



Collins Education Associates

The Collins Writing Program

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

The Collins Writing Exchange

February 9, 2026 Issue #87



Learning from Our CTE Classrooms

"Give the pupils something to do, not something to learn; and the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking; learning naturally results.

--John Dewey

Anyone who's spent time in a CTE classroom knows this already: the strategies that define strong CTE teaching are the very same practices school improvement experts keep telling all classrooms to use. CTE teachers don't have to force these ideas—they live them every day. By design, CTE classrooms naturally align with what the science of learning says works best and what good teaching has always aimed to do.

CTE classrooms regularly:

- Engage students in real-world, authentic tasks
- Give students multiple ways to show what they know
- Treat mistakes as a necessary (and valuable) part of learning
- Offer meaningful student choice
- Emphasize problem solving and critical thinking
- Build in collaboration
- Expect respectful, purposeful discussion
- Prioritize strong relationships with students

Not all that long ago, these practices could feel "out of place" in more traditional academic classrooms—not because teachers didn't believe in them, but because most of us weren't taught this way as students or trained this way as new teachers.

Watching CTE teachers model these best practices pushed us to reflect on the Collins Writing Program itself. At its core, Collins does all of this, too—so much so that it could almost be called the Collins Teaching and Learning Program. Writing is simply the tool we use to make these practices visible, manageable, and consistent.

In this newsletter, we're excited to share specific, classroom-ready ways to meet each of the areas above using Collins strategies, so you can see exactly how this work comes to life with students.



Engage students in real-world, authentic tasks with our brand new, ready-to-use eBook, **Authentic Writing by Design**. The eBook contains three of our favorite Seven Element Assignments for grades K-12, as well as a template to create your own.

Provide opportunities for students to learn from previous mistakes and build growth mindset by **Using Past Papers to Practice New Skills**. Or try "vertical learning," first developed by Peter Liljedahl, and featured in **Issue 67 of the Collins Writing Exchange**.

Promote critical thinking, increase collaboration, establish meaningful discussions, and build relationships with frequent **Type One and Two writing**. Check out these **High Impact Quickwrites to Start and End Lessons** for some fresh new ideas.

Love Is In the Air!

Connect with us on social media!

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!



Speaking of staying connected, have you seen our **Teacher Tip videos**? These short, practical video tips help teachers teach smarter, save time, and inspire learning. You can also visit our **YouTube channel** for more video content. And if you like what you see, be sure to Follow Us and drop us a comment!



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For Individuals and Cohorts

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Register for made-to-order training sessions!

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Email us and have your questions answered by a Collins Associate!

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Collins Video Library

View our collection of **FREE** and engaging videos on a variety of topics!

For Live Virtual Support
Collins Round Table

Email us to arrange a round table discussion of a topic you would like to know more about. Perfect for administrators or decision makers considering implementation of our program or looking to support their team.

For CTE Teachers and Leaders
Career and Tech in a Nutshell

Interested in using good communication skills in your program to support success in careers or college?

Schedule a 30-minute virtual session
to learn more about our one-of-a-kind CTE-focused training and resources.

For One-on-One Support
Speed Dating with an Expert

Schedule a 15-minute "date" with one of our experts and bring your questions!
Choose CEO **Kristine Gibson** for all things Five Types of Writing; Math expert, **Bill Atwood**; or, if looking for more of a non-traditional companion, choose **Cheryl McDonough** to learn more about Collins in CTE, PBL, and/or WBL!

The Collins Free for All: Browse our online **FREE RESOURCES** and find the perfect Valentine for yourself! Download assignments, templates, letters to parents, FCAs, and more!

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"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
(Short 2-hour sessions open to ALL from ANYWHERE!)

Sentence Building: From Basic to Breathtaking
Grades: 4-10
March 5, 2026
[Learn More and Sign Up](#)

Retrieval Routine: A Daily Learning Routine That Works
Grades: 6-12
March 13, 2026
[Learn More and Sign Up](#)

In-Person Workshops

**REGISTER
NOW!**

**Introduction to the Five Types
of Writing**

Grades: K-12
February 26, 2026
Greensburg, PA

[Learn More and Sign Up](#)

**Embrace the Past!
Using Past Work to Practice
New Skills**

Grades: 3-10
March 9, 2026
New Providence, NJ

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public workshops offered in
your area? We frequently partner
with Intermediate Units and
Educational Service Centers to
provide cost-effective PD
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