**SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO GUIDE PEER EDITING**

**(Courtesy of Maria Lima, from May 2nd, 2016 class meeting)**

NAME (Editor):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The writer’s name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Does the introduction to the paper provide the background you need to understand the argument/analysis that follows? Does it attract your interest? How would you improve it? Write down the essay’s argument in your own words, as you understand it from reading the introduction.
2. Read every topic sentence of every paragraph at least twice. Does it introduce the paragraph well? Does it flow nicely from the last sentence of the paragraph that precedes it? Topic sentences not only tell us of the focus of the paragraph, but they let us know what the paragraph is doing to advance the writer’s argument. Suggest ways of improving transitions and topic sentences. Remember that I read the title, the introduction, the topic sentence in each paragraph, and the conclusion, and I can tell if the paper is an A, B, C, or worse ***before*** reading the whole essay. And I’m never wrong ☺
3. Does the writer use quotations well? Circle at least two examples in the paper itself. Are there page numbers after every quote? Does the writer remember how to punctuate with quotation marks? How well do the quotes contribute to and support the writer’s argument? MARK ANY HIT-AND-RUN QUOTATION(S). Is there any section in the paper that would benefit from more quotes from the text? How many indented quotes are there? Are they double-spaced without quotation marks and period inside the parentheses? Remember that you only indent if the quote is *longer* than four lines (we are using the MLA format).
4. How much does the writer vary the way to introduce her quotes? Evaluate all verbs used to introduce quotes and paraphrased information. Suggest ways of improving them. Remember that “SAY” is a very weak verb.
5. Can you recognize the writer’s voice, the writer ethos, throughout the paper? Mark the passages in the paper where you miss the writer’s presence. Good writing means never exaggerate, nor condescend—watch for these too.
6. Do you disagree with any of the assertions made about the text(s), either interpretations or evaluations? Are there ways in which you would have handled the argument differently? Suggest ways in which the writer might incorporate your objections (by refuting them) into the paper. Planting at least one naysayer is required.
7. Has the writer varied her sentence structure often enough? Could she have combined sentences more effectively and avoided unnecessary repetition? Remember “the arms of your sentence” (107) and my drum: the beat of your sentences needs to be varied.
8. Read over the concluding paragraph. Does it merely summarize the paper? What emotion/idea/ question does the writer try to leave you with?
9. Has the writer used the Present Tense consistently? By convention we write about literature in the Present Tense.
10. How has the writer used the researched material? Does she rely too much on a single source? Is the research fully integrated? Remember that no paragraph should scream RESEARCH! And that merely adding a parenthetical citation is NOT enough. You need to introduce the critic –whole name the first time—and the quoted passage using the right verb.
11. Finally, do you find the title appropriate to the argument? Is it catchy? Can you suggest another one?A title is a doorway into your argument—make sure it’s a good one.
12. What about the works cited page? Are the sources recent? Is the format MLA?