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## Why Use Type Three and Four Writing?

### ***Focus on Progress, Not Perfection***

*Our targeted assessment criteria (FCAs) and our focus on editing and revision work together to improve writing and thinking across the curriculum. Identifying explicit and manageable FCAs makes it possible to provide targeted and focused feedback - including self, peer, and teacher. Quality feedback results in writing that responds to the task and students who understand that writing need not be perfect in order to be valuable.*

#### ***Why Use Clear and Focused Assessment Criteria (Focus Correction Areas)?***

***Because FCAs ...***

- **Give students a map of what the teacher is looking for.** They assist the student in letting "... go of the idea that [they] have to create perfection on [their] first draft. Teachers should help students focus instead on transferring ideas to the paper," as Graham and Hebert discuss in [Writing to Read](#).
- **Let students know that the teacher will not be grading everything they write.** Well-known author and lifetime educator [Kelly Gallagher](#) notes that when students believe they'll be scored on everything, they become paralyzed to start and reluctant to take risks. FCAs limit the number of assessment criteria, giving students the perception that the task is manageable and that they can be successful. FCAs are a good starting point for students as they become revisers as well as editors, helping them to name and identify areas that may need attention. FCAs also guide the peer-editing process.
- **Narrow the focus of assessment, which builds confidence in reluctant writers.** Using FCAs ensures that evaluative criteria is clearly articulated ahead of time and eases student fears about the evaluation process. "Moreover, students who know the standards against which their essays will be judged are more likely to try to meet those standards when they write. The more clearly you indicate what you want in your assignment, the more likely it is that you will get it" ([Incorporating and Grading Writing](#)). FCAs also provide the foundation for impactful teacher feedback and streamline the grading process.

#### ***Why Provide Students With OUR Tools for Editing and Revision?***

***Because Oral Reading ...***

- **Works!** Writers who "read aloud may be more likely to find substantive edits ... slow down in order to comprehend and organize content efficiently. Writers who read aloud will be more likely to understand how a [writing piece] is structured, how it is presented on paper ... and how it is presented orally." Writers "can effectively capture language fluency through listening to their own work be read aloud." Haley Roper discusses the benefits of oral reading in [Oral Proofreading: How Editors and Writers Benefit from Reading Aloud - Editing Research](#).
- **Is an essential step in the writing process.** The trick to revising a piece of writing is to experience it ... as your prospective reader would." The Collins "oral read" is effective because it brings "the words into your consciousness via a different sensory channel." See more from Deborah A. Lott in [Reading Your Work Aloud—a Crucial Step in Your Writing Process](#). Remember, the ears hear what the eyes don't see!

***Because Our Peer Editing Structure ...***

- **Has clear protocols to encourage respectful and useful collaboration between student writers, and it results in better writing.** "We want our students to be proficient writers and thinkers. Reviewing a peer's work can help young people better understand the often difficult process of writing

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by challenging them to adopt a dynamic new role as critic." Benjamin Barbour offers a number of tips that reinforce our peer-editing process in [A Framework for Teaching Students How to Peer Edit](#).

- **Increases productivity.** When unstructured, peer editing can be counterproductive. The key to the successful application of this approach is to provide students with specific directions for working together, then teach them how to carry out these procedures. Asking students to work together as they plan, draft, revise, and edit their papers results in a *31 percentile point jump in writing quality* (Yarrow & Topping, 2010). In ["A Path to Better Writing."](#) Graham and Harris, advocates of collaboration in writing classrooms, cite Yarrow and Topping's study and its finding that to successfully guide peer work during each phase of the writing process, teachers should provide "Help Sheets" with clearly defined instructions. Collins' peer editing combines oral reading with FCAs to provide students with a map to successful and manageable peer editing.

### ***Because [Focused Revision and Feedback](#) ...***

- **Aim for a *better* product, not necessarily a *perfect* one.** The goal of revising assignments is to prioritize writing as a way to improve learning, not just get a grade. If students know that they can fix and improve, they may read feedback more carefully and actually use it to revise and resubmit. [Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey](#) advocate for guiding student thinking during the revision process without making the fixes for them. This increases the cognitive load for students while still providing cues to assist.
- **Build writing confidence and encourage a growth mindset.** The Collins Writing Program endorses the "Comments Only" approach to teacher feedback. Rather than giving a low grade, teachers can offer specific, focused feedback and a chance for students to make improvements. Writing improves when students understand what the teacher is looking for, and they may do better on later assignments. In his meta-analysis, [John Hattie](#) found that giving students feedback has a significant effect on learning, with an effect size of 0.7, well beyond the "hinge point," or average effect size, of 0.4.
- **Let students know that the teacher cares about their learning.** The "revise and resubmit" process encourages students to learn from and correct their mistakes, building accountability and independence. For more, see ["Letting Students Revise and Resubmit: Why You Should Consider It" - HigherEdJobs](#). Collins Writing has always promoted the idea that student writers should review, edit, and revise their own work with the opportunity to resubmit when necessary.
- **Enable targeted and specific feedback.** "Quality feedback, not grading, is what makes writers better, just like a tennis player improves not because of the score of their last match but by the feedback she received on her last match's play," says Dave Stuart Jr. in [Grading ≠ Feedback, and Sometimes You Don't Need to Do Either](#). Grades are **not** feedback. They are not going away, but that doesn't mean we should consider them impactful feedback. Grant Wiggins observes that "Helpful feedback is goal-referenced; tangible and transparent; actionable; user-friendly (specific and personalized); timely; ongoing; and consistent." This description of impactful feedback in [Seven Keys to Effective Feedback](#) perfectly defines our FCAs!

### **Suggested Materials**

[Teacher Resources | Collins Education Associates](#) (free)

[Buy Products | Collins Education Associates](#) (for purchase)

### **A Few of Our Favorites:**

[Primary FCA Stamps](#)

[Collins Writing "At-a-Glance"](#)

[Collins Portfolios Gr. 4-12, Collins Primary Folders Gr 1-3](#)

[High School FCA Poster](#)

[Selecting and Teaching Focus Correction Areas \(PDF\)](#)