Guidelines to follow when conferencing a paper:

1. Keep an open mind. The paper you are reading is not perfect. Nowhere near it. What you need to do is make sure you are being kind to the writer. You are not grading the paper. You are *helping* the writer boost his/her grade on the paper.
2. When reading the paper, you will make corrections in spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc… You will also type comments or ask questions where the writer may want to add a little more info. You will admit if something is confusing to you and needs clarification.
3. It is okay to say that you didn’t particularly enjoy a specific part of the story, but you need to say this tactfully. You’ll say something along the lines of “Melissa, maybe you could work on page three. The description (or whatever you didn’t like) needs some changes.”
4. If you are rude with your commentary either on the paper or spoken in class, you will get a 0 for participating on that paper, and that will significantly drop your grade.

Other things to be aware of:

1. I will not lead the discussion of papers. Each of you will comment on each paper – more than just one comment. We’ll go through the paper page by page and spend the class period talking about one person’s paper.
2. I will be listening to each of you and grading you on participation. We are all comfortable enough with each other by now that there should be no nervousness about talking in class. I want all of you to feel as though you can say what is on your mind about the paper as long as you say it with tact.
3. When you finish commenting/correcting a paper, you need to email it to the writer and to ME. The writer will have 8 copies to read through all comments, make all corrections, and use what he/she can to boost the grade.
4. This should not be the only peer edit you plan. After you make all of these changes, find more (plus one more) people to edit your paper.

To the writer:

1. Our goal is not to crucify your paper, but we are going to pick it apart piece by piece. Don’t be afraid of what your classmates or I have to say about your writing. We are doing this to help you. You can take our comments and use them or ignore them completely.
2. Be prepared for questions. As we comment, we’ll involve you a lot with questions about your writing. Don’t be worried!