

Teacher Spotlight

By Keri Bartholomew | Categories: Teacher Spotlight, Thought Leadership

Collaborative Classroom is honored to spotlight first grade teacher Sandy Cebollero from Sherwood Forest Elementary School in Winston-Salem, North Carolina for our January Teacher Spotlight.

How long have you been teaching with Collaborative Literacy?

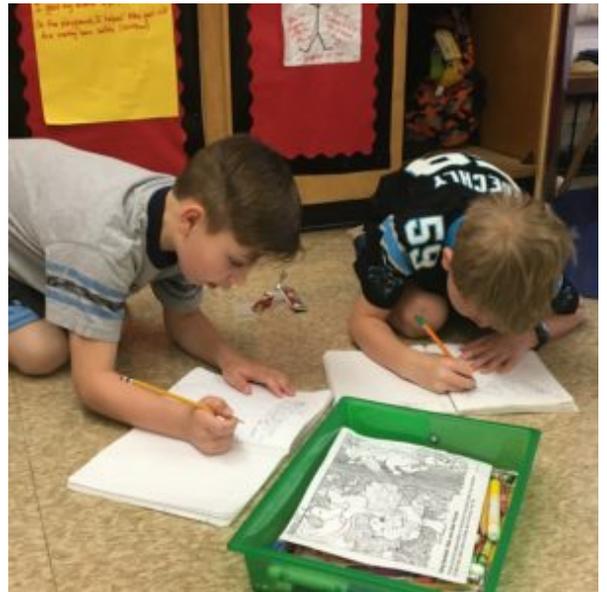
This will be my third year using Collaborative Literacy. I implemented it at a school in Florida as an instructional coach and for the past two years in my first grade self-contained classroom in North Carolina.

Tell us briefly about your classroom?

My classroom is a self-contained first-grade classroom. Our community consists of 19 students. Two of those students are diagnosed with a learning disability, several students have a diagnosis of ADHD (attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder), and several are considered academically gifted. I have 11 girls and 8 boys in our learning community.

What do you appreciate about Collaborative Literacy as a teacher?

So *many* things! I appreciate the Teacher Notes that help me think and reflect throughout the lessons and units. The CCC Learning Hub, webinars, and the Facebook® community page are so helpful and can be explored numerous times. I appreciate too that the curriculum educates not only the students but the teacher! I thought I was a reflective teacher, but I never thought about the importance of taking time every day for the whole learning community to reflect. It's been so eye-opening!





What do your students appreciate about Collaborative Literacy?

They *love* the books and having the opportunity to turn and talk to each other about the books. Also, I think they enjoy being seen as a “teacher” in our community. I am no longer the “sage on the stage.” Each member of our community teaches. You can see how each week the students become more willing to share their thinking and respect the thinking of others.

How has this approach impacted your own teaching?

I am more thoughtful about my word choice and spend more time paying attention to the facilitation techniques. I never realized how much I repeated myself or what the students said! Also, I think of the social-emotional focus and how it is as important as the academic focus. I enjoy participating in this

work each and every day!

What is your favorite part of Collaborative Literacy?

It is hard to choose one favorite! I guess I would say that I am thrilled to be part of a work that believes in growing and creating great readers, writers, and thinkers, and caring, responsible humans!

What advice do you have for new Collaborative Literacy teachers?

Take it easy. The first few years take time to get used to. It is a lot of work in the beginning. Give yourself that time. Trust the process and know that as with anything, give yourself that gift of time and learning. Also, use all the resources in the manuals and online tools (like the Learning Hub and the YouTube™ channel). No one expects perfection. Just trust and give it a go. You'll be amazed at what your students are doing!

