk about and prepared the reader to digest your arguments better. The transitions also helped to tie your paragraphs together and give the paper a flow.

Title:
The title was interesting and also again prepared readers for your argument. It catches the reader’s attention and draws them in.

Introduction/Conclusion:
The paper’s introduction was a bit short and could be improved on by adding some background information on the other version of the miller’s tale. You could also use those details in the body of your paragraph. You could also have summarized your points of evidence in the introduction. The same goes for the conclusion, restating a theme or summarizing evidence could help to convince and remind readers.

Overall the paper had a clear and relevant thesis, which if expanded a little further could become very interesting and insightful. Along with the thesis being clearly identifiable, another strength of the paper was the transitions. They provided a connectedness to the paper not often seen. The title was also creative and successful. Some aspects of the paper to improve on are the introduction and conclusion, the mentioning of similarities, and trying to take the thesis to the next level and expand on your ideas. Try to address the “why/so what” question.
3.

Thesis:
The issue the paper is exploring is Chaucer’s reasoning for changing aspects of “the Miller and the Two Clerics” to better fit the Reeve and his intent in telling the Reeve’s Tale as well as making the tale more insulting to the Miller. The Thesis is clearly identifiable throughout the paper and is represented by the evidence. The thesis does a good job of going beyond comparisons and into the deeper level question of why Chaucer did what he did. It provides new information into Chaucer’s writing process and gives the reader insight into his motivation.

Textual Support/quotations:
Excellent job of incorporating quotations providing textual support into the paper. This gives your argument a flow and prevents readers from having to stop and think about how the quote fits with the argument. The quotations were used effectively within sentences and were varied in structural insertion.

Transitions:
Transitions were very effectively used to move from point to point and paragraph to paragraph. They provided reader with a starting point for the evidence, which you then expanded on. **Transitions that were particularly effective at the topics mentioned above are underlined**

Title and Format:
Your paper doesn’t have a title so it would be an easy aspect to change to improve your paper. It would help to grab reader’s attention and prepare them from your paper. Also, watch MLA format for spacing and margins

Overall, the paper has many strengths and is effective. The paper has an engaging thesis that is supported very well by the evidence. Some other strengths are the integrations of quotations and text support and transitions. Some aspects of the paper that are weak are the title and formatting. One way to improve the paper is to expand on the evidence (highlighted in green) in the two paragraphs before the conclusion and ask why Chaucer did this?
Here are some other good examples:

4. What I think the thesis statement is in this paper is that “The Knight’s Tale” is actually a lesson to the Knight’s son about the duality of human nature and how nature turns to love in the case of Arcite and Palamoun and their love causes them to fight over Emelye. I’d never thought of this when reading “The Knight’s Tale.” I didn’t assume that the Knight was directing his tale to the Squire, so I found this thesis to be an interesting one.

I’m not sure how well the thesis is supported in the paper. There’s a great job done on the analyzation of “The Knight’s Tale,” but I don’t get the sense that the Knight is speaking to his son when telling this tale. I would agree that through this paper, the Knight is indeed showing that love destroys the relationship between Arcite and Palamoun, and that the Knight is pointing out that love can do this in any relationship, but there isn’t any support of the Knight talking mainly to the Squire when it comes to his tale.

There’s good textual support of Arcite and Palamoun’s shifting relationship from the quotes from “The Knight’s Tale.” You mention Rock’s views a lot, but don’t take too many direct quotes from her. Some more quotes from her might be a nice addition to your paper. Her information is a good help for the reader to understand the importance of oaths and knighthood. But I think it would be more effective in your paper to have a source on the Knight and his intentions with this tale, or even his relationship with his son. I think the quotes are integrated well. You do a good job describing what the quotes represent. The paper is organized by how “The Knight’s Tale” progresses, which is easy to follow.

I think finding more sources to support your thesis would make your paper stronger. You have an interesting thesis that I would like to see expanded more. You’ve done a good job letting the reader know how knighthood works and how Arcite and Palamoun seem to switch roles, but you haven’t spent much time talking about the Knight and the Squire. You have a solid base, but I’d like to see it tied in with the thesis more.

5. From what I gather, the thesis is that Chaucer does a good job of describing his characters, and he gives the reader an insight into his world. It was a bit difficult for me to find the thesis in the opening paragraph. The sentences are very vague in what you’re trying to tell the reader you’re going to discuss in your paper. You mention how people are described physically as well as their personality traits. Then you mention aspects that we don’t have today, but you don’t tell the reader what those aspects are. I think mentioning these would help clarify your topic for the reader. You also mention traditions, but you don’t say what traditions he covers. I think you could work with the thesis to make it clearer. Chaucer’s world and time period are very interesting topics that you could expand on. They’re also vague, so you might want to pick one aspect of Chaucer’s time period that really interests you and focus primarily on that.
I have a hard time finding the thesis being supported in the paper. You mention quite a bit in your paper, and don’t exactly tie them all together. You talk about the three estates, the order the tales are told, courtly love, the roles of men and women, the feminization of men, and the character of the scholarly Nicholas in “The Miller’s Tale.” Each of these topics are interesting within The Canterbury Tales, and they would each make for good papers.

You’ve used a few examples from The Canterbury Tales, but you don’t have any other sources yet. I’m sure if you narrowed your topic down, you could find some good resources. I particularly like the idea of the three estates and how Chaucer plays with that in the tales. I think some sources would really help you form a strong opinion on what your paper is about.

The organization of the paper is a bit hard to follow. The quotes you take from The Canterbury Tales are interesting ones that help what you’re talking about in your paragraphs, but I don’t really see the correlation between your thesis and your paper.

6.

The thesis of this paper is that Chaucer spoke out against the popular views on marriage in his time, and that he goes so far as to satirize courtly love and speak out with his views on marriage. The thesis gave me a new way of looking at Chaucer’s views on love and marriage. Your opening paragraph drew me into your paper. tying in the liberality of Chaucer’s views was a nice touch to your opening paragraph.

You supported your thesis well. It’s a well thought out paper and is well organized. I like that you focused first on marriage, and then moved onto courtly love. You have good textual support. If you wanted to add some more direct quotes from The Canterbury Tales, I think it could add to your paper, but it’s not completely necessary. You integrated your quotes from the tales well. I especially liked the quote you used on page five of your paper when you’re talking about “The Merchant’s Tale” and May flushing the love note down the toilet. Your thesis is found supported throughout your paper. you stick to it well and your train of thought is easy to follow.

There are no secondary sources for me to look at, but you’ve got a good base and strong paper even without them. When you do add textual support to your paper, it will take it from good to great.

There were some grammatical things that I noticed in your paper. You should watch capitalization and underlining or using quotes when referencing The Canterbury Tales and the tales within them. You have some colloquialisms in your paper which can take away from the reader’s view of you as an expert source, so be careful on how you use them. You also switch verb tense. Make sure to stay in the present when talking about Chaucer.
Here are some less-good examples. There are potentially useful observations, but they need more explanation and reference to specific places in the paper to be as useful as they could be. (This person does make a point of clearly identifying the thesis, which is helpful).

7.
-I believe the thesis to be “Sometimes they are human, but most of the time they are birds and it becomes confusing what Chaucer actually wanted them to be.” If this is in fact this is the thesis it could use a little bit more clarification.
-The examples and commentaries are useful and work well within the context of your paper.
-Paper could use some more secondary sources, but it is a great start.
-My only concern with this paper would be if you are going to end up having enough to write on, but never the less it is quite a compelling topic.

8. (refers to the same paper as example 4)
-I believe the thesis to be “The Knight’s Tale is a talk between himself to his son about the duality of human nature, and how that nature compounds into love through….squabbles over Emelye.”
-Tons of information from the text itself. I found the information to be relevant to the topic, didn’t seem like Rode was just grasping for page-fillers from the text.
-Pretty compelling topic which always helps.
-Good use of relevant secondary sources.
-The whole idea of the reversal of character is quite compelling and thought provoking.

9. (refers to the same paper as example 3)
-I believe the thesis to be “These combine to make The Canterbury Tales, as a whole, a collection of stories and characters which discuss views on both social and gender hierarchies in the time of Chaucer.”
-Interesting idea. I like the supporting evidence you give for your thesis.
-I may have found it helpful if you had used maybe one or two more secondary sources, but you still do a good job of supporting your thesis.
-Nice use of example from the text.
-I especially like your last sentence it wraps the paper up quite well, and is worded equally as well.