The Center for the Collaborative Classroom is a nonprofit organization dedicated to students’ growth as critical thinkers who learn from, care for, and respect one another.
“Conferring is not the icing on the cake. It IS the cake.”

- Carl Anderson
Session Goals

To enhance our thinking around conferring as an intervention

To offer practical tools for supporting one-on-one literacy conferences
Response to Intervention (RTI)

- **Tier 1**: High-quality classroom instruction, screening, and group.
- **Tier 2**: Targeted Interventions.
- **Tier 3**: Intensive interventions and comprehensive evaluations.
Successes and Challenges

Reflect on the instruction and intervention that occurs in your school...

What does Tier 1 instruction look like?

What does Tier 2/3 look like?

What’s working? What’s not?
The most educationally significant assessment takes place in classrooms moment to moment among teachers and students.

Peter Johnston
Choose an article/handout you are interested in reading. You will have a few minutes to read your selection “closely”.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Read closely...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Underline any language that intrigues you. Why do you find it interesting? Jot down your reasons.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Write down your opinions and reflections—what do you think of the article? Why?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Does the article remind you of your own experiences? What are the similarities? Differences?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What questions do you have? Write done several open ended questions.</strong></td>
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</table>
What did you talk about?
“How should we respond to a look, a piece of blackberry pie, a kiss, a death in the family, a joke, to the sneaky warm of the winter sun when it touches a hand? As a human being.”

“There can be no way—no single, correct, preconceived way— for one human being in the dynamic, ever-changing context of a human interaction to respond to another human being.”
What might this look like in practice?
Video Viewing

What do you notice about the student’s role in the conference?

What do you notice about the teacher’s role in the conference?
Conferring
Video Debrief

What did you notice about the student’s role in the conference?

What did you notice about the teacher’s role in the conference?
Principles of Conferring

Based on the conferences we just viewed as well as your own conferring experiences, what might we consider to be “core principles” of conferring?

Jot down a few core principles.
Architecture of a Conference

- Listen
- Teach
- Think/Decide
- Try
Listen...

What do you notice?  What do you wonder about?

What are the strengths of this reader?  What does the reader struggle with?
Think...

Of all the things this reader does really well, what is the one thing that should be appreciated?

Of all of the things this reader could do better, what is the one thing that will impact him/her the most?
Teach...

How can I support this student in trying something new?

How could I probe this student’s thinking about their reading that will tell me more about their literacy skills?

How do I work collaboratively with this student to address the identified need?
At the end of a conference, give students an action step.

Try...

How can I challenge a student to try a new strategy or skill?

How can I ask students to be more aware of a strategy, skill or writer’s craft?
Now let’s watch a writing conference.
As We Watch, Consider...

How do we know the teacher is listening?

What does the teacher decide to teach? What might have informed this decision?

What does the teacher ask the student to try? How might the teacher have decided upon this action step?
Video Debrief

How do we know the teacher was listening?

What did the teacher decide to teach? What might have informed this decision?

What did the teacher ask the student to try? How might the teacher have decided upon this action step?
Reflect:
Consider the architecture of a conference.

How might this structure support teachers as they confer with readers and writers?
Data Collection

*Formal procedures are important.*

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<tr>
<th>Provides a record of student progress over time</th>
<th>Supports ongoing teaching during future conferences</th>
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<td>Serves as a communication tool for families</td>
<td>Supports student goal-setting and self-assessment</td>
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Effective teaching calls for a third kind of assessment designed to record how the child works on tasks and to inform teaching as it occurs.

Marie Clay
# Unit 3
### Questioning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s name:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text title:</td>
<td>Text level:</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>1. Initiate the Conference</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ask: What is your book about so far?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is the student able to tell what the text is about?</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>2. Listen to the Student Read Aloud</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Does the student:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Attend to meaning?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Read fluently?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Pause and reread if having difficulty?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Read most words accurately?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Try to make sense of unfamiliar language?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask: What is the part you just read about?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Is the student able to tell what the passage is about?</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>3. Discuss the Text</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ask comprehension questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Is the student comprehending the text?</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>4. Discuss Text Level</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ask: Do you think this book is at the right level for you— not too difficult and not too easy? Why do you say that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is the student able to determine whether he or she comprehends the text?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is this text at the right level for this student?</td>
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**Next steps:**
Personal Narrative Conference Notes

Personal Narrative

Student's Name: ___________________________ Date: ________

Ask the student to show you his or her writing and read some of it aloud to you. Help the student extend his or her thinking about personal narrative by asking questions such as:

Q Why did you choose to write about this [event/memory/thing]?
Q What else do you remember about it that you can add to the narrative?
Q What words are you using to describe what you [saw/heard/smelled/tasted/felt]?
Q (Beginning Week 2, Day 5) What temporal words and phrases are you using to help readers understand when something happened?
Q What other experiences from your own life might you want to write about?

Other observations:

Next steps:
Reflect:

How can resources such as these support your teachers as they confer with readers and writers?
## Principles of Conferring

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<th>Use a tone of genuine interest and curiosity.</th>
<th>Let the child lead.</th>
<th>Be patient.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foster students’ confidence.</td>
<td>Assume the student has something to say.</td>
<td>Respect silence.</td>
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Principles of Conferring

Ask open-ended questions.

Look for the teaching moment.

Point out things you see them trying to do.

Follow-up.
The most important piece of advice I'd give to a new teacher when it comes to conferring, or someone just launching a readers' workshop, is 'relax.' Think about it as a conversation. Know that in the beginning it may very well feel a bit awkward. But aren't all first conversations?

Debbie Miller
Reflect & Plan

What are your “take-aways” from our session?

What do you plan to do?
Feedback Survey

Please take a moment to complete the Feedback Survey for this session on the Conference App.

Click here to access the survey
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