

COLLINS WRITING PROGRAM

Essential Middle School FCAs

There are dozens, possibly hundreds, of potential focus correction areas (FCAs). FCAs should be selected depending upon the topic, purpose, audience, and skill of the writer. The FCAs listed here have proven to be among the most helpful to use with middle school students when revising and editing informative or persuasive assignments.

1 Use clear topic sentence/thesis statement.

2 Elaborate ideas with sufficient/relevant details.

3 Use content vocabulary.

4 Vary sentence beginnings/lengths/types.

5 Use capitals, end marks.

6 Use commas in series, introductory elements, and compound sentences.

COLLINS WRITING PROGRAM

Essential High School FCAs

There are dozens, possibly hundreds, of potential focus correction areas (FCAs). FCAs should be selected depending upon the topic, purpose, audience, and skill of the writer. The FCAs listed here have proven to be among the most helpful to use with high school students when revising and editing informative or persuasive assignments.

1 Clarify topic/purpose in introduction
—end with strong conclusion.

2 Use content vocabulary.

3 Elaborate paragraphs with
sufficient/relevant details.

4 Vary sentence beginnings/
lengths/types.

5 Use word choice appropriate to
audience and purpose.

6 Use end marks and commas.

7 Use consistent verb tenses.

Examples of FCAs for the MORE Mature Writer

Examples of FCAs for the LESS Mature Writer

Sentence variety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mix of long, medium, and short sentences (long = 20 or more words, medium = 11 to 20 words, short = 1 to 10 words)• Use one semicolon• Use ___ sentences with introductory elements (participle or prepositional phrases, adverb clause, etc.)• Use one, long, correctly punctuated sentence
Clear/Strong language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid or eliminate clichés• Use no words from overused word list• Reduce or eliminate adverbs (Verbs or adjectives that need adverbs usually can be changed to stronger words that do not need modification)• Eliminate ___ percent of words from last draft
Clear organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use and underline ___ transitional devices• Structure paragraphs to help organize main ideas and support
Vivid verbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Underline ___ vivid verbs• Use no more than ___ percent linking verbs• Circle and change at least ___ verbs
Sufficient support	<p>Use at least ___ references from outside sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use ___ factual statements• Develop ideas in proportion to their importance
Clear thesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show thesis statement with four elements underlined: 1) topic, 2) position, 3) reasons, and 4) no use of pronoun "I"
Attention-getting beginning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use one of ___ attention-getting techniques listed in class, and identify technique in margin
Correct spelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allow no more than ___ spelling errors per page• Allow no more than ___ spelling errors per ___ words• Allow no misspelling of words on designated list
Correct capitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correct initial capitalization• Allow no more than ___ capitalization errors
Correct end marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use at least ___ sentences with correct end marks• Avoid fragments• Avoid run-ons
Content vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use ___ number of content vocabulary words correctly in context, spelled correctly, circled in the text, and numbered in the left hand margin

