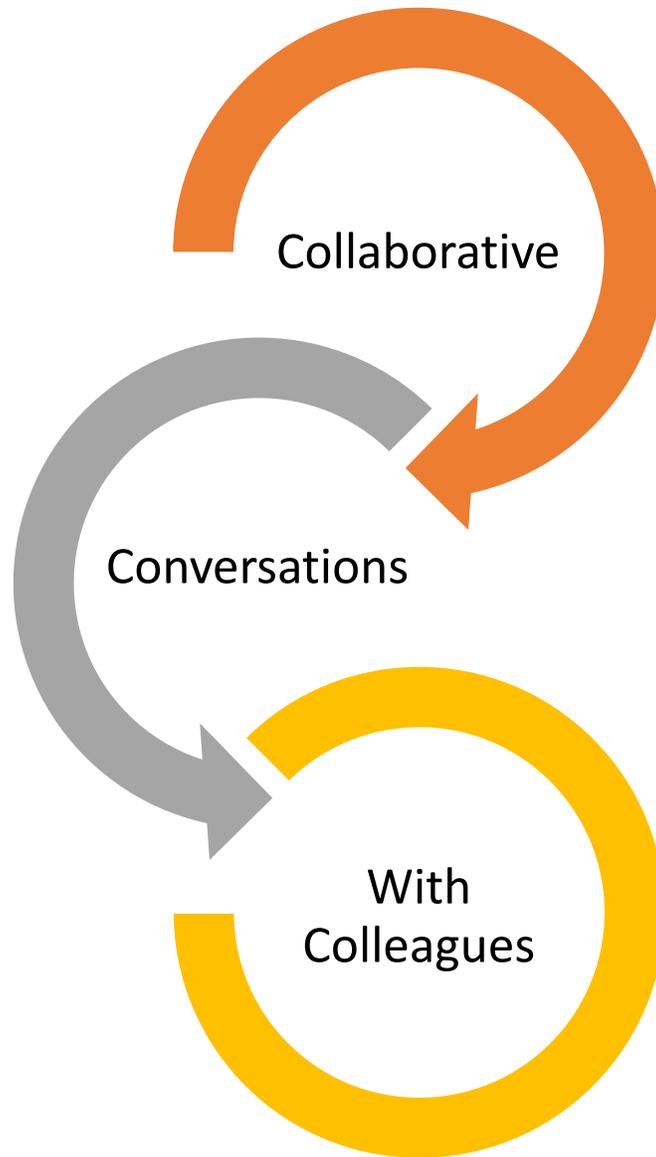


# Building a Culture of Writing



Professional Learning Guide (6-12)  
Writing Across the Curriculum

## How to Use this Guide

This guide is designed to support facilitators with planning for the webinar and conducting the 90-minute follow-up session after the webinar. The guide is also designed to support Tier I participants who are self-directed and participating in the series at their own pace. Included in this guide are the following:

- descriptions of each session outlining the content
- guiding questions for participants to think about as they view the webinar
- references for the research-based practices shared by presenters
- activities to deepen participants' understanding of webinar content
- resource materials to support participants with developing plans for classroom implementation

Following the webinar, facilitators will then guide participants through a series of discussions and activities designed to deepen their understanding of webinar content. Participants will also work to create next steps for individual classroom implementation. Upon returning to their building and implementing the high-quality instructional strategies shared in the webinar, participants are encouraged to further collaborate with colleagues in their schools through Professional Learning Communities and/or peer observations. It is suggested that participants share practices with colleagues across *all* content areas.

### **The outline for the 90-minute, face-to-face session is as follows:**

<i>Discussion of Webinar Content</i>	Suggested time: 10 minutes
<i>Small Group Work</i>	Suggested time: 15 minutes
<i>Break</i>	Suggested time: 5 minutes
<i>Plan for Implementation</i>	Suggested time: 40 minutes
<i>Share plan</i>	Suggested time: 10 minutes
<i>Reflection</i>	Suggested time: 10 minutes
	Total time: 90 minutes

## Things to Consider for Tier 2 and Tier 3 Facilitators

Each session opens with an **Activator** that includes questions for participants to consider prior to viewing the webinar. Facilitators can have participants share their responses orally, complete a written response or “hold” their thinking. Following the webinar is **Opening Moves**. This is a Think-Pair-Share activity that engages participants in collaborative conversations as they reflect on the webinar content and debrief the concepts and ideas shared by Presenters and Co-Presenters. Facilitators will then guide participants through the **Work Period** where they will participate in a small group activity to deepen their understanding of the instructional practices highlighted during the webinar, create a plan for classroom implementation, and share their plan with the group. The session ends with **Closing Moves** where participants will engage in a reflection activity.

### Before viewing:

The **Activator** should be done prior to viewing the webinar and take no more than 10 minutes. The activator questions are designed for participants to ponder as they prepare to engage in the webinar. Facilitators can also choose to have participants write a response using the following:

#### *Carousel Brainstorming*

Post activator questions on poster paper.

Divide your group into smaller teams to match the number of questions you have.

Give a different color marker to each team, and have each team start at a particular question.

At each question, participants should brainstorm responses or points they want to make about the posted question.

After 2-3 minutes with each question, signal the teams to move to the next question, until all teams have responded to all questions.

### *View with a Question in Mind*

Before viewing the webinar, have participants review the session overview and objective(s). From these, ask them to develop a question that comes to mind. After developing the question, encourage them to view the webinar with their question in mind and note new learning, important information, connections, and questions they may have.

Resource:

Harvey, S., & Daniels, H. (2009). *Comprehension and collaboration: Inquiry circles in action*.  
Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

### **After viewing:**

**“Opening Moves”** is a post-webinar activity that engages participants in collaborative conversations as they reflect on the webinar content. It is designed as a Think-Pair-Share activity but again facilitators can utilize alternative methods for a collaborative reflection. Here are a few suggestions:

### ***The National School Reform Faculty’s 4 “A”s Protocol***

- What **Assumptions** do the presenters in the webinar hold?
- What do you **Agree** with in the presentation?
- What do you want to **Argue** with in the presentation?
- What parts of the presentation do you want to **Aspire** to?

Resource:

[http://www.nsrharmony.org/system/files/protocols/4\\_a\\_text\\_0.pdf](http://www.nsrharmony.org/system/files/protocols/4_a_text_0.pdf)

### ***Visible Thinking Protocol***

I used to think \_\_\_\_\_, but now I think \_\_\_\_\_ **or**

I used to think \_\_\_\_\_ and I still think \_\_\_\_\_

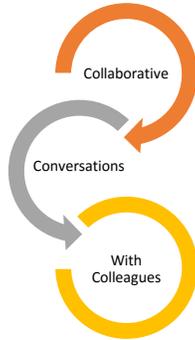
Have participants share and explain their shifts in thinking.

Resource:

[http://www.visiblethinkingpz.org/VisibleThinking\\_html\\_files/03\\_ThinkingRoutines/03c\\_Core\\_routines/UsedToThink/UsedToThink\\_Routine.htm](http://www.visiblethinkingpz.org/VisibleThinking_html_files/03_ThinkingRoutines/03c_Core_routines/UsedToThink/UsedToThink_Routine.htm)

### Things to Consider for Tier I Participants

Each session opens with an **Activator** that includes questions for participants to consider prior to viewing the webinar. Participants can complete a written response or “hold” their thinking as they prepare to view the webinar. While Tier I is self-paced, it is suggested that participants view the entire webinar in one session and make note of key ideas. Following the webinar is **Opening Moves**. This is an activity designed to debrief the concepts and ideas shared by Presenters and Co-Presenters. Tier I participants will complete a written response to the questions in this section. Following **Opening Moves** is the **Work Period**. Tier I participants will notice that the **Work Period** engages participants in a *small group* activity to deepen their understanding of the instructional practices highlighted during the webinar and allows time for participants to create a plan for classroom implementation. **Although Tier I participants will likely work through the series independently, they are still encouraged to work through the activity.** After creating a plan for implementation, participants are further encouraged to share their new learning and plan with a colleague. The session ends with **Closing Moves** where participants will complete a written reflection.



## Session 4: Writing Across the Curriculum

**Lead Presenter: Dr. Megan Adams**

**Co-presenter: Corrie Tuttle**

**Session Overview:** During this 90 minute interactive webinar, teachers will explore how writing using informational texts as support can engage students across the curriculum. We will discuss how writing as part of the secondary curriculum has changed in American education, and we will examine the tools that work best for each of us in our individual classrooms and school settings.

We will begin by describing the writing needs in various content areas as a group. We will then examine literature on writing across the curriculum and a reference list will be provided for those who wish to read further following our session.

The bulk of the session will be an activity where we each write about our most meaningful writing experiences in our own schooling. What did that look like? What was the assignment? What was the prompt? What did we do? What did our instructor/facilitator do? We will share our reflections and build a digital toolbox that we may each use to develop our own assignments to guide our students in writing across the curriculum.

We will then explore our most meaningful experiences teaching writing. What made it meaningful? What did we do? What did our students do? We will add those to our digital toolbox as well.

**Objective:** By the end of this session, participants will be able to

- provide instruction that supports students in their ability to synthesize information and explain their understanding of key concepts and ideas

**Activator**

**Questions to consider prior to viewing webinar**

- How often do you have students conduct research?
- How is the new information students learn shared?
- What is your current approach to having students write from informational text?

**Guide for Follow-up Session**

**Materials:** Chart paper markers

**Opening Moves**

*Discussion of Webinar Content (Think-Pair-Share)*

*Suggested time: 10 minutes*

- What concepts or ideas did you hear and/or see that were consistent with what you already know or believe about teaching students how to write across the curriculum?
- Share ways in which the webinar provided *new* understandings about writing instruction.

**Work Period**

*Step 1. Small Group Work (discussion)*

*Suggested time: 15 minutes*

- Have participants partner with others in similar grades. *\*Support staff members should assign themselves to a grade level with which they work.*
- Provide groups with chart paper and markers. Explain they will conduct a group discussion by answering the following questions and charting their responses.

They can divide the chart paper into four sections. (CAST)

<b>C-</b> current strategies	<b>A-</b> additional strategies
<b>S-</b> scaffolds	<b>T-</b> technology

- What are you **currently** doing to support students with informational writing that is working well?
  - What **additional** strategies shared during the webinar can you add to your current instruction to make it more effective?
  - What **scaffolds** would you offer to support students who struggle with comprehending informational text and/or unmotivated writers?
  - How might you utilize **technology** as a tool to support students with conducting research and writing?
- c. Allow time for groups to share their responses.

*Break*

*Suggested time: 5 minutes*

*Step 2. Create a Plan for Implementation*

*Suggested time: 40 minutes*

Say, “Reflect on the shifts in ELA standards that require students to build knowledge through content-rich, non-fiction text and use evidence from text when writing. Keeping your students’ needs in mind, how can you implement some of the strategies shared by presenters into your instruction?” Explain they will design a lesson using a new approach to engage students in informational writing. Remind them that their "wish list" of tasks they would use if time/resources were not a constraint might be helpful here (created during the webinar). Ask, “Are there some items on your list that you can incorporate into your lesson plan?”

*Step 3. Share plan*

*Suggested time: 10 minutes*

Have participants organize themselves into groups of 3-4. Allow time for them to share their lesson with the group.

### **Closing Moves**

*Reflect on what we have learned*

*Suggested time: 10 minutes*

Use the Chalk Talk protocol to debrief session

[http://www.nsrfharmony.org/system/files/protocols/chalk\\_talk\\_0.pdf](http://www.nsrfharmony.org/system/files/protocols/chalk_talk_0.pdf)

Write Chalk Talk stems on chart paper and post them around the meeting space. Provide participants with markers.

- I used to think \_\_\_\_\_ but now I think \_\_\_\_\_
- Helping students learn to express themselves with confidence in **all** subject areas can contribute to...
- Something I can begin doing differently tomorrow is...
- Something that still concerns me is...

Say, “Chalk Talk is a silent activity. No one may talk at all and anyone may add to the chalk talk as they please. You can comment on other people’s ideas simply by drawing a connecting line to the comment.

Invite participants to write as they feel moved. There are likely to be long silences—that is natural.

How you choose to interact with the Chalk Talk influences its outcome. You can stand back and let it unfold or expand thinking by:

- circling other interesting ideas, thereby inviting comments to broaden
- adding your own reflections or ideas
- writing questions about a participant’s comment
- connecting two interesting ideas/comments together with a line and adding a question mark

Invite participants to do the same kinds of expansions.

Allow them to comment for about 10 minutes (set timer). Thank them for their attention and participation in the session.

## References

Blintz, W. P. (2010). Fibbin with poems across the curriculum. *Reading Teacher*, 63(6), 509-513.

Collins, J. J. (2010). *Improving student performance through writing and thinking across the curriculum*. West Newbury, MA: Collins Education Associates.

Sleeter, C. E., & Cornbleth, C. (2011). *Teaching with vision: Culturally responsive teaching in standards-based classrooms*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.