One CFU I do with writing is having students highlight a particular skill we're working on (i.e. thesis sentence). In the screenshots below I asked students to highlight their favorite piece of dialogue + dialogue tag that shows character feelings or personality, as well as their favorite sensory detail. This allows me to quickly identify whether or not students have mastered a particular skill and provide the specific, appropriate feedback in the moment.

Example 1

“No..she came with us...I thought she was right behind me..” He stammered, looking behind himself. I paced forward, looking around as well. I didn’t see her either. Heat filled my face.

“You lost her?! This is Strawberry! Who knows what could happen!” I whipped my head back towards the boys. “Where’d you see her last?” I asked. Stacey pointed beyond me with a shivering hand.

“B-by the shop..” I walked quickly towards it. I can’t believe her own brother didn’t watch her! Please lord, let her be okay! I thought. Once I got there, I froze in terror. Mr. Simms was pinning my poor Cassie down on the road. His two sons, R.W and Melvin helped.

He was an ugly man. On the inside and outside. His face was an unnatural red with a large, pointed nose that sticked out of it. His beard was large and bushy, like an overgrown thicket and sweat ran down along his gray shirt.

Example 2

In a loud and angry voice I screamed, “ARE YOU CRAZY!” Eyes twitching, eyebrows down, mouth straight and with a serious tone I said, “People get hurt out their and bit by police dogs. Firefighters spray people with water from water hoses. Don’t you know that?”

“I wanna fight for my rights, freedom, and free speech.” Leon said in a loud and powerful voice.

We don't understand. Don't you know you're going to get killed for listening to those people?
Example 3

“Good afternoon ladies.” I said as I waved my hand with a smile on my face.

“Afternoon! My name is Zora.” Zora’s words would bounce like ball when she sprinted her words to me “What’s yours?” She sprinted at me again with a smile on her face.

“It’s not polite to ask strangers questions, Zora,” Mrs. Hurston interrupted with a high pitched voice.

“It’s quite alright,” I said as I chuckled “Hello Zora, My name is Gold.” Than I looked at the girl beside Zora with a smile on my face “And what’s your name?” I asked with a smile on my face.

“Uhhhhhh carrie my name’s Carrie” Carrie said kinda shy.

“Hello Carrie my name is Gold” “It’s so nice to meet you all lovely girls” I said with a smile as I looked around the desk.

When my husband came back he asked me “Why are you talking to . . . these . . . people?” His voice was loud like a animal screaming for help. He shifted his eyes back and forth to make sure no one was in the area watching us and no one heard him say that.