Analyzing Student Papers Quickly but (Mostly) Reliably

General principles:
1) Analyze before you read.
2) Don't mark until your formulate an agenda.
3) Mark top down. Start with the first "No" answer to the questions below.

Read the introduction and the conclusion.
1. Does the introduction offer a problem/question/issue?
2. Do the introduction and conclusion match?
3. Does the introduction (or the conclusion) offer a clear, substantial main point?
4. Is the main point a claim that directly addresses the problem/question/issue?

Read quickly for logic.
1. Can you quickly find sub-claims intended to serve as reasons supporting the main point/claim?
2. Do those reasons in fact add up to a coherent argument in support of the claim?

Check evidence.
1. Is each reason supported with sufficient, appropriate evidence presented in reliable ways?
2. Does the evidence point to better reasons than those offered by the writer?

Check for acknowledgement of other views.
1. Does the common ground state a position that a thinking person might actually hold?
2. Does the writer acknowledge and rebut objection that would occur to most careful readers?
3. Does the writer acknowledge alternative views, other evidence, other ways of interpreting the evidence, etc.

Read quickly for focus/coherence.
1. Do the sentences at the end of the introduction announce the key concepts that run through the body/argument as themes (and are those concepts in fact mentioned regularly)?
2. Do the sentences regularly focus on characters appropriate to the kind of argument the writer is making?