Francesca Cantarini has been teaching Reading and Language Arts in the School District of Philadelphia for 7 years. She currently teaches at C.W. Henry Elementary (K-8) in Mt. Airy. While her 8th grade classroom centers around the curriculum, she has found ways to integrate various other programs into her students' daily routine. "Writers Matter: Voices of Teens" is a creative journaling program sponsored by La Salle University. Ms. Cantarini uses this program to foster a sense of community in the classroom, nurture students' public speaking skills, and encourage writing among all students. In addition to the Writers Matter program, Ms. Cantarini, runs Literature Circles using novels with a social justice theme. The students learn about various struggles for equality throughout history by reading and discussing the literature. Anti-Semitism is one of the major themes the students deal with in class throughout the year. She also coordinates an annual Holocaust Survivor visit to her classroom. Her classes have visited the Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center in the Northeast, as well as, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. She recently finished writing a chapter about implementing the study of the Holocaust into a Literacy classroom for an upcoming book with Dr. Robert Vogel. Ms. Cantarini focuses much of the studies in her classroom on the ADL's Holocaust curriculum: Echoes and Reflections. The students' learning is extended through the spring with their work on their 8th grade Service Learning Project.

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