



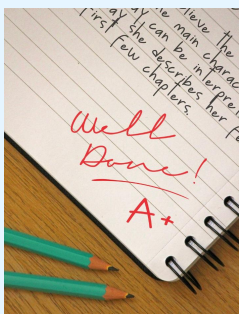
Collins Education Associates

The Collins Writing Program

A Writing Across the Curriculum Program with Over 35 Years of Proven Results

The Collins Writing Exchange

October 30, 2025 Issue #85



Student Assessment: Trick or Treat?

"The most important assessment does not happen at the end of learning – it happens during the learning, when there is still time to do something with the information... As soon as students get a grade, the learning stops."
— Dylan Wiliam

Our recent work in PBL and CTE classrooms has caused us to think about, and reassess, what makes meaningful assessment. Research suggests that meaningful assessment should:

- Steer teaching and learning as a process - not an end point - with short, middle, and long cycles. (Fisher and Frye)
- Ensure that students genuinely understand material and cannot succeed by accident (like some multiple choice, T/F, matching, etc.) — they should be virtually "un-cheatable." (Hernandez)
- Demand critical or creative thinking and problem solving.
- Require students to recognize and use strong evidence.
- Include authentic tasks with relevance to students and content. (Wiggins)

Our **framework** meets, and has always met, each of these criteria. Here's how...

Type One Writing is an exceptional tool for short cycle assessment (What do you currently know about the subject or task, and what do you want/need to know?) Immediate feedback and action drive powerful learning.

The Power of Retrieval to Strengthen Learning and Provide Meaningful

Type Two Writing was created as a middle cycle assessment - we just didn't know it! Assessing where students are as part of the learning journey and not waiting until they reach the destination is a best practice that we have long understood.

The Power of the Quickwrite in Assessment

Type Three, Four, and Five Writing are mid- to long cycle assessments that are authentic tasks requiring critical thinking, integration of strong relevant evidence, and genuine understanding of material. Students benefit from the **clearly-defined criteria** and skillful feedback of the instructor.

*"...the interaction between assessment and learning [is] a three-legged race, in which neither partner can make progress without the others' contribution."
— Harding and Raikes*

Let's Get Social!

Whatever you call it—
Social Platform? Social
Network? Digital Community?—
We've got it!

We are expanding and improving our Collins network by providing fun and helpful tips, videos, and free assignments on our social media platforms! Check them out and let us know what you think. Like, Share, and Comment to help us spread the word about all the great things we're doing at CEA—and to celebrate all the great things YOU are doing with writing across the curriculum!



Teaching Tips

Featured on our YouTube channel and shared via social media, our "Teaching Tips" are video shorts that provide a variety of best-practice tips for building engagement, accountability, and literacy skills in your classroom.

In the spirit of assessment, check out one of our recent fan favorite "Teaching Tips" here...

We invite YOU to send us suggestions or material to post! Do you have a cool Collins assignment to share? Do you want to celebrate a student writing success story? Maybe you'd like to spotlight a colleague's work. Or even ask us a question! **Send us your content**, and if we feature it in our socials, we'll reward you with a **\$10 credit** to use in our online store.



Have It Your Way: Introducing "Collins À la Carte"

Our new menu of virtual meetings for individuals, cohorts, departments, PLCs, or faculty is ready! These shorter workshops can be one-hit wonders or routinely scheduled and sustained throughout the year. PLC groups or departments can select what is meaningful for them, and individual teachers can choose according to their own tastes.

We are offering some long-time favorites (quickwrites, summaries, and more) and spicing up the menu with some new offerings (using graphics to prompt thinking, improving and enhancing sentences, etc.) Or, feel free to



Using Type One for Test Prep

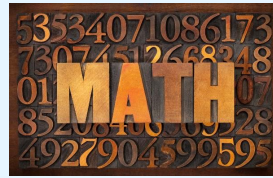
request a new topic—*Special orders don't upset us!*)

View the À la Carte Menu

*The Collins Free for All: Teachers LOVE free and our free resources section on the website offers effective and engaging options for using our teaching, learning, and assessment tools. Download assignments, templates, letters to parents, FCAs, and more! Fill that trick or treat bag with **Sweet Freebies**, starting with a few of the tried-and-true favorites below.*



Add some mystery and mayhem to your Halloween lesson plans! Try our **Mystery Word Riddle (K-2 or 3-12)** assignment. For a spooky twist, have students write eerie clues to help classmates guess their Halloween costumes!



Speaking of clues, help students crack the spooky code of math word problems with this quick guide to **literacy-based activities for your math classroom**—where every problem is a mystery waiting to be unmasked!



Turn your classroom into a haunted editing lab! With **Focused Editing**, students grab their colored pens and mark up their writing to prove they've met the FCAs—no tricks, just boo-tifully clear evidence of learning!

"A student's progress should be measured in terms of the questions they are asking, not merely by the answers they are reciting."

—Robert John Meehan

Highly Recommended Resources for an Assessment Makeover!

*Student Writing Portfolios
Check Mate for Essential Conventions
Vocabulary Cards Desktop Guide
Collins Writing "At-a-Glance" (K-12)
Primary FCA Stamps
Writing Roadmap Spiral Bound or PDF*

Buy Products | Collins Education Associates

"The expert in anything was once a beginner." - Helen Hayes, actor

Let One of our Experts Get You Started with Collins Writing Strategies

Join One of Our Public Sessions

Virtual Offerings

(No need to leave your home or classroom for these short 2-hour sessions!)

Improving Cross-Curricular Engagement, Understanding, and Constructed Response with Sentence Expansion

Grades 4-12
November 11, 2025

[Learn More](#)

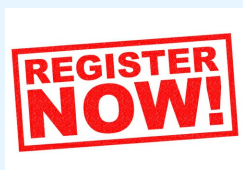
Revising and Editing Reboot: Simple Strategies That Build Revising and Editing Skills

Grades: 3-10
December 8, 2025

[Learn More](#)

In-Person Sessions

(New Jersey)



Exploring and Maximizing the Reading-Writing Connection to Build Literacy

Grades K-5
November 12, 2025
Eatontown, NJ

[Learn More](#)

Complete Assessment Makeover! Improving Assessment and Feedback Across the Curriculum

Grade: 3-10
December 2, 2025
Eatontown, NJ

[Learn More](#)

Revising and Editing Reboot: Simple Strategies That

Building Blocks to Success: A First-Year Teacher's Guide to Engagement, Accountability, and Classroom Routines

Grades: 3-12
December 15, 2025
New Providence, NJ

[Learn More](#)

Harnessing the Science of Writing to Improve Thinking and Learning

Grades: 3-12
December 19, 2025
New Providence, NJ

[Learn More](#)

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workshops offered in your area?
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Educational Service Centers to
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**Build Content Knowledge AND
Revising and Editing Skills**
Grades: 3-10
December 10, 2025
Eatontown, NJ

[Learn More](#)

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