

# Supporting Narrative Writing Proficiency and Engagement in a Montessori Upper Elementary Classroom through the Writing Workshop Model and 6+1 Traits of Writing

An Action Research Report  
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6+1 Traits of Writing

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Abstract

This action research project set out to determine the effects of daily writing workshop lessons, including the 6+1 Traits of Writing vocabulary, on student writing proficiency and engagement. An upper elementary classroom of 17 students, consisting of nine fourth graders and eight fifth graders, in an independent, suburban Montessori school participated in this study. Students completed a five-week narrative writing unit from Calkins, Ochs, & Luick's (2017) *Up the Ladder* curriculum. The teacher-researcher collected data through observation, writing prompts scored using a 6+1 Traits of Writing rubric, student feedback forms, Bottomley, Henk, & Melnick's (1997/1998) Writer Self-Perception Scale, and small group feedback sessions. The data suggested that students, particularly weaker writers, made gains in writing proficiency. Further research is necessary to determine if students would be more engaged in writing than other subjects and if classrooms with a full three-year age span would make similar gains in writing proficiency.

*Keywords:* Montessori, writing workshop, 6+1 Traits of Writing, writing proficiency, upper elementary, Calkins, Ochs, & Luick's (2017) *Up the Ladder* curriculum

“...I don’t know...” I’ve heard that response from so many of my students to various questions about their writing. “What part of your writing are you most proud of?” “Where will you add more detail?” and of course “What are you going to write today?” Their response always frustrated me; these kids could talk all day to each other, why couldn’t they put words onto paper? Of course, the irony of my frustration lies in the fact that if someone had asked me in my previous years of teaching “How can you help your students become better writers?” my answer also would have been “I don’t know.”

I always had some writers who excelled, who had ideas to work with and were even excited to revise their writing. I could offer suggestions on spelling and punctuation, even an occasional tidbit about throwing in juicy words or some dialogue. These students were strong writers who were getting stronger, but when it came to the average and struggling writers, I didn’t know what to do. After completing my Montessori elementary teacher training, I felt confident explaining the needs of invertebrates, describing dozens of verb tenses, even finding the square root of numbers into the hundred thousands; I did not, however, feel confident teaching writing.

While the upper elementary language curriculum, for students in fourth through sixth grade, excludes explicit strategies for writing instruction, that’s not because Montessori didn’t appreciate the written word. In her writings, it is clear Montessori valued reading and writing as important skills for students. In her text outlining the elementary curriculum, *The Advanced Montessori Method: Volume II*, Montessori (1918/2009) wrote:

The individual, all by himself, can put himself into communication not only with human beings actually alive on the earth, but also with those who lived

centuries and centuries ago down to the dawn of history. Such communication is made possible not by sound but by the written symbol. (p. 159)

In this way, Montessori reflected on the amazing nature of reading and writing, that text puts humans in a timeless realm of communication with each other. In fact, she valued writing so much she devoted one of only five “Great Lessons” to the evolution of the written word, presented annually to elementary students to spark their imaginations.

In her book *From Childhood to Adolescence*, Montessori (1948/2008) described her teaching method as a “preparation for life” (p. 27). Reflecting on this lofty goal, what better preparation for life could we give our students than strong writing skills? Writing allows students to express themselves and communicate with others. Writing allows students to process ideas and emotions. Writing allows students to advocate for themselves and others who need it. Like Montessori, I believed in the power of writing, but I did not know the best way to empower my students as writers.

Without formal training in writing instruction and a lack of a school-wide writing curriculum, teachers at my school filled this void in their own way. I created my own piecemeal professional development in writing and literacy, relying on conference sessions, books, websites, and colleagues’ work to inform my teaching. On this journey, I looked for writing methods and curricula aligned with Montessori philosophy, preserving student choice, independence, and respect for the child. This pursuit led me to Lucy Calkins’ work at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) through Columbia University. After spending a week at the TCRWP’s Institute for the Teaching of Writing, learning Calkins’ writing workshop approach, I felt that I understood one

method for writing instruction. I wondered if this method could adequately serve the students at my school.

I teach at a private Montessori school, accredited by the American Montessori Society, in a suburb of a major city enrolling approximately 325 students, aged 16 months to 14 years. The school previously had two Upper Elementary classrooms and opened a third this year; Upper Elementary enrollment totals approximately 65 students across the three homerooms. I teach in the newest Upper Elementary classroom alongside an associate teacher. Since we are in a year of transition growing a new classroom, there are no sixth graders in our class. We have seventeen students, nine fourth graders and eight fifth graders. With this cohort in mind, I set out to determine a method for writing instruction that could help my students become both proficient and engaged writers.

I looked to the body of literature to determine if other teachers, beyond my school and the Montessori community, also had difficulty teaching writing. I aimed to find the best practices for writing instruction. Finally, I tried to discern which of those best practices aligned with Montessori philosophy and which could be areas of conflict.

### **Review of Literature**

In 2011, American eighth-grade students took the National Assessment of Educational Progress to determine their writing proficiency. The Nation's Report Card found that 20% of eighth-grade students scored below basic and 54% scored basic, while 24% scored proficient, and only 3% scored advanced (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). From these findings, it is evident that American students are not performing as well as they could in writing. This deficiency extends beyond traditional learning environments.

Studying Montessori schools in one region, Lopata, Wallace, & Finn (2005) found that in language arts measures, fourth grade students scored similarly to their peers in traditional settings. Yet by eighth grade, Lopata et al. (2005) reported that “Montessori students had lower achievement than students in structured magnet, open magnet, and traditional non-magnet schools” (p. 12). Research suggests teachers’ lack of training in writing instruction is one factor contributing to students’ lack of skill.

Darling-Hammond (2012) argued that inadequate teacher training negatively impacts both students’ and teachers’ experiences. Teacher training is lacking in the United States, especially in the area of writing instruction. On a national survey of fourth through sixth-grade teachers in the United States, Gilbert & Graham (2010) found that 65% of teachers had no to minimal preparation in the teaching of writing from their teacher training and most educators rely on professional development to learn how to teach writing. Training in writing instruction is crucial to teachers feeling competent in the classroom (Graham, 2008) and should be included in traditional teacher education programs (Fry & Griffin, 2010). Specifically, teacher training in writing instruction is necessary to teach educators the skills of utilizing consistent language to describe strong writing, asking constructive questions, listening to students’ answers, and giving specific, constructive, inspiring feedback (Fry & Griffin, 2010). Both traditional educators and Montessori teachers lack training in how to best teach writing.

The Montessori philosophy at the upper elementary level, serving students aged nine to twelve, lacks a writing curriculum. *The Advanced Montessori Method Vol. II* (1918/2009), outlining the areas of the elementary curriculum, and teacher training manuals for language rely on a comprehensive grammar study but do not include explicit

directions for writing instruction (Midwest Montessori Teacher Training Center, 2015). This intense grammar study is not enough to help students improve their writing. In fact, Hillocks (1984) found that “The study of traditional school grammar...has no effect on raising the quality of student writing” (p. 160). Others have found that grammar instruction even has a negative impact on writing quality (Graham & Perin, 2007; Koster, Tribushinina, De Jong, & Van den Bergh, 2015). Time spent teaching grammar takes time away from direct instruction in how to be a strong writer and the practice time necessary for students to hone their writing skills. Only incorporating grammar into writing exercises, in contrast to direct instruction in the types of words and their functions, can have a positive impact on student writing (Fearn & Farnan, 2007). While traditional grammar instruction does not improve students’ writing, there are a number of best practices that do serve student writers.

Both student and professional writers benefit from similar strategies: abundant time to practice writing, feedback in a collaborative writing workshop, and a common set of language to describe strong writing (Atwell, 1987). Ideally, students should write for one hour per day (Calkins, personal communication, June 21, 2017; Gilbert & Graham, 2010; Graham, 2008). However, according to a survey of teachers in America, fourth through sixth-grade teachers average only fifteen minutes per day of writing instruction, with twenty-five minutes per day allotted for students to practice writing (Gilbert & Graham, 2010). One way to increase student writing time is to incorporate writing into other areas of the curriculum. Writing is interdisciplinary and teachers can integrate it across all subject areas (Culham, 2006; Sharp, 2015; Graham, 2008; Graham & Perin, 2007).



Within writing time, the writing workshop model, which is process-focused, rather than product-focused, is regarded as best practice for developing strong writers (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1994; Higgins, Miller, & Wegmann, 2006; Sharp, 2015). Writing workshop follows a consistent format of a mini-lesson of fewer than 10 minutes, writing time, the largest block of time where the teacher conferences with individual students and small groups, and share time, for about five minutes at the end. In mini-lessons, writing workshop explicitly teaches thinking strategies for how to approach writing (Higgins et al., 2006). Direct instruction on what strong writing looks like and how to execute writing, employed in the mini-lesson, as well as individual and small group conferencing, is an effective strategy for increasing student writing proficiency (Graham, 2008; Graham & Perin, 2007; Koster et al., 2015). Writing workshop also uses talk to develop writers through conferences, sharing, and writing celebrations; through this talk, students demonstrate their understanding of writing strategies, connect with their peers over writing, and build self-awareness in their writing identities (Laman, 2011). Singagliese (2012) found that writing workshop, implemented in grades three through eight for one hour per day, improved students' and teachers' attitudes towards writing, students' ability to convey a message, and aspects of student writing proficiency, including word choice, conventions, voice, organization, and fluency.

Within writing workshop, the 6+1 Traits of Writing were developed as common language to describe the components of strong writing to students (Culham, 2003; Culham, 2006; Education Northwest, 2017; Spandel, 2009). "The six traits represent a language that empowers students and teachers to communicate about qualities of writing—ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions, and

presentation” (Culham, 2006, p, 53). Thus, the traits are not a curriculum but rather “the language of the writing workshop” (Culham, 2006, p. 55). By providing clear terminology, students can assess their writing and the writing of their peers. Rubrics utilizing the 6+1 Traits also provide a clear framework for assessing student work (Spandel, 2009). DeJarnette (2008) found that students who received instruction in the 6+1 Traits, using models of children’s literature, demonstrated growth in content development and conventions compared to students who received writing instruction without the traits using a traditional process model. Incorporating best practices into writing instruction, specifically the writing workshop and 6+1 Traits, increases students’ writing proficiency and also improves test scores (Higgins et al., 2006).

Given the effectiveness of writing workshop and the 6+1 Traits of Writing, coupled with the lack of writing curriculum in Montessori education, it is a natural conclusion that these best practices could effectively supplement the Montessori curriculum. Supplementing the Montessori curriculum must be done thoughtfully, given that supplemental curricula can decrease the efficacy of Montessori education (Lillard, 2008). When deciding how to supplement the Montessori curriculum, schools must identify a need, research solutions, weigh the costs and benefits of the solutions, and pick one that aligns closely with Montessori core values (Cockerille, 2014).

In examining the need of establishing a writing curriculum, there are some costs to the writing workshop model. Implementing writing workshop could take away from students’ independent work time and introduce praise (Graham, 2007), an external motivator that is not a part of Montessori philosophy. Despite these downfalls, the best

practices for writing instruction, on the whole, do align closely with the values of Montessori philosophy.

In writing workshop, “Teachers are transformed into facilitators of carefully designed learning experiences, and students become active constructors of knowledge” (Sharp, 2015, p. 38). Similarly, Montessori philosophy argues that a teacher’s primary role is to guide students to meaningful work so that students can develop their own minds (Montessori, 1936/1966; Montessori, 1949/1995; Montessori, 1918/2007; Montessori, 1948/2008). While a teacher plans writing lessons, she is not in ultimate control; rather the teacher, students, and the environment interact to promote student learning (Hillocks, 1984). Additionally, exemplary writing teachers role model writing both in lessons and in everyday life, just as a teacher role models appropriate behavior in a Montessori environment (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1994).

Since the teacher is not directing students’ actions in the classroom, Montessori philosophy encourages independence among students (Montessori, 1936/1966; Montessori, 1949/1995; Montessori, 1918/2007; Montessori, 1948/2008). Similarly, the writing workshop model is meant to foster independence in student writing by adapting to students’ various needs. The best writing teachers scaffold and differentiate instruction to accommodate all learners (Gilbert & Graham, 2010). Engaging in the modes of writing, which provide different levels of teacher support, encourages independence at appropriate levels for all students (Higgins et al., 2006). Just as they do in Montessori environments, students should also independently set goals for their writing and self-assess their work (Graham, 2008; Graham & Perin, 2007; Koster et al., 2015). Koster et al. (2015) found that goal setting was the most important factor for improving students’

writing in fourth through sixth-grade. In addition to choosing goals for themselves, students should also have a choice in the content they are writing.

The best writing programs encourage student choice, both in subject and genre (M. Glover, personal communication, October 13, 2016). Having a choice in writing is best practice and increases the motivation of student writers (Atwell, 1987; Graham, 2008; M. Glover, personal communication, October 13, 2016). Similarly, Montessori philosophy respects students' choices of what work to do when and how long it takes to practice a skill to mastery (Montessori, 1936/1966; Montessori, 1949/1995; Montessori, 1918/2007; Montessori, 1948/2008).

Additionally, students have the choice to work independently or with peers in Montessori classrooms, recognizing their highly social nature at the upper elementary level (Montessori, 1948/2008). In writing workshop, students collaborate, through shared writing pieces, peer revising, and peer teaching opportunities; these forms of collaboration have been identified as strategies for increasing student writing proficiency (Graham, 2008; Graham & Perin, 2007; Koster et al., 2015; Laman, 2011). Within the classroom, Graham (2008) argued that there must be an environment of respect and trust between students for effective writing to take place. Similarly, Montessori philosophy believed that social interactions in the classroom are meant to teach students respect for one another and develop morals for how to guide one's interactions (Montessori, 1948/2008).

In addition to independence and choice, in an ideal writing workshop, students use mentor texts to determine the rules of good writing (Culham, 2006; M. Glover, personal communication, October 13, 2016). Similarly, in Montessori philosophy,

students use materials to determine rules and patterns across all subject areas (Montessori, 1936/1966; Montessori, 1949/1995; Montessori, 1918/2007). After determining these rules, Montessori philosophy emphasizes using proper nomenclature, for an exactness of language (Montessori, 1909/2008). Likewise, the 6+1 Traits of Writing provide a specific, universal language for talking about strong writing.

Perhaps most importantly, at the core of Montessori philosophy is the idea that education is a “preparation for life” (Montessori, 1948/2008, p. 27). In this argument, education should directly prepare children to become adults who can contribute to society. Graham and Perin (2007) wrote: “modern writing instruction in the United States recognizes that students need to write clearly and for a wide variety of real-life purposes” (p. 22). Thus, effective writing instruction must be tied to real-world applications, preparing students for life after graduation. Many careers necessitate writing skills for communication and report writing. In day-to-day life, writing allows an individual to express oneself and communicate with others, to process ideas and emotions, and to advocate for oneself and others who need it. In these ways, writing encourages children to develop their thinking as well as their ability to connect with others. Jones (2015) supported this argument, finding that elementary students aged five to ten preferred writing that was creative and expressive or practical and served a purpose, such as list or letter writing.

One genre in particular, narrative writing, encourages students to be expressive as well as reflective upon one’s personal experience. Calkins (1994) argued that students in the middle grades enjoy writing that is personal and interpersonal, or that which allows them to connect with others. Hillocks (2007) reflected

that narrative writing “is a way to examine the stories of our lives... They are, in every meaningful sense, who we are” (p. 1). Hillocks (2007) went on to argue that writing about an experience helps a student to reflect upon it. As children navigate social relationships in their upper elementary years, this seems particularly appropriate. Despite the opportunity it provides for expression and reflection, narrative writing occurs less in grades four to six than in earlier grades (Gilbert & Graham, 2010; Graham & Perin, 2007). Typically at this age, students transition to expository writing primarily. However, personal narrative writing can incorporate research and be a nice transition between fictional stories and expository writing (Thompson, 1995).

While the literature provides guidelines for the best practices for teaching writing to students in grades four through six, there is no research on the application of these best practices in a Montessori setting. Given the importance of writing instruction for student outcomes, additional research on the implementation of writing workshop in a Montessori classroom could provide a framework for teachers for how to best supplement the curriculum to provide quality writing instruction. It could also go on to inform and improve Montessori teacher training to include writing instruction. Thus, this action research aimed to discover the effect of a five-week narrative writing unit during writing workshop, conducted daily for fifty minutes per day and incorporating the 6+1 Traits of Writing nomenclature, on fourth and fifth-grade Montessori students’ engagement and writing achievement.

### **Methodology**

The first step to implementing daily writing workshop with my students was learning how to do so in a meaningful way. In June 2017, I completed a weeklong

Institute for the Teaching of Writing through the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) at Columbia University. Lucy Calkins was a founding member of the TCRWP over thirty years ago (Heinemann, 2017). Over the course of her career, Calkins and her colleagues have collected data on the best practices for teaching writing and literacy and have published dozens of books on the topic (Heinemann, 2017). The TCRWP holds numerous institutes each year, weeklong professional development events on writing and literacy, serving educators from around the globe. The institute I attended included over 2,000 educators, some attending for the first time and others returning to learn more about teaching writing.

As a first-time participant, I spent each morning in a large-group session with third through fifth-grade teachers led by Lucy Calkins. These sessions were mostly lecture based but also provided opportunities for me to practice my own writing and conference with colleagues about their writing. Each day after the large-group session, I attended a small group session led by an experienced TCRWP staff member that mimicked how one would run a writing workshop in an elementary classroom. We spent the first few minutes in a mini-lesson centered on a specific writing skill, then had writing time during which the instructor conferenced individually and with small groups of participants, and ended with some share time. In these sessions, we also paused to discuss tips for implementing writing workshop and practice conferencing with and teaching mini-lessons to our peers. Over the course of the week, the large and small group sessions covered the genres of narrative, information, and opinion writing.

Later in the week, I was able to speak to Lucy Calkins and ask for suggestions for someone new to teaching writing workshop in a Montessori upper elementary classroom.

She recommended I pursue the *Up the Ladder* curriculum. Calkins, Ochs, & Luick's (2017) *Up The Ladder* curriculum introduces elementary students to the rigor of a daily writing workshop and is intended to bring them up to speed if they have not been working in this model. Within writing workshop, I chose to pursue a narrative writing unit, because my students had experience crafting research-based pieces but less with narrative work. Additionally, Calkins et al. (2017) suggested starting with narrative writing to maximize student engagement and to demonstrate to students that they all have valuable stories to tell. After deciding what to teach during writing workshop, I then had to find the time to implement the intervention in my classroom.

Experts on teaching writing recommend implementing writing workshop daily for one hour per day (Calkins, personal communication, June 21, 2017; Gilbert & Graham, 2010; Graham, 2008). Unlike traditional schools with segmented blocks of time dedicated to different subjects, as a Montessori school, our schedule has an uninterrupted morning work period each day from 8:30 am to 11:30 am (see Appendix A). During this time, students participate in small group lessons, practice skills, and explore their interests independently. After recess and lunch, students participate in specials classes, such as physical education, Spanish, art, drumming, drama, and choir. Wanting to leave students' three-hour work mornings as undisturbed as possible, I identified 50-minute afternoon time blocks on Monday through Thursday to conduct writing workshop. Since there was no open time block on Friday afternoons, I decided to conduct writing workshop at the end of the morning work period on Fridays from 10:35 am to 11:25 am. Before beginning the intervention, I sent passive consent letters (see Appendix B) home to each student's family; no families chose to opt out of having their child's data included



in the research project. The entire class, consisting of seventeen fourth and fifth-grade students, participated in the intervention to determine the impact of daily writing workshop on students' engagement and writing proficiency. To retain anonymity, I assigned each student a number before the intervention. I labeled copies of each assessment with the numbers and passed them out so that each student received the paper with his/her corresponding number. Thus, students' identities were protected to prevent bias while scoring the assessments.

Before beginning writing workshop, I sought to collect baseline data on my students' writing proficiency and views of themselves as writers through a number of pre-assessments. First, students completed an on-demand narrative writing prompt, based off a prompt from Cedar Springs Public Schools (2014) (see Appendix C). In this exercise, students attempted to write their best personal narrative piece within one 50-minute writing workshop session. I scored the writing prompts using a 6+1 Traits of Writing rubric (see Appendix D). I adapted this rubric from two other 6+1 Traits of Writing rubrics (Chayot, 2012; "Six Traits Writing Rubric," 2017). This rubric assessed students on the 6+1 Traits of Writing, including ideas and content, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions, and presentation. I also counted the number of words written by each student to be able to compare how much text students could generate before and after the intervention. My associate teacher also scored each writing sample so that I could average both scores when analyzing the data.

In addition to the initial writing prompt, all students completed Bottomley, Henk, & Melnick's (1997/1998) Writer Self-Perception Scale during the second day of writing workshop (see Appendix E). For this assessment, students circled if they strongly agreed,

agreed, were undecided, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with 38 statements about writing. Since this document was quite visually complex, I read each prompt aloud so that students having difficulty reading could follow along while completing the form. I scored Bottomley et al.'s (1997/1998) Writer Self-Perception Scales according to their directions, analyzing students' views of their own self-efficacy as writers across five dimensions: general progress (growth over time), specific progress (growth on specific skills), observational comparison (how they compare themselves to their peers), social feedback (what others tell them about their writing), and physiological state (how their bodies feel while writing).

On the second day of writing workshop, students also completed a writing feedback form (Appendix F). On this form, students reported their views on writing and writing workshop by responding to statements using never, rarely, sometimes, or always. In completing the form, students reflected on their previous experience with writing workshop, including with other teachers. The feedback form also asked students to write a definition for each of the 6+1 Traits of Writing to determine their familiarity with that nomenclature. When scoring this section of the form, students could receive full, half, or no credit based on their responses. At the end of the survey, students had the opportunity to write in additional feedback on their feelings about writing.

In addition to the class-wide pre-assessments, I also completed a feedback session with six students at the beginning of my intervention to collect qualitative data on their views on writing and writing workshop (see Appendix G). I asked for student volunteers to meet with me during a lunch period. Eventually, two female fourth-grade students, three female fifth-grade students, and one male fifth-grade student agreed to participate. I

audio recorded the feedback session and later transcribed and coded the student responses to each question.

After completing these pre-assessments, I began writing workshop lessons during the second week of school, using Calkins et al.'s (2017) *Up The Ladder* curriculum for narrative writing. The narrative writing unit consisted of three mini-units, or "bends." The first bend included five lessons, focused on personal narrative writing. These lessons all worked on writing "trouble stories," or stories that included some type of trouble or conflict, in booklets of paper with room for illustrations. The lessons focused on planning a story, revising a story to tell it bit by bit, planning new stories with a beginning, middle, and end, using dialogue to bring stories to life, and utilizing different types of end punctuation (Calkins et al., 2017). Before the fifth lesson, I also added in a lesson on revising work for clarity. This was meant to be a lesson for a small group during the previous session, but I thought it was an important skill that warranted its own mini-lesson. After completing these six lessons, we spent the final writing workshop in the first bend celebrating our writing. To share, we completed a gallery walk where each student set out a personal narrative story at his/her workspace and students and teachers rotated between stories, leaving a post-it note on each story with a compliment for the writer. After completing this first bend, I was sick and missed a day of school, causing a brief break in writing workshop before beginning the second bend.

The second bend included four lessons about writing realistic fiction stories in booklets with boxes for illustrations. The lessons included creating a realistic fiction story based on a "trouble story" from one's own life, rewriting story endings, writing additional installments in a realistic fiction series, and bringing out a character's quirks

and inner thoughts (Calkins et al., 2017). After these lessons, we had a writing celebration where half of the class shared their writing while the other half of the class walked around to listen to and compliment stories; students switched roles halfway through the workshop.

The final bend revisited personal narrative writing, this time with students writing in their writers' notebooks. This bend included seven lessons, covering how to use a writer's notebook, focusing in on a specific moment, rehearsing stories aloud before drafting, reviewing skills to support independence in writing, revising writing to bring attention to the heart of the story, learning strategies from mentor texts, and utilizing commas (Calkins et al., 2017). We ended the narrative writing unit with a more formal writing celebration. We invited some administrators and other teachers to attend, and each student shared a polished personal narrative story. We enjoyed cookies and juice to mark the end of the unit as a special occasion worth celebrating.

Throughout the five-week unit, I followed the outline of the lessons depicted in *Up the Ladder*, incorporating the techniques I learned from the Institute for the Teaching of Writing for how to effectively implement writing workshop and introducing the 6+1 Traits of Writing vocabulary when appropriate (Calkins et al., 2017). I kept the mini-lessons brief at the beginning of each workshop, around five to seven minutes. Within the mini-lessons, I utilized chart paper to create anchor charts and writing samples to hang in the classroom. I spoke with excitement and urgency, luring students towards their writing. I tried to conference with each student during each session, meeting for only a minute or two to check in. When conferencing with students, I complimented a specific component of their writing and then asked where they could implement that technique

again or taught a new strategy they could use to make their writing even stronger.

Frequently, I reminded students to “keep going!” While most of my teaching strategies aligned with the *Up the Ladder* curriculum, there were a few areas where I made changes to the lessons.

Many lessons provided sample stories to share, but since I had not had those experiences, they seemed inauthentic. Instead, I told stories we had experienced as a class or I had experienced personally to draw students in. While I deviated from the examples given in *Up the Ladder*, this was a change supported by the authors of the curriculum. Calkins et al. (2017) instructed teachers to “know that more power will come from you using the moments from your own life in your writing. Getting to know students and allowing them to get to know you, builds powerful teacher/student relationships—a top influence on student achievement” (p. 124). The curriculum also instructed teachers to stop writing workshop to share a mid-workshop teaching point each day. While I sometimes paused the class to reinforce a skill or share the way one student implemented a strategy we had learned, at other times, I skipped these interruptions, not wanting to disrupt students who were focused in their work. Each lesson also included a specific skill to focus on when conferring with students and meeting with small groups. Given our small class size, I chose to spend my time conferencing with students individually, rather than in small groups, and sometimes worked on the specified skill, but other times worked on another skill that seemed appropriate based on the student’s work. Finally, *Up the Ladder* specifies a share time at the end of each lesson (Calkins et al., 2017). While we did take time to share at the end of each lesson, sometimes with a partner or sometimes with the whole group, we did not always do so in the way specified by the

curriculum. Depending on the time available and the needs of the students, I would sometimes abbreviate the share time to summarize a few of the story ideas students were writing about or strategies they employed in their writing that session.

While completing writing workshop for this five-week unit, I concurrently observed students during their morning work periods. During these observations, I used an observation tool meant to compare work engagement between students who chose to work on writing with students completing work from other curricular areas (see Appendix H). This tool was adapted from a similar form produced by the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector (2012). I began these daily observations during the first week of writing workshop and continued them throughout the intervention. While I initially planned to observe three times per work morning, I found that difficult to do while presenting lessons and helping students settle into a routine at the beginning of the school year. Additionally, I had initially chosen to categorize students as engaged in work, using work as a prop, choosing work, receiving help on a work, wandering from work, or behaving disruptively. Once I began collecting my data, I realized that I only needed to compare if students were engaged (focused in work, receiving help on a work, or in a lesson) or disengaged (using work as a prop, choosing work, wandering from work, or behaving disruptively). I chose to alter my observation tool and aimed to observe twice per work morning, tallying if students were either engaged or disengaged (see Appendix I). In each observation, I counted the number of students working in each subject area. Then, I tallied the number of engaged and disengaged students who were writing and then tallied the number of engaged and disengaged students working in other subject areas. Over the course of the intervention, I

was sick on one day, administered standardized testing on two other days, and was only able to observe once on some days, getting caught up in presenting lessons and supporting students. Thus, I was unable to collect observational data on every day during the length of the narrative writing unit.

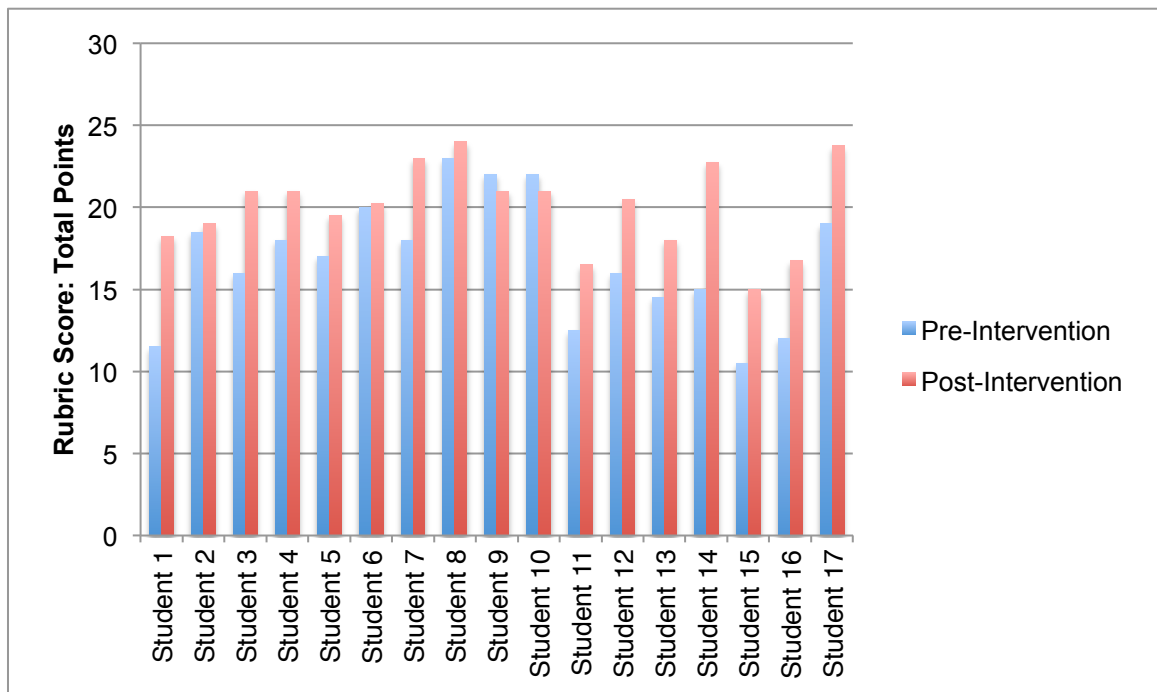
After completing the narrative writing unit, I re-administered the same assessments to determine the impact of the intervention. On the day following our writing celebration, students completed the on-demand narrative writing prompt (see Appendix C) during writing workshop which my associate teacher and I scored using the same 6+1 Traits of Writing rubric (see Appendix D). The next day, students completed Bottomley et al.'s (1997/1998) Writer Self-Perception Scale (see Appendix E) and writing feedback form (see Appendix F). Later that week, I completed a second feedback session with the same students who were in the initial session, asking the same questions (see Appendix G). After collecting post-assessment data, I was ready to begin analyzing the results to determine what impact the intervention had on student writing proficiency and engagement.

### **Analysis of Data**

The data in this project came from five sources. The sources included rubric scores (see Appendix D) from the narrative writing prompt (see Appendix C), Bottomley et al.'s (1997/1998) Writer Self-Perception Scale (see Appendix E), the writing feedback form (see Appendix F), the transcripts of the writing feedback sessions (see Appendices J and K), and observation data (see Appendix I). I analyzed the data to determine the impact of the writing workshop intervention on student writing proficiency and engagement with writing.

The rubric scores of students’ narrative writing prompts were the main data source aimed at determining student writing proficiency. When scoring the writing prompts with the 6+1 Traits of Writing Rubric (see Appendix D), my associate teacher and I separately scored every student’s response to the writing prompt. I then averaged our scores to determine a mean score for each student. This was done to mitigate any bias I might have had in scoring the writing responses due to my investment in this intervention. The analysis of the rubric score data was based off of these average scores.

The rubric assessed student writing on each of the 6+1 Traits of Writing. Students could earn between one and four points in each area: beginning = 1, developing = 2, proficient = 3, and strong = 4. A student could earn up to 28 points total. Based on the scale, a student who scored seven total points is a “beginning” writer, a student who scored 14 total points is a “developing” writer, a student who scored 21 total points is a “proficient” writer, and a student who scored 28 total points is a “strong” writer.





*Figure 1.* Pre and post-intervention narrative writing prompt rubric scores. This figure compares each student’s rubric scores from the pre and post-intervention narrative writing prompts. Most students showed growth on their narrative writing prompt rubric scores after the writing workshop intervention.

The average total score for the class was 16.79 points on the pre-intervention writing prompt and 20.07 points on the post-intervention writing prompt. Male students, on average, had slightly lower scores on both measures, with a pre-intervention average of 15.57 and post-intervention average of 19.14, compared to the female pre-intervention average of 17.65 and post-intervention average of 20.73. These average scores placed students in between developing and proficient both pre and post-intervention, though students did show growth between these benchmarks.

On average, students showed 3.38 points of growth from their pre-intervention writing prompt score to their post-intervention writing prompt score. The growth was most considerable for some of the lowest students. Based on the pre-intervention writing prompt scores, four students made up the bottom 25<sup>th</sup> percentile: Student 1, Student 11, Student 15, and Student 16. Looking at their scores specifically, the lowest 25<sup>th</sup> percentile of students gained 5 points, on average, on their narrative writing prompt rubric scores.

Table 1

*Students’ Narrative Writing Prompt Scores: Bottom 25<sup>th</sup> Percentile*

Student	Pre-test	Post-test	Gain Score
Student 1	11.5	18.25	6.75
Student 11	12.5	16.5	4
Student 15	10.5	15	4.5
Student 16	12	16.75	4.75

Analyzing the rubric scores by each trait, students in the pre-assessment, on average, scored below proficient in word choice (1.76 average points out of a possible 4),

organization (1.88 points out of a possible 4), sentence fluency (1.97 points out of a possible 4), and voice (2.09 points out of a possible 4). Participants, on average, scored proficient in conventions (3 points out of a possible 4) and presentation (3 points out of a possible 4).

On the post-intervention narrative writing prompt, students showed the most growth in the dimensions of sentence fluency (0.82 points average growth), voice (0.75 points average growth), word choice (0.71 points average growth), and organization (0.62 points average growth). Participants showed little growth in the areas of ideas and content (0.32 points average growth), conventions (0.13 points average growth), and presentation (0.03 points average growth).

The final dimension of growth included the number of words students wrote. For each narrative writing prompt, I counted the number of words in each student’s response, excluding the title. Word counts on the pre-assessment ranged from nine to 278 words.

Table 2

*Students’ Narrative Writing Prompt Word Count*

Student	Pre-test	Post-test	Gain Score
Student 1	58	299	241
Student 2	110	72	<b>-38</b>
Student 3	218	350	132
Student 4	217	182	<b>-35</b>
Student 5	278	244	<b>-34</b>
Student 6	135	232	97
Student 7	145	201	56
Student 8	215	145	<b>-70</b>
Student 9	92	45	<b>-47</b>
Student 10	239	266	27
Student 11	131	92	39
Student 12	132	132	0
Student 13	233	270	37

Student 14	57	222	165
Student 15	9	67	58
Student 16	22	129	107
Student 17	199	152	<b>-47</b>

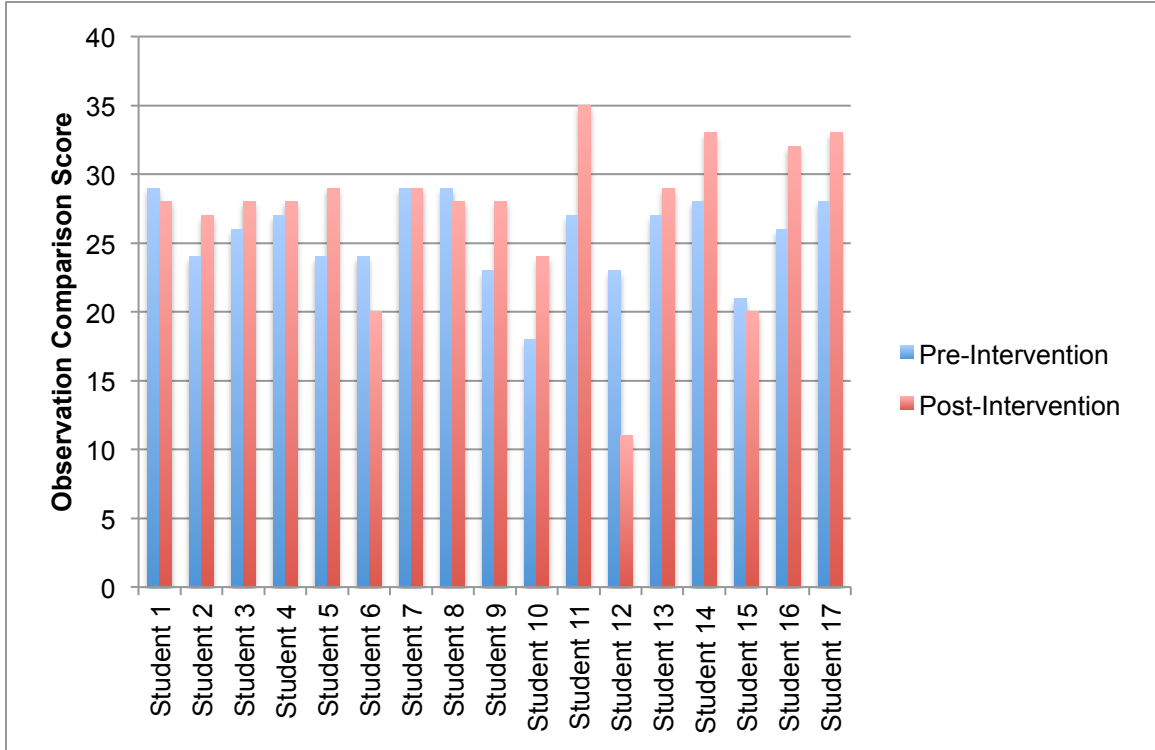
*Note.* The negative gain scores are in boldface.

On the post-assessment, students wrote between 70 words fewer and 241 words more than the pre-intervention prompt. On average, participants wrote 38 more words in their response to the post-intervention prompt than in their response to the pre-intervention prompt. The lowest 25<sup>th</sup> percentile of students increased their word count, on average, by 4.78 times. While many participants showed negative gains in their word count, this may not indicate weaker writing. Students may have practiced the skills of revision to write more concisely in their post-intervention responses.

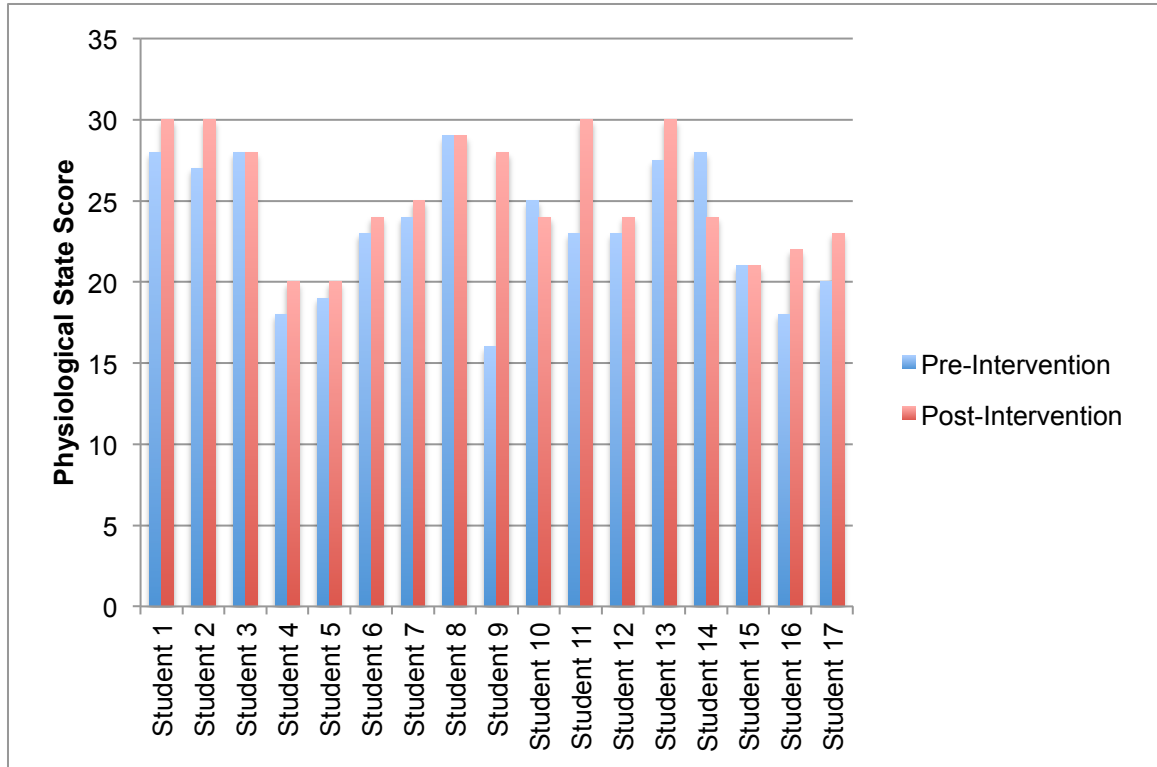
In addition to the narrative writing prompt rubric scores, an objective measure of writing proficiency, students self-reported their views of their writing proficiency on Bottomley et al.’s (1997/1998) Writer Self-Perception Scale (see Appendix D). On this measure, participants responded to 38 statements about writing, indicating if they strongly agreed, agreed, were undecided, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with each statement. Students received points for each response in accordance with the scoring directions: strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, undecided = 3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 1. Each statement aligned with one of five categories: general progress (growth over time), specific progress (growth on specific skills), observational comparison (how they compare themselves to their peers), social feedback (what others tell them about their writing), or physiological state (how their bodies feel while writing). Each category had its own maximum and average scores (general progress: 40 points maximum, 35 points average; specific progress: 35 points maximum, 29 points average; observational

comparison: 45 points maximum, 30 points average; social feedback: 35 points maximum, 27 points average; physiological state: 30 points maximum, 22 points average). On both the pre and post-intervention Writer Self-Perception Scales, participants scored slightly above average in general growth, specific progress, and physiological state; they scored below average in observational comparison and social feedback. The higher scores in general growth and specific progress indicate that students saw themselves as improving their writing over time, while the low scores in observational comparison and social feedback indicate that the students saw themselves as worse writers than their peers. Students' negative self-images could have been due to a lack of feedback from teachers, who typically avoid praise and external rewards in a Montessori environment, or could have been due to upper elementary students' nature to compare themselves to their peers and become more self-conscious.

In the post-intervention Writer Self-Perception Scale data, participants showed growth, on average, in all areas except specific progress. Students showed the most growth in the areas of observational comparison (1.61 average points of growth) and physiological state (1.92 average points of growth). Interpreting the data by the sex of participants, girls made more growth in general progress (1.40 points on average), social feedback (1.40 points on average), and physiological state (3 points on average), while boys made more growth in specific progress (1.43 points on average) and observational comparison (3.43 points on average). This data indicates that participation in daily writing workshop may have improved students' perceptions of their writing abilities compared to their peers, particularly for boys, and that participants, particularly female students, felt more positive and relaxed while writing.

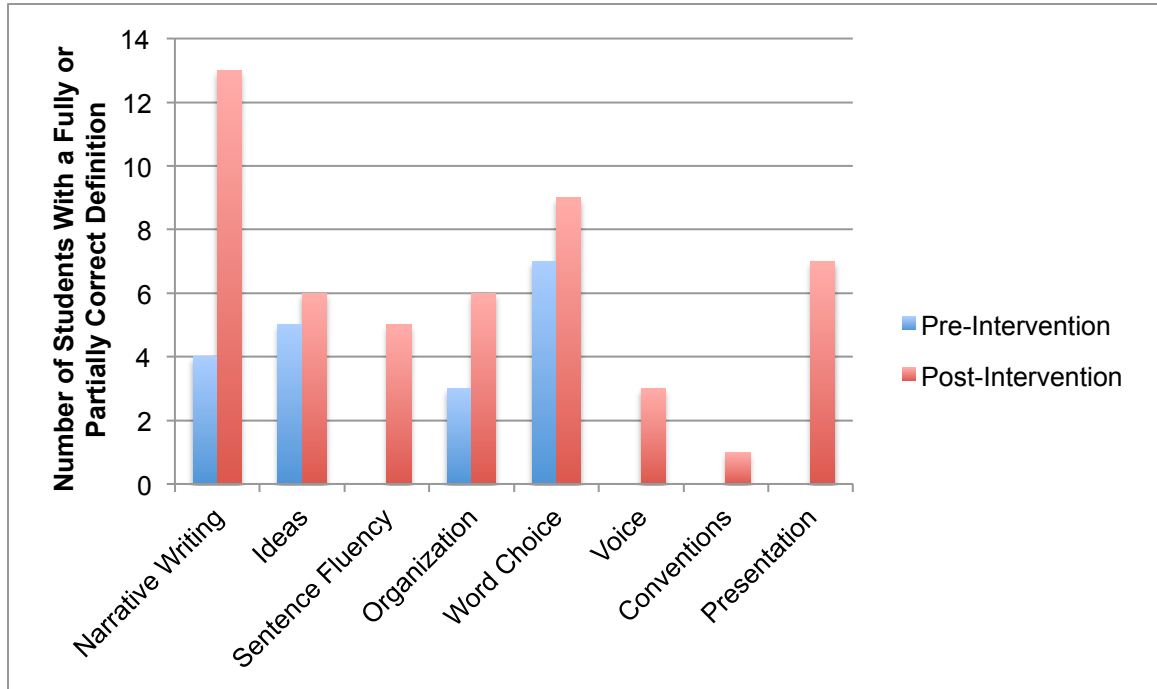


*Figure 2.* Pre and post-intervention Writer Self-Perception Scale responses: observational comparison. This figure compares students’ pre and post-assessment observational comparison scores on the Writer Self-Perception Scale. After the intervention, most students, particularly male students, improved their views of themselves in comparison to their peers.



*Figure 3.* Pre and post-intervention Writer Self-Perception Scale responses: physiological state. This figure compares students’ pre and post-assessment physiological state scores on the Writer Self-Perception Scale. Most students, particularly female students, reported an improvement in their physiological state after participating in the narrative writing unit.

As another component of narrative writing proficiency, I also sought to determine if students understood what narrative writing and the 6+1 Traits of Writing were. On the feedback form (see Appendix F), students wrote definitions for narrative writing and each of the 6+1 Traits of Writing before and after the intervention. Students had difficulty defining these terms, both before and after the intervention, but did show growth in their understanding.



*Figure 4.* Fully and partially correct definitions of vocabulary: narrative writing and the 6+1 Traits of Writing. This figure indicates the number of students who gave fully or partially correct definitions of each term on the pre and post-assessment feedback forms. Few students were able to correctly define these terms, though the number of correct responses did increase following the intervention.

While more students were able to correctly define each term after the intervention, the total number of correct definitions remained low. Looking in particular at the definition of narrative writing, 12 out of 17 students wrote a definition of personal narrative writing, rather than narrative writing in general. These errors may have occurred because most of the unit focused on personal narrative writing, so students were more familiar with that specific genre.

In addition to determining proficiency in the 6+1 Traits of Writing nomenclature, the feedback form also provided each student an opportunity to self-report his/her opinion on writing, writing workshop, choosing writing, and writing getting in the way of one's

work time, as a way of determining engagement with writing. For each question, participants could respond always, sometimes, rarely, or never. When analyzing the data, I assigned a value to each response: always = 4, sometimes = 3, rarely = 2, never = 1.

The first statement on the feedback form was “I like writing.” Before the intervention, eight out of 17 students reported that they always like writing, nine students reported that they sometimes like writing, and no students reported that they rarely or never liked writing. After the intervention, there was a slight change in responses in some male participants; female participants had no change in their responses. Nine students reported that they always like writing, eight students reported that they sometimes like writing, and, again, no students reported that they rarely or never liked writing.

Table 3

*Students’ Feedback Form Responses: “I like writing.”*

Student	Pre-test	Post-test	Gain Score
Student 1	4	4	0
Student 2	3	3	0
Student 3	4	4	0
Student 4	3	3	0
Student 5	3	3	0
Student 6	3	3	0
Student 7	4	4	0
Student 8	4	4	0
Student 9	3	3	0
Student 10	3	4	1
Student 11	4	4	0
Student 12	4	4	0
Student 13	4	4	0
Student 14	3	4	1
Student 15	3	3	0
Student 16	4	3	<b>-1</b>
Student 17	3	3	0

*Note.* The negative gain scores are in boldface.



The next statement on the feedback form was “I like writing workshop.” Before the intervention, six students reported that they always like writing workshop, ten students reported that they sometimes like writing workshop, no students reported rarely liking writing workshop, and one student reported never liking writing workshop. After the intervention, seven students reported that they always like writing workshop, eight students reported that they sometimes like writing workshop, two students reported rarely liking writing workshop, and no students reported never liking writing workshop. Female participants had a higher average score (3.5) on the pre-intervention measure, which indicated that they liked writing workshop more than their male peers, whose average score was 2.86. After the intervention, the gap in scores between males and females narrowed, male students scored 3.29 on average while female students scored 3.3. Overall, four participants reported liking writing workshop more in their post-intervention response and three participants reported liking writing workshop less.

Table 4

*Students’ Feedback Form Responses: “I like writing workshop.”*

Student	Pre-test	Post-test	Gain Score
Student 1	4	4	0
Student 2	4	3	-1
Student 3	4	4	0
Student 4	4	2	-2
Student 5	3	3	0
Student 6	3	3	0
Student 7	3	2	-1
Student 8	3	3	0
Student 9	3	3	0
Student 10	3	4	1
Student 11	4	4	0
Student 12	4	4	0
Student 13	3	4	1
Student 14	3	4	1

Student 15	3	3	0
Student 16	1	3	2
Student 17	3	3	0

*Note.* The negative gain scores are in boldface.

Next, participants responded to the statement “I choose writing during work time.” Before the intervention, one student reported always choosing writing during work time, nine students reported sometimes choosing writing during work time, seven students reported rarely choosing writing during work time, and no students reported never choosing writing during work time. After the intervention, two students reported always choosing writing during work time, four students reported sometimes choosing writing during work time, eight students reported rarely choosing writing during work time, and three students reported never choosing writing during work time. After the intervention, seven participants reported choosing writing less than they did before, seven participants reported choosing writing the same amount as they did before, and three participants reported choosing writing more than they did before.

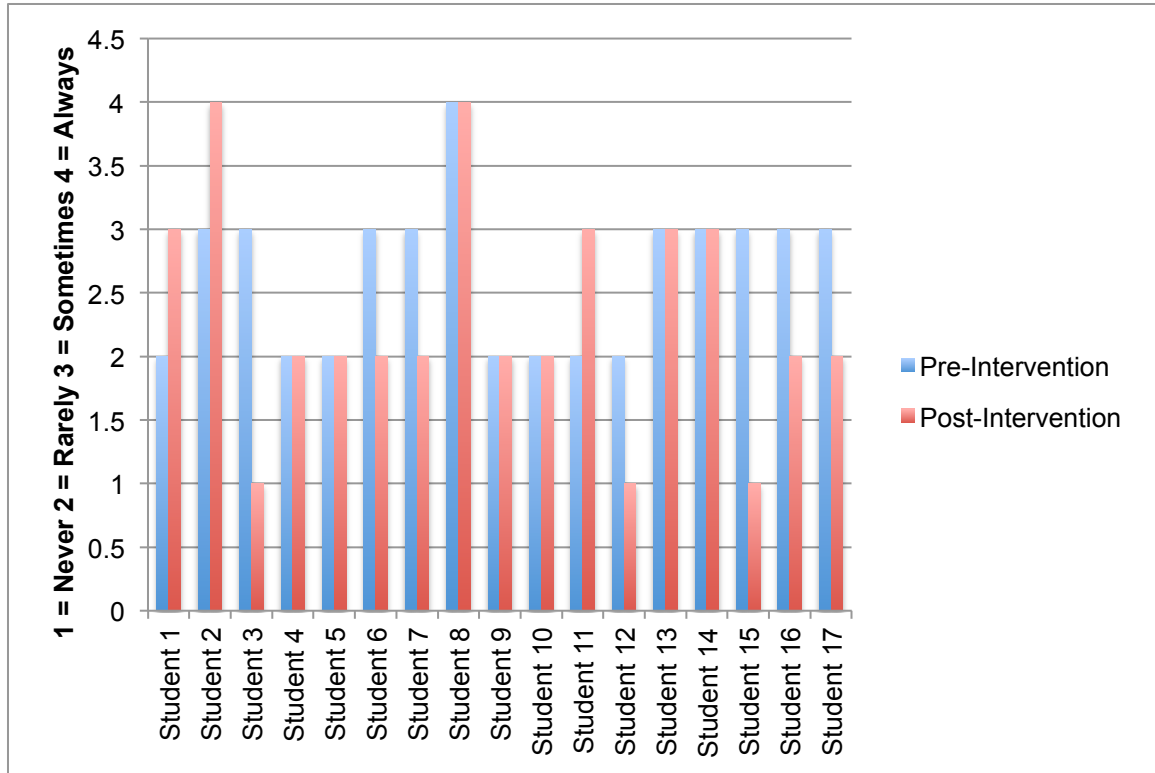


Figure 5. Feedback form responses to “I choose writing during work time.” This figure compares students’ self-reported responses to choosing writing never, rarely, sometimes, or always during work time. Of the students whose responses changed, most students reported choosing writing less during work time than they did prior to the intervention.

Before beginning the action research project, I thought more students would choose writing during work time as a result of the intervention, particularly as their writing proficiency increased. However, 41% of participants reported choosing writing less during work time, and only 18% of the class reported choosing writing more during work time than they did prior to the intervention. This may be due to the fact that since students had daily writing workshop time, they saved their writing work to complete at that time, reserving work time to complete assigned work in other subject areas.

Finally, participants responded to the prompt “Writing gets in the way of my work.” This prompt was designed to determine if participants felt that writing workshop lessons interfered with their work mornings, though students could have interpreted it to mean that writing is too time consuming or that their writing ability gets in the way of completing class work. Before the intervention, one student reported that writing always gets in the way of his/her work, two students reported that writing sometimes gets in the way of their work, eight students reported that writing rarely gets in the way of their work, and six students reported that writing never gets in the way of their work. After the intervention, no students reported that writing always gets in the way of their work, three students reported that writing sometimes gets in the way of their work, two students reported that writing rarely gets in the way of their work, and 12 students reported that writing never gets in the way of their work. Compared to the pre-assessment, eight participants reported that writing gets in the way of their work less than it did before, eight participants did not change their response, and only one participant reported that writing gets in the way of his/her work more than it did before.

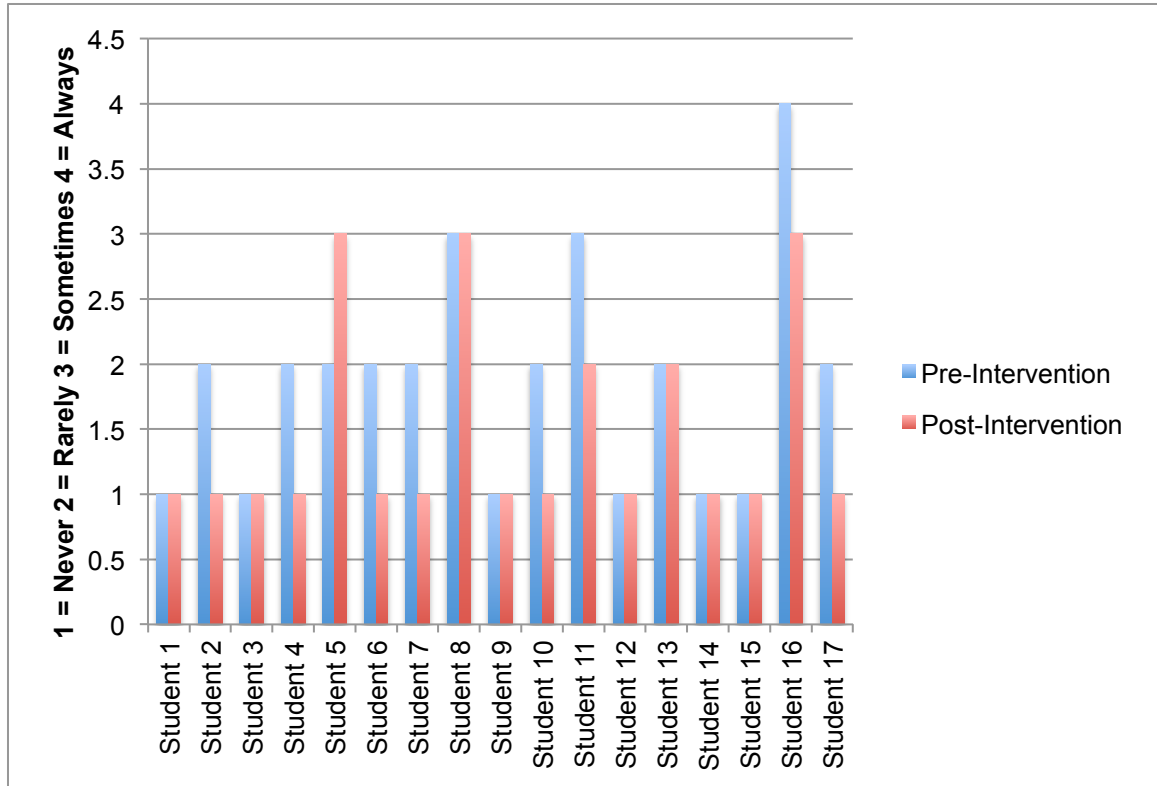


Figure 6. Feedback form responses to “Writing gets in the way of my work.” This figure compares students’ self-reported responses to if writing gets in the way of their work time never, rarely, sometimes, or always during work time. Most students reported that writing got in the way of their writing the same amount or less than it did prior to beginning writing workshop.

Since the writing intervention included one writing workshop session each week that cut into the morning work period, I was curious to see if students felt that this interfered with their work time. I was surprised by the responses to the final question, where only one student reported that writing interfered with his/her work more than it did before the intervention, while 47% of students reported that writing gets in the way of their work less than it did before the intervention. This data may indicate that students do

not mind having writing workshop on one day during the morning work period, though it is difficult to say for sure due to the wording of the question.

The final component of the feedback form included an optional open-ended question, “What else would you like me to know about your feelings about writing?” On the pre-intervention feedback form, six out of 17 students responded. Five students focused on their emotional response to writing and four responded that they like the activity. One student wrote, “I absolutely LOVE writing. It always makes me happy. Pouring out everything from my pencil thrills me!!!!!!” Another student shared “I really just feel calm when I write.” In contrast to these positive responses, one student took the opportunity to focus on his/her physiological response to writing, “My hand hurts a lot when I do it because I write too hard. I think I should write softer.”

On the post-intervention feedback form, six out of 17 students responded to the open-ended question. Three students gave feedback on their opinions of genres. One student wrote “I love writing!!! But I feel like I want more freedom in choosing what to write because I HATE PERSONAL NARRATIVES!” Two participants focused on the creative element of writing in their responses. One wrote, “I think you have the chance to free yourself and think freely and everyone can do it.” Again, one student reflected on his/her physiological state and challenges in the writing process, “My hand hurts a lot when I do it. I really struggle to take out the parts that don't make sense.” This qualitative data introduced some themes, such as enjoying writing but disliking the restriction on the genre, that reappeared in the writing feedback sessions.

I conducted two feedback sessions, each with the same six students, to gather more information about how students viewed writing and writing workshop. After

completing the feedback sessions, I transcribed student responses to each question and coded the data, looking for patterns in what students had said (see Appendices J and K).

In response to the question “How do you feel when you are writing?” many students discussed having a positive physical or emotional response to writing, such as feeling calm or focused, in the pre-intervention session. Only one participant reported a negative physical or emotional response, sharing that his/her hand hurts when writing. In contrast, in the post-intervention feedback session, all students reported some positive physical or emotional response to writing and five out of six students reported some negative physical or emotional response. Most of these negative responses referred to some stress or anxiety related to writing. One participant captured this dichotomy of positive and negative emotion in his/her response “I feel focused...I also feel attached to it, to my writing, and also I can sometimes feel stressed when I write if I either have a deadline or I feel like I have a deadline.” Three students also compared themselves to their peers in their responses. One participant reflected, “I also sometimes feel like my writing is not as interesting or good enough as the other kids.” These responses support the observational comparison scores on Bottomley et al.’s (1997/1998) Writer Self-Perception Scale. Regardless of students’ ability level or sex, they seemed to perceive themselves as weaker writers than their peers.

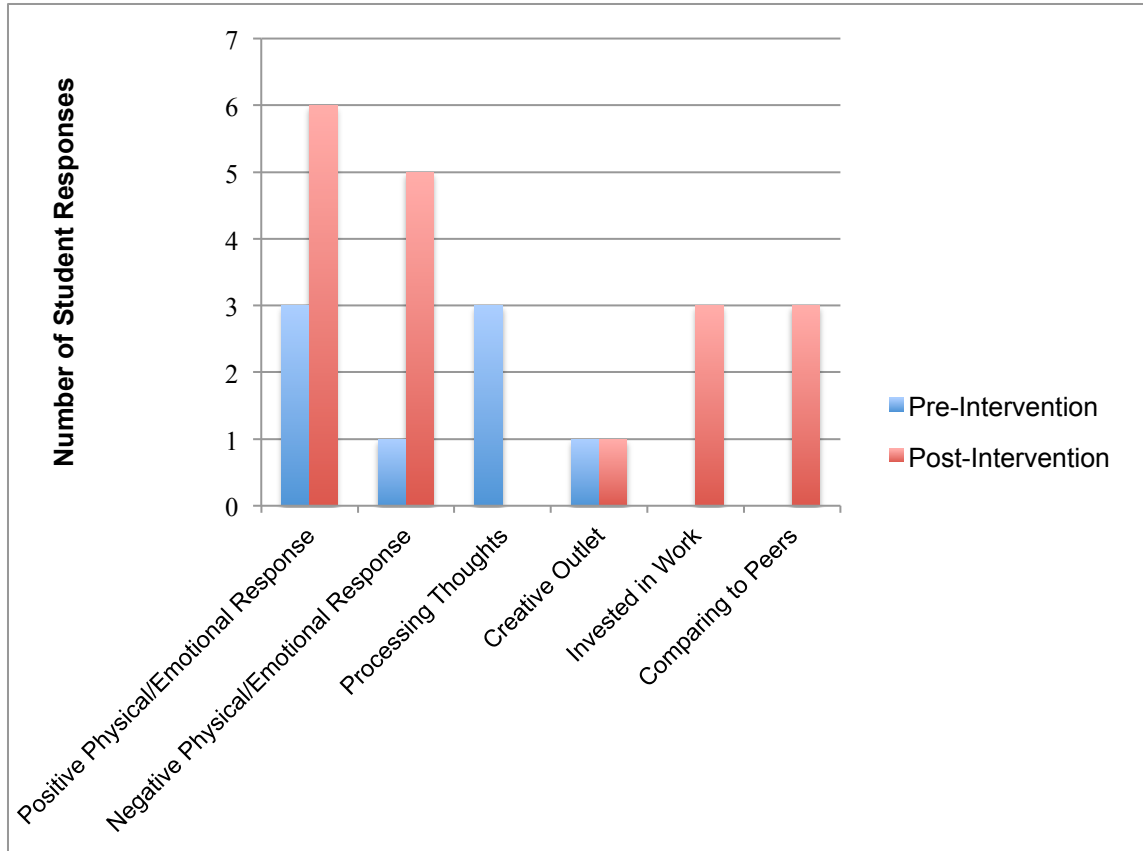


Figure 7. Student feedback session responses to “How do you feel when you are writing?” This figure indicates student descriptions of how they feel when they are writing in the pre and post-intervention feedback sessions. Most students reported a combination of positive and negative physical and/or emotional responses while writing.

Students reflected not only on their writing but also on writing lessons. In the pre-intervention feedback session, four participants reflected that they liked writing lessons because the lessons prepared them to write independently. In the post-intervention feedback session, again four participants found the lessons helpful but four participants were able to go on and identify specific teaching strategies that helped them be successful in their writing. One student appreciated the nomenclature used in the lessons. Other participants appreciated the modeling component. One student explained, “I feel like it



helps explain what you're about to do so I like how you also give ideas and how you did the thing with us when you showed where you wrote a story, so it helps to show how to edit." Another participant reflected "I enjoy them a lot because I get a sense of what I'm supposed to do and that way I can get an idea of what I'm going to write before I even start instead of just like going to write without any idea at all, it makes me feel prepared." Another student pointed to the anchor charts as helpful tools from the writing lessons. Calkins, Ochs, & Luick's (2017) *Up the Ladder* curriculum highly emphasizes the use of anchor charts and teacher modeling.

While students were able to identify many things they liked about the writing lessons, they could also easily identify many things they disliked about the lessons. The pre-intervention feedback session focused on the length and frequency of the lessons. Two participants felt the lessons were too long, one participant felt the lessons were too short, and four participants felt the lessons were too frequent. In contrast, in the post-intervention feedback session, two students felt the lessons were too long, two students reflected that the lessons felt rushed, but no students felt that the lessons were too frequent. Since this was such a big area for discussion in the initial feedback session, I was surprised to hear that no student in the group felt that daily writing workshop lessons were too frequent. The focus shifted in the post-intervention feedback session from the length and frequency of the writing lessons to the content of the writing lessons. All six students reflected that they felt restricted by the narrow focus of the writing lessons and wanted time to explore their unanimous favorite genre: fiction. One participant reflected, "I feel like my imagination has not been put to the test yet. If your imagination's not put to the test then you'll never become a good writer, and your goal is to make us good

writers, and if you keep doing [personal] narrative writing for one more month, I'm going to run out of interesting stories to write.”

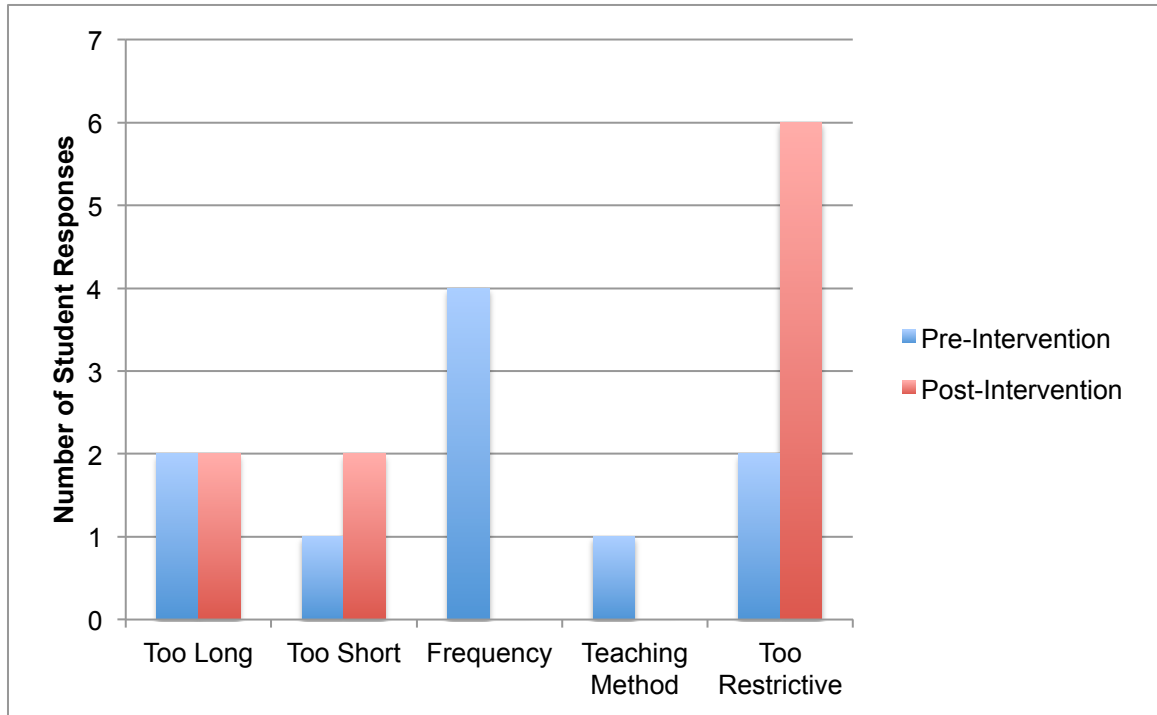


Figure 8. Student feedback session responses to “What do you dislike about writing lessons?” This figure indicates what students reported disliking about writing in the pre and post-intervention feedback sessions. Their main critiques shifted over time from the frequency of the lessons to the restrictions on genre.

While no students in the post-intervention feedback session disliked the frequency of writing lessons, the group did reflect on how lessons impacted their work time. In the pre-intervention feedback session, one participant reflected that anticipation of writing workshop distracted him/her from work in the morning. Another student reported that writing interfered with work completion. Two participants reported no impact and one participant reflected that strong writing skills helped with other work. In the post-intervention feedback session, students identified more ways in which writing lessons

negatively impacted their work time. The same student again reported that anticipating writing lessons interfered with his/her focus during the morning work period. Two participants reported that writing lessons got in the way of completing assigned work and three participants reported that writing lessons on Friday mornings impeded their work flow. One student explained, “I don’t like how in writing workshop on Fridays we have it in the morning and I don’t really like that because I just get out of a lesson and I’m starting on a work and then I have to stop.” Others noted that Friday, in particular, is a time to complete any outstanding work before the weekend so cutting into that work period in particular negatively impacted their work completion and flow.

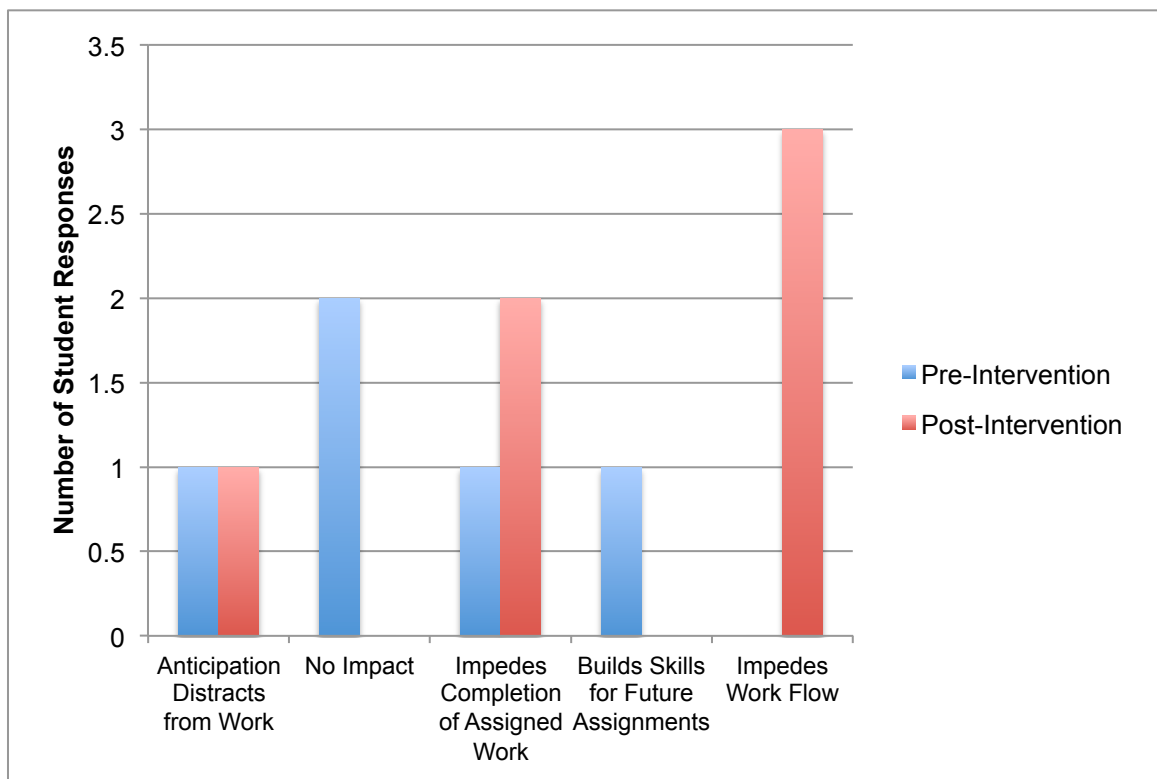


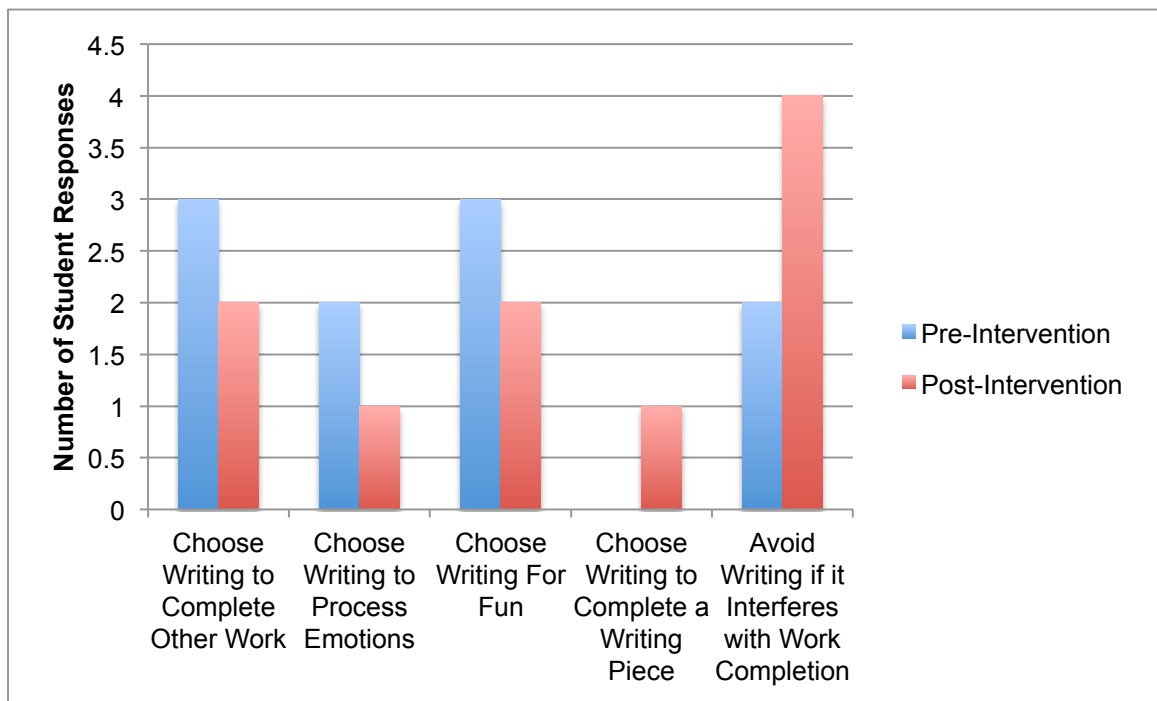
Figure 9. Student feedback session responses to “How do writing lessons impact your work time?” This figure indicates the ways students reported that writing lessons impact their work time in the pre and post-intervention feedback sessions. While some students

reported no impact prior to the intervention, after the intervention half of the students in the focus group discussed writing lessons getting in the way of their work flow.

To determine student engagement with writing, I was curious to see how many students chose writing during work time, particularly as they continued to practice writing in writing workshop. The final question of the feedback sessions focused on why students chose or didn't choose writing during work time. In the pre-intervention feedback session, three students reported writing to complete other work, such as researching and writing for a history or science follow-up assignment, two students reported choosing writing to help them process emotions, and three students reported choosing writing just for fun. Two participants reported that they would not choose writing during work time because it might interfere with completing assigned work from other subject areas. One student explained, "I might choose not to write, because one, it like interferes with your work a lot, but sometimes I will write, like today I didn't have anything else on my work plan."

In the post-intervention feedback session, two students reported writing to complete other work, one student reported writing to process emotions, and two students reported writing for fun. One of those students shared "I love writing during work time, I choose to do writing during work time because it gives me a break. It gives my mind a break, and it allows my imagination to take over and flood through my body." One participant reported choosing writing during work time to catch up or work ahead on a story from writing workshop. Four students also reflected on not choosing writing because it would prohibit them from completing assigned work on time. One participant reflected, "I feel like when I'm writing during work time I'm wasting the time I could be

working on other things cause we have our own time to do writing.” In this way, the student explained an effective time management strategy: holding off on writing work until writing workshop. These responses support the feedback form data indicating that students chose writing less during work time after completing the intervention. Both data sources suggest that writing may have been less integrated into the morning work period during this intervention since there was daily time set aside for writing later each day.



*Figure 10.* Student feedback session responses to “Why do you choose or not choose writing during work time?” This figure indicates the reasons students gave for why they would or would not choose writing during work time in the pre and post-intervention feedback sessions. After the intervention, more students reported holding off on writing during work time in order to complete other assigned work.

Throughout the intervention, I also collected observation data to determine students’ level of engagement when writing during work time compared to the

engagement of their peers working in other subject areas. While I had set out to conduct two observations per day during the length of the intervention, I only completed 27 observations total, due to absences, needing to proctor standardized testing, and lessons getting in the way of observation time.

When observing, I noted how many students were in the classroom, how many students were working in each area of the curriculum, and how many students were engaged in focused work. On average, there were between 13 and 14 students in the classroom at the time of observation. Some students may have been absent, in the bathroom, in a tutoring session, or working in the library at the time of observation which accounts for the lower average compared to the 17 total students expected to be in class. Out of 27 different observations, there were only 11 times when a student was observed writing, compared to 134 students observed to be working in the cultural subjects, 92 in grammar or reading, 109 in math or geometry, and 35 in practical life activities.

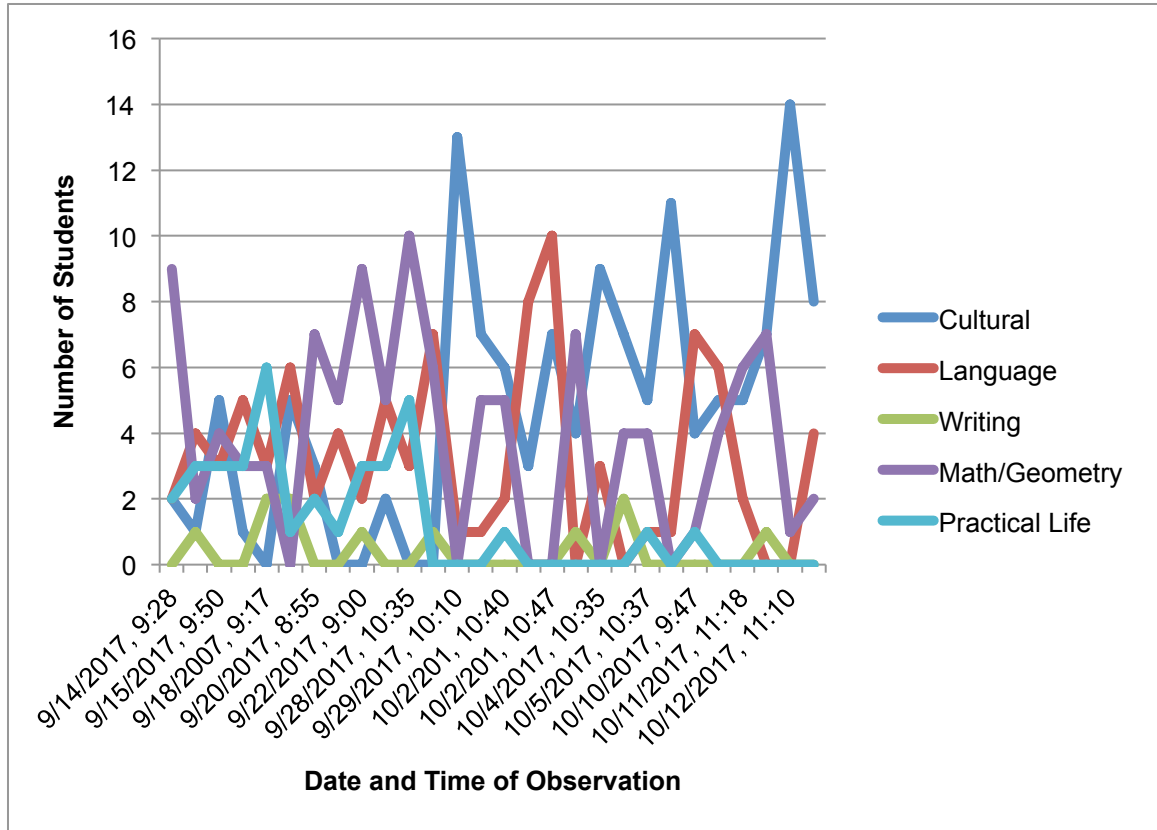


Figure 11. Number of students at work in each curricular area. This figure indicates the number of students at work in each curricular area at the time of each observation. Each line represents a different subject area. Few students chose writing during work time at the time of these observations.

Out of the 11 students who were working on writing, 10, or 91%, were engaged in focused work at the time of observation. In comparison, of all the other students observed, 275 out of 370 students, or approximately 74%, were engaged in focused work at the time of the observation. While this may indicate that students working on writing were more focused than students working in other subject areas, it is such a small sample size that this may not be the case. However, this data does support the reflections of students on their feedback forms and in the feedback sessions that they did not choose writing during work time because it interfered with completing other assigned work.

### Action Plan

The data from this study indicated that student writing proficiency did increase as a result of the daily writing workshop intervention. While the average growth in rubric scores across the class was exciting, it was even more impressive to see the growth in the lowest 25<sup>th</sup> percentile of writers. Their growth in word count and rubric scores from the narrative writing prompts indicated that the *Up the Ladder* curriculum and writing workshop model helped students become stronger writers. The Writer Self-Perception Scale data indicated that students felt slightly better when writing and felt slightly better about their writing in comparison to their peers after the intervention. In addition to the data, seeing students independently write over a page who previously could barely write a few sentences even with teacher support convinced me that this program had merit in the classroom. While the data did support an increase in writing proficiency, it did not indicate gains in writing engagement.

My observation data did not include enough data points to be able to assess if students were more engaged with writing than with other work during work time. Additionally, since the project occurred in the first weeks of the school year, I was unable to compile baseline data on how many students were choosing writing before the intervention to compare to data collected during the intervention. If I were to replicate the study, I would collect baseline data before the intervention as well as observation data within writing workshop and during work time over the length of the intervention. After settling into their writing following the mini-lesson, most students were typically focused and engaged throughout writing workshop. I would be interested to determine the average rate of engagement during writing workshop to see how it would compare to the



rate of student engagement during the morning work period. I also wonder if the work period engagement rate might increase over time since the data was collected in the first few weeks of the school year before students fully acclimated to the classroom.

Although there were gains in writing proficiency and how students saw themselves as writers, there were also some costs to implementing this intervention, namely time and student freedom. Best practices for teaching writing suggest having writing workshop daily for one hour per day (Calkins, personal communication, June 21, 2017; Gilbert & Graham, 2010; Graham, 2008). For my intervention, I had to cut into my students' morning work period on Fridays to be able to complete a 50-minute lesson five days per week, even then cutting the suggested writing time short by ten minutes per day. Students in the post-intervention feedback session commented on this explicitly and felt that the Friday writing workshop sessions interfered with their work completion and work flow. I do not think the growth students made is worth sacrificing the uninterrupted work period inherent to the Montessori philosophy on a long-term basis. Since students in the post-intervention feedback session did not appear to be impacted by the frequency of the daily writing lessons, just the timing of them during the Friday work period, I would advocate for next year's elementary schedule to include daily, afternoon periods dedicated to writing workshop. In the meantime, I have also suggested to the rest of the upper elementary teaching team switching off between writing and literacy "intensives" where we could complete five weeks of writing workshop in daily afternoon time blocks and then five weeks of read aloud and book group meetings during those same blocks. Thus, students could still have the repetition of daily writing practice without sacrificing literacy activities for writing growth.

Students on their feedback forms and in the feedback sessions also took issue with the lack of choice in genre within writing workshop. Choice is paramount in Montessori philosophy (Montessori, 1936/1966; Montessori, 1949/1995; Montessori, 1918/2007; Montessori, 1948/2008). Creating a learning environment that encourages student choice reflects a deep-rooted respect for the child. Each time an adult takes choice away from a child, the undercurrent is that the adult believes he/she can make the choice better than the child can for himself/herself. With that being said, a common misconception of the Montessori classroom is that students have the freedom to do whatever they want, which is not the case. It is the job of the Montessori guide to put appropriate boundaries in place to encourage student growth. Knowing that there are still elements of choice within writing workshop, such as choice of topic, whether to draft a new story or revise an old one, what goals to set for oneself, and which strategies to focus on to make a story stronger, I would continue to teach genre-based units within writing workshop. Genre work encourages repetitive practice and isolates the difficulty of learning the traits of strong writing unique to each genre.

Looking forward, I plan to continue teaching writing workshop using Calkins et al.'s (2017) *Up the Ladder* curriculum, exploring units on information and opinion writing in the coming months. I also plan to administer writing prompts for each genre at the beginning and end of each unit to track student progress. Additionally, since most students were still unable to define the 6+1 Traits of Writing on the feedback form, I plan to teach a set of explicit lessons defining these terms and introducing students to the 6+1 Traits of Writing Rubric so that they can begin to assess their own work based on the qualities of strong writing. I hope that continuing writing workshop four to five days per

week utilizing the *Up the Ladder* curriculum will continue to support student growth in writing proficiency across multiple genres over time.

While the data from this study did provide a lot of information and suggestions for future work, it could have been even more informative if there had been a larger sample size. Ideally, it would be interesting to replicate this study in other Montessori classrooms across numerous settings to see if other teachers would have similar results. Additionally, since my class only has fourth and fifth-grade students, I would be interested to see if sixth-grade students would have similar levels of growth or if the results might change in a classroom spanning all three ages.

In addition to my students' growth as a result of this study, I also felt like I made tremendous gains in my ability to teach writing. Armed with a curriculum and strategies for how to lead a writing workshop, I felt well-equipped to help writers in my class become stronger over time. Given my experience, I think it is also my responsibility to spread this knowledge to other teachers at my school and within the Montessori community. I have suggested the program-wide implementation of the writing workshop model, using the *Up the Ladder* curriculum to begin, and have advocated for funds to go towards sending other teachers to the TCRWP's Institute on the Teaching of Writing. I feel that a large part of the success of this intervention was due to my preparation from the Institute for the Teaching of Writing and I hope many of my colleagues will have the same opportunity. Finally, as I continue my involvement in my local Montessori teacher training center, I hope to share the results of this intervention with other adult learners completing their Montessori teacher training.

Before this study, there was little research published on the teaching of writing in Montessori upper elementary classrooms. Since the Montessori curriculum does not provide teachers with explicit guidelines for the teaching of writing, each teacher is left looking for ways to fill that gap on one's own. While I implemented this action research on a very small scale, I hope it can provide Montessori teacher training centers and individual teachers with a framework to try when teaching writing in their classrooms. Training on the teaching of writing can lead Montessori teachers to be more confident and effective educators, and consequently better prepare their students to communicate with others in and beyond the classroom. In this way, strong writing instruction truly supports students' independence and preparation for life.

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## Appendix A

### Class Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30 AM	<b>Morning Meeting</b> 8:30 - 8:45				
8:45 AM					
9:00 AM	<b>Work Time</b>	<b>Work Time</b>	<b>Work Time</b>	<b>Work Time</b>	<b>Work Time</b>
9:15 AM					
9:30 AM					
9:45 AM					
10:00 AM					
10:15 AM					
10:30 AM					
10:45 AM					<b>Writing Workshop</b> 10:35 - 11:25
11:00 AM					
11:15 AM					
11:30 AM	<b>Recess</b> 11:30 - 12:00	<b>All School Recess</b> 11:30 - 12:15	<b>Recess</b> 11:30 - 12:00	<b>All School Recess</b> 11:30 - 12:15	<b>Recess</b> 11:30 - 12:00
11:45 AM					
12:00 PM	<b>Free Lunch</b> 12:00 - 12:30	<b>Assigned Lunch</b> 12:15 - 12:45	<b>Free Lunch</b> 12:00 - 12:30	<b>Assigned Lunch</b> 12:15 - 12:45	<b>Free Lunch</b> 12:00 - 12:30
12:15 PM					
12:30 PM	<b>4th P.E.</b>	<b>D.E.A.R.</b> 12:45 - 1:15	<b>4th Spanish</b>	<b>D.E.A.R.</b> 12:45 - 1:15	<b>4th Spanish</b>
12:45 PM	<b>5th Spanish</b> 12:30 - 1:15		<b>5th Art</b> 12:30 - 1:15		<b>5th Drama</b> 12:30 - 1:15
1:00 PM					
1:15 PM	<b>Writing Workshop</b> 1:15 - 2:05	<b>Writing Workshop</b> 1:15 - 2:05	<b>4th Chorus</b> <b>5th Play</b> (6YP) 1:15 - 2:00	<b>4th P.E.</b> <b>5th Spanish</b> 1:15 - 2:00	<b>UE Book Group</b> 1:20 - 2:20
1:30 PM					
1:45 PM					
2:00 PM	<b>4th Drama</b> <b>5th P.E.</b>	<b>4th Art</b> <b>5th P.E.</b>	<b>Writing Workshop</b> 2:00 - 2:50	<b>Writing Workshop</b> 2:00 - 2:50	<b>Jobs</b> 2:20 - 2:30
2:15 PM					
2:30 PM	<b>Jobs/Dismissal</b> 2:05 - 2:50	<b>Jobs/Dismissal</b> 2:05 - 2:50	<b>Jobs/Dismissal</b>	<b>Jobs/Dismissal</b>	<b>Community Meeting</b> 2:30 - 2:50
2:45 PM					
3:00 PM	<b>Jobs/Dismissal</b> 2:50 - 3:00	<b>Jobs/Dismissal</b> 2:50 - 3:00	<b>Jobs/Dismissal</b> 2:50 - 3:00	<b>Jobs/Dismissal</b> 2:50 - 3:00	<b>Dismissal</b> 2:50 - 3:00

## Appendix B

### Passive Consent Form

#### **The Impact of Writing Workshop and 6+1 Traits of Writing on Montessori Students' Engagement and Narrative Writing Proficiency Parental Permission Form**

September 11, 2017

Dear families,

In addition to being your child's Upper Elementary teacher, I am a St. Catherine University student pursuing a Masters of Education. As a capstone to my program, I need to complete an Action Research project. I am going to study the impact of writer's workshop on students' engagement in writing and narrative writing proficiency because there is little research on the effects of writing workshop in Upper Elementary Montessori classrooms.

In the coming weeks, I will be conducting a narrative writing unit in writing workshop as a regular part of my writing instruction. All students will participate in writing workshop lessons as members of the class. Students will also be asked to complete feedback forms, respond to two narrative writing prompts, and some will be asked to participate in small discussion groups to give feedback on the unit. In order to understand the outcomes, I plan to analyze the results of this unit to determine if student engagement and writing proficiency increase.

The purpose of this letter is to notify you of this research and to allow you the opportunity to exclude your child's results from my study.

**If you decide you want your child's data to be in my study, you don't need to do anything at this point.**

**If you decide you do NOT want your child's data included in my study, please note that on the back of this form and return it by Monday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Note that your child will still participate in the narrative writing unit but his/her data will not be included in my analysis.**

In order to help you make an informed decision, please note the following:

- I am working with a faculty member at St. Catherine University and an advisor to complete this particular project.
- There are a number of benefits associated with this project. Consistent implementation of writing workshop, a normal classroom activity, should improve students' writing proficiency. Narrative writing in particular should be engaging to students and provide them with an opportunity to tell a story and/or reflect on a personal experience. Contributing feedback on the intervention should encourage students to feel empowered and that they have a voice in classroom activities. This study will inform my practice as a teacher moving forward, improving my writing instruction for students. This study could contribute to the body of work on the

impact of writing instruction for fourth and fifth grade students and inform Montessori teachers and Teacher Training Centers on the impact of writing workshop incorporating the 6+1 Traits of Writing on Upper Elementary students' engagement and writing proficiency. There are minimal risks to students involved in this study. Students who perceive themselves as having lower writing skill levels may feel challenged engaging in writing workshop and may feel discomfort when asked to reflect upon an area of challenge. This is true of students participating in and reflecting on any subject area that is an area of challenge. To minimize these risks, students will continue to participate in regular learning conferences, a normal classroom practice during which students reflect on goals and areas of strength to bolster self-image and develop a growth mindset about their ability level. Due to the low potential for risks in this study, the benefits of increased writing proficiency and engagement in narrative writing outweigh the risks.

- I will be writing about the results that I get from this research. However, none of the writing I do will include the name of this school, the names of any students, or any references that would make it possible to identify outcomes connected to a particular student. Other people will not know if your child is in my study.
- The final report of my study will be electronically available online at the St. Catherine University library. The goal of sharing my research study is to help other teachers who are also trying to improve their teaching.
- There is no penalty for not having your child's data involved in the study; I will simply delete his or her responses from my data set.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, Kirstin Nordhaus at [knordhaus@chiaravalle.org](mailto:knordhaus@chiaravalle.org) or (847) 864-2190. You may ask questions now, or if you have any questions later, you can ask me, or my advisor, Irene Bornhorst, at [ijbornhorst@stkate.edu](mailto:ijbornhorst@stkate.edu), who will be happy to answer them. If you have questions or concerns regarding the study, and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you may also contact Dr. John Schmitt, Chair of the St. Catherine University Institutional Review Board, at (651) 690-7739.

You may keep a copy of this form for your records.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kirstin A. Nordhaus

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

OPT OUT: Parents, in order to exclude your child's data from the study, please sign and return by Monday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

I do NOT want my child's data to be included in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix C

### Narrative Writing Prompt

#### **K-8 Narrative Pre-Assessment Prompt Pre and Post On-Demand Performance Assessment Prompt**

##### **Pre and Post Assessment Prompt:**

*"I'm really eager to understand what you can do as writers of narratives, of stories, so today, you will be writing the best personal narrative, the best small moment story, a story of one time in your life. You will have one writing workshop session to write this true story, so you'll need to plan, draft, revise, and edit in one setting. Write in a way that shows all that you know about narrative writing."*

*"When you get your paper/booklet, think about how you want to organize your writing. You will have one writing workshop session to finish your narrative writing piece."*

##### **For students in grade 3-8, you will add:**

*"In your writing, make sure you:*

- Write a beginning for your story.*
- Use transition words to tell what happened in order.*
  
- Elaborate to help readers picture your story.*
- Show what your story is really about.*
- Write an ending for your story."*

Adapted from: [http://www.csredhawks.org/documents/Curriculum/academics/curriculums/3rd/K-8\\_Pre\\_Post\\_Writing\\_Assess\\_Prompt\\_14-15.pdf](http://www.csredhawks.org/documents/Curriculum/academics/curriculums/3rd/K-8_Pre_Post_Writing_Assess_Prompt_14-15.pdf)

**Appendix D**

**6+1 Traits of Writing Rubric**

Student Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Scorer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>1 Beginning</b>	<b>2 Developing</b>	<b>3 Proficient</b>	<b>4 Strong</b>
<b>Ideas &amp; Content</b> *main theme *supporting details	Missing or unclear details Does not stay on topic	Few details present Does stay on topic	Clear ideas with supported details	Vivid details, accurate, and well-focused
<b>Organization</b> *structure *introduction *conclusion	Beginning/ending missing No transitions Incorrect structure Lack of paragraphing	Limited beginning/ending Few transitions Some structure Irregular paragraphing	Beginning, middle, and end are present Use of accurate transition words Correct paragraphing	Strong beginning, middle, and end Smooth, varied transitions Correct paragraphing
<b>Voice</b> *personality *sense of audience	Lacks expression/feeling	Beginning to show voice and express feelings	Appropriate expression/feeling words present	Strong expression/feeling words present and relevant
<b>Word Choice</b> *precision *effectiveness *imagery	Words are repetitive and simple Limited imagery	Beginning to use interesting words Some imagery	Uses a variety of interesting words Imagery is present and developed	Strong use of interesting, vivid words Imagery is clear and precise
<b>Sentence Fluency</b> *rhythm, flow *variety	Incomplete/run-on sentences	Simple and/or repetitive sentences, little variety	Sentence structure varies: varieties in beginnings and lengths	Sentences are consistently varied and enhance the writing piece
<b>Conventions</b> *age-appropriate spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar	Many errors in capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and spelling prevent understanding	Errors in capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and spelling interfere with understanding	Some errors in capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and spelling	Few or no errors in capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and spelling
<b>Presentation</b> *appearance of written work	Handwriting is illegible with inappropriate spacing	Handwriting is messy but legible Spacing inconsistent	Handwriting legible, appropriate letter formation and size Spacing consistent	Handwriting is neat and easy to read; consistent letter formation and size Spacing is consistent

Adapted from: Six traits writing rubric. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.slideshare.net/castel31> and

Chayot, L. (2012) *4<sup>th</sup> grade 6+1 writing rubric*. Retrieved from <https://leechayot.wordpress.com/impact-on-student-learning/screen-shot-2012-05-27-at-10-11-10-pm/>

**Appendix E**

**Writer Self-Perception Scale**

**THE WRITER SELF-PERCEPTION SCALE**

---

Listed below are statements about writing. Please read each statement carefully. The circle the letters that show how much you agree or disagree with the statement. Use the following scale:

SA=Strongly Agree A=Agree U=Undecided D=Disagree SD=Strongly Disagree

Example: **I think Batman is the greatest super hero.** SA A U D SD

If you are really positive that Batman is the greatest, circle SA (Strongly Agree).

If you think that Batman is good but maybe not great, circle A (Agree).

If you can't decide whether or not Batman is the greatest, circle U (Undecided).

If you think that Batman is not all that great, circle D (Disagree).

If you are really positive that Batman is not the greatest, circle SD (Strongly Disagree).

- |       |  |    |   |   |   |    |
|-------|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| (OC)  | 1. I write better than other kids in the class.  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (PS)  | 2. I like how writing makes me feel inside.  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (GPR) | 3. Writing is easier for me than it used to be.  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (OC)  | 4. When I write, the organization is better than the other kids in my class.                     | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (SF)  | 5. People in my family think I am a good writer.   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (GPR) | 6. I am getting better at writing  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (PS)  | 7. When I write, I feel calm.  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (OC)  | 8. My writing is more interesting than my classmates' writing.                                   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (SF)  | 9. My teacher thinks my writing is fine.   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (SF)  | 10. Other kids think I am a good writer.   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (OC)  | 11. My sentences and paragraphs fit together as well as my classmates' sentences and paragraphs. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (GPR) | 12. I need less help to write well than I used to.   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (SF)  | 13. People in my family think I write pretty well.   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (GPR) | 14. I write better now than I could before.  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (GEN) | 15. I think I am a good writer.  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (OC)  | 16. I put my sentences in a better order than the other kids.                                    | SA | A | U | D | SD |

(GPR)	17. My writing has improved.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(GPR)	18. My writing is better than before.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(GPR)	19. It's easier to write well now than it used to be.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(GPR)	20. The organization of my writing has really improved.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(OC)	21. The sentences I use in my writing stick to the topic more than the ones the other kids use.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(SPR)	22. The words I use in my writing are better than the ones I used before.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(OC)	23. I write more often than other kids	SA	A	U	D	SD
(PS)	24. I am relaxed when I write.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(SPR)	25. My descriptions are more interesting than before.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(OC)	26. The words I use in my writing are better than the ones other kids use.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(PS)	27. I feel comfortable when I write.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(SF)	28. My teacher thinks I am a good writer.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(SPR)	29. My sentences stick to the topic better now.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(OC)	30. My writing seems to be more clear than my classmates' writing.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(SPR)	31. When I write, the sentences and paragraphs fit together better than they used to.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(PS)	32. Writing makes me feel good.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(SF)	33. I can tell that my teacher thinks my writing is fine.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(SPR)	34. The order of my sentences makes better sense now.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(PS)	35. I enjoy writing.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(SPR)	36. My writing is more clear than it used to be.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(SF)	37. My classmates say I would write well.	SA	A	U	D	SD
(SPR)	38. I choose the words I use in my writing more carefully now.	SA	A	U	D	SD



THE WRITER SELF-PERCEPTION SCALE SCORING SHEET

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Scoring Key: 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)  
 4 = Agree (A)  
 3 = Undecided (U)  
 2 = Disagree (D)  
 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

Scales

General Progress (GPR)	Specific Progress (SPR)	Observational Comparison (OC)	Social Feedback (SF)	Physiological State (PS)
3. ___	22. ___	1. ___	5. ___	2. ___
6. ___	25. ___	4. ___	9. ___	7. ___
12. ___	29. ___	8. ___	10. ___	24. ___
14. ___	31. ___	11. ___	13. ___	27. ___
17. ___	34. ___	16. ___	28. ___	32. ___
18. ___	36. ___	21. ___	33. ___	35. ___
19. ___	38. ___	23. ___	37. ___	
20. ___		26. ___		
		30. ___		

Raw Scores

\_\_\_ of 40    \_\_\_ of 35    \_\_\_ of 45    \_\_\_ of 35    \_\_\_ of 30

Score Interpretation	GPR	SPR	OC	SF	PS
High	39+	34+	37+	32+	28+
Average	35	29	30	27	22
Low	30	24	23	22	16

THE WRITER SELF-PERCEPTION SCALE  
DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATION, SCORING AND INTERPRETATION

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The Writer Self-perception Scale (WSPS) provides an estimate of how children feel about themselves as writers. The scale consists of 38 items that assess self-perception along five dimensions of self-efficacy (General Progress, Specific Progress, Observational Comparison, Social Feedback, and Physiological State). Children are asked to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with each statement using a 5-point scale ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1). The information yielded by this scale can be used to devise ways of enhancing children's view of themselves as writers, and, ideally, to increase their motivation for writing. The following directions explain specifically what you are to do.

### Administration

To ensure useful results the children must (a) understand exactly what they are to do, (b) have sufficient time to complete all items, and (c) respond honestly and thoughtfully. Briefly explain to the children that they are being asked to complete a questionnaire about writing. Emphasize that this is not a test and that there are no right or wrong answers. Tell them that they should be as honest as possible because their responses will be confidential. Ask the children to fill in their names, grade levels, and classrooms as appropriate. Read the directions aloud and work through the example with the students as a group. Discuss the response options and make sure that all children understand the rating scale before moving on. The children should be instructed to raise their hands to ask questions about any words or ideas that are unfamiliar.

The children should then read each item and circle their response to the statement. They should work at their own pace. Remind the children that they should be sure to respond to all items. When all items are completed, the children should stop, put their pencils down, and wait for further instructions. Care should be taken that children who work more slowly are not disturbed by classmates who have already finished.

### Scoring

To score the WSPS, enter the following point values for each response on the WSPS scoring sheet (Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1) for each item number under the appropriate scale. Sum each column to obtain a raw score for each of the five specific scales.

### Interpretation

Each scale is interpreted in relation to its total possible score. For example, because the WSPS uses a 5-point scale and the General Progress (GP) scale consists of 8 items, the highest total score is 40 ( $8 \times 5 = 40$ ). Therefore, a score that would fall approximately at the average or mean score (35) would indicate that the child's perception of her/himself as a writer falls in the average range with respect to General Progress. Note that each remaining scale has a different possible maximum raw score (Specific Progress = 35, Observation Comparison = 45, Social Feedback = 35, and Physiological State = 30) and should be interpreted accordingly using the high, average, and low designations on the scoring sheet.

**Appendix F****Upper Elementary Writing Feedback Form**

**For questions 1-4, circle one answer.**

- |   |       |        |           |        |
|---|-------|--------|-----------|--------|
| 1. I like writing.                          | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Always |
| 2. I like writing workshop.                 | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Always |
| 3. I choose writing during work time.       | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Always |
| 4. Writing time gets in the way of my work. | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Always |

**For questions 5-13, write your answer in complete sentences.**

5. What is narrative writing?

6. What are ideas in writing?

7. What is sentence fluency in writing?

8. What is organization in writing?

9. What is word choice in writing?

10. What is voice in writing?

11. What are conventions in writing?

12. What is presentation in writing?

13. What else would you like me to know about your feelings about writing?

**Appendix G**

**Writing Feedback Session Question List**

Date of feedback session: \_\_\_\_\_

Students present (grade level):

\_\_\_\_\_ (Grade \_\_\_\_, Study ID number: \_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Grade \_\_\_\_, Study ID number: \_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Grade \_\_\_\_, Study ID number: \_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Grade \_\_\_\_, Study ID number: \_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Grade \_\_\_\_, Study ID number: \_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Grade \_\_\_\_, Study ID number: \_\_\_\_)

1. How do you feel when you are writing?
2. What do you like about writing lessons?
3. What do you dislike about writing lessons?
4. How do writing lessons impact your work time?
5. What is your favorite kind of writing?
6. Why do you choose or not choose writing during work time?

### Appendix H

#### Observation Tool

Observing Writing in the Elementary Classroom (Conduct 3x/Day for 3-5 min.)

Date of observation: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of observation: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of children present: \_\_\_\_\_

Of the children present, how many children are working on:

	<b>Cultural</b> History, Science, Art, Music	<b>Language</b> Grammar, Reading	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Math and Geometry</b>	<b>Practical Life</b> Care of the Environment, Social Activity
<b>Number of Students</b>					

Record the type of writing students working on:

#### Sample of Work Engagement of Students

- Observe for two minutes or until you count each student once
- Tally each category observed; one tally mark per student

	<b>Engaged in work</b>	<b>Using work as a prop</b>	<b>Choosing work</b>	<b>Receiving help on work</b>	<b>Wandering from work</b>	<b>Behaving disruptively</b>
	engaging in age-appropriate and concentrated work independently or in presentation	not engaging with material in front of him/her	in process of selecting and/or setting up work	consulting with or receiving direction from a teacher in class	moving aimlessly or conversing without focus	yelling, defiant, leaving room, obvious misuse of materials
<b>Tally students writing</b>						
<b>Tally students working on other subjects</b>						

Based on:  
National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector (2012). Observing work engagement: Elementary classroom. Retrieved from <http://public-montessori.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/NCMPS-Elementary-Observation-Rubric.pdf>

**Appendix I**

**Revised Observation Tool**

Conduct 2x/Day During the Morning Work Period for 3-5 min.

Date of observation: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of observation: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of children present: \_\_\_\_\_

Of the children present, how many children are working on:

	<b>Cultural</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Math and Geometry</b>	<b>Practical Life</b>
	History, Science, Art, Music	Grammar, Reading			Care of the Environment, Snack, Social Activity
<b>Tally Students</b>					

Record the type of writing students working on:

**Sample of Work Engagement of Students**

- Observe for two minutes or until you count each student once
- Tally each category observed; one tally mark per student

	<b>Engaged in Work</b>	<b>Disengaged from Work</b>
	Engaging in age-appropriate and concentrated work independently, receiving help on a work, or in a presentation	Not engaging with work in front of him/her, Using work as a prop, Choosing a work, Wandering from work, behaving disruptively
<b>Tally Students Writing</b>		
<b>Tally Other Students</b>		

Adapted from: National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector. (2012). Observing work engagement: Elementary classroom. Retrieved from <http://public-montessori.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/NCMPS-Elementary-Observation-Rubric.pdf>

**Appendix J**

**Transcript of Pre-Intervention Writing Feedback Session**

<b>1. How do you feel when you're writing?</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Coding</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Coding</b>
STUDENT #9: Cramps.	Negative physiological state	Negative physical/emotional response
STUDENT #2: Fun.	Enjoys writing	Positive physical/emotional response
STUDENT #7: Imaginative because if you're making like a nonfiction, I mean a fiction story and it's more like you get to use your creative abilities.	Creative outlet	Creative outlet
STUDENT #17: I often feel like fluent like I can just write down my thoughts on paper.	Transferring thoughts	Processing thoughts
STUDENT #9: Me too.		Processing thoughts
STUDENT #8: I feel really relaxed because I'm just getting my thoughts out and I'm feeling really happy with the way I'm being.	Relaxed, enjoys writing	Positive physical/emotional response
STUDENT #9: I agree with Student #17.		
STUDENT #10: Similar to what Student #8 said, it helps me feel calm and it's just like kind of pouring your thoughts onto the paper.	Relaxed, transferring thoughts	Processing thoughts Positive physical/emotional response
<b>2. What do you like about writing lessons?</b>		
STUDENT #17: It helps me feel more familiar with what we're going to write, instead of just saying "you're going to do narrative writing," then you're kind of like "what?"	Students feel prepared	Students feel prepared

<p>STUDENT #8: I agree with Student #17</p> <p>STUDENT #7: I agree with Student #17</p> <p>STUDENT #10: It helps us kind of like what Student #8 and Student #17 and Student #7 said, it kind of helps us like if you're just going to say we're going to practice writing twin sentences you'd just write everything twice.</p>	<p>Helpful, students feel prepared</p>	<p>Helpful, students feel prepared</p>
<p><b>3. What do you dislike about writing lessons?</b></p>		
<p>STUDENT #17: Well sometimes they can take a long time and sometimes they can be a little boring.</p>	<p>Too long, disengaged</p>	<p>Too long</p>
<p>STUDENT #2: I don't like it because they seem so short.</p>	<p>Too short</p>	<p>Too short</p>
<p>STUDENT #17: I think they should be shorter, the lessons and the writing time, or at least not having it every single day like having DEAR more.</p>	<p>Too long, too frequent</p>	<p>Too long, Frequency</p>
<p>STUDENT #7: I wish like for a couple writing workshop we could just like read an interesting book that we tell us to that would have a lot of juicy words and we could each have the book</p>	<p>Seeking a stronger connection to reading</p>	<p>Teaching method</p>
<p>EE: I wish we could be able to write whatever we wanted like we'd have some free writing time, even if we did have it every day, like three times would be narrative writing and then it could be like a free writing</p>	<p>Wants more choice of genre</p>	<p>Too restrictive</p>



<p>where you could just write any story you want.</p> <p>STUDENT #8: I do not like that we always have to write about, we don't get the choice to write, and I don't like that I feel pressured to do well in that</p> <p>STUDENT #10: I agree with Student #17. Less frequent, not exactly the free writing but mostly the less frequent, I'm ok with not free writing.</p> <p>STUDENT #9: I agree with Student #17 and Student #8 on everything. I agree with Student #17 on what Student #10 just said that they wouldn't happen as often.</p>	<p>Wants more choice of genre, pressure to do well</p> <p>Too frequent</p> <p>Too frequent</p>	<p>Too restrictive</p> <p>Frequency</p> <p>Frequency</p>
<p><b>4. How do writing lessons impact your work time?</b></p>		
<p>STUDENT #8: I kind of feel like it kind of like a little bit distracts me because I need to think about my work and I'm like "Oh, later today we need to do all this" I'm focused on all the work I have already and I have to do some more work later today which takes the same amount of time</p>	<p>Mental distraction from work</p>	<p>Anticipation distracts from work</p>
<p>STUDENT #9: I don't think it impacts me at all.</p> <p>STUDENT #7: I think it's like you know you have to do your work, you also know you have writing. I also wish when we have writing workshop, sometimes</p>	<p>No impact</p>	<p>No impact</p>

<p>writing workshop takes up time in the morning that could be used for work. I was thinking that maybe sometimes we could like when we finish writing a story we need to write, then maybe we could just for fun. I think that we should just if you're done with your story that you should have the choice to work.</p>	<p>Morning WW takes away from time to complete assigned work</p>	<p>Impedes completion of assigned work</p>
<p>STUDENT #2: Well, I like it, I don't mind it. Like right now I don't really care because we're just getting started and I don't have too much works. I don't really have to worry too much, probably next month that will be the opposite and I won't really like it because when I have a lot of works to do it isn't really useful when my work time stops early.</p>	<p>No negative impact, could take away from time to complete assigned work</p>	<p>No impact</p>
<p>STUDENT #10: I feel like it helps me because in work time you need to write well like sometimes you need to write a story for a lesson or sometimes you need to write a research for a lesson so I feel like it helps me that way.</p>	<p>Builds skills for future assignments</p>	<p>Builds skills for future assignments</p>
<p><b>5. What is your favorite kind of writing?</b></p>		
<p>STUDENT #8: Free writing, I like to write horror stuff and make everything really descriptive and I use words like "it sprung up with pus, red at the holes at his skin"</p>	<p>Horror</p>	<p>Fiction</p>
<p>STUDENT #17: Fiction and dark, bloody, gruesome</p>	<p>Fiction, horror</p>	<p>Fiction</p>

<p>deaths.</p>		
<p>STUDENT #2: I agree with Student #8</p>	<p>Fiction</p>	<p>Fiction</p>
<p>STUDENT #9: I agree with Student #8 on I like having free times, not the blood and gruesome deaths, that's more you guys.</p>	<p>Choice of genre</p>	<p>Choice of genre</p>
<p>STUDENT #2: I agree with Student #8 but I don't want to copy but I still like writing scary stories.</p>	<p>Fiction, horror</p>	<p>Fiction</p>
<p>STUDENT #7: I like writing sort of like fiction, I just like writing a lot of genres, different genres, not really like one specific, but they're all fiction, I prefer made-up stories because that lets me use my imagination better because like it lets me stretch my imagination out instead of just like having a storyline to go by like I can base it off of something that happened in my life but I would rather have like to add more things and more details and more add-ons that aren't really part of that story</p>	<p>Fiction, creative outlet for imagination</p>	<p>Fiction</p>
<p>STUDENT #10: My favorite kind of writing is mostly fiction but I put a little bit of nonfiction from my own life in there, kind of like what Avery said, I base it on my life, sort of like that.</p>	<p>Fiction</p>	<p>Fiction</p>
<p>STUDENT #2: It's sort of fun basing something on your life but it's still not exactly from your life but it's</p>		

<p>like a little bit like your life, like it's following along your life but you're exaggerating.</p> <p><b>6. Why do you choose or not choose writing during work time?</b></p> <p>STUDENT #9: I choose to write cause it's how I record.</p> <p>STUDENT #8: I choose writing during work time cause I just enjoy just writing down stuff and taking out all my emotions from it, cause it's a good way for me to process emotions.</p> <p>STUDENT #2: I agree with Student #8. I just like writing a lot and I would write my whole entire life if I wanted to. It's just so much fun.</p> <p>STUDENT #7: So I choose to write when I'm like bored and then I choose to like make a skit.</p> <p>STUDENT #9: I would choose not to write because then I'd feel like I'm not doing my work which is why I just choose to do it when I record.</p> <p>STUDENT #10: I choose to write sometimes, usually during work time I read a lot, especially when there's no DEAR because I take advantage of that, but if I've already read for 45 minutes to an hour, sometimes I write, like for research, which also includes writing,</p>	<p>Write to complete other work</p> <p>Processing emotions</p> <p>Processing emotions, For fun</p> <p>For fun</p> <p>To complete other work, don't write if it interferes with work</p> <p>For fun</p> <p>When bored</p>	<p>Write to complete other work</p> <p>Write to process emotions</p> <p>Write to process emotions, Write for fun</p> <p>Write for fun</p> <p>Don't write if it interferes with work completion, Write to complete other work</p> <p>Write for fun, Write to complete other work</p>
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<p>because I feel like there's nothing else to do if there's nothing on my work plan and I've already read for a little while then I might.</p> <p>STUDENT #2: Excuse me, could there be certain days of the week when we have free writing time when we get to write what we want?</p> <p>STUDENT #17: I might chose not to write, because one, it like interferences with your work a lot but sometimes I will write like today I didn't have anything else on my work plan so I finished my narrative story about when I got my finger slammed in the car door. If you have other things on you work plan, writing a giant story when you still have other works probably isn't the best idea.</p>	<p>For fun, to stay balanced</p> <p>Chooses not to write when it would take away time to complete assigned work</p>	<p>Don't write if it interferences with work completion</p>
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**Appendix K**

**Transcript of Post-Intervention Writing Feedback Session**

1. How do you feel when you're writing?	1 <sup>st</sup> Coding	2 <sup>nd</sup> Coding
STUDENT #2: I feel attached to my imagination and memory and I feel really happy.	Enjoys writing, creative outlet	Positive physical/emotional response, Creative outlet
STUDENT #8: I feel really focused and I feel like I don't want to look away from it cause I just want to keep writing and keep adding my ideas.	Focused, want to make it better	Positive physical/emotional response, Invested in work
STUDENT #9: I feel the same way as Student #8.	Focused, emotional connection, stressed out	Positive physical/emotional response, Invested in work
STUDENT #10: I feel focused too I also feel attached to it, to my writing, and also I can sometimes feel stressed when I write if I either have a deadline or I feel like I have a deadline.	Stressed out, pressure to perform as well as peers	Positive physical/emotional response, Invested in work, Negative physical/emotional response
STUDENT #7: Sometimes I feel stressed when I don't have like the next like if you're stuck and don't know what to write because you look around and see that everyone is writing and you feel like sometimes I feel stressed.	Pressure to perform as well as peers	Negative physical/emotional response
STUDENT #9: And you're like what do I write I feel so embarrassed because everyone else is writing while I don't have an idea.	Pressure to perform as well as peers	Negative physical/emotional response
STUDENT #8: I also sometimes feel like my writing is	Pressure to perform as well as peers	Negative physical/emotional response

<p>not as interesting or good enough as the other kids.</p> <p>STUDENT #17: Sometimes I feel calm and sometimes my hand really hurts.</p> <p>STUDENT #7: I feel very calm.</p> <p>STUDENT #2: I feel like I could just sit there and write all day.</p> <p>STUDENT #7: Like it's kind of frustrating when you start because you have no ideas and then halfway through you're like "never end!"</p>	<p>Peaceful, negative physiological state</p> <p>Enjoys writing</p> <p>Stressed out, focused Enjoy continuing the work</p>	<p>Negative physical/emotional response, Positive physical/emotional response</p> <p>Positive physical/emotional response</p> <p>Positive physical/emotional response</p> <p>Negative physical/emotional response, Positive physical/emotional response</p>
<p><b>2. What do you like about writing lessons?</b></p>		
<p>STUDENT #7: That basically your follow up is usually always fun.</p>	<p>Helpful, students feel prepared</p>	<p>Enjoy the work</p>
<p>STUDENT #17: I feel like it helps explain what you're about to do so I like how you also give ideas and how you did the thing with us when you showed where you wrote a stories so it helps to show how to edit.</p>	<p>Modeling</p>	<p>Prepare students, Teaching method</p>
<p>STUDENT #7: Also because we get to see your writing as you're giving us the lesson and also it's like you're teaching us the names for these, at the beginning I didn't know any of the terms or anything but at the end I only didn't know a couple of them.</p>	<p>Modeling</p> <p>Nomenclature, led to growth</p>	<p>Teaching method, Nomenclature</p>
<p>STUDENT #9: I like it because if I forget what I have to do I can just look back and see.</p>	<p>Anchor charts, helpful, students feel prepared</p>	<p>Teaching method</p>

<p>STUDENT #10: I think they're helpful because it helps us understand what we're going to do, I mean like it wouldn't make sense if someone just said "go write" and then expected you to have like a perfect story.</p>	<p>Helpful, students feel prepared</p>	<p>Prepare students</p>
<p>STUDENT #8: I like how the lessons kind of guide us through what we're doing and it keeps us in knowledge of what we're expected to do.</p>	<p>Helpful, students feel prepared</p>	<p>Teaching method, Prepare students</p>
<p>STUDENT #2: I enjoy them a lot because I get a sense of what I'm supposed to do and that way I can get an idea of what I'm going to write before I even start instead of just like going to write without any idea at all, it makes me feel prepared.</p>	<p>Helpful, students feel prepared, get started together</p>	<p>Prepare students</p>
<p>STUDENT #9: Because you tell us you explain what we need to write I've learned a lot already this year and we're not even through a quarter of the year!</p>	<p>Led to growth</p>	
<p>STUDENT #2: Imagine how much you'll know at the end of the year!</p>		
<p><b>3. What do you dislike about writing lessons?</b></p>		
<p>STUDENT #9: I don't like that I feel rushed when I'm in the lesson.</p>	<p>Rushed, too short? Too much information?</p>	<p>Too short</p>
<p>STUDENT #2: I feel that they take too long, it makes me feel like curled into a tiny space waiting, and it makes me feel like what if I keep waiting and then</p>	<p>Too long</p>	<p>Too long</p>



<p>finally I give up waiting and then a couple seconds later it's time to write and I don't get up that makes me feel really scared.</p>		
<p>STUDENT #8 I don't like how you tell us that we have to write a personal narrative, it can't be fictional it can't be a different thing, that's what I don't like, like I don't like how it's so you have to write this genre.</p>	<p>Not enough freedom to explore fiction</p>	<p>Too restrictive</p>
<p>STUDENT #2: Yeah, I agree.</p>		
<p>STUDENT #7: I don't like how you just give us that and I don't necessarily like when our lessons we had a whole two weeks to just talk about personal narratives and I feel like maybe that time should have been shortened</p>	<p>Too long on one topic, not enough freedom to explore fiction</p>	<p>Too restrictive Too restrictive</p>
<p>STUDENT #9: I feel like we have too short of writing workshop.</p>	<p>Too short</p>	<p>Too short</p>
<p>STUDENT #2: I feel like my imagination has not been put to the test yet. If your imagination's not put to the test then you'll never become a good writer and your goal is to make us good writers and if you keep doing narrative writing for one more month, I'm going to run out of interesting stories to write.</p>	<p>Not enough freedom to explore fiction</p>	<p>Too restrictive</p>
<p>STUDENT #10: I don't really like the part where we it's a little too long, doesn't give us enough of a chance</p>		

<p>to write and sometimes I don't finish what I was supposed to do the other time because it was too short and I don't get enough time and then I have to do it the next time and I keep falling shorter and shorter.</p>	<p>Too long, not enough writing workshop time, Not enough freedom to explore fiction</p>	<p>Too long, Too restrictive</p>
<p>STUDENT #17: I don't like how sometimes we have a really long period to work on one story.</p>		
<p>STUDENT #7: Like you're done and then you say "are you sure you're done?"</p>	<p>Pressure to revise</p>	<p>Pressure to revise</p>
<p>STUDENT #8: And then it feels like you feel like you're done but then it's like well does that mean I've done something wrong? Does that mean I need to keep adding? What if I think the story's fine?</p>	<p>Seeking teacher approval</p>	<p>Pressure to revise  Pressure to revise</p>
<p>STUDENT #9: I agree with Student #8, I feel like we don't have enough options to write about we can write about one thing and that one thing for an entire month and I feel like I just run out of ideas.</p>		
<p><b>4. How do writing lessons impact your work time?</b></p>		
<p>STUDENT #2: Well we only have one writing lesson during the work time so...</p>		
<p>STUDENT #8: I feel like during the work time when we have writing workshop I'm kind of like dreading it because I have a story that I don't really want to be</p>	<p>Not enough freedom to explore fiction</p>	<p>Too restrictive</p>

<p>writing in writing workshop and I'm thinking like "oh crud, I have to do this in the afternoon" and it's like, it's making me think about how I don't want to do this but yet I have to do it this afternoon and it makes me think about that during the work time.</p> <p>STUDENT #7: I don't like how in writing workshop on Fridays we have it in the morning and I don't really like that because I just get out of a lesson and I'm starting on a work and then I have to stop.</p> <p>STUDENT #17: I feel like Friday's my day when I try to get as much as I can done.</p> <p>STUDENT #8: Then you're like stressing over the weekend like "I have a bunch to do now, I didn't get to finish it on Friday."</p> <p>STUDENT #10: They only really impact me if I really need to do something like if it's the day before the presentation because I'm usually behind as I just said so I have to write either the full final draft or part of the final draft when I do it and so it impacts me that but that's not that bad actually because it's just that I have to do it just like all my other lessons I have to do.</p>	<p>Mental distraction from work anticipating WW</p> <p>Morning WW takes away from time to complete assigned work</p> <p>Fridays are hard for morning WW, should be productive work days</p> <p>See it like other subject area work</p>	<p>Anticipation distracts from work</p> <p>Impedes work flow</p> <p>Impedes work flow</p> <p>Impedes work flow</p> <p>Impedes completion of assigned work</p>
<p><b>5. What is your favorite kind of writing?</b></p> <p>STUDENT #9: Fiction.</p>		

<p>STUDENT #8: Fiction but like fiction but a little realistic, like there's not going to be a dragon eating my townspeople, but like not that realistic like it doesn't need to be something that could really happen.</p>	<p>Fiction</p>	<p>Fiction</p>
<p>STUDENT #7: Fiction, but not completely science fiction.</p>	<p>Fiction, some area for creativity</p>	<p>Fiction</p>
<p>STUDENT #17: I like fiction but like Student #8 said, not when there's something that's totally not going to happen but something that's going to happen but not likely.</p>	<p>Fiction</p>	<p>Fiction</p>
<p>STUDENT #2: My favorite type of writing? I like fiction but I like to write about anything like I would write about aliens dancing to my favorite song!</p>	<p>Fiction, some area for creativity</p>	<p>Fiction</p>
<p>STUDENT #10: I like realistic fiction, but again, not too realistic because then it seems kind of boring to me but it's not really that way with personal narratives it's more that way with realistic fiction that I feel like it's not as boring because it's not about myself and I know it seems a little self-centered and it seems more boring when it's not about yourself and it's realistic, I think a little realistic like it could happen like winning the lottery or like having a tornado in a place where it's unlikely to have a tornado, I mean like if you're in</p>	<p>Fiction, some area for creativity</p>	<p>Fiction</p>

<p>Kansas it's not that unlikely to have a tornado.</p> <p>STUDENT #8: I feel like more enjoy to do what kind of genre I want to instead of someone telling me "you have to do personal narrative, you have to do realistic fiction, you have to do a fiction, you have to do science fiction" I like to more choose that because it feels like I want to "feel" the writing, like I didn't really "feel" my personal narrative, I want to be able to "feel" like the excitement of being able to write that and not just be like "I'm not really interested in this concept."</p> <p>STUDENT #2: One of my favorite types of writing is when I get to write about me and my friends but in different times.</p>	<p>Looking for more choice</p>	
<p><b>6. Why do you choose or not choose writing during work time?</b></p> <p>STUDENT #9: I feel like when I'm writing during work time I'm wasting the time I could be working on other things cause we have our own time to do writing.</p> <p>STUDENT #2: I love writing during work time, I choose to do writing during work time because it gives me a break, it gives my mind a break and it allows my imagination to take over and flood through my body.</p> <p>Thoughts...feelings...</p>	<p>Fiction</p> <p>Writing is for WW unless assigned work is complete</p> <p>Writing is fun, is a productive break</p>	<p>Fiction</p> <p>Avoid writing if it interferes with work completion</p> <p>Choose writing for fun, Choose writing to process emotions For Fun, Choose Writing to Process Emotions</p>

<p>STUDENT #8: I kind of choose both a little bit but I mostly don't because I feel like when I'm writing and I have everything done on my work plan, someone is going to come over and be like "what are you doing?" and I'm gonna be like "I'm writing" and they're gonna be like "what do you have to do? It's work time, you shouldn't be writing during this," even though it's a choice I feel like someone's gonna do that. I have that urge to be like I don't want to write because I feel like someone's gonna turn me down when I'm doing it cause it's not really a work it's more like a free thing to do.</p>	<p>Writing is not for assigned work time</p>	<p>Avoid writing if it interferes with work completion</p>
<p>STUDENT #7: I don't really like doing it because it takes away from my work time and I usually have a lot of works that I need to do and we have writing workshop every day so why.</p>	<p>Writing is for WW unless assigned work is complete</p>	<p>Avoid Writing if it Interferes with Work Completion</p>
<p>STUDENT #17: I don't really like doing it because, like Student #7 said, it takes away from my work time and I usually have a lot of works to do.</p>	<p>Writing is for WW unless assigned work is complete</p>	<p>Avoid Writing if it Interferes with Work Completion</p>
<p>STUDENT #10: I choose not to usually, I mean, as I said earlier, sometimes I have to do it to be on time, like if it's on the presentation day, but I usually choose not to do it, I mean like in some lessons I have to write</p>	<p>Choose writing to prepare for WW, priority goes to assigned work</p>	<p>Choose Writing to Complete Other Work, To Complete a Writing Project</p>

<p>something but I choose usually not to write unless I have to.</p> <p>STUDENT #8: I do choose writing and it's because...it's not like writing workshop where you have to have a due date, it's just like you can write at your own pace and not be concerned about finishing it or turning it in at a certain time you can just write when you want to if you have everything done and you write what you feel like, not a certain genre that you're forced to write.</p> <p>STUDENT #7: Sometimes you have works that you do writing on and sometimes you have to do research on those things.</p>	<p>Free writing is fun</p> <p>You need to write to do other assigned work</p>	<p>Choose to Write for Fun</p> <p>Choose Writing to Complete Other Work</p>
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