Tips for Providing Quick and Meaningful Feedback
Types One and Two Writing

Types One and Two Writing are designed for quick feedback, but it can take practice (and a willingness to give up some control) to master strategies for providing meaningful feedback without collecting and grading every paper. Here are some tips that will help.

Provide in-class feedback:
- Practice "over the shoulder" scoring, taking a quick glance at student responses as you move around the room or monitor shared digital documents.
- End class with a Type One or Two "exit ticket" and scan responses as students exit the class.
- Spot-check by reading responses only from students whom you anticipate may need help.
- Have each group choose the best response from their group. Provide quick feedback on these samples and direct students to self-score their own writing (more on this below).

Speed up your "over the shoulder" scoring:
- Ask students to circle a set number (usually 4–6) of key words in their writing—words that best capture the meaning of their response.
- As you skim papers, focus on just these key words.

Let students do the work:
- Embrace the power of self-scoring. As you go over a correct response, train students to check off or highlight that content in their own responses.
- Incorporate the "below the line" technique. Ask students to draw a line below the last line of their written response. During self-scoring, ask students to record parts of the answer that they missed or that need further detail below the line to increase accountability, practice notetaking, and provide an accurate study guide.
- Save the best response from a previous class and use it as a model for future classes.

Collect a sampling of papers:
- For a closer look at student responses, consider collecting and scoring a sampling of papers instead of all of them.
- Roll dice to determine which row or group you will collect or pull popsicle sticks with students' names on them.

Tips for Providing Quick and Meaningful Feedback
Types Three and Four Writing

Collecting and grading is the recommended method for Types Three and Four Writing, but for teachers who are swamped with grading (or struggling not to correct every error), there are a few alternatives.

Establish a clear focus and be disciplined about sticking to it:
- Give yourself permission to overlook some of the errors that you see. Remember, the purpose of Focus Correction Areas (FCAs) is to narrow the writing focus for more targeted practice. Provide feedback and scores only on the designated FCAs.
- If using points, be sure that the first FCA (the content FCA) carries the most weight and that the mechanics FCA, if using one, carries the least. This allows you to spend most of your effort emphasizing content, and a low mechanics grade will not have a serious impact on the overall grade.
- When providing anecdotal feedback, consider limiting yourself to one "glow" and one "grow" per paper. This takes less time on your end and is more manageable for students as well.

Simplify grading:
- Instead of assigning points to each FCA, consider scoring each FCA with a check, check- minus, or X ("got it," "almost got it," "nope"). This will speed up grading while still providing feedback to students about their understanding of a key concept.

Involve students in the feedback process:
- Use focused editing tasks. Before collecting work, ask students to color-code or otherwise identify evidence for each FCA (underline your content vocabulary, highlight your claim, number your text examples, etc.). This helps build student accountability while making it easier for you to skim for the content or skills you're looking for.
- When really pressed for time, consider having students score their own papers. An easy way to do this is to collect all papers in advance and skim the pile, pulling out one that meets all expectations. Skim for common errors or content misconceptions in the rest of the papers.
- The next day, return the papers to students and use the exemplary paper you selected as a model. Have students check their answers against this model, checking off items that are correct and making fixes to any errors they find. Take time to point out common misconceptions that you observed and clarify for students as needed.

Stop fixing mechanics errors:
- Flag problems with previously mastered conventions by marking the Check Mate™ rule number in the margin or by putting a check mark in the margin and asking students to make the correction and to indicate the rule number.
- Set a maximum number of notations per paper so you don't get bogged down in the process and lose focus on the content, style, and organization of the writing.