



Ideas

What's this all about?

- Do:**
Identify/define the focus.
Highlight big ideas that develop the focus.
Highlight details that support the central focus.
Circle ideas that don't support the focus.

- Ask:**
What are you writing about?
What's the main idea?
How does this idea/sentence connect to the topic?
What does this mean? Why does this matter?

I don't need help!

Tip: Be curious about their assignment and ask specific questions about what they're doing.

Conventions

Make time for grammar and mechanics!

- Do:**
Read out loud and see what the student automatically self-corrects and picks up.
Look for one or two patterns or constellations of errors and show the student how to correct those patterns of errors.

- Ask:**
Do you see anything that is missing?
What do we need to change?
Does that sound right? Which one sounds better?

- Say:**
Let me show you how to... now let's try one together... and then you can try one on your own.

Organization

What's the overall structure of the piece?

- Do:**
Identify the organizational pattern.
Highlight any transitional words or sentences.
Provide options for organizing if there isn't any organization.

- Ask:**
Talk to me about what is happening in each paragraph.
How do you want to start/end this piece of writing?
How are these paragraphs related? How can we connect them?

Word Choice

How do specific vocabulary or details convey meaning?

- Do:**
Identify specific nouns and active verbs.
Identify overused words and linking verbs (is/am/are/was/were).
Highlight moments when more detail or imagery would help.
Take me there: What am I hearing?
Seeing? Smelling? Feeling?

- Ask:**
What's another/more specific word you can use?
Take me there: what am I hearing?
seeing? smelling? feeling?
Would you be able to draw this scene?

What are merfolk?
There are only mermen and mermaids.

Tip: Listen actively and ask them where they're coming from before judging or correcting.

Voice

Is there a distinct tone or flavor?

- Do:**
Transcribe.
Identify the perspective, point-of-view, or style.
Affirm the perspective, point-of-view, or style and reflect back.

- Ask:**
How do you feel about the topic? How do you let the reader know what you feel?
Who is your audience? How can you make this interesting for them?

I'm bored.

Tip: Build rapport. Ask them about how they're doing and get to know their interests.

Sentence Fluency

What's the rhythm and flow to the language?

- Do:**
Read out loud.
Pause and mark down areas where a transition seems absent.
Mark where sentences seem repetitive.

- Ask:**
Are there any words missing?
The sentences all sound the same.
How can you add some variety?
How does that sound?
How are these sentences related?
How can we connect them?

Say:
I got a little lost when...

I don't know.
It doesn't matter.

Tip: Ask about what matters to them and help them find other ways to engage, e.g., drawing, talking it out, etc.