

## WRITING CENTER TIP SHEET

### PEER EDITING

#### 5 Ways to Effectively Peer Edit

1. Read before you comment. Read the piece through once before making any marks on it. This allows the author to give you information in the order he or she wants it presented, and so you don't comment on missing material that shows up later in the piece.
2. Mark for clarity. Go back through the piece and mark any areas where you don't understand what is being said, or where you need more information.
3. Review the assignment. Does the paper answer the question being asked? Is there missing material, or places where more information can be given? Mark them.
4. Think: So what? Does the piece tell you why the presented information is important? If not, the writer needs to explain/give more info to the reader. This gets the writer's point across more clearly.
5. Talk about it. After reviewing someone's piece, discuss your comments with them so they can ask questions and better understand your comments. This helps you articulate why you made the suggestions you did.

#### 5 Peer Editing Mistakes to Avoid

1. Save the love for someone who needs it. Telling someone you can't find anything to improve on their paper means one of two things: you're a lazy reader or you don't know how to peer edit. You waste valuable opportunities and time by not critiquing someone's work to the best of your ability.
2. You are not the grammar and spelling police. If you notice a spelling mistake, mark it, but avoid hunting down and fixing grammar—it'll distract you from reviewing the paper as a whole. If the piece contains a lot of grammatical mistakes, tell the writer he/she needs to fix them and give one or two examples of mistakes you found in the paper.
3. Fast and furious. Blowing through a peer review "just to get it over with" shows that you're not invested in learning the skills in becoming a good teacher or colleague. Plus, it disrespects your friends and their work.
4. The pen is mightier than the (blank) page. Turning someone's paper back with no comments on it is a waste of time—see #3 above. Mark up the page with questions.
5. Insecurity is unattractive. Don't succumb to the idea that you have nothing to say or offer in helping someone be a better writer—be confident in your opinions.