

STUDENT COLLABORATION ON ASSESSMENT OF WRITING IN
PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT GENERATION
SCIENCE STANDARDS

by

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A professional paper submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

Master of Science

in

Science Education

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

July 2015

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ABSTRACT

Elementary students are often assessed by standards that they do not understand or have no vested interest in. Conversely, student involvement in the assessment process has been shown to increase metacognition and critical thinking skills. The main focus of this research project was to investigate the connection between student involvement in creating an assessment rubric for writing, and increased writing proficiency in compositions.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Expressing ideas and observations in words is a necessary tool to meet the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), as well as in today's educational world. Moreover, student's writing ability is challenged not only during the language arts and science block but throughout the classroom curriculum. Taking this into account, I noticed many students performed well on daily grammar practice and editing, but struggled during writer's workshop, science journaling and other classroom writing tasks. This was often the result of not transferring these skills consistently to their work. I began to wonder about ways to boost student confidence and performance. Could I front load assessment objectives into student learning by having them help me write the assessment rubric or tool to use on their compositions? Assessments should be a component of the education process that enables students to understand the aims of their learning and how the quality of their achievements will be judged (Gardner, 2011, p. 115). Students at Kings Valley Charter School (KVCS), where I currently teach, are required to author three polished compositions a year, which is consistent with the increasing expectations of national standards. They also participate in the annual science fair, where they are expected to complete a thorough and concise write up of their findings. No matter how much we try to standardize assessment instruments, we can never know what is in a student's head. Assessments only tell us what the students can do in particular circumstances (Buhagiar, 2007, p. 42). Students are often assessed by standards that they do not understand or have no vested interest. This prompted me to

investigate the connection between student involvement in the assessment processes and student learning.

The primary questions I explored during this action research project were: What were the effects on student attitudes about writing and proficiency in writing when students participated in the assessment process? Sub Question #1: What result will a teacher-student collaborative assessment tool for writing have on student accuracy, neatness, and adherence to directions? Sub Question #2: How would student/teacher collaboration on a writing assessment tool impact proficiency in the writing process? Sub Question #3: What effect would student/teacher collaboration have on the classroom teacher?

I worked with my entire fourth and fifth grade class on this research project. The blended class of 20 was composed of seventeen fifth graders and three fourth graders; seven girls and thirteen boys. KVCS is a rural school that serves preschool through twelfth grade, and most of our students are bused to the school from the surrounding areas. KVCS has approximately 49% of the student population eligible to receive free and reduced lunch. Two of the students participating in the project have been diagnosed Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and one student is considered Meth affected. They all had varied ability in writing, and benefited from an improved understanding of the six traits of writing model. "Goals need to be measurable," Stefl-Mabry pointed out, "we need to articulate carefully and document how we know that students know" (2004, p. 22). By identifying ways students think about their own

writing, encouraging them to describe and discuss traits of quality writing, and building their skill set, many students discovered greater confidence and proficiency as authors.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Teaching to the test or for national rankings will not encourage students to develop metacognition skills needed for lifelong learning. Students need to develop the critical thinking skills necessary to evaluate their own learning and to be able to judge for themselves if they are on track. The NGSS requires students to focus their ideas, write in clear and precise language, and to participate in scientific argumentation. As educators, we cannot know for sure what understanding students have of concepts presented, nor can we know that any assessment developed would be nonbiased and designed to evaluate all students with equity. However, when students are given the opportunity to discuss and clarify what expectations are involved in the learning process and encouraged to participate in the assessments, they can deepen their concept knowledge.

In a 2012 study done by Fletcher and Shaw, 80 students participated in writing assessments where 38 students used Student Directed Assessment (SDA) and 42 students used Teacher Directed Assessment (TDA). They found that students in the SDA group "demonstrated a more developed form of writing in respect to text structure" (Fletcher and Shaw, 2012, p. 259). There were also significant statistical improvements by the SDA group in regards to creative writing, technical qualities, structure and spelling. "The project required both students and teachers to engage meta-cognitively by reflecting on how they were going to address the students' learning goals" (Fletcher and Shaw, 2012, p. 252). My research showed creating an assessment with my students collaboratively,

taking into account the goals of units we studied and skills needed to make a strong assessment has helped most of the students discover and reflect on their own learning process. Teachers reported, "students were more engaged and produced a higher standard of work in the SDA project" when compared to the traditional TDA (Fletcher and Shaw, 2012, p. 255). Students have a better knowledge of grading criteria for grading and are primed with the concepts they will be graded on when participating in the development of assessment tools. Fletcher and Shaw found narrative devices such as humor, suspense, and genre-styles were more developed in the SDA writing samples and resulted in higher marking rubric scores (2012, p. 255). This study also looked at the impact on the teacher, "When teachers observed the positive experience for student learning that emerged from this process, they too engaged in deep critical thinking about their role as a teacher, leading to critical reflection" (Fletcher and Shaw, 2012, p. 259).

Another research study performed through the University of Nebraska at Omaha reinforced the concept that students experience learning gains when involved in the evaluation process (Fluckiger, Tixier, Pasco and Danielson, 2009). Through creation of formative assessment tools generated to encourage greater collaboration between teachers and students on assessment, students learned about their own learning. "Creating a climate that maximizes student accomplishment in any discipline focuses on student learning instead of on assigning grades," explained Fluckiger et al. (2009, p. 136). The researchers discovered that student learning gains improved when students participated in assessment strategies. The creation of an assessment tool "involved students in making decisions about how to gain the knowledge they needed" (Fluckiger et

al., 2009, p. 138). The classroom environment shifts to "a positive focus on learning instead of an anxious focus on grading" (Fluckiger et al., 2009, p. 138).

Creating an assessment tool such as a grading rubric with students has helped them to develop metacognition skills and "achieve better learning outcomes" as shown in Fletcher and Shaw's study about Self Directed Assessment (SDA) (Fletcher and Shaw, 2012, p. 246). The researchers confirmed that "students learn better when they play an active role in determining their assessment" (Fletcher and Shaw, 2012, p. 246). A key aspect of my action research was to encourage my students to critically think about their own learning. They evaluated the expectations on assignments and made goals to attain accurate, complete and neat artifacts from our units of study. Positive learning gains were also shown in the study done by Fluckiger et al., 2009, where students evaluated their own work, "as well as that of others so they could see their own learning and growth regardless of the level of expertise they'd brought with them" (p. 136). During my research, the process of collaborating with students and reflecting on their learning as well as my own not only offered me an opportunity to grow as a teacher, but allowed me to put theory into practice and observe students participating in their own learning gains.

METHODOLOGY

The treatment component of my methodology was to generate an intervention collaboratively with my students to focus on specific writing goals. Consistent with the State of Oregon's writing standards, we use the six trait writing model throughout the school. My students and I created an assessment rubric based on this model, which was used alternatively with end of assignment peer/ teacher feedback to see if there was a

correlation to collaborating on writing objectives with concepts of proficient compositional writing. "Assessment of any kind should ultimately improve learning" (Gardner, 2011, p. 115).

To begin with, I gathered a baseline writing sample from each student, scored according to the Oregon Department of Education Official Scoring Rubric, Appendix A. I then asked all 20 of my fourth and fifth grade students to fill out an attitude survey before we created the writing rubric and repeated this at the end of the study. The survey identified how students felt about themselves as authors, their confidence in the writing process, as well as their feelings about sharing their writing with others. A copy of the survey questions can be found in Appendix B. The writing attitude survey I used was adapted from a survey posted on Region 15 Connecticut Schools web site, <http://www.region15.org/>.

Over a four week period, I guided students through the process of creating a writing rubric. We analyzed several examples of writing rubrics such as the ODE Scoring Rubric (Appendix A), some other sample rubrics and accessing the rubric generator such as <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>. "The strength of using rubrics as a learning situation or as an assessment strategy lies in its success in developing metacognitive skills" (Skillings and Ferrell, 2000, p. 455). The process began with instructions on how to create an assessment rubric, defining levels of performance and developing a standard. This included mini lessons on how to structure an assessment rubric, what qualities a polished composition would include, and establishing a standard for levels of achievement. The most challenging piece of this process was establishing a

common vocabulary of writing terms. The students were often stuck on academic terms for writing such as "thorough, balanced and insightful details" and "accurate and credible support," which are taken from Official ODE Scoring Rubric. Discussions about aspects of a writing rubric that made little sense to them, moved into alternative terms that resonated with the students as authors. I also wanted students to think about the NGSS goal of communicating information using precise and clear language. The students and I then collaborated to develop a rubric to guide and assess their writing assignments, Appendix C.

After several weeks of working with students to build a rubric, students used the rubric on two of their compositions, and I scored two pieces totaling four in all. We had included a stratified scale and retained language from the ODE Scoring Rubric that provided challenges for some of the students. We discovered that our rubric was too long and wordy and the vocabulary still confusing to students. Moreover students seemed to lose focus as they approached the end of their self-evaluation. We discussed these issues, took a vote and unanimously decided to make a new rubric. At this time, I had also received a list of writing goals from the middle school language arts teachers, which they wanted to see fifth graders accomplish before transitioning. With this in mind, the students and I created a second rubric shown in Appendix D. This rubric focused on specific objectives we were working on such as adding figurative language, specific details, and precise nouns and verbs to student compositions. The students and I also added a 'prove it' element to the rubric, in order to encourage authors to think about the evidence and reasoning in their topics. Students then used the rubric to guide three of

their compositions (treatment) and wrote three other compositions without the rubric (non-treatment). I scored all six of the assignments according to the Six Traits Rubric to track growth. During this time students continued to write in their science and daily journals.

Along with the rubric, the students and I created a Composition Checklist, see Appendix E. The whole class was involved in this assessment, and provided input into the design. The students and I evaluated each writing sample for neatness, accuracy and adherence to the directions according to a number scale from one, applying all the concepts we have talked about, to five, additional coaching. This exercise encouraged students to identify neatness, accuracy and following directions as the ground work for proficient writing. I collected and recorded the data, then handed the assessments and writing samples back to the students; giving them a quick way to review and evaluate their own work.

The final component of my research, was to compare my findings against the ODE standards. My colleagues and I score student writing samples three times a year using the ODE Official Scoring Rubric (Appendix A). The first sample of student papers showed two students proficient in all six traits of writing; scoring a four or better in each category. The second sample, written after the class created the first collaborative rubric, generated four passing writing samples. There were nine passing compositions in the last samples submitted, and four additional papers that were only one point shy of a passing score. These scores were based on the high school rubric used throughout the state of Oregon. The research methodology for this project received approval from my

administrator (Appendix G) and an exemption by Montana State University's Institutional Review Board and compliance for working with human subjects was maintained, Appendix H. Students found by developing and using a rubric they helped design, they understood the writing process better and had a "higher level of student ownership" in the success of this process (Skillings and Ferrell, 2000, p. 455).

Instrumentation

By teaching students key elements of the assessment criteria and having them develop guidelines for performance, students had the opportunity to increase ownership of their learning goals when writing compositions for narrative and persuasive prompts. Students also had an opportunity to reflect on their learning, strengthening their metacognition skills when evaluating the assessment process. The data collection matrix in Table 1 demonstrates that my action research questions were answered in a variety of ways contributing to the validity and reliability of this research. ODE Scoring Rubric and initial Attitude surveys are used by many schools to assist students and staff with the assessment process.

Table 1
Data Collection Matrix

	Attitude Survey	Focus Group	Composition Checklist Assessment	6 Traits Writing Rubric	Teacher Reflections And Time Study
Research Questions					
What are the effects on student attitudes about writing and proficiency in writing if the student participates in the assessment process?	**	**	**		**
1. What result will a teacher-student collaborative assessment tool for writing have on student accuracy, neatness, and adherence to the directions?		**	**	**	**
2. How will student and teacher collaboration on a writing assessment tool impact proficiency in the writing process?		**	**	**	
3. What effect will student teacher collaboration have on the classroom teacher?	**	**			**

The focus group interviews and Writing Attitude Survey overlapped and provided comprehensive data to answer my main action research question about the effects on student attitudes about writing when participating in the assessment process. At the beginning and the end of the study I interviewed eight students from my class in focus groups of four students per group about their attitudes, confidence level and understanding of the writing process, Appendix F. I chose to use focus groups so that I had an opportunity to talk with a large sampling of participants in my research, which I would be unable to do with individual interviews due to time constraints. I also felt that

the group discussion atmosphere of a focus group encouraged deeper analysis of the students' own work. The focus group interview as well as the student survey provided insights into the main action research question of how student attitudes about writing were impacted by collaborating on an assessment tool for writing.

In order to evaluate sub question one and two, the students and I created the Composition Checklist to use on each of the writing samples submitted during the study period. I compiled scores in Microsoft Excel of the formative assessments and presented the results to students. Students used the results to guide their next writing assignment. Additionally, scoring sessions with my colleagues provided data and insight into the growing writing proficiency of students. These tools addressed how student accuracy, neatness, adherence to directions, and proficiency in the writing process were impacted when using a collaborative assessment tool.

To answer the question on how this research project affected the teacher, I kept notes, a time study and recorded reflections on the writing process and development of the collaborative assessment lessons. I discovered that creating a rubric with the students took quite a bit of class time early on. We spent eight 30 minute class periods looking at different writing rubrics and expectations, and the essential vocabulary needed to define writing objectives. We then spent five more class periods formulating student generated ideas into a consensus of the most important and understandable objectives. I spent another nine hours compiling the information and ideas students turned in and outlined a writing rubric. When we revised the rubric, I spent an additional four hours reworking and changing the assessment. As the year progressed, we spent less time discussing the

objectives of a writing sample, therefore front loading assessment objectives for students saved instructional time later in the year. While working with different rubrics I noticed students become fatigued with lengthy self evaluation tools. However, when we settled on the more concise rubric there was a noticeable change in the students' focus and attention to the entire process.

DATA AND ANALYSIS

After compiling a baseline of student compositional writing, I asked students to answer questions on the Writing Attitude Survey. At the end of the treatment, I gave the same survey and asked students to answer the questions thoughtfully and carefully. One of my students diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) struggled with the post-treatment survey and wrote comments like "I like bananas" and "I already answered these questions" on the survey. I included his answers because I wanted as many students as possible represented in the findings, and I thought some of his answers may have been accurate. I did not included responses from one student who was out of the country for the second survey and one that joined our classroom after the first survey was given. The results from before and post treatment are included in Figure 1.

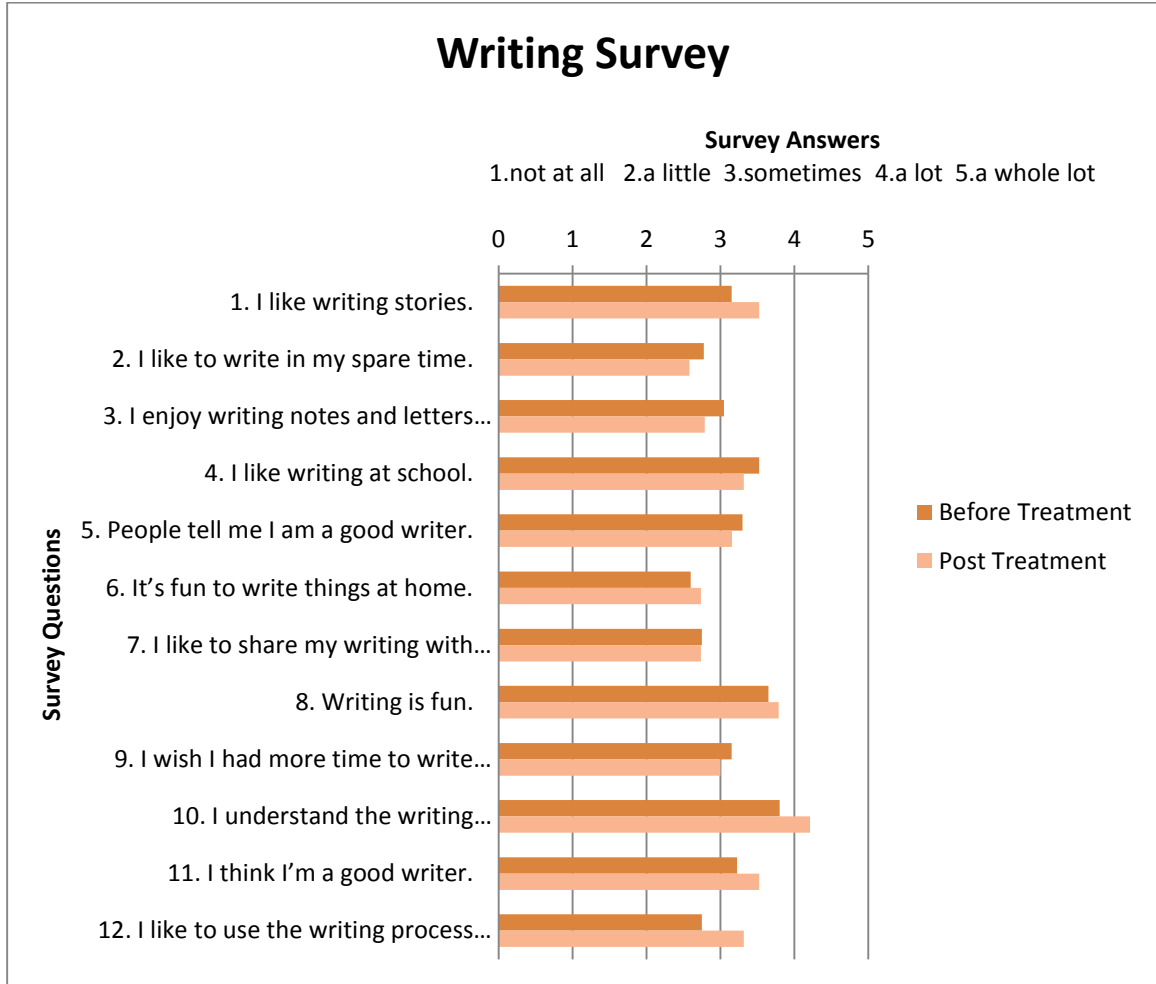


Figure 1. Average score on the Writing Attitude Survey, ($N=19$).

The students were asked to rate how confident they were with using the writing process and preferences on where they enjoy writing, as shown in Figure 1. The survey also asked students to explain their reasoning on some of the questions, and included a section for open ended responses. When presented with the survey one of the students exclaimed, "I have been waiting for a long time for someone to ask me these questions!" I created a spreadsheet of the survey questions to analyze student responses, and gave a number value from one to five on each of the answers. Then I separated the answers into

categories of positive attitude toward writing, questions about disliking or being discouraged about writing, and questions that reveal students interest in writing at home and in school. A value of five was given for positive feelings, three for sometimes, and one for expressing lack of confidence or dislike on the survey. The survey data was entered in sections per time frame of before collaboration and end of study. The data was collected in two class periods taking approximately 20 minutes for the students to fill out.

The data suggests most students in this 4th and 5th grade class like writing sometimes, however they do not like to share their writing as much, which is illustrated in Figure 1. The lowest score on the Writing Attitude Survey pretreatment was "It's fun to write things at home" scoring on average 2.6 on the attitude scale, and improving slightly on the post-treatment survey. One student explained, "I write comics about Super Marshin Mellow and Super Bunny." Nevertheless, he was not the norm. Writing at home offers students more open ended writing experiences, which can be very intimidating to young authors. The other two lowest scores were about sharing writing with others and writing during a students' spare time. These numbers indicate that students' interest in writing outside of school is not as high as when in the classroom.

Conversely, when looking at the scores for 'writing is fun', 'I like writing in school' and 'I like to write stories' students ranked these the highest on the post treatment survey. One student's response to the question of how do you feel about writing, "very happy and imaginative." Another student wrote, "I feel happy because it is fun to do." "It helps me feel sane," expressed another. "I like to write about history, fantasy and animals when I am in school." These comments indicate that many students enjoy

writing for various reasons and on many topics during the school day; in part, I believe, because the resources are available to research and generate story concepts and informational compositions. The classroom is also a more encouraging and safe place to grow as authors.

The questions that saw a decrease in positive responses between pre and post treatment on the Writing Survey were numbers two, three, four, five and nine. Most of these questions addressed where and when students like to write. In response to the question about enjoying writing notes and letters to people, one student responded "it is weird" and another said "I don't see the purpose." The two students responded with sometimes on the first survey then not at all on the second, however, both students grew as authors and passed the end of the year ODE Official Writing Assessment. When discussing the question about enjoying writing notes and letters to people in the focus groups students responded that they rarely write letters to anyone. "No one reads my writing," expressed one student. My impression after discussing this with students, is that they did not really think about writing to people differently from activities such as texting on the first survey. After we discussed all of the reasons people write and in the varied forms, students realized how little they write outside of school. Some of the short answers generated around those questions were "I like reading," and "I like to spend time with my family." One student responded with "I just don't have time." During the focus group discussions when I asked about writing during free time one student replied, "I feel like writing is a passion or a hobby." For some of the students I got the sense that we had done a great deal of writing this year and they were feeling some fatigue toward it.

Looking at the average attitude score shows where the class is collectively, however, the diversity of students' confidence and feelings about writing comes through when looking at the individual responses. Data from the question about whether writing is fun demonstrates how some students' enjoyment of writing grew during the research project, shown in Figure 2. Two of the students responded with a decrease of enjoyment in writing after using the rubrics and producing the writing samples, however their written responses were that it is "boring". Both of these students passed their final writing sample with four or greater scores in all six categories. Their compositions show proficiency, and one of the student's compositions are very creative. However, these two authors are in the advanced math groups and sometimes struggle with less linear and concrete activities.

For some of the students the gain in enjoyment of writing was significant, as indicated by the data in Figure 2. I observed this in the classroom as well, as many students would request extra time to work on compositions and extended journaling sessions. I offer an author's chair, in which students sign up on the white board to share their recent written work with the class while we have a snack. Several students a week would request more time in the author's chair to share their journals and science entries, which increased throughout the treatment period. Two students who struggled with writing at the beginning of the year have given me independent writing projects that they are working on at home. For them, this year has been a catalyst for creative writing outside of school.

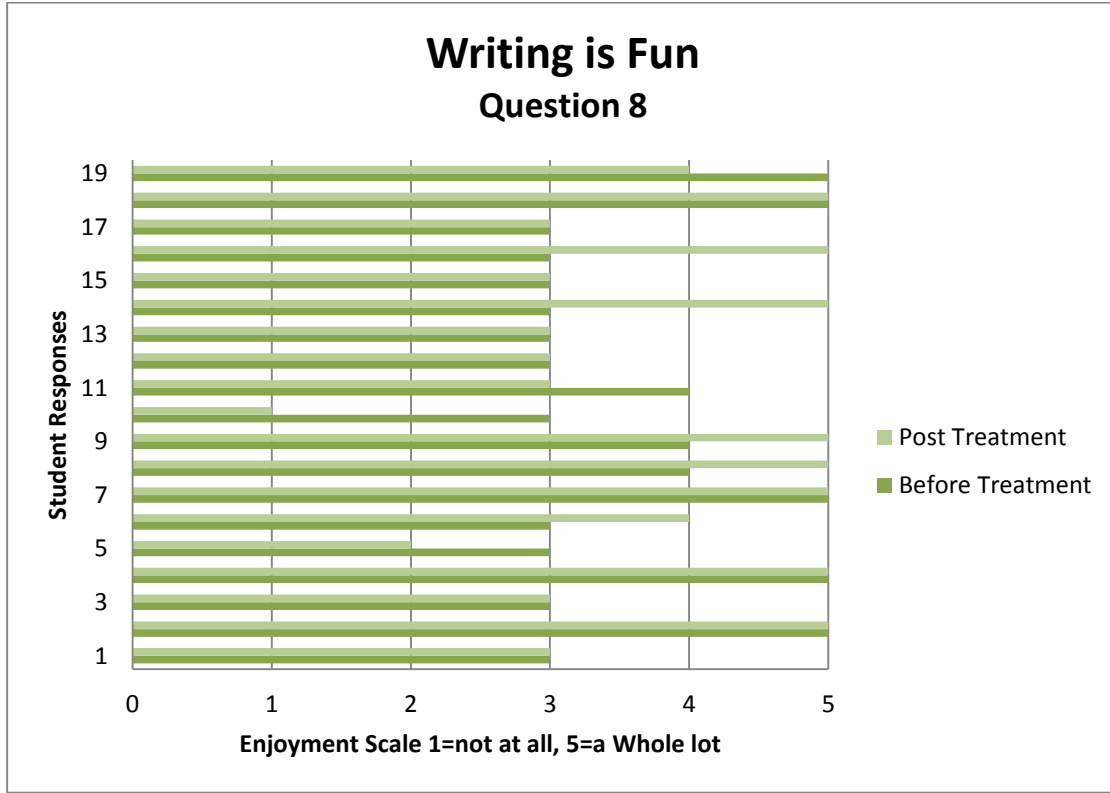


Figure 2. Average score on question number eight attitude scale, ($N=20$).

As part of the process of shifting students' thoughts about their writing to more critically appraising their own work and that of others, student feedback turned more analytical. I believe this critical thinking process caused the decline in the response to question five, "people tell me I am a good writer". When discussing this in the focus groups, students responded that sharing their writing "makes me feel a bit uncomfortable, because I am not sure if [others] will like it or not." An important part of metacognition is helping students discover some of their challenges and finding ways to help them overcome those challenges. As part of the process of creating the writing rubric, students had to brainstorm what a good composition looked like as well as a work that was struggling. I encouraged them to discover their limitations as authors and to look at their

work with a critical eye in order to improve. I also believe this data is a good indication that students are feeling invested in their own writing. The student from above responded to my question 'How do you feel about writing?' with "I feel very confident." Demonstrating that her personal feelings about her work are positive, and that she would like to create an enjoyable composition to share. Another student responded "I feel excited," and that he would like to write "entertaining things," when asked how he feels about writing. I asked another student how he felt about himself as a writer and his response was, "I feel that I need to improve my writing and shape my stories. After all, I could turn out to be an author one day!" Many students' ideas about writing changed over this process of trying to define a proficient or well written composition or story. They discovered that authors in our classroom library contemplated the writing traits much like themselves.

At the onset of this project, I wondered if there was a link to enjoying writing and having a clear understanding of writing objectives. Figure 3 shows a positive correlation between using and understanding the writing process and feeling a sense of competency when writing, which improved over the project's timeline. Throughout this action research project, students discussed, evaluated and used the writing process to guide their compositions. Responses by students about understanding the writing process grew by four tenths of a point during the treatment, while 'I like using the writing process' increased by five tenths. This correlation suggests that students felt more proficient and confident with their use of the writing process. I observed this in class as well,

documenting in my journal that students appear more aware of the writing traits and process in their later compositions.

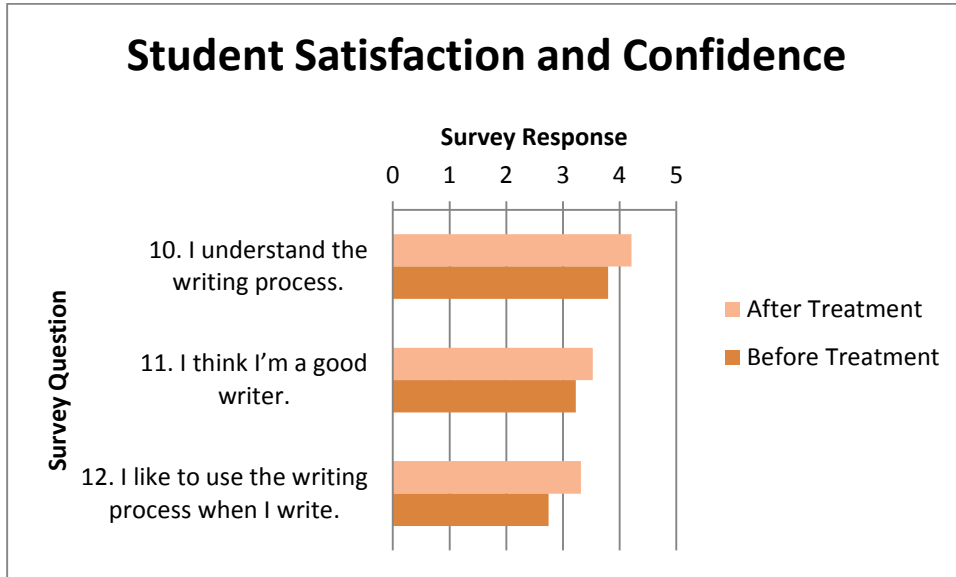


Figure 3. Average score on questions number 10 through 12 on the attitude scale, (N=19).

When approached with the confidence prompt "I think I am a good writer," only three students responded by circling "a whole lot" in the attitude survey. One student wrote "I suck" on the line given for short answers on the first survey, and he did not circle any choices offered. This student has ADHD and finds sitting and writing for any length of time to be a real challenge. His response in the second survey was, "sometimes I do write good." This was a large shift in his attitude and carried through in the classroom, as he often sought out the author's chair. Half of the students reported being "sometimes" a good writer or better, with five students circling "a little" in response.

The two strongest writers in the class responded to the survey questions differently. One wrote, "People tell me I am a good writer, because I am talented in school," and "I feel that I am in the right place." However this student responded "not at

all" to writing in his spare time, it's fun to write at home and I like to write in my spare time. Whereas another talented writer responded "a lot" to the three prior prompts and expressed, "I feel awesome about writing, because it is fun!" Both of these students passed all three of the writing samples taken throughout the year, and scored four or better on the ODE Rubric in all six elements by various teachers in the school.

The students with the weakest convention use when writing also displayed varied levels of confidence and enjoyment in the writing process. One student responded 'not at all' to five of the twelve survey questions saying, "I prefer to draw" and "I just don't like it [writing]" on the first survey. However, on the post treatment survey she responded with 'sometimes' and 'a lot' to many of questions and responded 'not at all' to only one question. The question was about writing notes to people, which she explained "because I have to spell things correctly and I am not good at spelling." While another struggling author responded to the prompt of 'I like writing in school' by circling 'a whole lot'. She expressed, "I like to write, because I can learn things," and I am a good writer because "I like to do my best." These examples suggest that writing strengths do not always match enjoyment.

Along with the Writing Survey students completed a writing checklist for each of their compositions. The use of this checklist proved beneficial in completing their work with greater accuracy, neatness and attention to directions. Figure 4 illustrates the progress students made over the treatment period.

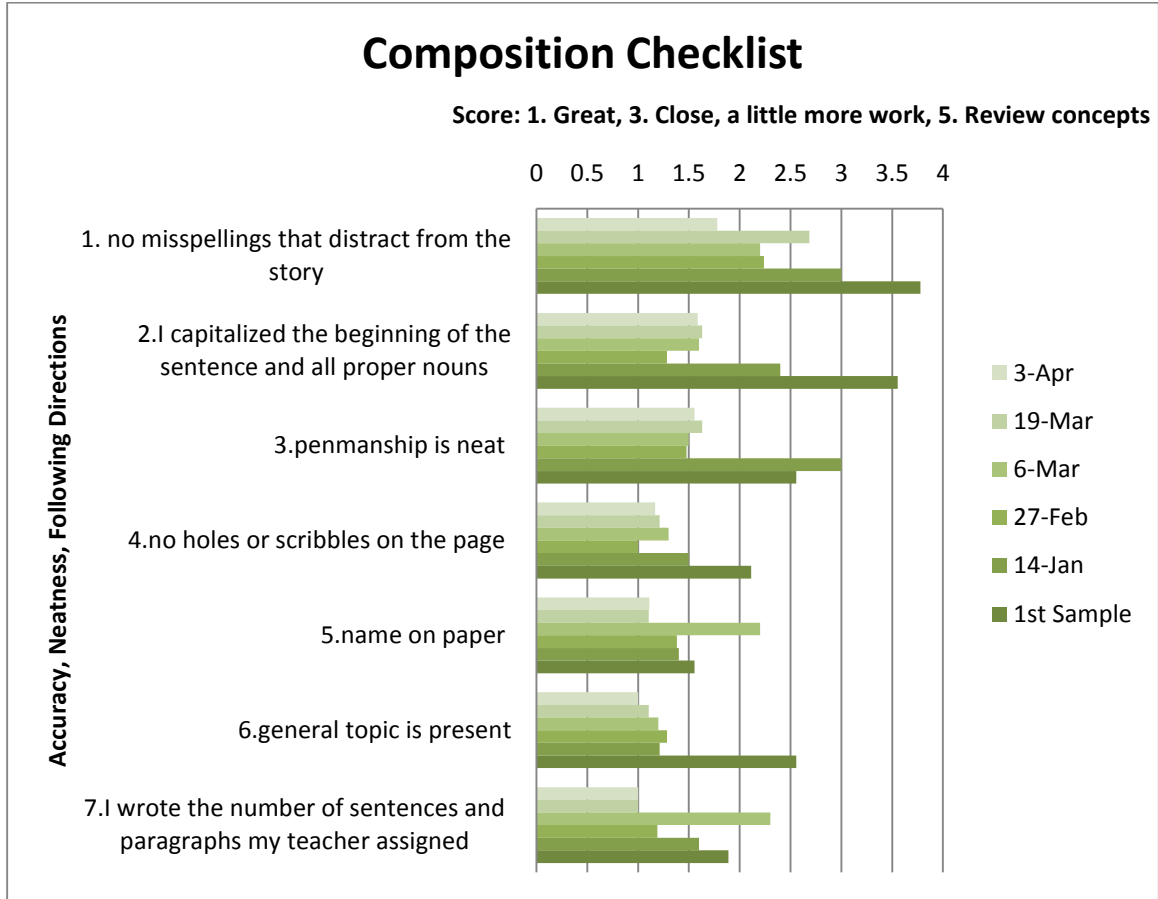


Figure 4. Average scores on the Composition Checklist, ($N=20$).

Students assisted in developing the Composition Checklist, and data indicates this tool was successful in helping students focus attention to these key areas of their writing. The two areas of greatest improvement over the treatment period were checking spelling and capitalization, and ensuring the composition stayed on the assigned topic. Rating themselves according to the Checklist helped students identify areas they consistently overlooked.

Each of the compositions turned in during the treatment period were scored according to the Six Traits Rubric, which the students and I made collaboratively to track growth. Figure 5 illustrates that the students made improvements to their compositions in

all focus areas. While writing three of their papers, students used the Six Traits rubric to guide their compositions. For the other three papers written during the treatment period, students relied on feedback from the teacher and each other.

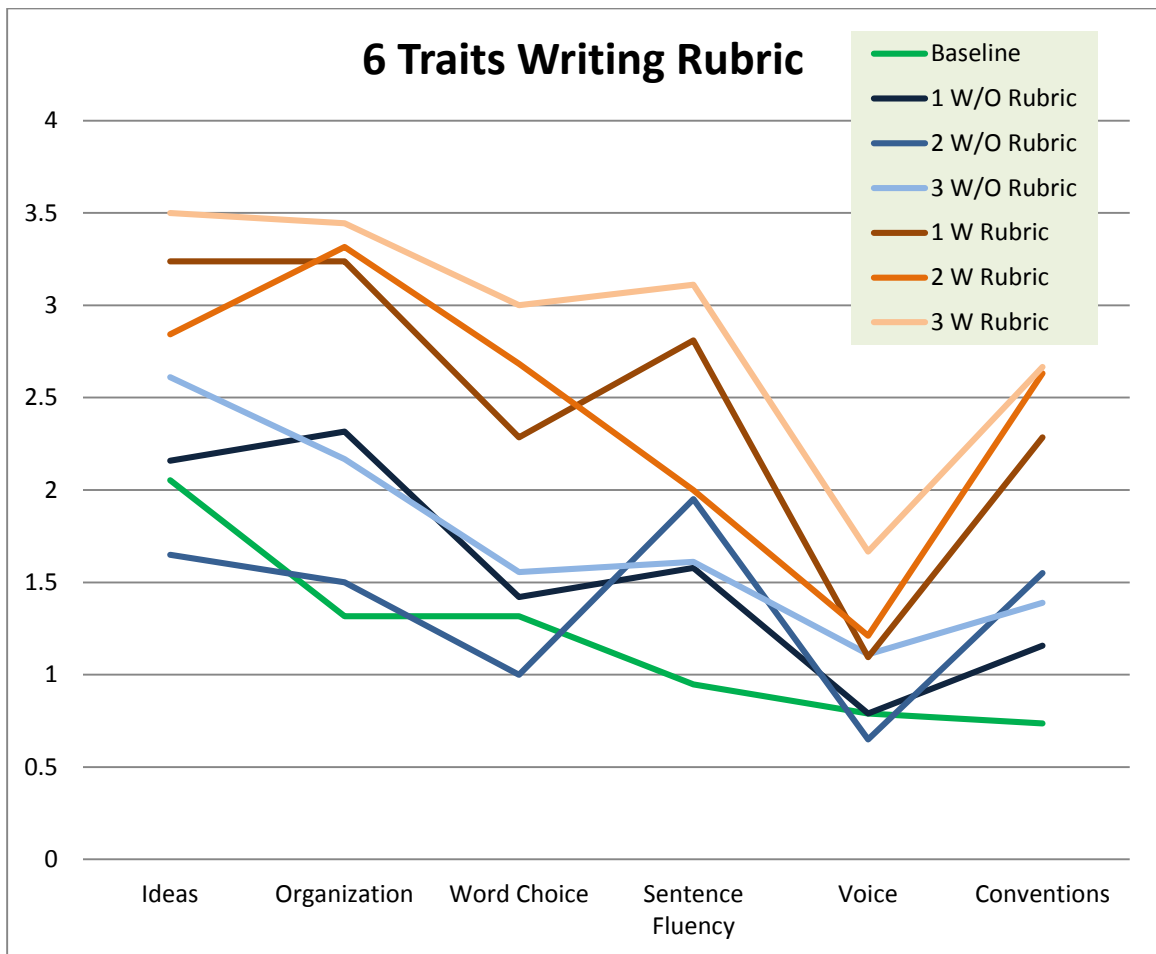


Figure 5. Average scores on 6 Traits Writing Rubric made collaboratively between teacher and students, ($N=20$).

Data in Figure 5 suggests there were learning gains in focus areas when students used the collaborative Six Traits Rubric to guide their compositions. By collaborating on the rubric students came up with a shared vocabulary about writing traits and skills.

"Good evaluative instruments, if shared with the students in advance, will take the guess work out of how projects will be judged," point out Stefl-Mabry (2004, p. 22). Students

were able to focus their work, clarify their ideas and present well organized compositions. Data suggest one of the most challenging aspects for students was to identify and use their voice in writing. This may be due to the limited choices included on the Six Traits Rubric that we developed.

The most significant gains were made in the categories of ideas and organization in student compositions. Student work became much more focused and sequential, and they were able to express their ideas with greater clarity and vivid details. A few of the elements that students worked on, in order to score well on their rubric, included transition words, proving their point, and ending at a good spot. The NGSS calls for students to participate in scientific argument from evidence, which we discussed in class and inspired the category of 'I proved it' on the collaborative rubric. Students are required to document sequential and chronological observations in their science journals, as well as formulate predictions. I found concepts carrying through into their compositional pieces as well. During the end of year scoring meeting my colleagues who scored student writing commented that compositions were stronger in these areas, as well.

Looking back at this process through my notes and journaling, I discovered my growth personally was incremental. In the early phase of identifying qualities of a well written composition, I noted that students seemed bored, and I had a hard time keeping some of the students focused. On October 31st I noted in my journal, "I am surprised that many of the students have little idea about using rubrics." I shortened some of the mini lessons and downloaded writing samples done by other students in the fourth and fifth

grade. I was surprised at how engaging reviewing these papers with my students was; they looked at them with a critical eye and displayed knowledge of the traits of proficient writers. As we developed the second rubric I could tell students were excited and more invested in the process. I spent nine hours creating the first rubric, because I tried to incorporate most of the ideas of all 20 students. I then spent approximately four hours more making the second rubric and inserting student generated thoughts. As the students gained confidence and understanding about rubric assessments, they began to view them as learning tools rather than outside evaluations that they had little control over.

INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSION

When students are given the assessment criteria upfront and become not only stakeholders in the assessment process but collaborators, their interest and enjoyment in the process of learning increases. The primary question I explored during this research was "What effect would collaborative assessment have on student author's attitudes about writing?" The data shows some positive trends, such as the answers to 'I like writing stories' increased from an average of 3.15 to 3.53. The responses for 'Writing is fun' increased from 3.65 to 3.8, and 'I think I am a good writer' increased from 3.23 to 3.53. However, the interview and personal comments made by students depicts the changes. "I like knowing what I am supposed to do," said one fifth grader. "The writing process makes more sense," offered another fifth grader, "now that we have been talking about it." Though some of the data shows little change, I see that the students are more interested and engaged during our writing times and science journaling. The most challenged writers in the classroom are still struggling authors, but their attitudes are

reflective and they have a better understanding as to why acquiring proficient writing skills are important. This answers the question about the effect on student attitudes about writing, which I believe to have a positive correlation to collaborative assessments.

Data on the first sub question I addressed, 'What result will a teacher-student collaborative assessment tool for writing have on student accuracy, neatness, and adherence to the directions?' indicates students improved throughout the treatment. The scale on the Composition Checklist moves from one: great, to five: review the concepts. Students demonstrated improvement in all areas, with the greatest gains in misspellings that distract from the story shifting from 3.78 to 1.78. As well as students increased capitalizing at the beginning of their sentences and proper nouns by nearly two points. The added reminder of checking off these items on the collaborative rubric seemed to help students with this skill.

At the end of the treatment students showed an increased proficiency in compositional writing, addressing my third sub question. This was illustrated in the number of students passing their writing sample benchmarks according to the ODE Official Scoring Rubric. When the first writing samples were scored, pre-treatment, only two students scored four or better across the six writing traits. When the final writing samples were evaluated nine of the students had achieved passing scores. While normal classroom instruction and writing sessions contributed to the learning gains, the process of collaborating on a writing rubric and using it as a tool to strengthen compositions, helped students gain a deeper understanding of the writing process and improve as authors.

Implementing this research project took a great deal of upfront time, but as we moved into the process the time requirements lessened. "Unless teachers are committed to any particular innovation in assessment, the prospects for successful changes in practice are unlikely to slim" (Gardner, 2011, p. 114). I spent 13 hours compiling information and creating rubrics, and four hours of class time with students discussing writing rubrics, creating them and finding shared vocabulary. I became disheartened after the students and I created the first rubric and it was often set aside. My journal indicates the students "look frustrated and fatigued when working to the end of the rubric." However, the second rubric was concise and easy to understand, and the students felt ownership of it. As a result, they used it consistently and productively.

Factoring in the upfront commitment, I feel this was a positive project and one I will continue with classes in the future. Which answers my third sub question on how creating and using a collaborative assessment will affect the teacher. Palak states about action research, "It is as rigorous and meaningful as the improvements teachers make in their teaching practices" (2013, p.13). If I can improve my practice to include and compel even a minority of my students it is time well spent.

VALUES

I intend to continue the process of collaborating with students on rubrics and other assessments when the opportunity arises. I feel the results and data indicate the students had positive learning gains as well as improved confidence and satisfaction when writing compositions, daily and science journals, as well as science fair presentation write-ups. I originally thought the students and I would create a rubric that would be overarching for

the many types of compositions they write. However, the components of each of these compositions are different, as well as the writing skills needed to be proficient. The rubric we did create worked very well for narrative and imaginative writing. In following years, I intend to create more rubrics with students focusing on the unique qualities of each type of composition, science fair project and write up they take part in.

Assessments guide lesson plans and daily activities in the classroom, offer reports to parents and administrators on learning gains towards established goals, and are often a compass for students on whether or not they understand a concept. Assessment experts have, for the past couple of decades, recognized that assessment is an essential component to learning (Buhagiar, 2007, p. 40). However, often times the focus on summative tests, grades and ranking in national tests leads the assessment process rather than guiding the learning process. Assessments should be a component of the education process that enables students to understand the aims of their learning and how the quality of their achievement will be judged (Gardner, 2011, p. 115). By involving students in the development of evaluation tools such as a writing rubric, students gain understanding of the goals for assignments, science journaling and compositions. When equity and diversity are factored into the process, identifying that everyone is capable of learning and worthy of the best possible education, the traditional model of assessment becomes unsustainable (Buhagiar, 2007, p. 41). Having collaborated with the students during the assessment process, I am more confident about the assessments I create. I feel that the students were presented with positive challenges that will encourage them to be more capable and proficient writers.

I was surprised to discover that a few of the student authors that I believed to be engaged writers were bored, and I was excited to see some of the reluctant authors becoming avid writers. I feel this points to why a collaborative rubric works so well, because all students have unique qualities and ways of learning. By acquiring a common vocabulary the students and I were able to analyze and share ideas about writing that we all understood. The fifth grade classroom is often a bridge to middle school from elementary. I was pleased that my colleagues gave me a list of writing topics for my students to focus on in preparation for next year. I feel by creating these rubrics the students were able to gain greater understanding of the expectations as they transition next year into middle school. They have also gained awareness and understandings of assessment models that will be used as they continue their education. I intend to share these findings with my colleagues as we continue to look for ways to link objectives from the elementary classroom to the middle school.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OFFICIAL SCORING GUIDE

**OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICIAL SCORING GUIDE, WRITING**

Ideas and Content	
<p>6 The writing is exceptionally clear, focused, and interesting. It holds the reader’s attention throughout. Main ideas stand out and are developed by strong support and rich details suitable to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity, focus, and control. • main idea(s) that stand out. • supporting, relevant, carefully selected details; when appropriate, use of resources provides strong, accurate, credible support. • a thorough, balanced, in-depth explanation / exploration of the topic; the writing makes connections and shares insights. • content and selected details that are well-suited to audience and purpose. 	<p>5 The writing is clear, focused and interesting. It holds the reader’s attention. Main ideas stand out and are developed by supporting details suitable to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity, focus, and control. • main idea(s) that stand out. • supporting, relevant, carefully selected details; when appropriate, use of resources provides strong, accurate, credible support. • a thorough, balanced explanation / exploration of the topic; the writing makes connections and shares insights. • content and selected details that are well-suited to audience and purpose.
<p>4 The writing is clear and focused. The reader can easily understand the main ideas. Support is present, although it may be limited or rather general. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an easily identifiable purpose. • clear main idea(s). • supporting details that are relevant, but may be overly general or limited in places; when appropriate, resources are used to provide accurate support. • a topic that is explored / explained, although developmental details may occasionally be out of balance with the main idea(s); some connections and insights may be present. • content and selected details that are relevant, but perhaps not consistently well-chosen for audience and purpose. 	<p>3 The reader can understand the main ideas, although they may be overly broad or simplistic, and the results may not be effective. Supporting detail is often limited, insubstantial, overly general, or occasionally slightly off-topic. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an easily identifiable purpose and main idea(s). • predictable or overly-obvious main ideas; or points that echo observations heard elsewhere; or a close retelling of another work. • support that is attempted, but developmental details are often limited, uneven, somewhat off-topic, predictable, or too general (e.g., a list of underdeveloped points). • details that may not be well-grounded in credible resources; they may be based on clichés, stereotypes or questionable sources of information. • difficulties when moving from general observations to specifics.
<p>2 Main ideas and purpose are somewhat unclear or development is attempted but minimal. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a purpose and main idea(s) that may require extensive inferences by the reader. • minimal development; insufficient details. • irrelevant details that clutter the text. • extensive repetition of detail. 	<p>1 The writing lacks a central idea or purpose. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ideas that are extremely limited or simply unclear. • attempts at development that are minimal or nonexistent; the paper is too short to demonstrate the development of an idea.

OFFICIAL SCORING GUIDE, WRITING

Organization	
<p>6 The organization enhances the central idea(s) and its development. The order and structure are compelling and move the reader through the text easily. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective, perhaps creative, sequencing and paragraph breaks; the organizational structure fits the topic, and the writing is easy to follow. • a strong, inviting beginning that draws the reader in and a strong, satisfying sense of resolution or closure. • smooth, effective transitions among all elements (sentences, paragraphs, ideas). • details that fit where placed. 	<p>5 The organization enhances the central idea(s) and its development. The order and structure are strong and move the reader through the text. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective sequencing and paragraph breaks; the organizational structure fits the topic, and the writing is easy to follow. • an inviting beginning that draws the reader in and a satisfying sense of resolution or closure. • smooth, effective transitions among all elements (sentences, paragraphs, ideas). • details that fit where placed.
<p>4 Organization is clear and coherent. Order and structure are present, but may seem formulaic. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear sequencing and paragraph breaks. • an organization that may be predictable. • a recognizable, developed beginning that may not be particularly inviting; a developed conclusion that may lack subtlety. • a body that is easy to follow with details that fit where placed. • transitions that may be stilted or formulaic. • organization which helps the reader, despite some weaknesses. 	<p>3 An attempt has been made to organize the writing; however, the overall structure is inconsistent or skeletal. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attempts at sequencing and paragraph breaks, but the order or the relationship among ideas may occasionally be unclear. • a beginning and an ending which, although present, are either undeveloped or too obvious (e.g., “My topic is...”; “These are all the reasons that...”). • transitions that sometimes work. The same few transitional devices (e.g., coordinating conjunctions, numbering, etc.) may be overused. • a structure that is skeletal or too rigid. • placement of details that may not always be effective. • organization which lapses in some places, but helps the reader in others.
<p>2 The writing lacks a clear organizational structure. An occasional organizational device is discernible; however, the writing is either difficult to follow and the reader has to reread substantial portions, or the piece is simply too short to demonstrate organizational skills. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some attempts at sequencing, but the order or the relationship among ideas is frequently unclear; a lack of paragraph breaks. • a missing or extremely undeveloped beginning, body, and/or ending. • a lack of transitions, or when present, ineffective or overused. • a lack of an effective organizational structure. • details that seem to be randomly placed, leaving the reader frequently confused. 	<p>1 The writing lacks coherence; organization seems haphazard and disjointed. Even after rereading, the reader remains confused. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a lack of effective sequencing and paragraph breaks. • a failure to provide an identifiable beginning, body and/or ending. • a lack of transitions. • pacing that is consistently awkward; the reader feels either mired down in trivia or rushed along too rapidly. • a lack of organization which ultimately obscures or distorts the main point.

**OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICIAL SCORING GUIDE, WRITING**

Voice	
<p>6</p> <p>The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. The writer demonstrates deep commitment to the topic, and there is an exceptional sense of “writing to be read.” The writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an effective level of closeness to or distance from the audience (e.g., a narrative should have a strong personal voice, while an expository piece may require extensive use of outside resources and a more academic voice; nevertheless, both should be engaging, lively, or interesting. Technical writing may require greater distance.). • an exceptionally strong sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader and of how to communicate the message most effectively. The reader may discern the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction. • a sense that the topic has come to life; when appropriate, the writing may show originality, liveliness, honesty, conviction, excitement, humor, or suspense. 	<p>5</p> <p>The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. The writer demonstrates commitment to the topic, and there is a sense of “writing to be read.” The writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an appropriate level of closeness to or distance from the audience (e.g., a narrative should have a strong personal voice, while an expository piece may require extensive use of outside resources and a more academic voice; nevertheless, both should be engaging, lively, or interesting. Technical writing may require greater distance.). • a strong sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader and of how to communicate the message most effectively. The reader may discern the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction. • a sense that the topic has come to life; when appropriate, the writing may show originality, liveliness, honesty, conviction, excitement, humor, or suspense.
<p>4</p> <p>A voice is present. The writer seems committed to the topic, and there may be a sense of “writing to be read.” In places, the writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a suitable level of closeness to or distance from the audience. • a sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader but has not consistently employed an appropriate voice. The reader may glimpse the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction in places. • liveliness, sincerity, or humor when appropriate; however, at times the writing may be either inappropriately casual or personal, or inappropriately formal and stiff. 	<p>3</p> <p>The writer’s commitment to the topic seems inconsistent. A sense of the writer may emerge at times; however, the voice is either inappropriately personal or inappropriately impersonal. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a limited sense of audience; the writer’s awareness of the reader is unclear. • an occasional sense of the writer behind the words; however, the voice may shift or disappear a line or two later and the writing become somewhat mechanical. • a limited ability to shift to a more objective voice when necessary. • text that is too short to demonstrate a consistent and appropriate voice.
<p>2</p> <p>The writing provides little sense of involvement or commitment. There is no evidence that the writer has chosen a suitable voice. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little engagement of the writer; the writing tends to be largely flat, lifeless, stiff, or mechanical. • a voice that is likely to be overly informal and personal. • a lack of audience awareness; there is little sense of “writing to be read.” • little or no hint of the writer behind the words. There is rarely a sense of interaction between reader and writer. 	<p>1</p> <p>The writing seems to lack a sense of involvement or commitment. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no engagement of the writer; the writing is flat and lifeless. • a lack of audience awareness; there is no sense of “writing to be read.” • no hint of the writer behind the words. There is no sense of interaction between writer and reader; the writing does not involve or engage the reader.

OFFICIAL SCORING GUIDE, WRITING

Word Choice	
<p>6 Words convey the intended message in an exceptionally interesting, precise, and natural way appropriate to audience and purpose. The writer employs a rich, broad range of words which have been carefully chosen and thoughtfully placed for impact. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurate, strong, specific words; powerful words energize the writing. • fresh, original expression; slang, if used, seems purposeful and is effective. • vocabulary that is striking and varied, but that is natural and not overdone. • ordinary words used in an unusual way. • words that evoke strong images; figurative language may be used. 	<p>5 Words convey the intended message in an interesting, precise, and natural way appropriate to audience and purpose. The writer employs a broad range of words which have been carefully chosen and thoughtfully placed for impact. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurate, specific words; word choices energize the writing. • fresh, vivid expression; slang, if used, seems purposeful and is effective. • vocabulary that may be striking and varied, but that is natural and not overdone. • ordinary words used in an unusual way. • words that evoke clear images; figurative language may be used.
<p>4 Words effectively convey the intended message. The writer employs a variety of words that are functional and appropriate to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • words that work but do not particularly energize the writing. • expression that is functional; however, slang, if used, does not seem purposeful and is not particularly effective. • attempts at colorful language that may occasionally seem overdone. • occasional overuse of technical language or jargon. • rare experiments with language; however, the writing may have some fine moments and generally avoids clichés. 	<p>3 Language lacks precision and variety, or may be inappropriate to audience and purpose in places. The writer does not employ a variety of words, producing a sort of “generic” paper filled with familiar words and phrases. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • words that work, but that rarely capture the reader’s interest. • expression that seems mundane and general; slang, if used, does not seem purposeful and is not effective. • attempts at colorful language that seem overdone or forced. • words that are accurate for the most part, although misused words may occasionally appear; technical language or jargon may be overused or inappropriately used. • reliance on clichés and overused expressions. • text that is too short to demonstrate variety.
<p>2 Language is monotonous and/or misused, detracting from the meaning and impact. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • words that are colorless, flat or imprecise. • monotonous repetition or overwhelming reliance on worn expressions that repeatedly detract from the message. • images that are fuzzy or absent altogether. 	<p>1 The writing shows an extremely limited vocabulary or is so filled with misuses of words that the meaning is obscured. Only the most general kind of message is communicated because of vague or imprecise language. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general, vague words that fail to communicate. • an extremely limited range of words. • words that simply do not fit the text; they seem imprecise, inadequate, or just plain wrong.

OFFICIAL SCORING GUIDE, WRITING

Sentence Fluency	
<p>6</p> <p>The writing has an effective flow and rhythm. Sentences show a high degree of craftsmanship, with consistently strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a natural, fluent sound; it glides along with one sentence flowing effortlessly into the next. • extensive variation in sentence structure, length, and beginnings that add interest to the text. • sentence structure that enhances meaning by drawing attention to key ideas or reinforcing relationships among ideas. • varied sentence patterns that create an effective combination of power and grace. • strong control over sentence structure; fragments, if used at all, work well. • stylistic control; dialogue, if used, sounds natural. 	<p>5</p> <p>The writing has an easy flow and rhythm. Sentences are carefully crafted, with strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a natural, fluent sound; it glides along with one sentence flowing into the next. • variation in sentence structure, length, and beginnings that add interest to the text. • sentence structure that enhances meaning. • control over sentence structure; fragments, if used at all, work well. • stylistic control; dialogue, if used, sounds natural.
<p>4</p> <p>The writing flows; however, connections between phrases or sentences may be less than fluid. Sentence patterns are somewhat varied, contributing to ease in oral reading. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a natural sound; the reader can move easily through the piece, although it may lack a certain rhythm and grace. • some repeated patterns of sentence structure, length, and beginnings that may detract somewhat from overall impact. • strong control over simple sentence structures, but variable control over more complex sentences; fragments, if present, are usually effective. • occasional lapses in stylistic control; dialogue, if used, sounds natural for the most part, but may at times sound stilted or unnatural. 	<p>3</p> <p>The writing tends to be mechanical rather than fluid. Occasional awkward constructions may force the reader to slow down or reread. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some passages that invite fluid oral reading; however, others do not. • some variety in sentence structure, length, and beginnings, although the writer falls into repetitive sentence patterns. • good control over simple sentence structures, but little control over more complex sentences; fragments, if present, may not be effective. • sentences which, although functional, lack energy. • lapses in stylistic control; dialogue, if used, may sound stilted or unnatural. • text that is too short to demonstrate variety and control.
<p>2</p> <p>The writing tends to be either choppy or rambling. Awkward constructions often force the reader to slow down or reread. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant portions of the text that are difficult to follow or read aloud. • sentence patterns that are monotonous (e.g., subject-verb or subject-verb-object). • a significant number of awkward, choppy, or rambling constructions. 	<p>1</p> <p>The writing is difficult to follow or to read aloud. Sentences tend to be incomplete, rambling, or very awkward. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text that does not invite—and may not even permit—smooth oral reading. • confusing word order that is often jarring and irregular. • sentence structure that frequently obscures meaning. • sentences that are disjointed, confusing, or rambling.

OFFICIAL SCORING GUIDE, WRITING

Conventions	
<p>6</p> <p>The writing demonstrates exceptionally strong control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, grammar and usage) and uses them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are so few and so minor that the reader can easily skim right over them unless specifically searching for them. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong control of conventions; manipulation of conventions may occur for stylistic effect. • strong, effective use of punctuation that guides the reader through the text. • correct spelling, even of more difficult words. • correct grammar and usage that contribute to clarity and style. • skill in using a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece. • little or no need for editing. 	<p>5</p> <p>The writing demonstrates strong control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, grammar and usage) and uses them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are few and minor. Conventions support readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong control of conventions. • effective use of punctuation that guides the reader through the text. • correct spelling, even of more difficult words. • correct capitalization; errors, if any, are minor. • correct grammar and usage that contribute to clarity and style. • skill in using a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece. • little need for editing.
<p>4</p> <p>The writing demonstrates control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, grammar and usage). Significant errors do not occur frequently. Minor errors, while perhaps noticeable, do not impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • control over conventions used, although a wide range is not demonstrated. • correct end-of-sentence punctuation; internal punctuation may sometimes be incorrect. • spelling that is usually correct, especially on common words. • correct capitalization; errors, if any, are minor. • occasional lapses in correct grammar and usage; problems are not severe enough to distort meaning or confuse the reader. • moderate need for editing. 	<p>3</p> <p>The writing demonstrates limited control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, grammar and usage). Errors begin to impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some control over basic conventions; the text may be too simple or too short to reveal mastery. • end-of-sentence punctuation that is usually correct; however, internal punctuation contains frequent errors. • spelling errors that distract the reader; misspelling of common words occurs. • capitalization errors. • errors in grammar and usage that do not block meaning but do distract the reader. • significant need for editing.
<p>2</p> <p>The writing demonstrates little control of standard writing conventions. Frequent, significant errors impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little control over basic conventions. • many end-of-sentence punctuation errors; internal punctuation contains frequent errors. • spelling errors that frequently distract the reader; misspelling of common words often occurs. • capitalization that is inconsistent or often incorrect. • errors in grammar and usage that interfere with readability and meaning. • substantial need for editing. 	<p>1</p> <p>Numerous errors in usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. In fact, the severity and frequency of errors are so overwhelming that the reader finds it difficult to focus on the message and must reread for meaning. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • very limited skill in using conventions. • basic punctuation (including end-of-sentence punctuation) that tends to be omitted, haphazard, or incorrect. • frequent spelling errors that significantly impair readability. • capitalization that appears to be random. • a need for extensive editing.

APPENDIX B
WRITING ATTITUDE SURVEY

Participation in this research is voluntary and participation or non-participation will not affect a student's grades or class standing in any way.

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Please read each question and circle the answer that fits you the best.

1. I like writing stories.

not at all a little sometimes a lot a whole lot

Why? _____

2. I like to write in my spare time.

not at all a little sometimes a lot a whole lot

Why? _____

3. I enjoy writing notes and letters to people.

not at all a little sometimes a lot a whole lot

Why? _____

4. I like writing at school.

not at all a little sometimes a lot a whole lot

5. People tell me I am a good writer.

not at all a little sometimes a lot a whole lot

Why do you think that is? _____

6. It's fun to write things at home.

not at all a little sometimes a lot a whole lot

What do you write about? _____

7. I like to share my writing with others.

not at all a little sometimes a lot a whole lot

8. Writing is fun.

not at all a little sometimes a lot a whole lot

9. I wish I had more time to write at school.

not at all a little sometimes a lot a whole lot

10. I understand the writing process.

not at all a little sometimes a lot a whole lot

Why do you think that
is? _____

11. I think I'm a good writer.

not at all a little sometimes a lot a whole lot

Why? _____

12. I like to use the writing process when I write.

not at all a little sometimes a lot a whole lot

13. What kinds of things do you like to write?

14. How do you feel about writing?

15. Why do you feel that way?

16. What do you think you could learn about the writing process
that would make your writing better?

APPENDIX C

FIRST TEACHER AND STUDENT COLLABORATIVE RUBRIC

IDEAS AND CONTENT	WORD CHOICE	CONVENTIONS
<p>5 – Focused, clear, and interesting. It keeps the reader’s attention.</p> <p>a) I know a lot about this topic and added interesting details.</p> <p>b) My topic was small enough to handle.</p> <p>c) The reader can easily answer the question, “What is the point of this paper/story?”</p>	<p>5 – Extremely clear, visual, and correct. I picked the right words for the right places.</p> <p>a) My words are colorful, snappy, important and clear.</p> <p>b) All the words in my paper fit.</p> <p>c) My verbs are energetic!</p>	<p>5 – Mostly correct. There are very few errors in my paper.</p> <p>a) My spelling is accurate.</p> <p>b) I have used capitals correctly.</p> <p>c) Every paragraph is indented to show where a new idea begins.</p> <p>d) Periods, commas, exclamation marks, and quotation marks are in the right places.</p>
<p>3 – Some really good parts, some not there yet!</p> <p>a) Details are general (nice, fun, some, good.)</p> <p>b) I’m still thinking aloud on paper. I’m looking for a good idea.</p> <p>c) I have not decided on a topic.</p>	<p>3 – Correct but not striking. The words get the message across, but don’t capture the reader’s attention.</p> <p>a) I used everyday words pretty well, but I did not try new vocabulary words.</p> <p>b) My words aren’t specific. I need better, juicy details.</p> <p>c) My word choice could confuse the reader.</p>	<p>3 – Almost there. Some cleaning up needed.</p> <p>a) Spelling is correct on simple words, but harder words have some errors.</p> <p>b) Most sentences and proper nouns begin with capitals, but a few have been missed.</p> <p>c) Problems in punctuation make the reader stumble and pause in a few spots.</p>

<p>1 – Just thinking about what I want to say.</p> <p>a) I have not written much information. I don't seem to know much about this topic.</p> <p>b) My details are so unclear it's hard to picture anything.</p> <p>c) I'm still thinking aloud on paper. I'm looking for a good idea.</p>	<p>1 – Confusing. The reader is often asking "What did they mean by this?"</p> <p>a) A lot of words and phrases don't make sense.</p> <p>b) My words don't make pictures yet.</p> <p>c) I used the same words too often.</p>	<p>1 – Paper needs more editing.</p> <p>a) Simple and harder words are spelled wrong.</p> <p>b) Capital letters are scattered all over the paper.</p> <p>c) Punctuation is very limited and makes reading this paper difficult.</p>
<p>ORGANIZATION</p>	<p>VOICE</p>	<p>SENTENCE FLUENCY</p>
<p>5 – Clear and specific. The order of my paper works well and makes the reader want to find out what comes next.</p> <p>a) My beginning grabs the reader's attention and gives clues about what is coming.</p> <p>b) Every detail adds a little more to the main idea or story.</p> <p>c) My details are in the right place.</p> <p>d) I ended at a good spot.</p>	<p>5 – Really individual and powerful. My paper has personality and sounds different from the way anyone else writes.</p> <p>a) I have put my personal stamp on this. It's me!</p> <p>b) Readers can tell I'm talking right to them.</p> <p>c) I write with confidence and security.</p> <p>d) My paper is full of feelings and the reader will know how I feel.</p>	<p>5 – Different and natural. The sentences in my paper are close and delightful to read out loud.</p> <p>a) Some are long and stretchy. Some are short and snappy.</p> <p>b) It's easy to read my paper out loud. I love the sound of it!</p> <p>c) Sentence beginnings vary.</p> <p>d) My sentences flow, and all extra words have been cut out.</p>

<p>3 – Some really smooth parts, others need work. The order makes sense most of the time.</p> <p>a) I have a beginning but it doesn't really grab you or give clues about what is coming.</p> <p>b) Sometimes it is not clear how some of the details connect to the story or main idea.</p> <p>c) Some of the details should come earlier, or I sped through others.</p>	<p>3 – Individuality fades in and out. What I truly think and feel only shows up sometimes.</p> <p>a) The reader will understand what I mean, it won't make them feel like laughing, crying, or pounding on the table.</p> <p>b) My writing is right on the edge of being funny, excited, scary, or honest—but it is not there yet.</p> <p>c) My writing is pleasant, but not me.</p>	<p>3 – Routine and functional. Some sentences are stop and go, but most are clear.</p> <p>a) Some of my sentences are smooth and natural, but others are choppy.</p> <p>b) When I read my paper, most of the sentences have the same patterns.</p> <p>c) Many sentences begin the same way.</p> <p>d) I used more words than necessary.</p>
<p>1 – Not shaped yet. The order of my paper is jumbled and confused.</p> <p>a) My paper starts in the middle of an idea, or it does not have a conclusion.</p> <p>b) I'm confused about how the details fit with the main idea or story line.</p> <p>c) My ideas seem scrambled, jumbled and disconnected!</p>	<p>1 – Not me yet. I'm not comfortable or don't know what I truly think or feel yet.</p> <p>a) If you didn't already know me, you might not know who wrote this paper.</p> <p>b) I'm not comfortable sharing. I've taken the safest route by hiding my feelings.</p> <p>c) I sound like a robot.</p>	<p>1 – Paper needs work because there isn't enough sentence sense yet.</p> <p>a) As I read my paper I have to go back and read over, just to figure out the sentence.</p> <p>b) The sentence patterns are repetitive.</p> <p>c) I'm having a hard time telling where one sentence stops and another begins.</p>

APPENDIX D

6 TRAITS TEACHER AND STUDENT COLLABORATIVE RUBRIC

6 Traits Writing					
Ideas Think of an interesting idea and details	Organization Give your ideas a good beginning, middle and end.	Word Choice Use interesting words that make pictures and images in the reader's mind	Sentence Fluency Use different sentence lengths: some short, some long	Voice Write so your words so like your ideas, feelings and thoughts	Conventions Capitalize proper nouns and the beginning of sentences, punctuate and use your best spelling
☞ Use a graphic organizer	☞ Strong Hook	☞ Clear Adjectives	☞ Begin sentences differently	☞ Personification (human traits: the sun smiled down on me)	☞ Capitalization (beginning of sentences and proper nouns)
☞ Show the reader and express your ideas	☞ Use an organizer to plan ideas	☞ Spicy Verbs	☞ Use transition words (first, then, finally)	☞ Hyperbole (exaggeration: You could fry an egg on the sidewalk)	☞ 5 minute Edit/Revise
☞ Narrow your ideas	☞ Sequence your ideas	☞ Strong Nouns	☞ Short, medium and long sentences	☞ Character Reactions	☞ Punctuation (., !, ?)
☞ Add juicy and vivid details	☞ Use transition words (then, next)	☞ Onomatopoeia (Bam!, Thwap!, Kadoosh!)	☞ Introductory Phrase (In the first place, additionally)	☞ Dialogue ("Yes!" said April.)	☞ Apostrophes (Possessive and Contractions, don't, can't)
☞ Sensory Details	☞ Use paragraphs	☞ Simile (like or as)			☞ Punctuate Dialogue and change paragraph for each speaker
☞ I proved it!	☞ Ends at a good spot				☞ "To, Two, Too" "Their, They're, There"

APPENDIX E
COMPOSITION CHECKLIST

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 -great! 3 -the concept is close, just a little more work 5 -let's talk and review some concepts

A. My writing is accurate:

1. ___ no misspellings that distract from the story
2. ___ I capitalized the beginning of the sentence and all proper nouns

B. My assignment is neat:

3. ___ penmanship is neat
4. ___ no holes or scribbles on the page

C. I followed directions:

5. ___ name on paper
6. ___ general topic is present
7. ___ I wrote the number of sentences and paragraphs my teacher assigned

APPENDIX F
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Please answer these questions and give an example or share a memory.
How do you feel about writing?

When and how did you learn to write?

What kinds of things do you write at school?

What kinds of writing do you do at home?

Why do you think it's important to be a good writer?

How do you feel when you are asked to share your writing with others?

How do you feel when others share their writing with you?

How do you feel about yourself as a writer?

What is the writing process?

What tools could you use to improve your writing?

possible probes- Why do you think? What might that look like?

adapted from <http://www.region15.org>

APPENDIX G
ADMINISTRATOR APPROVAL

Administrator Approval

I, Mark Hazelton, Director of King Valley Charter School, verify that I approve of the classroom research conducted by Stacey Zaback.

MA Director

(Signed Name, Title of Position)

Mark Hazelton

(Printed Name)

10/14/2014

(Date)

Administrator Exemption Regarding Informed Consent

I, Mark Hazelton, Director of Kings Valley Charter School, verify that the classroom research conducted by Stacey Zaback is in accordance with established or commonly accepted educational settings involving normal educational practices and that I approve the project. To maintain the established culture of our school and not cause disruption to our school climate, I have granted an exemption to Stacey Zaback regarding informed consent.

MA, Director

(Signed Name, Title of Position)

Mark Hazelton

(Printed Name)

10/14/2014

(Date)

APPENDIX H
IRB APPROVAL



INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
For the Protection of Human Subjects
FWA 0000165

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Stacey Zaback and Walt Woolbaugh
FROM: Mark Quinn, Chair *Mark Quinn et al*
DATE: October 27, 2014
RE: "Student Collaboration in Assessment to Improve the Writing Process" [SZ102714-EX]

The above research, described in your submission of October 27, 2014, is exempt from the requirement of review by the Institutional Review Board in accordance with the Code of Federal regulations, Part 46, section 101. The specific paragraph which applies to your research is:

- (b) (1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.
- (b) (2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can't be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.
- (b) (3) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under paragraph (b)(2) of this section, if: (i) the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or (ii) federal statute(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.
- (b) (4) Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available, or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.
- (b) (5) Research and demonstration projects, which are conducted by or subject to the approval of department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (i) public benefit or service programs; (ii) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (iii) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (iv) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs.
- (b) (6) Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (i) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed, or (ii) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the FDA, or approved by the EPA, or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the USDA.

Although review by the Institutional Review Board is not required for the above research, the Committee will be glad to review it. If you wish a review and committee approval, please submit 3 copies of the usual application form and it will be processed by expedited review.