

Courses > 2008Summer62-391-11 TCHG LANG ARTS ELEM > RDE #2



## RDE #2

**Tammy** ([permalink](#))

Created on Wednesday, 05/28/2008 11:01 PM by [Tammy](#)

1. I chose to write about Chapter 1 in *Selecting and Teaching Focus Correction Areas*. Chapter 1 is an introduction to focus correction areas and describes that because every student has different skills it is necessary to teach around their diverse writing skills and needs. The chapter then goes in to discuss the three different teaching strategies including requiring the students to read every draft out loud. The second strategy is requiring students to practice new editing skills on their past papers. Finally, the third strategy, focus correcting, which is a selective approach to correcting student writing. The next part of the chapter focuses mainly on the support for focus correction with the use of extensive research. Implementing focus correction, the third part of chapter 1, describes how focus correction should be used in the classroom. It is stated that focus correction should be done with care and purpose, stress rhetorical and stylistic considerations in writing, and can also be used to redirect the students through a sequence of drafts leading to a better final product.

2. Lois Rosen stated that almost "50% of their combined responses on their students' papers focused on mechanical and grammatical errors."

This quote goes along with what we also discussed in class. I think it is very intimidating for a student when they have truly worked hard to produce a great paper and when they receive it back, it is covered in red ink. I think this may occur too often which can discourage students from writing completely. It is important for teachers to put aside the grammatical errors and look beneath the misspellings, where in fact could be a very creative and well written paper.

3. In reflection to the previous quote, I had a professor in the past who did exactly what can be discouraging to anyone. I worked extremely hard on a paper when in the end, all he seemed to care about was the grammar and mechanical errors. I think for younger children especially, it can be discouraging because it can direct them to focus solely on grammar rather than their actual writing. On a positive side, I also once had a professor who returned your paper to you until it was perfect, no matter how many tries it took or until you were ready to accept any grade less than perfect. I thought this was a great opportunity to see the mistakes, correct them, and keep trying until you received the grade you deserved.

4. I really enjoyed the way the Collins' books are written. Sometimes it is very overwhelming to read textbooks that are hundreds of pages in length in which you may lose focus on what is important rather than reading to finish reading. The Collins' books are packed with information and are written in the order in which the focus correction areas are learned. At first, focus correction areas were confusing but after reviewing what I read in the book and along with the class discussions, focus correction areas are much easier to understand. I also really like the chart at the end of the book, this is a book I intend to hold on to in the future!

5. Today in class I really enjoyed the activity with the three different parts of a story. Each group had three different envelopes, one with settings, characters, and a problem. Students' would then create their own narrative by using the three different parts in their stories. I thought this was a great activity because it gives the students' certain areas to focus on and include while allowing them to put it together in a narrative using their own creativity. This is definitely an activity I will use in my classroom in the future.

### Comments

1. Your summary captures the Collins' approach to teaching writing in a very nice way. You will be able to return to your words and easily refresh yourself on his methodology.

2. I agree, the focus of writing instruction should not be solely on grammatical errors. There are so many other areas that the focus can and should be focused upon. FCAs rule!

3. Use your prior knowledge to build the kind of pedagogy that you believe will be best for your students. A super reflection with a lot of thought about your past experiences as a learner.

4. I am so pleased to read that you intend to keep your Collins' books. I hope that through careful work on my part that I request students to purchase texts that are worthy and will be able to used to assist in future career paths.

5. Thank you for the compliment on the various story-starter activities. I hope I demonstrated how to encourage students to write without always using a clearly stated prompt. Sometimes, it is important for students to decide with our guidance how they will begin to write a story.

Friday, 05/30/2008 8:31 PM by [DAVID](#)

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### **Christine** ([permalink](#))

Created on Sunday, 05/25/2008 2:21 PM by [Christine](#)

1. I chose to write about chapter one of the Collins Developing Writing and Thinking Skills. This chapter describes the five different types of writing assignments. Type One writing is used to get one's ideas ready for writing. It is a timed writing and requires a minimum number of lines for evaluation. This type of writing is most effective when used at the beginning of a unit. Type Two writing is best used as a quiz to determine what the writer knows about a topic. This type encourages students to write what they know or how they feel about a topic. In Type Three writing assignments, students have to create a draft, read it out loud and review it to make sure it completes the assignment, is easily read and avoids problems in the focus content areas. Focus content areas include the content, organization, convention and style of the writing assignment. Type Four writing requires two written drafts and someone to critique it and read it out loud. The last type of writing is used for major projects that are of publishable quality. Type Five requires multiple drafts and should be as close to perfect as possible because it is usually read by readers outside of the classroom.

2. "We read with our brains, not our eyes, and brains fill in what should be on the page and ignore the things that shouldn't be there." (pg. 19) I can relate to this quote because many times I will read a writing assignment from the computer screen to myself before I print it and find that I missed mistakes. I avoid more errors by printing out my writing and reading it out loud to hear myself make the mistakes.

3. It explains in the chapter that students to not edit and revise their papers because they do not know what to look for or how to fix a problem once they do find one. One of the tips they give in the book says that we should start by accessing the students' prior knowledge and then teach the meaning of the FCA. Once students understand this meaning they should go back into a writing folder and make corrections to their past papers for practice. Teachers should make sure the students know the meaning of the FCA before they give an assignment.

4. It is important that we let our students know what our reactions to their writings mean. We should show our students examples of how we react to different students writing. If we are going to make our students better writers we have to explain what our reactions mean and then teach them how to solve the problems they have in their writings.

5. The Collins Writing Program has a set of revision and editing symbols. If we as teachers are using these symbols to correct our students' papers, then they should be visible to the students in the classroom. I also liked that there are symbols for positive comments. It can be discouraging as a student to get a paper back filled with marks for mistakes so having positive comment symbols is a great idea.

**Comments**

1. A fine summary considering that you have not been able to attend class and learn first-hand about these various types of writing. We will focus on Type I - V in our after class sessions. On the mid-term, concepts relating to type I developing creative thinking skills and working through the various types to the opposite end of the spectrum, critical thinking skills focused in type V.

2. Read aloud all of your writings. Be sure that your students learn this vital habit. I will demonstrate the one-foot voice device that Collins recommends as an assisting tool to develop this concept.

3. I love this approach as it promotes the constructivist philosophy. Yes, encourage the students to use their own past writings to find and improve upon past errors.

4. Yes, we are the great models for our students. We must show them what we mean and use our own writings as examples of growth and learning, too.

5. I will post a chart that Collins has developed that shows these different revision and editing marks for all to easily see. I also recommend that each student has a copy of the one in your text to have in his/her writing notebook so they can easily refer to it when they wish.

Tuesday, 05/27/2008 9:54 AM by [DAVID](#)

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#### Ashley Post on May 22 2008 ([permalink](#))

Created on Thursday, 05/22/2008 8:19 PM by [Ashley](#)

1. Chapter 1 of *Improving Student Learning* went into detail about the five different types of writing assignments. **Type 1** is more or less the brainstorming stage. This is where the students get all of their ideas or thoughts down on paper to start the assignment. There are no special requirements just those set by the teacher, i.e. In **five** lines, list foods that begin with "c". The grading system for this step is very simple, either you did it, +, or you didn't, x, and definitely not on whether or not the chosen words were the best ones. All the teacher is looking for is to see what his/her students know, not whether their writing is error free. In **Type 2**, this is where the students begin to build on an idea that was chosen from their type 1 writing. In grading, there should be a point system. The teacher can choose his/her own point system accordingly and it should be more or less based on if the criteria was met not if their explanations were well written. As long as they are on the right track, that's what we're looking for. **Type 3** writing is when the students start to read over their work to find errors that they may have made. The students use a "one-foot voice". Students read their papers out loud to themselves in no louder than a whisper so some anyone one foot away cannot hear them. At this point, teachers are looking for understandable work. At this stage in writing, the teachers use FCA's to address their students work. FCA's are Focus Correction Areas. Teachers normally choose 1-3 critical problems that the student should go back and focus on. When developing the FCA's, there are four things that should be considered. #1 is the content. Was the quality of the information provided and the details used to support them well written? #2 is organization. This one is pretty simple. The students need to make sure that their writing is in some sort of order. Thought/topics that jump around shouldn't be accepted. #3 is convention. Are there spelling or grammar errors and is their writing legible? #4 is style. The writing needs to flow. The sentences need to make sense and the tone the writing is in is very important. In this stage, the teacher again develops a point system in which points are deducted for errors in the writing. **Type 4** writing is the time when a "community" is created in the classroom among the students. At this time, students get together with a peer so they can look over the writing, reading aloud, and pointing out any defaults. There are three things that the peers are looking at when going over their classmates work. #1 Was the assignment completed? #2 Does the writing sound right and was it easy to read/comprehend? #3 Were the FCA's addressed and fixed? As far as the evaluation goes, the teacher bases things on the FCA's. In the last stage, **Type 5**, the teacher's are looking for almost perfect work. The type 5 writing is also referred to as the "ideal text". At this point in time, the work of the student needs to be free of any grammatical/spelling/content errors. At the completion of all levels, the work should be able to be displayed to others, the outside world, i.e. other classes in the school.

2. "If I intend to display student work, shouldn't the work be perfect?" (pg. 37) The quote is pretty self-explanatory.

The quote in itself asks a question but the answer is found within. Work that is displayed with a poor grade or anything less than almost perfect is subjecting the student(s) to ridicule. It isn't fair to anyone for a student's work to be publicized when the chance of poor remarks is coming out. Not only would the student feel terrible but how would you as a teacher feel? This is something I will always make sure I am aware of. Not all of your students are going to work at the same level. A student knows well before you whether he can do something or not and to what expectation. However, if you know that a student is having trouble and their grade reflects that, why hang up the work with the rest of the class's A's? If we do that as teachers, we will never reach our students on a positive level.

3. I believe the five types of writing assignments is an amazing thing to follow. It pretty much follows the writing process but it also has all of the guidelines already laid out for teachers and students. There are no gray areas. There are specific things that are required making it much harder for a student to do anything less than achieve. Where was this guy when I was in grade-school?

4. I love the quote at the beginning of Chapter 2 in Farris. "Live a balanced life--learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play a work every day some." Life doesn't have to be miserable. We must work to survive but surviving also means taking a time to look around and do things that we enjoy.

5. Dr. Walker said something in Tuesday's class that really caught my attention. It isn't necessary for everything to be counted for a grade. If we do this as teachers, we will have no life. Are life will revolve around papers and that infamous **RED INK** :o)

## Comments

1. You have captured the essential elements of the five types of writing in your outstanding summary. We will practice many of these next week, after class. Then you will have your absences all made up and excused.

2. Posted work should not have a grade on it ever. Grades are personal and must be kept confidential. You may post work with comments for all to learn from and in the Collins' approach, all that is assessed is located in the no more than three FCAs. Everyone learns from each other in a non-threatening and non-embarrassing manner.

3. Yes, this method does focus on specific skills and helps students grow and master their deficits and then move on to new needs or more advanced concepts.

4. Absolutely, let's enjoy our work. I do!

5. I will spend this long weekend with my wife at a Renaissance Fair in Lancaster. We will enjoy the day with friends and each other. I will do no work related to my course and rejuvenate myself. Your work will be reviewed but not to the expense of my family and my life. As Bon Jovi sing, "It's my life..." I choose to have it without red ink, thank you.

Friday, 05/23/2008 2:07 PM by [DAVID](#)

1. Nice job summarizing this chapter and the five types of writing assignments.

2. This is true. We have to make sure we clearly look things over before displaying them.

3. I agree. Having a writing program like this to follow in elementary school would have made things more

clear.

4. We were at the practicum by new teachers to make sure you take time out to do the things you enjoy or else you will be miserable and it will show to your students.

5. Yes, this sounds so true. And red ink is so discouraging. I definitely do not want to be like that.

Monday, 06/09/2008 7:13 PM by [Christine](#)

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### Post on May 21 2008 ([permalink](#))

Created on Wednesday, 05/21/2008 11:20 PM by [Kylie](#)

Updated on Wednesday, 05/21/2008 11:21 PM by [Kylie](#)

1. In chapter 1 of *Selecting and Teaching Focus Correction Areas*, Collins defines an FCA (Focus Correction Areas) as writing skills which teachers use to help aid with individual student's needs. He also includes that different writing tasks require different writing skills. One of teaching strategy that Collins discusses is that you should listen to your own writing and listen to others read your own writing out loud to edit. Next, Collins gives in depth research account that supports the FCA approach. This chapter focuses a lot on how to implement FCAs into a classroom. Collins suggests that there must be a purpose to an FCA and to not focus all the attention on mechanical errors in writing. Rather, an FCA should focus on more rhetorical and stylistic aspects of writing and a teacher should require beneficial feedback in order to redirect students. A major point that Collins emphasizes is that this writing approach is about teaching writing and students must be able to make mistakes. Researcher, Peter B. Vaill, is an organizational theorist composes three characteristics that appear in a person 100% of the time. These three characteristics are spending extraordinary amounts of time, having very strong feelings about the purpose and goals, and developing a laser-like focus on a few key outcomes. These characteristics sum up Collins' approach through student improvement in writing.

2. "Emphasis on the product usually leads to difficulties with the process" (pg. 7). I liked how this quote is so straight forward. Paul Eschholz is discussing a prior method to writing and with this model it is very clean how students can become very overwhelmed and stressed with an expectation of a successful finished product. Eschholz is ultimately suggesting how crucial the process of writing really is. When a student would have such a large goal put in front of them it is harder for them to create but when there is a plan and a process laid out for them, students are able to develop fluency in their writing.

3. Today in class, Dr. Walker shared with us the difference between creative thinking and critical thinking. I found it interesting that creative thinking may lead to critical thinking, or vice versus, but that creative thinking and critical thinking do not occur at the same time. I never looked at it as two different aspects but always under a generalization of 'thinking'.

4. I think we touched on this in class and it was reiterated in the Collins' book of FCA but I was amazed to find that when marking or editing a student's paper is decreases their yearning to write. I feel that on a teacher's perspective that it would be beneficial to mark a students paper but yet I do recall being ashamed and embarrassed to get a paper back with tons of markings on it. With FCAs in a classroom you will have something to focus on and specifically mark. I think that I will defiantly think about that when I enter my own classroom

5. In class we talked a little bit more about the one foot method and on pg. 3 the book talks about a

great strategy on how to edit your writing. You are to listen to yourself read your own writing and then have others read it out loud as you listen to them. I think that is a great idea and can defiantly use that as a technique in a classroom.

### Comments

1. A fine summary. I love the phrase "laser-like focus" and I believe students who use the Collins' approach learn how to hone their skills in this manner.

2. Yes, the plan is so significant. I used an analogy in class of going on a trip and not having a map or directions. Writing is like traveling, we are more productive with a plan and less likely to get lost along the way. Always encourage your students to pre-write either via a web, list, outline, use a graphic organizer, etc. and they will be more liely to find success in their drafts and later finished pieces.

3. Wonderful, you have learned a deeper understanding related to thinking skills.

The continuum is: Creative Thinking -----Critical Thinking. Yes, they can lead to one another, but they do occur simultaneously, as they are polar opposites.

4. Oh yes, marks to the points of FCAs honor the students because they know what you are seeking in your assessment. They only need to focus on what is pre-determined in the FCAs that are always written on the top, left-side of the papers. If other mistakes are found they become future FCAs for that specific student.

5. Yes, first we listen to ourselves and make the necessary revisions and edits. If it is a type 3, the teacher then reviews the work next. However, if it is a type 4, a peer reads, reacts, and returns the paper for the next author's revision and edit. Next, the teacher reads, reacts, and assesses this draft using the FCAs as the sole criteria of assessment. If it is a type 4, the paper is returned to the author. If it is a type 5, the author continues to revise and edit, seek peer assistance, and lastly seeks the teacher to be the final set of eyes. When the paper is perfect (if this is possible), the paper is published, as all type 5 writings are intended.

Thursday, 05/22/2008 11:07 AM by [DAVID](#)

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1. Awesome! I love the FCA approach. Students today are so pressured into doing everything perfect. No one is perfect so why should we as teachers promote it? It's great to motivate a child to do their best, but the more we push them to do everyting up to par, the more stressed the child becomes. When it comes to writing, we aren't looking for award winning work. Our job is to guide the child to improving their writing and getting them to the point that they want to write not because they have to. By using FCAs, we can pin point a few things at a time to help a child in improving their work.

2. Your quote ties in with what I just said prefectly. Why make things more difficult than they have to be? Instead of throwing an assignment at a student, let their own ideas flow first and then they can guide themselves to where they need to be according to the layout or process already provided.

3. Neat how things always go together. I think everything we learn in the education field piggy-backs from

something else.

4. I can relate. I never got a lot but when I did get a paper back with marks everywhere, I always hid my paper. Especially when the person next to you has a paper that is just about perfect...what a self esteem crusher.

5. I think this method is great. Children always like to talk outloud or I know even for myself, when I read something out loud, I catch more errors than I would if reading silently. If we can incorporate this method to students early, imagine over the years how much a students writing will improve aotomatically.

Friday, 05/23/2008 3:38 PM by [Ashley](#)

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### Samantha ([permalink](#))

Created on Wednesday, 05/21/2008 8:50 PM by [Samantha](#)

1. I read chapter 1 in *The Collins Writing Program: Improving Student Performance Through Writing and Thinking Across the Curriculum*. The chapter goes into great detail about the five different types of writing assignments. Type I allows the writer to be creative and gradually becomes more of a critical process as the types progress to Type V. The Collins Writing Program was established to make assessing papers much more easier and faster to evaluate for teachers. The next several pages were about the five separate types of writing. In the beginning of each Type the form, audience, and evaluation were given. Each Type has a separate purpose in its place and order of the program. After the descriptions of each individual Type, a page was solely dedicated to the different revision and editing symbols. To end the chapter, general guidelines were given to help the teachers who would be using the five types of writing assignments. Also, the advantages and disadvantages of each Type were given.

2. "The program helps students grow as thinkers and writers because it states explicitly what students must do to be successful" (p.1). This quote is pretty much self-explanatory. I chose this quote however because I believe there is much truth behind it. Many times writing is the students worst subject. Writing a paper can be very stressful on students and knowing exactly what to do can be very beneficial in the end. This program really does explain step for step on how to write an exceptional paper.

3. I feel reading our Type 1 or Type 2 sentences with a neighbor is very beneficial. Instead of just reading your work to yourself is simply not enough, getting a fellow peers opinion of your work can help you out much more in the long run. I have used peer editing in former classes and felt uncomfortable at first having a random person reading my paper, but they do not know you allowing them to give you an honest opinion and make the best out of your work.

4. Throwing the brain around in class is a good idea I thought to use in the classroom instead of raising hands. I remember back in elementary school we used a game called 'Popcprn'. We usually used it during reading. Whoever was reading at the time would read a paragraph or two then say popcorn and someone's name. That person then would have to pick up where that person left off. Usually kids would try to pick on the people who they knew were not paying attention.

5. I like the idea of getting out of your seats once in awhile as we did today in class. Children definitely sit entirely way too long during the school day, then teacher's wonder why they have so many students acting out in the classroom. All the kids need is a little movement here and there. And now there's talk about getting rid of recess! I think that is absurd, if anything the students need more recess and play activities.

### Comments

1. great summary, you are very detailed and I can definatly see that you had clear objectives. I liked how you used your transitional phrases to proceed through your summary. I thought your covered the main points that are covered through the chapter.

2. I like how simplistic this quote is as well. I think it is very straight to the point. I think you had good elaboration on this quote and you added an example to it as well which is great for an audience, like myself, to read and relate to, which is great.

3. I think that reading our sample work was beneficial as well because you could see other points of view and how different each was. Also, great job connecting prior experience to your reflection. I think it really benefits you by doing this.

4. This is a good way to get kids active in a classroom- I have used that to do camp activities and other introduction things as well. I think it is a great way to get kids to use their brains but yet they aren't really thinking about that- they are just thinking about who is going to catch the ball (brain) next.

5. I think this is soooo important in a classroom. I know personally that when I sit to long that I get bored and then I think about my leg or behind getting numb and sooner or later I am lost because I was so concentrated on me being so uncomfortable that I totally missed what the teacher was saying. I think that is a great thing to bring to your classroom.

Wednesday, 05/21/2008 11:32 PM by [Kylie](#)

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1. A lovely summary in which you provide readers with an overview that is to the point. I love the fact that Collins writes the advantages and disadvantages of his various types of writings.

2. Yes, the step-by-step method is quite clear and friendly. Students really appreciate knowing what will be assessed so writing is not so open-ended. I like the FCAs for this reason.

3. I agree, peer-editing is a research-based method and professional authors use it, too. We all grow from reading others' works.

4. Popcorn questioning/answering is fun and productive. Find and use activities that are fun and productive and your students will love learning. You can buy the soft, toss toys at WalMart for less than a dollar!

5. Recess rules. Piaget would turn over in his grave to learn that communities are doing away with recess. We must allow the students to experience learning in many different ways; standing up, moving around, with music; outside, sitting on the floor, atop of desks, etc. Make learning both fun and productive.

Thursday, 05/22/2008 10:48 AM by [DAVID](#)

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### Post on May 21 2008 ([permalink](#))

Created on Wednesday, 05/21/2008 4:28 PM by [Julie](#)

Updated on Wednesday, 05/21/2008 4:48 PM by [Julie](#)

1. I read and analyzed Chapter 3 of the Improving Student Performance book called Essential Writing Assignments. The text goes in detail about 4 tasks essential to the world of writing, and gives examples of a seven element assignment to go with each. Some are filled in to give a model of how it can be done and others are blank that you can directly use as a resource. The first essential assignment, according to Collins, is the summaries and the seven element assignment to go along with it is the 10 percent summary. The second is vocabulary cards and provides a five step process on how to teach new terms. It also points out that you should use general terms along with specific academic words when teaching them. The third is comparing and contrasting. There are four activities you can use in identifying differences and similarities which are classifying, comparing, creating metaphors and analogies. The fourth is a persuasive essay.

2. "Writing summaries of precis of articles or lectures is a superb way to develop reading and listening skills, to practice decentering, and to develop the skills of precision, clarity, and succinctness" (P.62). I agree with this quote. Summaries are good for children to get into the habit of making for the reasons given and it makes them pay attention more knowing they will have to summarize it after. It is great for developing all of the elements of language arts I think! Being able to spit back in your own words what you got out of a story or article is a good skill to have.
  
3. Reflecting on the reading, I would like to point out some of the examples given to guide vocabulary instruction. The students need to encounter the terms more than once to know them. Go over them a few times, keep checking for comprehension, don't just assume after teaching them once they get it even if they don't raise their hands with questions about them. Have them learn the new words associated with an image. Visual learners here ya go! It will also be helpful when they are trying to remember what a word means to have a picture in their head as a key or a little trick to remembering it.
  
4. In the reading there were a few good examples given of quick activities for studying vocabulary when done with a different lesson a little early. Turn the list of words into a Bingo game. Say a definition and if the word that matches up with it is on their Bingo card, cover it. Use a form of pictorial by giving an illustration and students guess the word. I think these would be fun for the children and making learning fun is always a plus!
  
5. Reflecting on the discussions in class today here are a few things I did not know before going. Do NOT start a sentence with the word "it". Do not grade papers while your students are doing their work. Web site is capitalized and is two words even when it is not at the beginning of a sentence like here. Internet is always capitalized as well. You can not think creatively and critically simultaneously. Thanks for enlightening me.

### Comments

1. Very succinct and analytical summary of the chapter, you really focused on the main points of this chapter and recapped them well. I was really surprised to read what the four assignments Collins chose were, especially the vocabulary cards, I would never have thought of them before.
  
2. I agree, summarizing is a really important skill to have that I think is sometimes ignored or neglected by teachers today. One of the big aspects of reading is comprehension and what better way to promote comprehension of a text than having students summarize what they read.
  
3. Yes, for vocabulary instruction associating words with images is a great way to help students remember vocabulary. Not to mention it is less boring than writing sentences and it can be used in so many creative assignments.
  
4. I think any time a classroom activity can be made challenging and fun for the students is the best way, students will learn but they will also remember the experience more and if the lesson is more meaningful the material will be too.

5. I always go into Dr. Walker's class expecting to learn something new, our discussions in class always take different paths and lead to new topics. I think in this class we are going to learn not just language arts but also real world knowledge as well!

Wednesday, 05/21/2008 4:59 PM by [Larissa](#)

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1. Your summary is masterful. I enjoy how you generate the essential elements in individual sentences. Note, the top pillars of literacy development are being promoted through Collins' approach, i.e., vocabulary and comprehension. These are important connections to have students make between their reading and writing development.

2. I like your straight to the point wording of having students "...spit back in their own words" as the summary. A fine study skill for everyone to be able to master. Note, we are doing this *spit back* each and every time we write and react to an RDE! Built in success.

3. Yes, all too often novice teachers feel that instructing a skill one time will have the students magically master the skill. We must build in review and allow time to practice so students may incubate their knowledge and develop connections and categories to truly be able to apply their learning.

4. Not only fun activities but also supportive of both visual and kinesthetic learners. When you create active, engaging lessons your students will be motivated and desire to learn.

5. Thank you for such a nice review of what you learned in class today. I also appreciate Larissa's comments that she always expects to learn something new in my classes. Truly a lovely comment that supports masterful instruction. Let's all strive for comments like this from your students, too!

Thursday, 05/22/2008 10:17 AM by [DAVID](#)

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### **Melissa** ([permalink](#))

Created on Wednesday, 05/21/2008 3:59 PM by [Melissa](#)

Updated on Wednesday, 05/21/2008 4:24 PM by [Melissa](#)

1. Chapter 1 of Collins' Focus Correction Area's book begins with a brief introduction of what specific skills a school system may select to teach during a school year, also known as FCA's or focus correction areas. He then goes on to describe three teaching strategies which are critical to this approach to writing instruction. The first strategy is to require all students to read out loud every draft that they write. They say that this is the best single editing technique. The second strategy is to require all students to practice new editing skills on their past papers. You will only get better at editing if you practice it. The final strategy is to use focus correcting. This means focusing in on a single area to correct in that paper at that time. This means that all other errors, besides the FCA, are left as errors on the paper. Next, we are presented with a generous amount of evidence supported by research on the effectiveness of focus correcting. Collins then explains how to properly implement FCA's into writing and says that our main focus at first should be the form of the writing such as run-on sentences or the removal of any unnecessary words and then we should later focus on the mechanical errors throughout the writing. This is because mechanical errors are not the main cause of lower writing scores on state standardized tests. The final section of this chapter discusses whether or not one will ever be able to write an "error-free" text and Collins explains that with much practice and by following each type of writing properly, especially level 3-5, one can accomplish this task.

2. "Research has never been able to show that circling all errors-the error-hunt approach to marking- makes a significant difference in writing quality; instead it discourages the student whose paper is full of mistakes and focuses students on errors instead of ideas" (p 5). This is something I had never thought of until I learned the Collins approach 3 days ago and I now completely agree with. For those children who hate writing to begin with, when they get a paper back that is covered in red ink, they are overwhelmed and now hate writing even more. If we as teachers are able to do anything to make it easier on them, and I believe focus correcting will do so, then we must try it. This may help children gain an appreciation for something that they truly hated based on the old method

of the error-hunt approach.

3. Today in class we began with a review of Type 1 and 2 writing and the material we covered from the day before. I really liked this because it makes you think back and pull the information out and I think this really helps to make it stick. It is sometimes hard to review each night what you have done that day in class and being able to discuss it as a class and even hearing other people's ideas and what they got out of the same class is always refreshing to hear.

4. I really enjoy all of the modeling that Dr. Walker does in class. It is one thing to read about all the different teaching techniques and strategies or little ideas that teachers always throw out there at you, but it is another thing to actually be able to see them in use. This especially makes me realize that they are useful ideas and do have a real effect on the students in the classroom when used the proper way.

5. I found it very interesting to read that the main focus when first designing FCA's should be on technical errors in the children's writing such as their form and use of run on sentences and such, and not initially on the mechanical errors. I think that many teachers place too much emphasis right from the beginning on proper spelling, capitalization and punctuation and that all the red marks on a paper may frighten a child and discourage them from the writing process altogether. When we break things down, and focus on errors one by one, I think children will feel less threatened and actually more excited about writing because they are not being completely knocked down if their writing is less than perfect.

## Comments

1. I think your summary is very well written and is also nicely detailed. I like how you would say a main point and then explain yourself as if someone who had not read this chapter would understand it.

2. I couldn't agree with you more. Like we've talked about in class, not everything the students do in class necessarily needs to get graded. I also agree with you on how it definitely discourages the children who receive red marks all over their paper when they are already nervous about writing the paper.

3. That's so weird you mentioned this because I meant to write this in my blog but I totally forgot. We've all learned about the five types of writing however, it never hurts to review.

4. Again, I agree with you on this subject as well. Dr. Walker does do a great job modeling exactly what should be done in a classroom environment. Being preached is one thing and sometimes goes in one ear and out the other but when being showed right in the classroom is much more beneficial.

5. I too was shocked to find this out. Most people would think that technical errors would be corrected first rather than mechanical errors. Technical errors I figured were to be left to be corrected last. I agree with your last statement as well. Instead having red marks all over the paper, take one focus at a time.

Wednesday, 05/21/2008 9:04 PM by [Samantha](#)

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1. Your summary was very good because it hit main topics and your writing flowed very nicely. I like how you pointed out the reason for why mechanical errors are corrected last. I wouldn't have known why. Reading drafts out loud is very important!! 2. I agree that a lot of the red ink is not good! I like how Collins takes the corrections one step at a time. I think it is too intimidating to beginners of writing and discourages them. This way we make an impact and don't scare them off at the same time. 3. Reviewing and refreshing your mind is great I agree with its importance. It brings the information front and center to build upon during the next lesson. I'm glad that we do this in class. 4. I love the modeling he does too. It's very practical. Experiencing what we will have the children do and knowing how to teach it effectively is important. The effect is apparent when modeling is done correctly and I am sure that we will use techniques from this class many times in the future. 5. I thought the

same thing as I wrote in #1 about the mechanical aspect not being addressed first. This approach is good I think! I will be interested in seeing research results in the future once it has been around a while longer.

Wednesday, 05/21/2008 9:59 PM by [Julie](#)

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1. Your summary is marvelous. I like how you clearly inform everyone as to the necessary aspects of the Collins' approach - "The first strategy is to require all students to read out loud every draft that they write. They say that this is the best single editing technique. The second strategy is to require all students to practice new editing skills on their past papers. You will only get better at editing if you practice it. The final strategy is to use focus correcting."

2. Yes, the fine pointed error correction is something we all can learn from. This Focus Correction Area approach helps students to hone in on a few skills that need to be worked on and later learn to improve other areas.

3. Use reviews of the material you are teaching as friendly reminders so learning sticks and can be used later and then mastered.

4. Thank you. Yes, modeling does bring about a greater understanding in our students. A primary concept of instruction.

5. Let's get to the heart of the writing. Mechanics are not the heart of the writing.

Monday, 06/09/2008 3:33 PM by [DAVID](#)

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### **Jen** ([permalink](#))

Created on Wednesday, 05/21/2008 3:57 PM by [Jennifer](#)

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1.) This summary is on Collins' "Improving Student Performance" book. It is the one with the blue cover. Chapter one covers the five types of writing assignments. Type One Writing is the brainstorm stage. It is not to be graded or judged. It is used to generate ideas about a given topic. Type Two Writing shows that the writer has thought about the topic and knows something about it. It asks definitions, facts, explanations, opinions with supported details, evaluative comments, and/or new applications through a prompt that the students uses to guide their writing. Evaluation of Type Two Writing should be limited to the teacher making sure the student answers the question correctly and should not be graded on spelling, punctuation, and/or capitalization. Type Three Writing is more complex than Type One or Type Two. This type of writing should meet three specific focus correction areas. Students should first write a draft, then read that draft aloud to themselves, and finally review it to see if it completes the assignment, is easy to read, and avoids problems noted in the focus correction areas. Type Four Writing uses the Type Three Writing. Another student reads the Type Three Writing aloud and critiques it. It is the most effective and efficient and requires two drafts. Type Five Writing is the type of writing that is perfect and of publishable quality. Very few writings actually make it to this stage.

2.) "...the program works well with computers" (pg 41). I think that it is important in today's day and age to use curriculums and methods if teaching that work well with technology. Students need to have a good understanding of technology if they are going to be successful in today's world. I believe that we as teachers, no matter what grade level you teach, are responsible for helping children better understand how to use technology and how to integrate it within learning.

3.) On page 45 to page 46, Collins includes a chart that compares advantages and disadvantages to each type of writing. I found this very helpful as I am a visual learner and seeing advantages and disadvantages compared to each other in this format really helped me understand the different types more clearly.

4.) On page 43, Collins includes a page with all the editing symbols that should be used during Type Three and Four editing. I think this would be a helping page for not only the teacher to have handy, but also for each student to include in their portfolios to help them edit correctly and effectively.

5.) Today in class Dr. Walker had us get up and walk around while going over our creative prompt for Type Two Writing. Personally, I needed to get up and move. As teachers, we need to remember that sitting for long periods of time can become mundane and incorporating movement in your lessons help students stay focused and interested.

### Comments

1. A fine summary with main points covered in a clearly written manner. Yes, the published works are few but worthy.

2. Here we are using a blog to communicate our writing and demonstrate our ability to think, to apply our understandings, and to reflect upon our overall learning. A wonderful 21C tool in operation right here in Bloomsburg, PA!

3. Visual learners unite! I am glad that you realize the type of learner you are, it will benefit so many of your future students.

4. I have this on a poster that I will place on the wall at a later date.

5. Yes, change up the learning and keep the students alive and wondering what is he/she going to do next.

Wednesday, 05/21/2008 4:22 PM by [DAVID](#)

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1. This is a good over view of the five types of writing. I like how you said just a little something about all of the types of writing.

2. I agree, it is very important to use technology in the classroom. A lot of today's world uses computers and it is easier to learn how to use them when they are younger.

3. I agree that this is important also. As the types of writings are useful in the classroom, teachers should know the disadvantages as well.

4. It is good to have, I did not know all of them myself they will be good to teach to the kids to use and keep their edits organized.

5. I liked that we moved around in class today. I have a class in their before our class so I am sitting for a while. It is nice that a teacher knows that we get tired of sitting and need to move around a little.

Wednesday, 05/21/2008 8:20 PM by [Lisa](#)

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1. You did a great job with your summary by keep it short and to the point!

2. Technology has become such a big part of our society that it is difficult to not incorporate it in our classrooms. Children pick up on computers especially fast and it is also important to use them in the classroom for those who do not have one at home.

3. I also stated that i enjoyed the advantages and disadvantages. It helps students to understand what they should be getting out of the writing.

4. Every classroom should have an editing chart to get the students familiar with the marks so they can use them in their own editing.

5. Moving around is important especially for younger students!

Tuesday, 06/10/2008 11:04 PM by [Tammy](#)

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**Lisa** ([permalink](#))

Created on Wednesday, 05/21/2008 3:45 PM by [Lisa](#)

1. In chapters one and two of *Selecting and Teaching Focus Correction Areas*, Collins talks about the different teaching strategies. There are three main concepts of strategies; one is to have the students read their writing aloud, another strategy is to have them edit their previous writings, and the third is focus correcting. The main focus of this chapter is on focus correcting. This is when the teacher reads the students' work and determines the three problem areas for the students to work on. Collins talks about how the teacher should not put the emphasis on the mechanical aspects of writing. Research shows that most of the problem areas are in organizing their thoughts in writing. Teachers should help the students develop stronger endings, use more details, and develop smoother transitions. Collins also talks about the five types of writing. He explains that types three and four are is when the main concern is about corrections and type five is when a writing is ready to be "published." Chapter two focuses on the diagnosis of student writings. It talks about how standardized tests are using less multiple choice and are using more open-ended response questions.

2. "...teachers also feel that by letting errors go, they are condoning mistakes or denying students the opportunity to learn" (pg 7). I have to agree that by letting the mistakes go on a student's paper will not teach them the correct grammar or spelling. Some students will pick up on the corrections themselves while others will not and need the teacher to show them the errors. It is important to show the corrections to the students in earlier grades so it is easier for them to write as they get older.

3. I was interested to read that teachers should focus more on the structure of the students' writings rather than the mechanical errors. I think this is interesting because I can remember being in elementary school and our teachers would always tell us our mechanical errors. It is nice to see that our teachers are taking research into consideration to help improve how students write.

4. I was surprised to read that more of the tests are using open-ended questions. I am glad that they are using them because this gives the students an opportunity to show what they know and their writing ability. A multiple choice test shows how many facts a student can remember.
5. I liked how in class today Dr. Walker explained to us type 1 and 2 of writing today. What I liked the most was that he had us do our own sample writing in the form of type 1 and 2. This showed me how to I would use this in a classroom.

## Comments

- 1.) Short and sweet while still covering the main points of the chapter.
- 2.) I agree that we as teachers should help students correct their mistakes but we should do it in a non-condescending way.
- 3.) Again I agree. It is nice to see that research is being taken into consideration in teachers teaching methods.
- 4.) Open-ended questions help teachers see how much the students understand and reach those higher levels of Blooms Taxonomy. It is nice to see that teachers are assessing more than just rote memory.
- 5.) It is nice to be able to actually practice what our students would be doing. It helps me get a deeper understanding on the material as well.

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Wednesday, 05/21/2008 4:05 PM by [Jennifer](#)

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1. A fine summary of both chapters! Yes, we must prepare all students for more writing. The new SAT has a writing component and many businesses ask for a writing sample before hiring new personnel. Writing skills are important in today's society.
  2. Focus the corrections and continue to build upon the good aspects and sure up the errors by using specific FCAs to address the needs of each student.
  3. Less conventions and more content, style, voice, ...
  4. I will use MC and T/F tests but will balance this with the writing that we do in class and within this blog. Balance your classes with a variety of writings.
  5. Teach by example and your students will always learn and be satisfied in their learning.
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Wednesday, 05/21/2008 4:16 PM by [DAVID](#)

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**Stephanie** ([permalink](#))

Created on Wednesday, 05/21/2008 11:41 AM by [Stephanie](#)

1. Collins' *Focus Correction Areas* book in chapter one, the Introduction to Focus Correction Areas, begins to introduce what a focus correction area (FCA) is. This chapter then moves on to discuss three concepts or teaching strategies that are critical to this approach to writing instruction. The first strategy requires students to read every draft out loud to themselves or others around them. The second is to have students practice new editing skills on their past papers. The third strategy is to use focus correcting which is a selective approach to correcting student writing. When using focus correcting, one should use selectivity to locate only one or two kinds of errors at a time. When focus correcting, it should not focus on grammatical errors, instead it should stress rhetorical and stylistic considerations in writing. To back up the focus correction method, Collins sites specific data results for error frequency. The final portion of this chapter, discusses the process of students reaching a level of "publishable" works that are error free. Some question whether error free pieces of work are possible from student's, and Collins explains that indeed it is possible.

2. "If I don't tell them, how will they know it is wrong. We are adding to the decline of literacy" (Pg. 7)! I choose this quote because it is what many people and teachers believe when it comes down to correcting writing assignments. Many people believe that they need to mark the whole paper up and find every error, so they can show the child and teach them the correct way of doing something. I do not agree with this statement because if you correct every error in a child's work that they are very proud of, you will discourage them from writing at later times, in fear that they will get in trouble for making mistakes. I liked how Collins showed data for error frequency in different years to prove that children today are not making anymore errors than back then.

3. I liked how Dr. Walker set the classroom seating up today, for a small class I feel this is a good way to get everyone involved in discussion and to get them to know one another. I had one other class like this in college so far which was an American Lit class. Knowing that I do not speak up in class as much as I should, this is a great way to get me to talk and participate fully because it is easy to tell who is participating and who is not. So in a way, it forces me to speak up.

4. I greatly appreciate Dr. Walker having us create our own type one and two writing because with hands on experience, we are better suited to understand the concepts. One thing I wish would be a little clearer in the directions was when he said write five lines of a type two writing, I was unsure and I know the girl next to me was unsure also, about whether it was supposed to be a paragraph or just a short phrase on five lines; such as a bulleted list. I hope that for next time we could have clearer instructions right off the bat.

5. As I entered the room, I noticed that Dr. Walker has hung up many new posters on the side wall. One poster described Collins type one, two, three, four, and five writings; which I feel will be very helpful if we need a refresher on the concepts. I feel that when Dr. Walker says he is teaching for his students, he truly means it because he provides us with posters that will make us better teachers as well as the way he handles the class to get us involved in the learning.

## Comments

1. I think you hit all the key parts of the chapter in your summary. I liked that you ended with the idea that children creating publishable works is indeed possible.

2. I thought you chose a good quote to comment on, and I agree with what you have written about this quote. It may be hard when teaching to get used to the idea of not correcting every error found on a child's paper, but in the long run this will benefit the students more.

3. I think room setup says a lot about a teacher and a course. It is nice to know that teachers care about the relationships in their classroom and want to get to know each of their students, even at the college level where this is often ignored.

4. I had the same the problem with the type one and type two writings. I think my confusion came from the fact that right after we discussed brainstorming, and creating lists, we went right into the writings, which were supposed to be in sentence format rather than list format.

5. I too appreciate Dr. Walker's dedication to teaching to benefit the students. I also have realized that he does not treat his summer courses any different than he would a regular semester course, which is different than how many teachers act in the summer.

Wednesday, 05/21/2008 3:33 PM by [Zoe](#)

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1. I think your summary includes many of the salient points that Collins is making. I, like Zoe, enjoy the fact that you end with a positive that indeed the end result of student writing must be like real world authors, a publishable work.

2. Let's not discourage, let's encourage. The FCAs allow students to focus their attention on skills that they individually need to practice. We all know what is being assessed and can work toward a better end result.

3. Yes, let's build our classroom community. Everyone is actively engaged, practicing their listening skills, and reviewing writing/literacy skills. I am glad you like the forced encounters. Classroom design can be a very important element to consider.

4. Thank you for your honest input. As Collins states, lines not sentences or paragraphs should be counted in type 1 and 2 writings. I will remember to be clearer.

5. I appreciate your kind words that encourage me to be a better teacher. My desire is to model accomplished teaching practices and hopefully inspire you to do likewise in your careers to come.

Wednesday, 05/21/2008 4:10 PM by [DAVID](#)

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### **Zoe** ([permalink](#))

Created on Tuesday, 05/20/2008 5:27 PM by [Zoe](#)

1. The Introduction to Focus Correction Areas (chapter One of the Collins book on FCA) goes over what an FCA is, and how this language arts teaching approach can be useful to a teacher, a school, or a school system. There are three critical concepts that must be applied when using this approach to teaching; students should read every draft aloud, students should practice editing on their old papers, and focus correcting should be used in the classroom. Chapter one goes on to site specific research examples that support focus correcting, and explain how to implement this technique in the classroom. The chapter ends by discussing how a student gets to the point where their work is "publishable," or error free.

2. "When asked to read their drafts aloud, students unconsciously correct many of their mistakes" (pg. 3). I believe that this is an extremely important aspect to editing, and it was proven in class that this activity can be done with any age or grade level. When Dr. Walker had us read our sentences aloud, several people found mistakes. If it works for college students, you can bet that it will work in the lower grade levels as well!

3. In the text one of the strategies is to practice new editing skills on past papers. The text refers to past papers as, "the best sources of practice sheets you will ever have." I agree with this statement, although never in my school career have I had to put this into practice. It is surprising to me that my teachers did not think to do this with students, because it seems like a great idea. No prewritten text or sample paragraph can compare to a real life example of one's own writing.

4. I found it very interesting when the text showed research that compared the errors that students make over time. The research showed that the frequency of error has not changed much over time. On one hand, this means that teachers must not be doing worse of a job, but it also may mean that they are not doing a better job teaching language arts to students.

5. I liked the comparison drawn between athletes at practice and students writing papers on page 8 of the text. It states that sometimes a coach knows a kid can do something in practice, but then things fall apart during the real game. This comparison was relatable for me, because there have been several times in school when I have known everything when studying for a test, but then have drawn a blank when the actual test is passed out.

## Comments

1. I feel that when you read the chapter, you are able to pinpoint the major points perfectly and summarize them in a way that is clear to understand. Personally, I have a little trouble with summarizing because I go into too much detail. I hope that by the end of writing all of these blogs, that I will be able to summarize better. 2. I agree with you 100% that when you read your drafts aloud, you can find many of the errors in your piece of work. I try to do this each time I write an important paper, but I am also realizing that I should do this with each assignment; such as these blog entries. 3. I agree with you, and I also have never had the experience of correcting any of my past papers. When I think back to all of those drill and practice paragraphs, I wish that my teachers would have had us correct our past papers, and really learn what things we need to work on in our own writing to make it better. 4. Your statement slightly confused me, I agree that it shows that the teachers are not doing any worse of a job, but the lack of change might mean that the teachers are allowing those grammatical errors to go untouched and are focusing more on the stylistic and rhetorical processes to writing. 5. I agree, this also has happened to me and i have seen it happen to athletes as well. I feel that the pressure one puts on themselves can do this.

Wednesday, 05/21/2008 11:54 AM by [Stephanie](#)

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1. I feel the author honors us by infusing research that supports his methods. Your summary is clear and accurate.

2. Yes, it works for college professors, too! Read aloud with your one-foot voice and make it become a habit not only for you, but also for your students.

3. Forget the worksheets, have the students use their past writings as work that is in-progress and revise and edit away.

4. Errors need to be selective. We do not want to overwhelm our students or make them feel that they did not know what aspects of their writing would be assessed. That's why the FCAs are so great, everyone understands the skills that are being developed and assessed.

5. Let's coach the students in writing as a good coach does for a sports team. Be the guide on the side and not the sage on the stage.

Wednesday, 05/21/2008 4:01 PM by [DAVID](#)

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[larissa \(permalink\)](#)

Created on Tuesday, 05/20/2008 10:46 AM by [Larissa](#)

1. The Collins book *Improving Student Performance* appears to be a very thorough guide for teachers as well as a systematic writing tool for students. Collins has developed and described in chapter one five different types of writing assignments that make up the writing aspect of language arts. The five types are arranged on a

contium from simple idea generation to complex and detailed writing. First, type one writing is described as the act of brainstorming or simply getting words onto paper. Type one writing is also described as a timed activity requiring a minimum number of lines and should be completed in class in less then ten minutes. Type two writing is the next level up, and requires students to know something about the topic on which they are writing. This type of writing is parallel to constructed response questions on standardized tests and is used best as a quiz. This type of writing is scored on a point system and answers should be short and easily predictable. Next, the third type of writing is when students begin to use FCA's or Focus Correction Areas to further develop and one their writing skills. Collins describes the implementation of type 3 in two steps: first the student will locus at their focus correction areas and then read aloud/edit their work directly on the draft. Here in the chapter, Collins begins to describe FCA's as a selective approach to guide corrections in student writing. They should be limited to three per paper and will change over time as the student becoms proficient in the skill. There are four categories that Collins discusses that should be the goal of all FCA's; they are content, organization, conventions, and style. The text then defines each of the four categories as content being the what of writing, organization as the order of writing, convention is the appearance of writing, and finally style is the personality of the student's writing. Following the descriptions, Collins provides very useful sample FCA's for each of the categories he listed. Collins discusses the heading that is required for types 3-5 writing with the FCA listed in the top left corner of the paper with the corresponding point value. Finally, type four writing is described as following the type three writing characteristics but the difference is that it has also been read aloud and editing by someone other then the author. And the ultimate goal in student's writing is the type five level, this level of writing has both strengths and weaknesses. It's strengths are that the high expectations that come with this assignment truly reflect what teachers want to see in their students writing, however the weakness is that these expectations are often too high. All five types of writing are described in detail and the chapter closes with a page of revision and editing symbols (p. 43).

2. "Professional writers have long advocated free writing as a critical technique, and in a carefully designed study published *in Education and Treatment of Children*, Kasper-Ferguson and Moxley found that timed free writing periods dramatically improved the quality of student writing in the fourth grade" (p. 2). I chose this quote as my selection because it reminded me of my own writing experiences in elementary school. I can't recall many instances where I was allowed to sit down and freely express myself and I think it is important that children today are given this opportunity. By taking away the pressures of graded work students develop writing skills in a more realistic and overall meaningfull setting and this will ultimately result in the type of writing teachers want to see.

3. I found it very helpful that COLLins included sample writing prompts for each of the types of writing (p. 7), and also sample FCA's for each of the categories discussed in the chaper (p. 23). These samples provide excellent quidelines for someone like me who has never learned about these types of writing or strategy for focusing student's writing, and I think it makes the definitions more real and applicable. It especially helps to clarify what prompts or FCA's should look like before I actually have to write one myself.

4. On page 5 of the text an activity is highlighted called "below-the-line activity", I was glad to see this included in the text beside all the definitions. Real-life applications and classroom activities like this that teachers have used and that have worked are truly the gift from the text as they can be directly applied and used after I graduate. I especially liked this activity because I found it reflected on my own beliefs of peer editing, sharing and collaborative work in the classroom.

5. I thought the revision and editing symbols on page 43 were especially clear and again very useful. I have allready made a copy of this page because it is something that can be used immediately in the classroom to show students exactly how their work should be looked at. The best part of any textbook is the part that can be used after reading it, not just the definition you highlight but the pages like this one that can be recycled and used in your classroom.

## Comments

1. Excellent summary. I think you were able to touch on all of the main points of the chapter and you also gave precise explanations of each type of writing.
2. I think that when children are given a timed period of free writing they are more likely to write something

meaningful rather than when you just have them sit down and write for an unknown period of time. It is important to make expectations clear so they know they have a goal that must be reached by the end of the time. I also agree that it is more beneficial to children when all of their writing is not graded all of the time because they will be less likely to be discouraged if they see a lot of mistakes on their papers.

3. I think the prompts and examples are very helpful as well because this is the first time I am being introduced to the Collins method as well.

4. Excellent point, and I think that making connections to real-life experiences makes classroom learning more meaningful.

5. They are also so useful because they can be used uniformly in the class so all the students are using the same symbols and know which each means without confusion.

Wednesday, 05/21/2008 3:37 PM by [Melissa](#)

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1. A fine summary with many of the various types of writing highlighted. I agree that the teacher can set the assessment standards and scoring criteria related to the FCAs. However, later the student and teacher decide upon skills that need to be practiced and improved upon. Here we work together to focus learning and assessing to become aligned and significantly connected to achievement over time.

2. I love the sentiment of taking away the pressures of writing always being assessed. Let's follow research and provide ree writing time that the students love and desire to do.

3. Yes, the texts by Collins should be seen as guide books you should definitely use them as you prepare for the first assignment.

4. I like the real world and proven aspects that Collins includes. No sense in just showing theory and not supporting it with true examples from the classroom.

5. A wonderful reference. I have this page as a poster that I will be putting up in the classroom as we progress toward the type 4 and 5 writings.

Wednesday, 05/21/2008 3:55 PM by [DAVID](#)

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