



## Why Write Across the Curriculum?

*Because . . .*

- **It develops critical thinking.** *"The process of writing involves organizing thoughts, analyzing information, and constructing coherent arguments, all of which are essential components of critical thinking"* ([Bazerman, Charles, et al. "Reference Guide to Writing Across the Curriculum." Parlor Press, 2005](#)). Immersing students in critical thinking is a foundational piece of our framework based on the belief that critical thinking improves everything! Our recommendation is that all assignments or tasks should move students to the highest levels of thinking.
- **Today's jobs involve writing.** *"... Writing has joined center stage in the work environment as an absolutely critical skill. High level literacy skills are required for most jobs that pay a living wage, and this is only going to increase in the future. Jobs today require on average a higher level of literacy skills than entry level jobs did just 10 or 20 years ago, and the trend is accelerating ... Lack of competence in writing puts students at risk for school failure and the consequences extend well beyond the school years"* ([Karen Harris on Why Writing Matters](#)). Currently we are working with many Career and Technical Schools to implement literacy skills in all areas - from Welding to Business - Health Services to Plumbing! The premise that writing is a life skill, not just a school skill, is well established.
- **It builds content mastery.** In the words of Dave Stuart Jr. (history teacher and author of several books including the widely respected [These 6 Things](#)), taken from [Why We Write](#). *"None of the classes I teach are labeled in the curriculum as writing classes" . . . however, "writing is a reliable and efficient means toward content mastery."* We share his belief and believe that all classes share the goal of students mastering the knowledge, understandings, and skills that each course requires.
- **It improves learning.** In ["Why Students Should Write in All Subjects," Youki Terada](#) explains that writing improves learning by consolidating information in long-term memory according to researchers. Students who write about content have a deeper understanding of the area of study. [Steve Graham's research](#) further reinforces this. His formal study validates his hypothesis that *"writing about content reliably enhances learning. . . . [it is] equally effective at improving learning in science, social studies, and mathematics as well as the learning of elementary, middle, and high school students."* The goal of our work is also student understanding; not just knowledge and comprehension. Formal research, studies, and collections of data support our contention that writing is an indispensable instructional strategy that supports deeper understanding in all content areas.
- **ELA and core area teachers have equally important literacy roles.** In order for students to get quality writing experiences in other subjects, they need to be taught how to write effectively. Effective writing instruction involves assigning authentic tasks and teaching engaging lessons. To this end, students need time to write daily in various settings ([Graham, et al., 2012](#)).

**Suggested Materials**—All of the materials at [collinsed.com](#) support writing across content areas:

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

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

A Favorite for Getting Started: [Collins Writing "At-a-Glance" Desktop Reference](#)