

COLLABORATION AND CO-TEACHING

By Andrea Honigsfeld and Maria G. Dove

Collaboration and Co-teaching is an excellent resource for ESL teachers, mainstream teachers, and school administrators. This text not only justifies the need for collaboration between ESL and mainstream teachers but also provides examples of ways to make collaboration successful. Designed to be a guide for all schools wishing to meet the needs of their English language learners (ELLs), this text offers many different models of collaboration for a variety of classroom settings. This text's greatest asset is that it gives such an array of collaboration scenarios that any teacher should be able to find a model that works for them. It is also great because it proposes solutions to the challenges of collaboration.

This text is nicely organized in that it begins with a strong argument for the need for collaboration between mainstream and content teachers. It states the ever-growing population of ELLs in U.S. schools and how those schools are often unequipped to meet the needs of these students. The authors propose that collaboration between ESL and content teachers is the key to meeting the needs of ELLs. They then go on to carefully outline the components of successful collaboration defining who's involved, where and when collaboration can take place, and the nuts and bolts of how it can be done. Throughout the chapters there are vignettes that illustrate the various issues involved with collaboration. The vignettes personalize the text and make a strong argument for the need for collaboration. The text ends with several case studies of different collaboration models in elementary, middle, and high school settings. This wraps the text up nicely and shows how the components of collaboration that were explained in previous chapters work in real scenarios.

A good portion of this book is dedicated to making the case for collaboration. This is both effective and necessary for there are many obstacles to collaboration, such as time, space, and lack of training, that make it seem too difficult to attempt. Administrators and mainstream teachers need to understand that ELLs are not just the responsibility of ESL teachers but the entire school. Chapter two addresses the challenges that ELLs face and offers ways collaboration can help ELLs meet those challenges. For example, it can be difficult for ELLs to acculturate to a new school climate. ESL teachers are often trained in responding to the needs of culturally diverse students. Through collaboration ESL teachers can share this knowledge and training with administration and mainstream teachers so that they, too, understand the cultural differences of their students and can better help them meet their needs. After reading the ways collaboration can address the needs of ELLs, it's hard to not to want to adopt collaboration as part of ELL instruction. This section of the book provides the inspiration needed to take on a new way of teaching.

After providing the rationale for collaboration, the authors go on to explain the nuts and bolts of effective collaboration. They define who's involved: administration, ESL teachers, mainstream teachers, and students. They instruct that teachers need administrative support, time, encouragement, and team-building skills to effectually collaborate. They also outline instructional activities such as joint planning, curriculum mapping and alignment, parallel teaching, co-teaching, and collaborative assessment and non-instructional activities such as joint professional development, teacher research, and conducting joint parent-teacher conferences for successful collaboration to take place. These activities are explained in detail and great examples are given as to how these activities will look in practice. Throughout the chapters there are diagrams and charts that illustrate the concepts of collaboration. There are also a

number of different ways these concepts can be applied to different scenarios, making this text very adaptable for many different teaching situations.

The authors do a nice job of tackling the obstacles involved with collaboration. The biggest hurdle for teachers to collaborate is time. Because there are so many demands placed on teachers, they are always pressed for time. Chapter six offers a protocol for making the most of time constraints. Example charts are given that offer ideas to make time for collaboration such as staff development days, time within class periods, and decreasing student class time so that teachers have time to work together. The authors also state that incentives must be provided to teachers if they are to do the work that's involved with collaboration. The idea of asynchronous time is also brought up. An effective way to communicate is often online, and teachers can use this method to their advantage when it is difficult to find time to meet face to face.

This text is a very practical guide for schools in how to incorporate successful collaboration between ESL and mainstream teachers so that ELLs receive the best possible education. It is crucial that administrators understand the need for collaboration when it comes to educating ELLs and this book does an excellent job of justifying the need for ESL and mainstream teachers to work together. Although the authors do touch briefly on joint assessment for ELLs, I wish this book had covered this issue more deeply. It did, however, address many of the concepts of collaboration, clearly spelling out what is involved in successful collaboration, giving examples of various forms of collaboration and ending with stories of how collaboration looks in various settings. Collaboration is a crucial step in helping ELLs succeed. I believe administrators and ESL and mainstream teachers should read this book so they understand the need for collaboration and have the tools needed to successfully work together.