I. Suggestions for Streamlining Response to Student Writing

• Don’t grade all student writing. Responses should be appropriate for the stage of writing: for most low-stakes writing, students need credit and perhaps a check or check plus or minus to indicate quality. Tailor the response to the need, considering Belanoff’s concepts of Guts, Bones, and Skin:
  o GUTS Invention: talking, listing, brainstorming
  o GUTS Drafting: writing for the writer: talking
  o BONES Revising: shaping for audiences: group reading
  o SKIN Editing: polishing and proofreading

• Create situations in which groups or partners can provide helpful feedback. When students are asked to read papers from other students, the activity should be focused and the readers should be prepared to offer real help. Two areas are most helpful to the revising writer:
  o Meeting the assignment requirements: other writers can tell writers whether the assignment’s components are present and fully answered if they’ve seen models
  o Clarity: readers can tell writers what they understand and don’t (one possibility is to ask readers to write a summary of the paper for the writer)

• If students are writing multiple versions of a basic assignment (as in several article reviews), ask that all copies be turned in for credit with only one revised and edited for your feedback and/or grade.
  o Students gain authority over their writing
  o You evaluate only the best product

• Avoid writing on student papers
  o Grading cover sheets with three categories:
    Development: Answers assignment’s requirements
    Clarity: notes about what’s clear and not
    Style/editing notes

• Ask students for a cover letter for writing assignments, in which they describe their process and write about their writing. Respond to this letter as part of your response to the assignment.
• In responding to student writing, use positive aspects of the paper to model revision: don’t just read negatively (Instead of just writing that analysis is thin, point out that analysis in the first section is supported by specific examples and ask for a similar level of support in the next section)

• Don’t edit: tell students about the patterns of error you note.
  o Conferences
  o Writing Center
  o Handbook (with support)
  o Editing habits
  o Don’t accept papers with egregious error
  o Mini-lessons and editing workshops

II. Suggestions for Aiding Transfer of Skills

In designing assignments, consider the conventions of writing in the discipline.

See the writing project as a process: turn it into a list of tasks, if possible.

• What’s new: spell out which elements of the assignment are particular to the discipline and model these for students
  o Register terms
  o Documentation
  o Analysis of writing in the field

• What’s familiar: consider which tasks students are likely to have learned in earlier writing courses
  o Summaries/abstracts
  o Similar documenting concerns
  o Basic report format
  o Comparison and contrast
  o Analysis

Glossary of common terms of writing pedagogy (wac.appstate.edu)