COLLINS ONLINE CONVERSATIONS

Online Support for Implementing the Collins Writing Program

OVERVIEW

One question we continually grapple with is how to provide affordable, targeted support for teachers and administrators as they implement the Collins Writing Program. We offer a variety of options from model lessons to formal program reviews. We now have added an online option: Collins Online Conversations.

Based on a very successful pilot with educators in Pennsylvania, Collins Online Conversations is a 1- to 2½-hour online training session to address topics chosen from a menu of common training issues, answer user questions, suggest next steps, and build support. We can modify the session format so it fits into a faculty meeting time schedule.

SUGGESTED SESSION FORMAT

COFFEE AND SHARING

The first 15 minutes provides an opportunity for participants to have coffee and share general thoughts and impressions on how the Collins Writing Program implementation is going.

TYPE ONE: GENERATE AND SHARE

Individuals select topics or generate a list of 4-6 questions, concerns, or problems, and share this list with a partner. Each pair consolidates their list and shares it with facilitators during a whole group session. With the help of facilitators, the group selects 5-6 topics or questions for the Collins consultant.

QUESTION > RESPONSE > DISCUSSION

Your consultant appears online and spends 5-8 minutes responding to the first topic or question. There is an opportunity for participants to discuss the answer, ending with additional follow-up questions for 2-3 minutes. This process is repeated for 4-6 rounds: question > response > discussion > follow-up questions.

DEBRIEF AND WRAP UP

After 60-75 minutes, the consultant signs off. The group has additional time to process the responses and reflect on their next steps.

KEY BENEFITS

- It is time and cost effective. Educators commit to 1- to 2½-hours, and the cost of $300 per hour is substantially less than an in-person workshop.
- Participants have time to share successes and ideas with colleagues who are using Collins Writing.
- Participants get clarification and responses to their specific questions and concerns and may receive follow-up resources that provide expanded explanations.
- It's easy to implement. All you need to participate is a facilitator, computer, internet access, large screen, speakers and a microphone. We provide the web meeting software at no charge.

As you plan your professional development, consider Collins Online Conversations as one of your options.

Collins Online: Sample Topics for Online Training and Follow-up

Collins Basics
- ☐ Troubleshooting Types One, Two, and/or Three
- ☐ Self-editing strategies
- ☐ Peer-editing strategies
- ☐ Developing powerful prompts (Type One, Two, and/or Three)
- ☐ Tackling longer writing assignments—How to narrow down FCAs or break assignments into smaller chunks
- ☐ Getting kids to elaborate in writing
- ☐ Scaffolding writing with graphic organizers
- ☐ Creating Seven Element Assignments (meaningful and purposeful Type Threes)
- ☐ Pre/Post test writing model for Type Three

Genre-Specific Writing
- ☐ Developing genre-based FCAs for each grade level
- ☐ Developing opinions, arguments, and reasoning/evidence
- ☐ Comparing and contrasting
- ☐ Developing well-crafted stories
- ☐ Developing personal narratives
- ☐ Planning and carrying out research reports

Reading and Writing Connection
- ☐ Linking writing assignments to reading curriculum
- ☐ Practicing main idea/central idea
- ☐ Ten Percent Summary of nonfiction articles

Text Dependent Analysis
- ☐ Going beyond evidence to analysis
- ☐ Four techniques to incorporate evidence into written responses
- ☐ Reading strategies that help students preview, closely read, and engage with complex text

Management and Accountability
- ☐ Classroom management during writing tasks
- ☐ Tips for organizing and/or eliminating paper overload
- ☐ Non-negotiable FCAs
- ☐ Using student portfolios to build student accountability/reflection and monitor/document progress
- ☐ Developing students' ability to reflect on their work and apply feedback

Content-Specific Writing
- ☐ Developing content-specific assignments (i.e. lab reports, test essay questions, slide show presentations, etc.)
- ☐ Comparing and contrasting
- ☐ How to sound like a scientist
- ☐ Improving general academic and content-specific vocabulary

Math-Specific Writing
- ☐ Using Type One and Two to improve mathematical thinking and understanding
- ☐ Using Type Two to target open-ended response skills in math
- ☐ Using KNSA to teach and practice the basics of open-ended math response
- ☐ Improving and refining open-ended math responses with FCAs
- ☐ Developing FCAs for math assignments (including proofs, graphs, algebraic procedures, etc.)
- ☐ Using "penny whiteboards" to increase engagement and gather formative assessment

Mechanics
- ☐ Dealing with conventions (teaching conventions, selecting convention FCAs, holding students accountable)
- ☐ Using student portfolios to practice new writing skills
- ☐ Sentence building for primary students
- ☐ Sentence building for intermediate students/enhancing sentence style
- ☐ Pilot the *Check Mate for Essential Conventions*

Assessment
- ☐ Grading techniques—scoring and feedback
- ☐ Embedding test prep into your daily routine without calling it "test prep"
- ☐ Using student portfolios to monitor growth and progress
- ☐ Calibration of grading
- ☐ Combining Collins Writing with rubrics
- ☐ Student work/portfolio review and discussion

Differentiation
- ☐ Modifications for struggling and/or gifted learners
- ☐ Strategies for emerging writers