

## **Narrative Writing, Grades K-2**

### **Addressing the Common Core Standards with Focus Correction Areas (FCAs)**

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) categorize writing into three types: argument/opinion, informative/explanatory, and narrative. This document provides Collins Writing Program users with focus correction areas (FCAs) for narrative writing in grades K-2. The FCAs listed and described here do not include all writing skills (style and conventions of language FCAs are not included). They focus on the critical, specialized skills that students will need to be effective narrative writers. In addition, these FCAs focus on many of the other Common Core State Standards. For example, the skills we list as FCAs also impact Standard 5 (revision), Standard 6 (using technology to produce and publish), Standard 7 (conduct short and sustained research), and Standard 8 (gather information).

Narrative writing skills progress developmentally across the grades. The Core introduces narrative writing in kindergarten with Anchor Writing Standard 3: "Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened." In grade 3, when the tests are introduced, through grade 12, Anchor Writing Standard 3 asks that students "write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences."

**Narrative Vocabulary:** On page 2 is a list of general academic vocabulary words related to narrative writing. It is not a comprehensive list, but it is an excellent starting point.

**Critical FCAs List: Critical FCAs List:** Beginning on page 3 is a list of critical FCAs. Across the top are the FCAs in abbreviated form for each grade. Below that are three columns with additional information. Column One shows the FCAs, including symbolic FCAs for emergent writers. Column Two has the CCSS description and specific standard reference. Column Three has authentic examples from the CCSS Appendix C, showing student writing that meets the standard.

**FCA Teaching Strategies:** On pages 5 and 6, you will find strategies for teaching FCAs to mastery. The strategies include activities you are already doing and may be done over a period of days or weeks. Because the FCAs listed on pages 3 and 4 are so critical, the time spent teaching and perfecting them is well worth the investment.

**Consistent Terminology:** Because the Common Core Standards are for literacy in all subjects, we encourage teachers to use the FCAs across the content areas. Doing so not only provides common language and consistent expectations but reinforces that the traits of effective writing are similar subject to subject.

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**Narrative Vocabulary:** The Core divides vocabulary into two types: domain specific and general academic. Domain specific words and phrases are “specific to a particular field of study,” and, therefore, are more likely to be taught directly. General academic words and phrases are “vocabulary common to written texts but not commonly a part of speech” (CCSS, Appendix A, p. 42). David Coleman, one of the authors of the Common Core, calls general academic vocabulary “the language of power.” Others call it the language of college or the language of opportunity. When students become comfortable with these words in the primary grades, it sets the foundation for learning throughout their school years and beyond.

As you introduce students to the Standards, take care to define words that students will need to understand. Here are some general academic terms related to narrative writing with brief, student-friendly definitions that students will need to know.

actions	what a character is doing
character	a person (sometimes an animal) who appears in a story
closure	to close; to bring to an end
details	facts or information about something
event	something that happens
facts	information that is true and correct
feelings	emotions or what someone’s heart says
in order	taking place in a particular sequence (e.g., beginning, middle, end)
information	facts about something or someone
introduce	to tell about a topic at the beginning of a piece of writing
linked	connected
narrate	tell a story
problem	something that causes trouble
related	things that are connected to one another
sequence	the order in which events happen
solution	something that solves a problem
text	any written material
temporal	relating to time
thoughts	what someone thinks

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## Focus Correction Areas (FCAs) to Address Narrative Writing, Grades K-2

(Note: For Conventions FCAs, see *Check Mate* Level P)

**Anchor Standard:** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

FCAs for Kindergarten	FCAs for Grade 1	FCAs for Grade 2
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tell about an event/events</li> <li>2. Tell events in order</li> <li>3. Closure</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tell about 2 or more events                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>n</i> details</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Tell events in order                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Time order words</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Closure</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tell about several related events                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>n</i> thoughts, actions, feelings details</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Tell events in order                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Time order words</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Closure</li> </ol>

FCAs<sup>1</sup>

DESCRIPTION

STUDENT EXAMPLE<sup>2</sup>

<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <span style="font-size: 48px;">?</span> </div>	<p>Student writes narrative to tell about an event or sequence of events. Kindergarten students use a combination of drawing, dictating and writing. (W.K,1,2,3)</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Copy symbolic FCAs and paste, or have students paste, them on paper for Type Three writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I went to Disnand (Disneyland) (K)</li> </ul>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">  </div>	<p>Student includes some details regarding what happened to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings. (W.1,2,3)</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Using a number (<i>n</i>) gives young writers a sense of how much detail to give. (e.g., you might ask for 1 thought and 1 feeling).</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> When using this symbolic FCA, have students write the number in the magnifying glass.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I had a fun on vacshne (vacation). . . . I see lot (lots) of rids (rides). I went on the mader hon (Matterhorn). . . . I went my house. (K)</li> <li>• Boy! did we cry.</li> <li>• Then it felt funny.</li> <li>• So I ran down the hall, like I wasn't supposed to, and showed my mom and dad. (gr.2)</li> </ul>

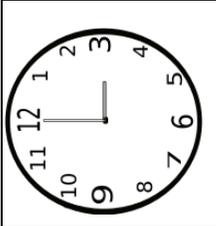
<sup>1</sup> Symbolic FCAs are effective with emergent writers.

<sup>2</sup> Examples taken from *Common Core State Standards, Appendix C: Samples of Student Writing, Kindergarten, Narrative, p. 9; Grade 2, "My first tooth is gone" p. 17.*

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## Focus Correction Areas (FCAs) to Address Narrative Writing, Grades K–2

(Note: For Conventions FCAs, see *Check Mate* Level P or A)

FCAs <sup>3</sup>	DESCRIPTION	STUDENT EXAMPLE <sup>4</sup>
<p><b>2. Tell in order</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <p style="font-size: 24pt; margin: 0;">1, 2, 3</p> </div>	<p>Student tells about the events in the order they occurred. (W.K,1,2.3)</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Sometimes you may have students number the events that happen.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I see lot (lots) of rids (rides). I went on the maderhon (Matterhorn) . . . I went my house. (K)</li> </ul>
<p><b>2a. Time order words (grades 1,2)</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">  </div>	<p>Student in grades 1 and 2 uses time words to signal event order. (W.1,2.3)</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> On the Word Wall, provide grades 1 and 2 students time order words from which to choose (e.g., <i>after, finally, first, next, then, when</i>).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>then</b> at nite (night) <b>when</b> my. Dad came home he sedi (said) was (what) is that. Noys (noise) . . . (gr. 1)</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Closure</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">  </div>	<p>Student provides a reaction to what happened (K) or a sense of closure (grades 1 and 2). (W.K,1,2.3)</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Provide emergent writers several emoticon faces expressing different reactions from which they can choose to express their own reaction. (e.g., 😊 😐 😞 😡)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I had a fun on vacshne (vacation).</li> <li>• I went my house (K)</li> <li>• They were suprised because when they lost teeth the only thing they got is 50¢. (gr.2)</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Symbolic FCAs are effective with emergent writers.

<sup>4</sup> Examples taken from *Common Core State Standards, Appendix C: Samples of Student Writing, Kindergarten, Narrative, p. 9; Grade 1, "I bot a little cotton ball" p. 13; Grade 2, "My first tooth is gone" p. 17.*

## Teaching FCAs for Narrative Writing at the Primary Level

As you introduce new FCAs to your young writers, consider the following strategies.

### Strategy One: Use Mentor Text to Develop Awareness

The experiences young children have before they begin to formally read and write are critical to their literacy development. For example, teacher acknowledgement of FCAs while reading aloud can begin to develop awareness of the skills that students will soon apply to their own writing. For example, "Let's listen to how the author introduces the problem in her story."

### Strategy Two: Use Drawing and Labeling to Develop Fluency

Type One writing in the form of drawings or labeled drawings can start emergent writers on the road to linking thinking and writing. As emergent writers start drawing as a way to communicate in writing, teachers should encourage drawing as a way of telling a story. For example, "Draw a picture and label it to show what you think will happen next in the story."

### Strategy Three: Use Reading to Promote Writing

- Read narrative stories aloud to students. Point out the FCAs/writing skills the author has used. Discuss with students what the FCAs look and sound like. Gradually work toward asking students to identify for you where they see the FCA/writing skill demonstrated in a text.
- For both read alouds and for independent reading, be sure to include narrative stories like *Frog and Toad Together* by Arnold Lobel and *Amos & Boris* by William Steig.
- Use Type Three writing with these specific FCAs for narrative writing.
  - Tell about an event/events
  - Tell events in order
  - Tell details: thoughts, actions, feelings (grades 1,2)
  - Use time order words (grades 1,2)
  - Give closure/conclusion

### Strategy Four: Model FCAs

- Using a document camera or Smart Board, model a Type Three writing for students showing how you might accomplish an FCA. Following a shared class experience, begin telling/writing a narrative about it. "Our class took an exciting trip to the Science Museum yesterday."
- Carry through with the writing, modeling each of the FCAs for narrative writing.
  - Add in order, the events that took place during the trip
  - Review with students details about the trip. Elicit details about events as well as thoughts and feelings. For example, "Cameron was a little scared by the spider exhibit."

- For grades 1 and 2 students, use and point out time order words. "Then we rode the bus to the museum."
- Finally, model how to write a concluding sentence. "We all agreed this was one of our best field trips ever."
- This modeling process may be done in one or two class sessions, or over a longer period of time.

### **Strategy Five: Practice What Has Been Modeled**

- Have students practice each of the FCAs individually, much as was done in the teacher modeling. Remember, Type Three writing can have up to three FCAs. With emergent writers, teachers may choose to focus on only one key FCA at a time.
- Ask students to write a beginning sentence for another shared or individual experience. They could tell a story about a day at school, something their family had done, playing with a friend, or another event.
- Gradually—or over a class session or two—concentrate on other narrative FCAs.
  - tell events in order
  - tell details: thoughts, actions, feelings (grades 1,2)
  - use time order words (grades 1,2))
  - give closure/conclusion

### **Strategy Six: Use the Vocabulary of the Standards Frequently**

- Use the vocabulary of the FCAs and standards so students will become used to hearing the words and applying an understanding of their meaning.
- On your Word Wall have a section for academic vocabulary words. Encourage students to use the words, both orally and in their writing.

### **Strategy Seven: Repeat FCAs**

- Repeat the FCAs on new Type Three assignments until you feel the students have mastery. One of the advantages of the Core is that it requires the same skill over multiple years and various subjects. For example, students are asked to write narrative texts and provide a sense of closure from grades 1 to 12. As students progress, some of the skills will become habits. Once the skills are internalized, FCAs can be refined to direct students' intellectual energies can be directed toward producing writing with more sophistication and nuance.

### **Strategy Eight: Publish Student Exemplars**

- Post some of the best examples of FCAs from student work. They may be complete stories showing 3 FCAs, or smaller pieces showing exemplary work on an individual FCA. Students may have done the writing on their own or after conferencing with the teacher. This practice gives students examples of clearly written Type Five papers demonstrating the FCAs. It also provides recognition and motivation for students.