



# Collegial Circle Final Report

Please type in the information on this form, print it and send it to the Teacher Center along with the Collegial Circle copies in the check list below. Also, attach it to an email to Laurie Hummel to share in the Teacher Center's online Collegial Circle Library. Thank you for being a part in the effort to improve teaching and learning for our students.

## COLLEGIAL CIRCLE INFORMATION

**Assessment to Drive Writing Instruction:  
Using Carl Anderson's book Assessing  
Writers to analyze student writing** Standards Area: **(CCSS 3.W.4,  
3.W.5)**

Title of Circle: \_\_\_\_\_

Facilitator: Mary Kokinda School(s): MCE

Beginning Date: Dec 3, 2012 Ending Date: May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 # of Hours: 10.5

Participants (list): Elizabeth Mitchell, Kristin Thrash, Amanda Moon, Liz Knowles, Angie Carpin

Please attach copies of the following to this report:

- ✓ Collegial Circle Attendance Log (required for payment)
- ✓ Collegial Circle Meeting Log
- ✓ Log of Strategies Implemented
- ✓ Samples of implementation strategies or student work samples if applicable
- ✓ Collegial Circle Reflection Sheets (each member fills one out)

## COLLEGIAL CIRCLE DESCRIPTION

(Type your answer in the grey box below the question. The size of the box will adjust to the length of your answer.)

**What were the anticipated objectives of this Circle?**

TEACHERS WILL KNOW MORE ABOUT HOW TO ANALYZE STUDENT WRITING IN MEANINGFUL WAYS THAT GUIDE INSTRUCTION. AS A RESULT OF ANALYZING STUDENT WRITING, TEACHERS WILL BE BETTER ABLE TO GUIDE AND SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH THE DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANIZATION OF WRITING APPROPRIATE TO THE TASK AND PURPOSE AT HAND. TEACHERS WILL BE ABLE TO MORE PURPOSEFULLY GUIDE AND SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH PLANNING, REVISING, AND EDITING WRITING PIECES.

**What grade level(s) and or subject area(s) would benefit from this Circle?**

2-5, ELA (writing)

## FINAL REFLECTIONS

(Type your answer in the grey box below the question.)

**Was the outcome/goal of this Collegial Circle met? Explain.**

We came upon some challenges as we dove into the Anderson text that resulted in us learning something other than what was expected! So yes, the outcomes of hoping to improve our understanding of writing standards, expectations, and instruction were achieved.

**How did the Collegial Circle assess whether the outcome was met?**

As we unpacked the Anderson text, we realized that many of the instructional and assessment strategies used and suggested fit into a much more open-ended writing workshop than what any of us runs in our classrooms. We had discussions around how and when to implement writing lessons that weren't fitting into the prescribed units we have at the grade level but that seem to help students achieve the CCSS for ELA.

While we initially thought we could use the district rubric to analyze work, we learned from Anderson's text that it's crucial to catch student work that is not a "finished" piece and analyze that work. The district rubric did not always apply or help us in noticing which areas to "teach to" or areas of strength, etc. when doing so. We tried applying the rubric from the Anderson book which gave us new perspective. Ultimately, we kept trying to link the things we "have to do" as writing teachers tied to prescribed units with instructional and assessment practices suggested by Anderson. We shared student work in various stages and discussed what next steps we'd take with it and with the students.

We also found that our conversations revolved around the logistics of how to best teach to the points/areas of need

– whether whole group, 1:1, etc. Ultimately many of us tried new management techniques as well as instructional and assessment strategies. Being inspired to do so has allowed us to meet different needs for students in new ways and craft more purposeful techniques as writing teachers. We met our goal of having every teacher submit work samples that we analyzed and discussed. (See attached evidence/photos with comments)

**How did your work impact teaching/learning? Include student work samples, lesson plans, peer reviews, etc.**

Based on Liz's seed ideas for essay/non-fiction writing we had a great talk about what makes for a worthy idea and how to help kids navigate through ideas from an 8 year old mind to generate something that they can actually write about. Generating ideas independently was a part of the Anderson rubric and an important goal in his mind. (Pictures in Meeting 4 notes)

Elizabeth shared a journal page entitled "Storys About my mom" that was the result of a "free write" opportunity in her room. We used it to find evidence for what the student was already doing well and what could be taught based on this authentic sample. (Pictures in Meeting 5 notes)

Mary shared the planning page and final product of a writing piece aligned with practicing for On Demand Opinion Writing. We discussed best practices for using on demand writing as pre and post assessments for every genre. Participants who attended Lucy Calkins workshops reiterated that Calkins stressed the idea of not using final drafts of something that has been taught in lessons as evidence for grades but rather on demand pieces like this. (Pictures in Meeting 6 notes)

Amanda used a technique meant to help with generating ideas after learning about it from colleagues and we had a good discussion on how this strategy has worked for some teachers but not others – what are we doing differently or does it just work for some kids and not all. If we assess a piece of work that is not a "final" version but a brainstorming session product what can we learn from it. (Pictures in Meeting 4 notes)

Angie did an On Demand Opinion writing piece using a TFK (Time for Kids) article – something many of us ended up trying – and we analyzed what could be gathered from looking at this type of student work versus more authentic in-process pieces. (Pictures in Meeting 5 notes)

Kristin shared an example of the literary essay her class did as a unit. We had a good discussion around what expectations are regarding the quantity of writing production and communicated with Erin Ciccone, ELA Standards leader, with regards to this issue. We discussed the level of success we've each had with regards to teaching essay structure and shared techniques such as the hamburger model and using your five fingers as well as more traditional graphic organizers (in particular one Liz created). We all benefitted from trying a variety of these with our students, as did the students! (Picture in Meeting 5 notes)

**Comments/additional information to share.**