



Collins Education Associates

The Collins Writing Program

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

The Collins Writing Exchange

September 7, 2023 Issue #68

Welcome to the 2023-2024 School Year!

We are excited to have new resources, new PD opportunities, and new management! Please visit our website, www.collinsed.com, frequently to see our evolution in real time.

Collins Education Associates Breaking News!



**A Message from Founder
Dr. John Collins**

I'm happy to announce a change in the Collins Writing Program's management structure. After more than 30 years as CEO, I am turning over this role to Kristine Gibson, a veteran, highly successful associate who will help take Collins Writing into the future. Be assured that I am continuing my work consulting in schools and developing products. I will be working closely with Kristine to ensure that Collins Writing has another three (or more!) decades of improving learning for all students through writing!



**Welcome from New CEO
Kristine Gibson**

I am thrilled and honored to take on this new position with CEA and am excited for the opportunity to lead the Collins Writing Program into the future. My passion is sharing with teachers my own classroom experience with the Collins Writing Program and all that I have learned over the past two decades of teaching, training, and working with an excellent team of mentors and colleagues. I am excited to be able to continue in my role as a Collins trainer while also having the ability to build on the solid foundation that Dr. Collins has built and apply my own vision to the program as we function in an ever-changing educational climate.

Celebration of the Month*

Constitution Day September 17th

Many schools across the country engage in activities during the month of September to celebrate Constitution Day. This month we are including some examples of assignments that can be used as is or as models for your own as you plan your own recognition of this important historical event.



Constitution Day Assignments - Ready to Use!

Grades K-2

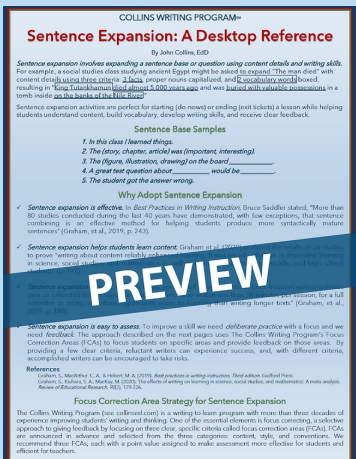
K-2 Paper

Grades 3-5

Grade 6-12

HELPS sheet

* Each month we will highlight a day or event. In October we will be sharing assignments for Columbus/Indigenous People's Day. If you have a great Collins Writing assignment, please send it to [Cheryl McDonough](mailto:Cheryl.McDonough), and you may see it in our newsletter!



Hot Off the Press! New Collins Resources

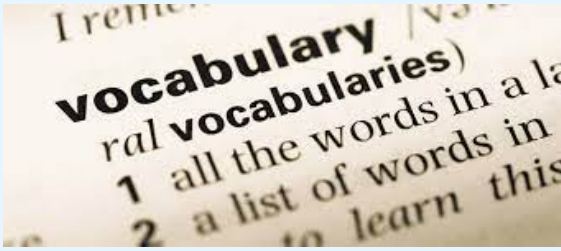
The [Sentence Expansion Desktop Guide](#) is a handy reference tool for any teacher looking to improve students' content retention and writing skills with a quick, versatile, ready-to-use classroom activity. Sentence expansion involves expanding a sentence base or question using content details and writing skills. Sentence expansion activities are perfect for starting or ending a lesson while helping students understand content, build vocabulary, develop writing skills, and receive clear feedback.

This laminated guide includes:

- overview and rationale behind the Sentence Expansion strategy
- step-by-step instructions for using Sentence Expansion in your classroom
- student template and sample Focus Correction Areas

Buy it now

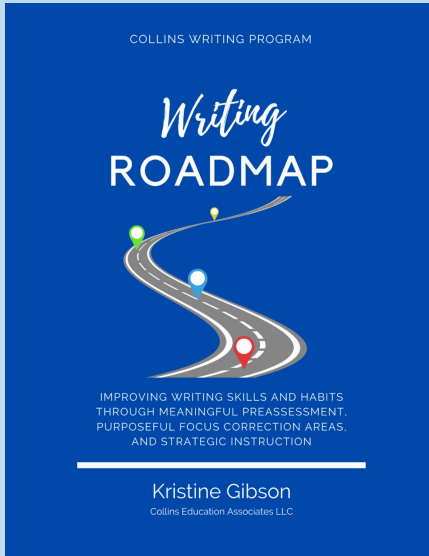
Keep an eye out for two more highly anticipated new resources:



Desktop Guide to
Collins Vocabulary Cards



Desktop Guide to
the Ten Percent Summary



Writing Roadmap...
Pre-Assess, Set Priorities, and
Go!

Start the Year Off Right!

Whether you're a new or veteran Collins user, here are some great resources for starting the new school year on the right foot!

Tips and Routines...Save time and ensure a smoother ride all year long!

Type Ones to Start the Year...Kids need to get back into writing--right away, and Type One makes it easy.

Who's Who Assignment...Get to know your students, build classroom culture, and check-off your first Type Three of the year! K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12

Parent Letters...Communication is key, and we've got you covered. K-3, 4-12

Posters...Because who doesn't love posters?!



Collins FAQs

Just getting started with Collins writing? Need a few things clarified? Here are some of the most commonly asked questions we receive from new users...

- **What is the recommended number of FCAs for Type Three assignments?** Three. The method works best, and learning is most effective, when three FCAs from varied categories (content, style, organization, conventions) are used. See our website for [sample Type Three papers, FCAs, and more](#).
- **Are FCAs assigned in [Type One and Two writings](#)?** No, never. But to keep expectations clear, assign a line or item quota for Type One assignments and a content quota for Type Two.
- **Can Collins assignments be used as homework?** Sure! Students can easily be asked to write 20 lines about what they learned in a class that day, name and define 10 content area vocabulary words, or summarize a chapter according to pre-assigned FCAs. Type One and Two assignments lend themselves very nicely to homework, and teachers often give Type Three assignments that students start in class, but are finished outside of school.
- **Does every Collins assignment take the form of an essay?** No. The Collins program works well with many kinds of assignments, from posters to projects to tests to periodical/newspaper type of assignments. FCAs can be used to set expectations for creating graphs, Google slides, and art projects. Most Collins assignments include writing, but the program is really a method of incorporating critical thinking and setting clear criteria for success. Writing is the vehicle for students to demonstrate content area understanding. See some of our favorite examples of Type Three "Seven Element Assignments" [here](#).
- **Do Type Three and Four assignments have to be multi-paragraph, lengthy writings?** Not at all. The definition of a Type Three is an assignment with FCAs that is read out loud by the student for [revision and editing](#). A Type Four assignment also has FCAs and adds a peer editing component after self-editing. Length is not part of the criteria. Our [Sentence Expansion](#) activity is a great example of a single-sentence Type Three.
- **Can a [Type Three](#) writing become a Type Four?** Yes, this is actually recommended. You can make this transition by using the Type Three as a first draft and Type Four as the next draft. Changing the [FCAs](#) between the first and second draft, based on student needs and increased expectations, maximizes the learning experience.
- **Is skipping lines really important?** It is not a deal breaker. However, it does allow for students to edit their own papers and permits revision that is easier to understand, rewrite, or type. Skipping lines also makes papers easier to read and allows more room for peer or teacher comments and/or editing. Here's a printable [model](#) of what a typical Type Three paper should look like.
- **Can journals be used in this program?** Absolutely. Journal entries are a great way to incorporate Type One and/or Two writing. Just be certain to have the entries labeled and dated and provide a line or content quota to set the bar for productivity.
- **Does the Collins Writing Program prescribe how teachers must grade assignments?** No. But we do aim to streamline the feedback process and make it more meaningful. Line, item, and content quotas makes grading Type Ones and Twos a snap, and FCAs provide clear grading criteria for Type Threes and Fours. Teachers are still responsible for the weighting and grading of each assignment. You may choose to grade all writings of the same type with the same weight. You may, however, choose to weigh them individually according to the individual assignment - not the type of writing. And remember, FCAs within a single assignment can also be weighted according to priority. Click [here](#) for some great tips on providing feedback on writing.

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