



Better Answers, Second Edition: Written Performance That Looks Good and Sounds Smart

Ardith Davis Cole

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"Student's writing skills are improving tremendously... Last year's fourth-graders started using the sandwich method mid-year and almost all of them scored in the highest possible category when they took the state's standardized English-language arts test just a few months later."

—Wells Central Schools, NY

Wells Central is just one of numerous schools that attribute their success to Ardith Davis Cole's Better Answers process. Since 2002, her book *Better Answers* has offered teachers and school districts a powerful alternative to "test-prep" workbooks. It presents a dramatically different instructional model that helps students construct thoughtful test responses, but it also prepares them for any task requiring thorough, cogent answers to questions and prompts -- both in and out of school.

Now, with students tested more frequently than ever, and with teachers increasingly concerned about incorporating substantive test-taking skills into children's learning, Ardith Cole responds with a new updated and expanded edition of *Better Answers*. Informed by Ardith's ongoing work in classrooms where students struggle over constructed-response tasks, the new edition makes the Better Answers "sandwich" even easier to implement. The book has also been significantly reorganized, as well as expanded to include two new chapters, "Understanding the Prompt" and "What to do When." Also included is a resource-packed CD-ROM that contains everything teachers need to support their lessons and is a great tool for staff development:

- lesson plans for text-based and self-based responses;
- power point slides, charts, and other visual supports;
- sets of sample texts with prompts;
- sample student responses;
- assessment forms;
- extensive bibliography of print and online resources.

The Better Answers process is easy to grasp and uses a gradual-release instructional process that begins with teacher modeling, invites increasing amounts of student participation, and eventually moves students into independent response writing. The book clearly explains each element of the process and provides helpful activities, authentic classroom vignettes, and tips on how to handle typical stumbling blocks along the way.

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