

Providing Feedback in Microsoft Word Documents

Microsoft Word 97 (and 2000) provides options for including typewritten and verbal comments **without changing** its original organization or appearance. This can be a powerful tool for providing feedback to students on term papers, essays and other homework assignments that might be written up using Microsoft Word. Adding verbal comments is especially helpful because it can relieve the reader / grader from having to suffer through an excessive amount of handwriting, especially when there are many assignments to grade.

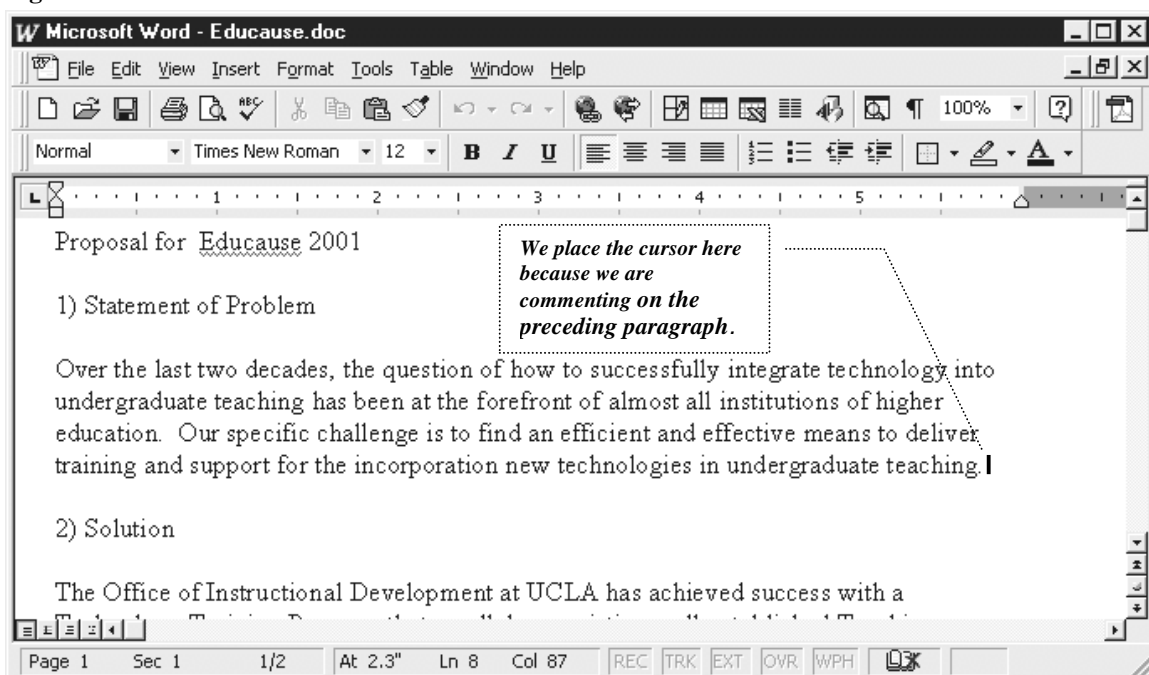
Using some simple instructions and screen capture images, this document will show you how to add both written and verbal comments to a document. We will begin with written comments and then move onto verbal. Before we begin, though, we should note that in order to get the most out of this document you will need to have a basic familiarity with Microsoft Word and you will need to have access to a computer that has a sound card, speakers or headset, and microphone installed.

Adding Written Comments To A Word Document

Comments are simply short notes or annotations to a document that can be read on the computer, but will not show up in the printed version of a document. Basically it works as follows - when you insert comment in a document, Word will place a note within the text that includes the editors initials and the comment number. This note will be highlighted in yellow. The text of the comment itself will be displayed in a new windowpane that opens in the lower third of your screen. All comments will be displayed in the order in which they appear in the document. Below are specific instructions for inserting written comments. Again, remember that the comment notes and text will show in the document on the computer, they will not appear when the document is printed.

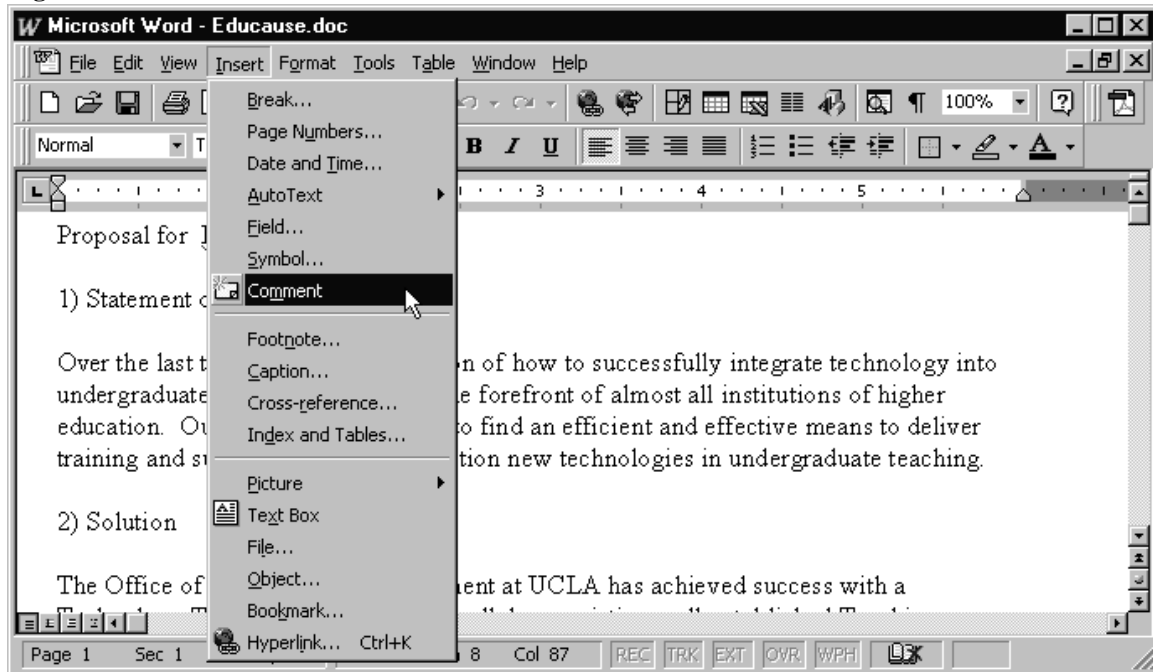
1) Select a location in the document to insert a comment by simply clicking once to place the cursor in the location where you want the text note to appear. You should place your comments according to the location of the specific text you are referencing. In figure 1 we have placed the cursor at the end of the first paragraph of the document

Figure 1



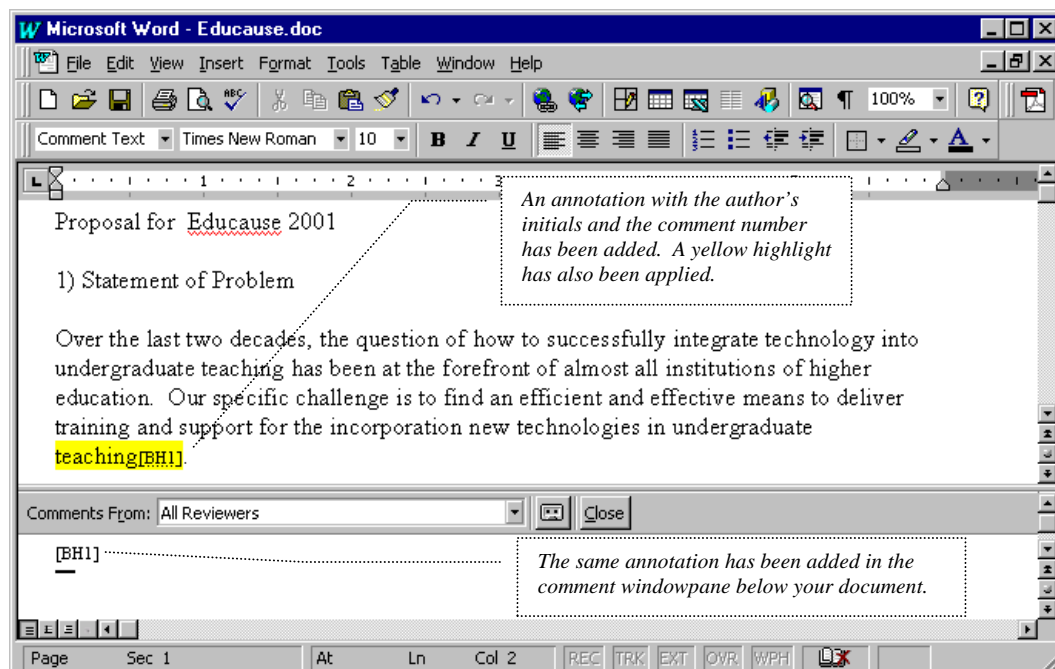
2) To insert a comment at the end of the first paragraph click on the **Insert** drop-down menu, then select Comment from the list. This is displayed in figure 2.

Figure 2



3) Once you insert a comment, you will notice three things happen (fig 3). First, an annotation will be added to the original text. It will be in brackets, it will include the initials of the user, and it will include a number (in this case the number is 1 since it is our first comment added to the document). Second, the annotation will be highlighted in yellow. Third, a new windowpane will open in the bottom of your screen. The same annotation that appears in the text will appear in this window and your cursor will now be located within the windowpane next to the annotation.

Figure 3



4) To add the text of your comment, simply type your text following the annotation in the comment window pane. In figure 4, the comment text refers to the first paragraph of the paper.

Figure 4

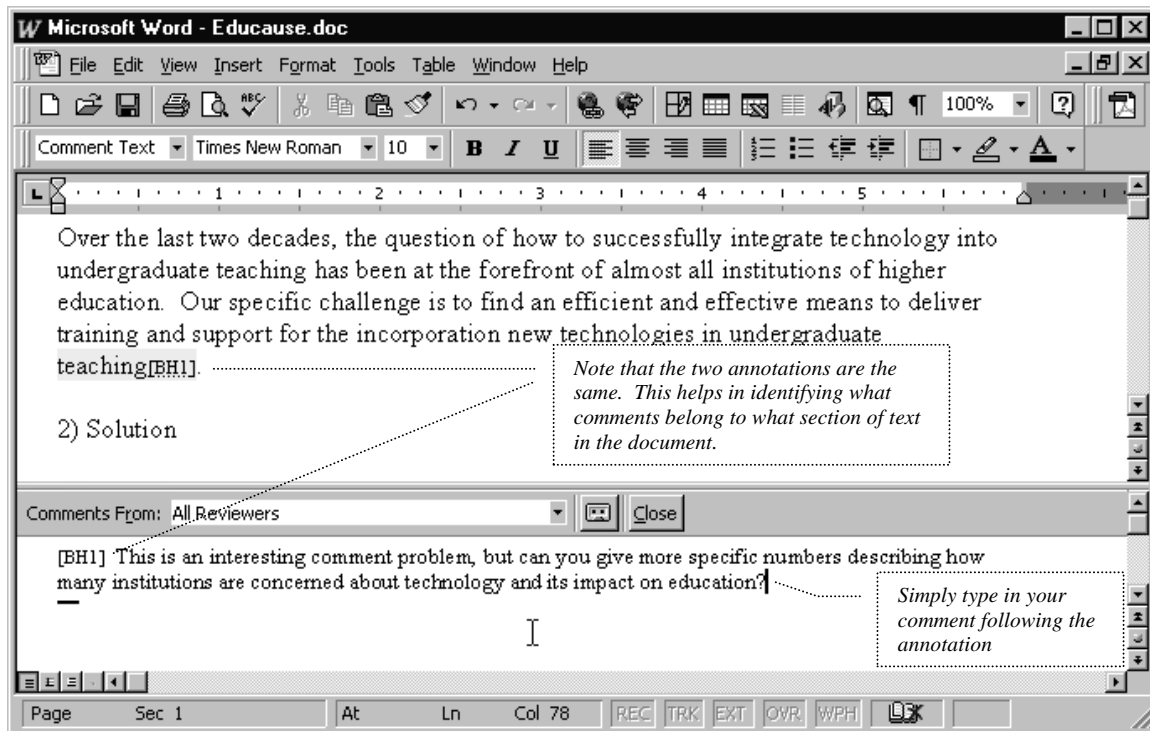
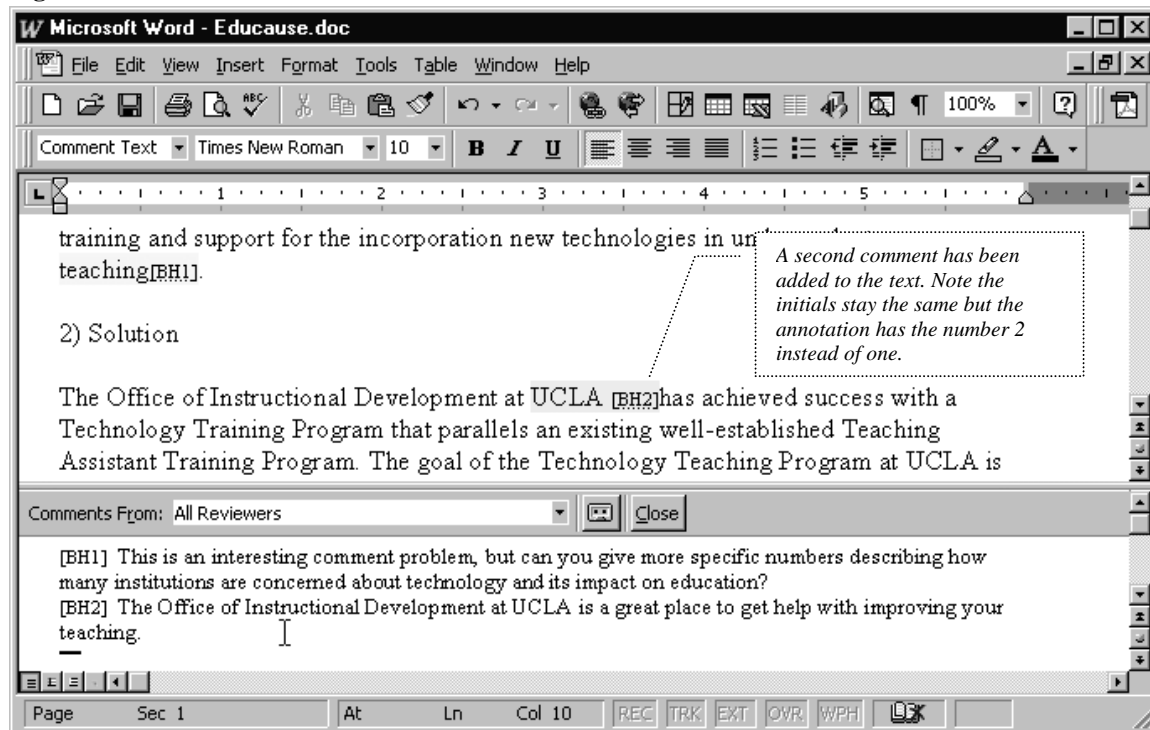


Figure 5



5) To insert more comments, simply follow the steps outlined above. You do not need to close the comment window pane. Simply click on the document in the upper pane, find the location for a new comment annotation, and then select **Insert > Comment** from the drop down menus. We did this for a second annotation in our example in figure 5 above. Note that the reviewer's initials stayed the same but the new annotation has the number 2 indicating that it is the second comment added to this document.

6) Once you have inserted comments in the document and saved the document you may wish to come back and re-open the document at a later time to view comments or your students may wish to view comments. You can view comments in two ways. The first is to simply rest your mouse cursor over one of the highlighted annotations in the document. A small window will pop open displaying the text of the comment. When you move the mouse off, the window will close. This is displayed in figure 6a below. The second method is to select the **View** pull-down menu and then **Comments**. This will open the comments window pane (that you saw earlier) displaying all the comments in the document. This is displayed in figures 6b and 6c.

Figure 6a

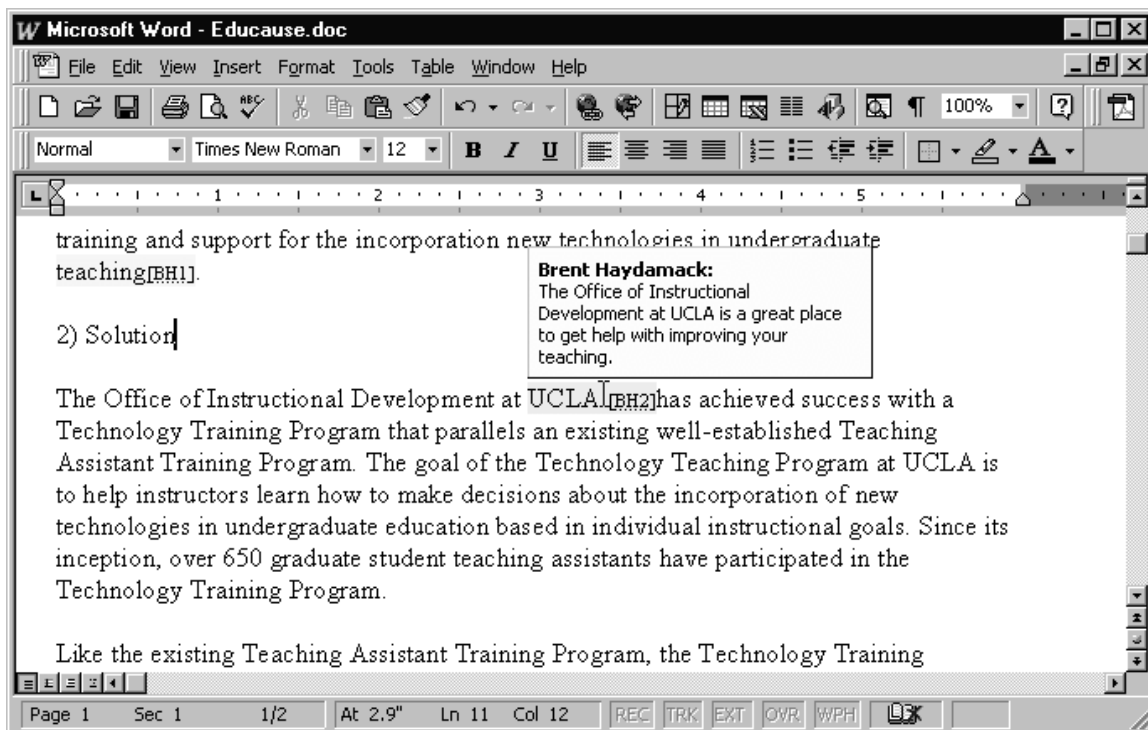


Figure 6b

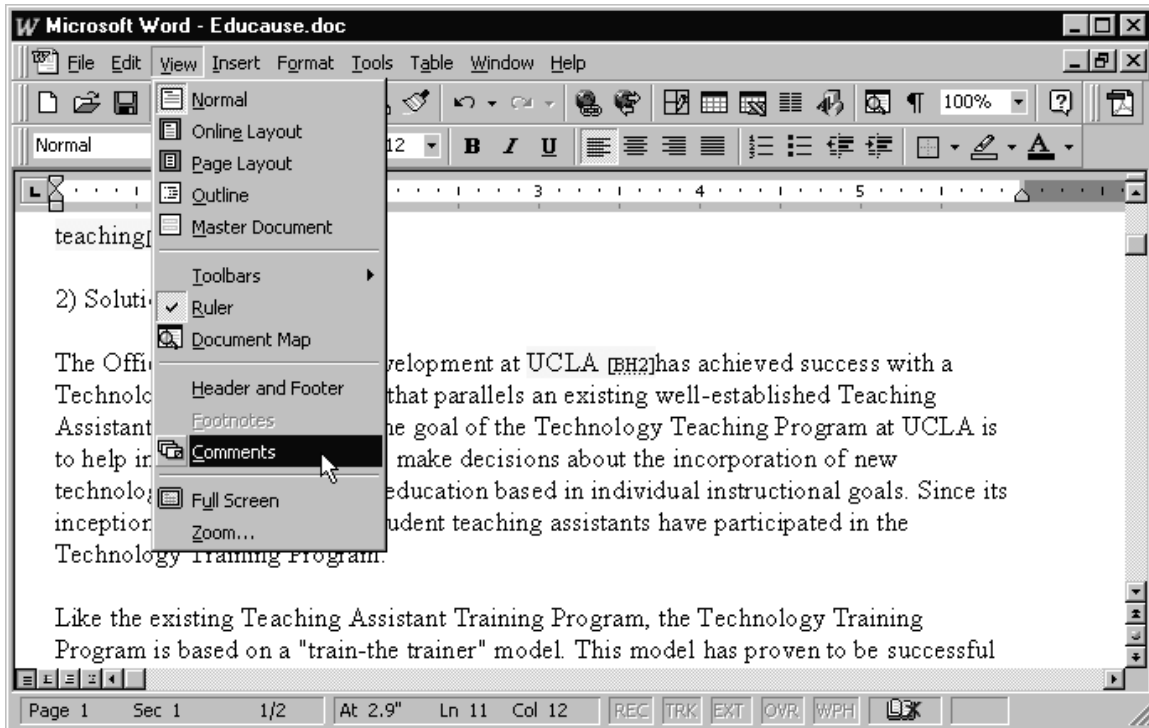
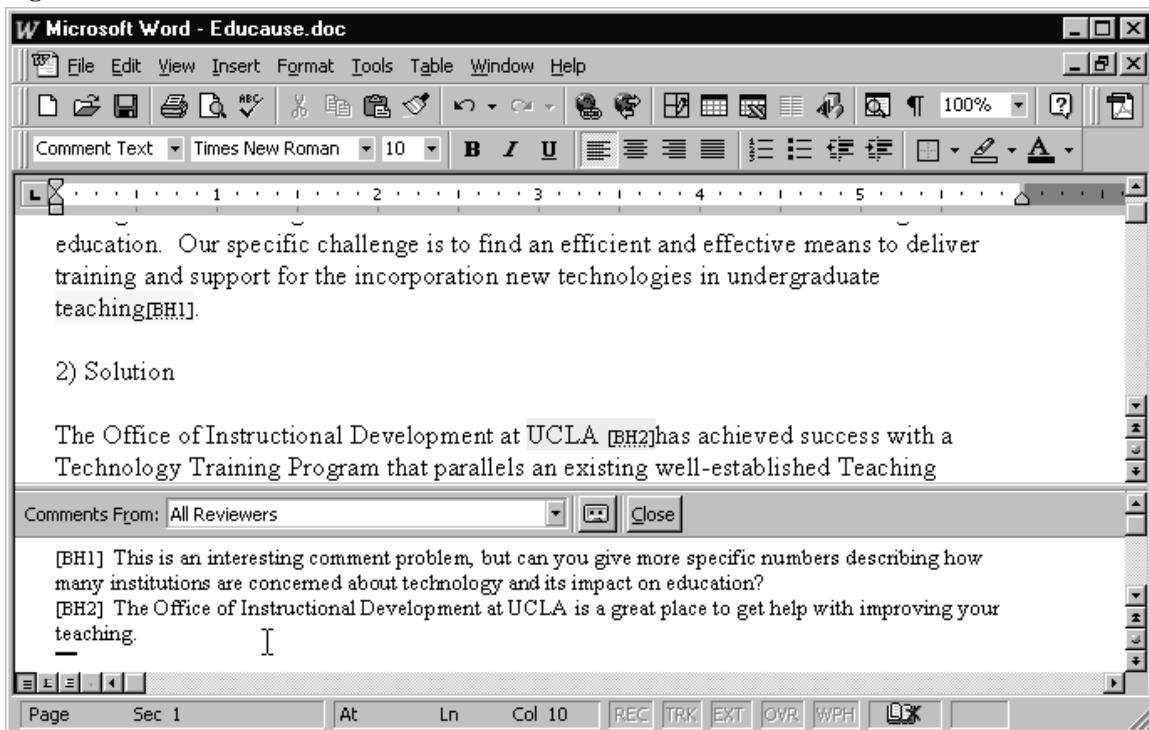


Figure 6c

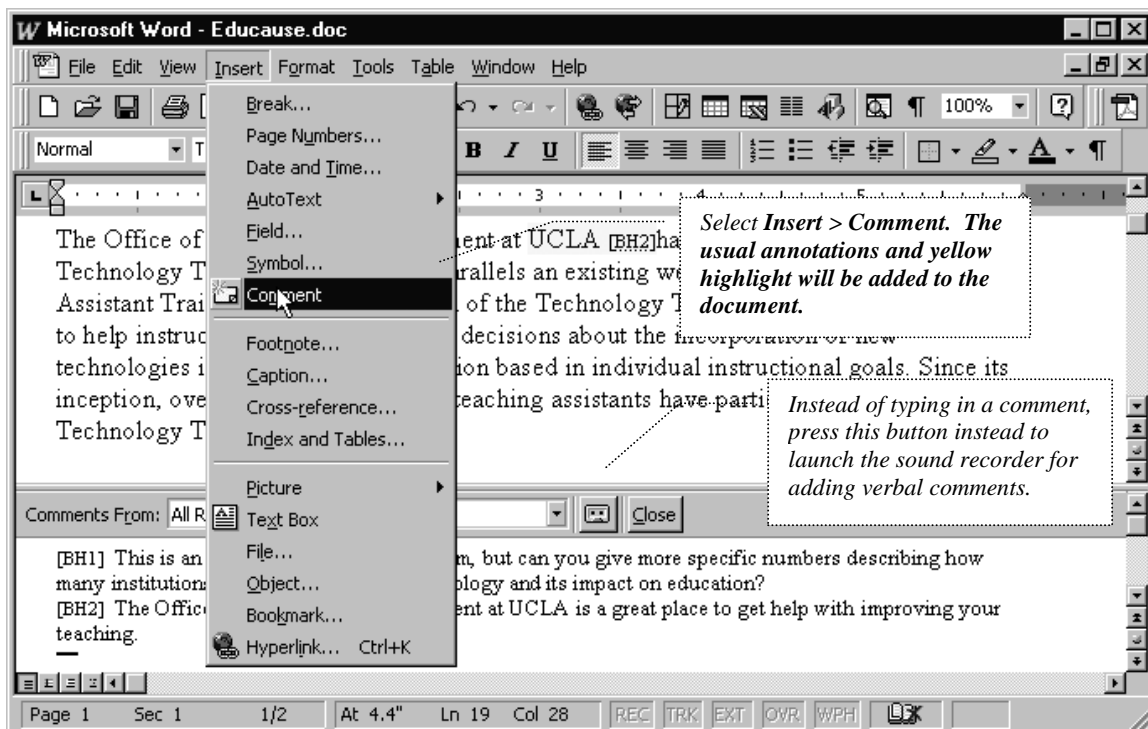


Adding Verbal Comments To A Word Document

As you were adding in written comments to your document you probably noticed a little button with a cassette tape icon on it in the comments windowpane. Clicking this button will allow you to add recorded verbal comments to a Word document. The following steps provide a specific explanation of adding verbal comments.

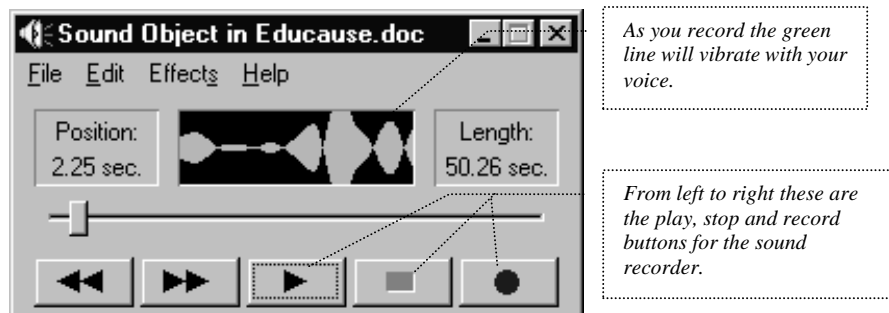
- 1) Pick a location in the document to add a verbal comment and then select **Insert > Comment** from the pull-down menus. The familiar comment widow will open, an annotation will be placed in the body of the document and in the list of comments. This is displayed in figure 7.

Figure 7



- 2) Instead of typing in text for your comment, click on the button with the little cassette tape to launch the Sound Recorder to record verbal comments. A small sound recorder window will open. Operation of the sound recorder is similar to a regular cassette tape recorder. The red circle will begin the recording process. The black square will stop your recording. The single black triangle will allow you to play back the comments you have recorded. As you record, the green line in the center of the window will vibrate with the sound of your voice. The box on the right of the windowpane will show the **Length** of your recording.

Figure 8



3) Once you are finished your recording simply close sound recorder by clicking the **X** in the upper right corner or select **Exit** from the file menu. Once you have closed sound recorder you will find a speaker cone icon in the comments windowpane. To listen to your recorded verbal comments, simply double-click on the speaker icon and your recorded comments will be played. As the comments, play the speaker will be grayed out until the verbal comment is finished playing.

Deleting Written and Verbal Comments

To delete written and verbal comments from your document, you may simply select the specific annotation within the body of the document and delete it. This will work for both written and recorded verbal comments. When you delete the annotation from the document, the associated comment in the comment list will also disappear.

Saving

Once you have added (or deleted) all your comments to your document simply save your document as you would any other. All your written and verbal comments will be saved within your document.