

## **Responding to Writing at the Sentence Level—Principles and Practices**

### *Some general principles*

- Some of the “errors” that alarm teachers are not matters of right or wrong, but rather matters of taste and discipline.
- Rather than addressing sentence-level writing as a series of “mistakes,” it is more helpful to approach style as a series of rhetorical choices students make.
- Students should learn to attend to sentence-level issues as an essential last step in the writing process.

### *Some best practices*

- Encourage students to act as proofreaders for each other.
- Encourage listening and reading aloud.
- Assign a handbook, or direct students web-based style guides and additional resources.
- Categorize errors by focusing on two or three sentence-level issues at a time in your response.
- Have students respond to your response.

### *Some time saving strategies*

- Respond to patterns of sentence-level errors in a set of essays in a subsequent class.
- Make use of model essays with varying rhetorical contexts.
- Assign mini-essays for practice.