

Collins Writing Exchange

Ideas, Tips, and Resources on Writing from Collins Education Associates

A Note to Our Readers

The Right Time for Writing

"After all, teachers should not be able to grade all of the writing students do. If they can, they aren't inviting students to write enough."

Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey

The beginning of the new school year is the perfect time to establish good habits. Why not make writing one of them? Consider the myriad ways you can use writing right out of the gate to get to know your students, to develop classroom rules and routines, to get kids thinking about new content and find out what they already know, and to spark interest in learning, just to name a few.

And as Fisher and Frey suggest, writing need not be formal nor graded to be meaningful. Frequent low-risk writing builds fluency and confidence while creating a culture of engagement and participation in your classroom. For students who are sluggish at the start of the year, Type One Writing is the perfect remedy and sets the right tone for the entire year.

[Quick and Easy-to-Use Type Ones to Start the Year](#)

[Tips for Quick Feedback and Grading](#)

Aim to make writing a key part of your daily routine and give yourself permission to let go of trying to grade every piece students write. Everyone wins!

Kick-Start Your Year

Start the Year on the Right Foot with these Collins Writing Routines

Establishing routines up front saves time in the long run. We've compiled some of our tried-and-true strategies for setting students up for writing success and building an engaging writing culture in your classroom. Here's just a sampling:

- Brush up on your Collins IQ by [taking our QUICK QUIZ](#).
- Establish a system for using [Type One](#) and [Type Two Writing](#) quickly and easily. Consider setting up student notebooks (digital or paper) that can be readily accessed when a quick-write opportunity arises!
- Post the [Type Three Writing model paper](#) and download and use the preformatted "Focus Correction Area" (FCA) papers below:
 - [Grade K](#)
 - [Grades 1-2](#)
 - [Grades 3 and up](#)

[Click here](#) for the full list of tips and routines.

Most importantly, get students writing on day one!

Featured Resource

Letters to Parents About Collins Writing

For most parents, nothing is more important than their children's education, and communicating with parents about what goes on in the classroom is key to empowering them to support great writing habits at home. Some aspects of the Collins Writing Program may be unfamiliar to parents, so the beginning of the school year is the perfect time to open the lines of communication about how you will use and teach writing throughout the year.

The following are examples of letters you might send home at the start of the year to explain the rationale and strategies behind the Five Types of WritingSM. Feel free to use these letters as is or adapt them to your own style and needs.

- [Five Types of Writing for Primary/Elementary](#)
- [Five Types of Writing for Elementary/Secondary](#)
- [FCAs, Writing Portfolios, and Help at Home](#)
- [Role of Invented Spelling](#)

Must-Have Resource

Writing Roadmap: A Powerful, New Teacher Tool for Planning Writing Instruction

This exciting and user-friendly resource includes everything teachers need to quickly diagnose student writing skills and habits and plan purposeful assignments and instruction for the entire school year.

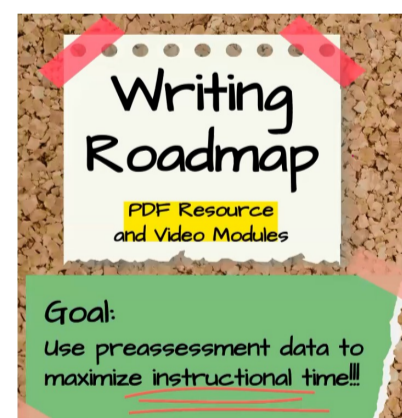
Writing Roadmap includes

1. a curated menu of prompts to use to preassess student writing;
2. helpful tools and checklists for evaluating the student writing habits that most contribute to writing success;
3. diagnostic writing rubrics for scoring student writing, including specially designed rubrics for emerging primary grade writers;
4. class checklists for tracking student strengths and needs;
5. ready-to-use FCAs aligned directly with the Diagnostic Writing Rubric and tips for building key writing habits;
6. annotated and scored student writing samples and instructions on how to use them in your daily instruction to provide models of exemplary writing, highlight common writing problems, and build revising and editing skills;
7. postassessment prompts to use later in the year to measure growth over time.

We know that *Writing Roadmap* will be a valuable tool for writing teachers at all grade levels, helping them improve student writing and build lifelong writing habits.

Learn More!

[Watch the video overview](#) of *Writing Roadmap* with author Kristine Gibson or [download the Preview PDF](#).



Plan Your Route and Get Ready to Roll with *Writing Roadmap* . . .

Follow one of three routes to bring *Writing Roadmap* into your school or classroom:

1. Purchase *Writing Roadmap* now as a [single-user PDF](#), ready-to-download and start using today
2. Schedule a *Writing Roadmap* training session with author [Kristine Gibson](#) and receive the *Writing Roadmap teaching materials* for FREE!
3. Buy the new three-part *Roadmap video* training module from [Central Intermediate Unit \(CIU\) 10](#) in PA and receive the *Writing Roadmap teaching materials* for FREE! Single and multi-user licenses available.

Quick Links

ONLINE PD MODULES

Introduction to the Collins Writing Program: six one-hour, asynchronous learning PD modules. Available from CIU 10 (PA).

TEST YOUR COLLINS EXPERTISE

Try a sample of our quick self-assessment survey to review basic, intermediate, and advanced Collins implementation strategies.

PD OPTIONS & WORKSHOPS

From basic to expert—everything you need to know about our PD options, workshops, institutes, and graduate courses.

FREE RESOURCES

Ready-to-use Type Threes, Focus Correction Area lists, graphic organizers, and more!

ESSENTIAL CONVENTIONS

Check Mate™ and other resources to tackle teachers' biggest writing pet peeves!

EXCHANGE ARCHIVE

All previous newsletters with FREE writing assignments in every edition!

PUBLIC PD SCHEDULE

Upcoming live and online events in your area.

[Website](#)

[Contact Us](#)