How to Peer Edit Someone’s Paper

Peer editing is a necessary evil. It is really difficult to edit your own work. If you do, you tend to read what you meant to write rather than what you wrote.

You don’t have to be a grammarian to help someone with edits.

You need to go over the paper three times. Here is what you do.

1. Read the paper all the way through the first time. You are too nosey not to. You want to know what the paper is about.
2. Starting with the last sentence on the last page, read the paper backward. Does that sentence make sense? Can you note any grammatical errors? Do they have a complete sentence or a run on sentence?
3. The last pass is from the beginning to end. Does the paper flow or does it seem disjointed? Does the paper stay on topic?

Make sure you note any questions you may have about the paper. If a paper has to be explained, the writer needs to fix that. The paper should stand on it’s own merit.