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WRITING CURRICULUM AND THE ADOLESCENT:
ADDRESSING SKILL VARIANCE IN THE CLASSROOM

by

Zakieh A. Mohammed

Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of

Olivet Nazarene University

School of Graduate and Continuing Studies

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of

Doctor of Education

in

Ethical Leadership

May 2011

WRITING CURRICULUM AND THE ADOLESCENT:
ADDRESSING SKILL VARIANCE IN THE CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

by

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This study addressed a means of responding to the varying writing skill levels found in the standard high school classroom. A structured writing curriculum was examined through a state, national and marketed rubric, focusing upon a high-risk high school population in Chicago, IL. The research centered around cognitive learning theory, specifically, Vygotsky's zone of proximal development. Additionally, to account for the variance in skill level, a new measurement tool was created to quantify rigor in relation to increasingly difficult writing assessments. The longitudinal study determined that, with extended exposure, the proposed structured writing curriculum did enable students to meet state, national, and marketed expectations.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 1997, the Illinois State Board of Education adopted the Illinois Learning Standards (ILS). These standards established what knowledge and skills students should have upon exiting a specific grade level; they ultimately were the official position on what determined a prepared student. The standards established benchmarks for educators to guide their teaching and for curriculum design to grow. The Illinois State Board of Education grouped writing within the English Language Arts category. The category was designated Goal 3, and, subsequently, provided criteria by which to determine what was “proficient” or “at-level” writing production. However, no clear writing curriculum was adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education or its subsidiary Chicago Public Schools.

In 2005, the nationally recognized ACT (American College Test), a significant factor in determining college entrance eligibility, issued an optional writing component for the junior year exam. ACT used math, English, reading and science as the sole subjects by which a composite score was determined for proficiency. The national acknowledgement of writing as a testable or reviewable element of student aptitude was significant as it revealed two major facts: (a) writing was viewed as a second tier skill to overall student ability, and (b) writing remained a separate curricular element.

With no clear writing curriculum available, the instructor, whose structured writing curriculum was the focus of this study, reconfigured writing instruction so it did address state and national expectations, while considering the varied level learners that

entered that community high school. The scaffolded and structured curriculum that was created by the instructor, who was also the researcher, challenged whether a curriculum could or could not reach varied level learners, could or could not improve the quality of student writing, and could or could not put students at the level that would be deemed sufficient by state and federal guidelines. The purpose of this study solely looked at the program and its ability or inability to serve students.

The creation of such a curriculum was motivated by a need in Chicago Public School classrooms. The Consortium on Chicago School Research established that Chicago Public School students who went on to college graduated at a staggering 6% rate by the time they were in their twenties (Roderick, Nagaoka, & Allensworth, 2006). Such a sobering fact underlined a continued need for change. While school reformation was an ongoing movement in Chicago, as it needed to be in any non-performing, large, bureaucratic systematized institution, contributing factors from teaching, to leadership, to curriculum were all considered possible culprits. The response initially appeared as the small school movement which ultimately became Renaissance 2010 (Renaissance 2010, 2009).

Renaissance 2010 (Renaissance 2010, 2009) called for charter, contract, or performance schools that hoped to deconstruct the institutionalized imprint that had created such large cracks into which students fell; these smaller schools were hopeful that they would provide more individualized support to students. The creation of one hundred new smaller schools by the year 2010 was the goal. The plan aimed to reach out to communities where a higher quality of instruction and a more personalized approach would typically not be available. The intended results of this investment were higher

graduation rates and test scores, lower truancy and dropout rates, and an increase in college readiness and completion. (Renaissance 2010, 2009).

Still, as restructuring the traditional school was happening, and the results of that initiative were still outstanding, the schools with enrollments sometimes in the thousands, would have their curriculum targeted. While the system was being redesigned for greater teacher recruitment, stronger and more effective professional development, and better prepared and mentored leaders, curriculum was the area in which change could be elicited. From a curricular standpoint, the ‘one size fits all’ adage was avoided when speaking about specialized and individualized curriculum; however, standards are norms, and the state and city had to establish norms in order to have data to verify success. Therefore, current trends in Chicago Public Schools began to lean towards prescribed curriculum. Prescribed curriculum was defined as curriculum designed with the intention of being implemented on a day-to-day basis; it had preset objectives and tasks that were built through a scaffolded method. The curriculum was scaffolded over the year and the subsequent years. This differed from the theme-based curriculum that called upon the teacher to determine how to reach objectives.

With funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, underperforming schools were targeted to be retooled under the High School Transformation (HST) project. With the HST project, schools that were recognized as not performing were to be managed through the Instructional Design System (IDS) (Chicago Public Schools, 2008). Schools that did not make adequate yearly progress (AYP) were mandated to choose a curricular program run by educational consultative organizations to align the curriculum with external coaches who supported professional

development, assessments, and day-to-day curriculum implementation (Sporte et al., 2009). The lock step movement of IDS allowed schools to better control classroom pacing and direction of math or English instruction. Teachers, with the monitoring of the IDS coaches, moved from unit to unit with a set curriculum. However, inputting such a curriculum did reveal a problem. If a student was given the eleventh grade curriculum without being exposed to the curriculum from the beginning, yes, there would be large holes in his or her understanding or skill set (Sporte et al.).

With such a great institutional, system-wide, and monetary investment, questions surfaced. Could one curriculum be developed to serve students who were at varying levels of understanding? Could such a curriculum enable students to meet or exceed the expectations of the Illinois Learning Standards? Was the elimination of variance in teaching the remedy that was necessary to regain academic footing? With the adoption of transformation school status and prescribed curriculum, that answer seemed to come back as “yes”. While the curriculum addressed the goals of the Illinois Learning Standards and potentially limited the negative impact of teachers who lacked the expertise or competence to ready students properly, the results of such an effort were yet to be determined.

As a skill, writing is an anomaly to teach. Questions plague English teachers: Do teachers teach from a grammar standpoint? Do teachers advocate the five paragraph essay? Do teachers keep writing creative and/or reflective in nature to encourage students to share their voice? The panacea for writing instruction is elusive; however, writing instruction is critical. In the traditional teaching paradigm, teachers modeled, activities were created, students practiced, and assessments proved that students had a respectable

understanding of a concept. However, there were cracks that existed within that model. The space between modeling and an activity was standard; the space between the activities and the practice was typical; the space between the practice and the assessment was understandable; however, there was no truly recognized space between the assessment and those that failed the assessment. As writing is a process of parts, the failure to understand one component often creates weaknesses in other areas. For example, if a student could not produce a substantial thesis, he or she could not produce a substantial paper; if a student could not establish a sound argument, the paper was illogical. Writing was not limited to the construction of the written word. The Illinois State Board of Education (2008b) defined the writing process as “prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, [and] publishing” (p. 5). While this was true in concept, it was generic in what had to be accomplished by the classroom teacher. Writing was the manifestation of reading comprehension, a command of language, and the critical synthesis of opinion, information, and articulation.

Statement of the Problem

Students enter high school at varying levels of development, resulting in a differentiation of writing ability; therefore, some graduating seniors fail to achieve writing competency as determined by the Illinois Learning Standards. Students are taught a set content, and, in a system like CPS, with class sizes starting at 28 students, there is a conflict between personalized teaching, testing achievement, and actual proficiency. Traditional content is read, reported on, and tested; the chronology of curriculum is followed. Writing curriculum is taught proportionately, and not as a partner to content curriculum.

The challenge of having a writing culture imbedded in a classroom through a specific writing curriculum pressed the question of whether writing could service students from different avenues of comprehension. Specifically, Illinois Learning Standard Goal 3, under the category of English Language Arts Goals and Standards, read: “Write to communicate for a variety of purposes” (Illinois State Board of Education, 2008a). The explanation posited:

In learning to write effectively, students learn to work with increasingly detailed and complex knowledge and tasks, learn to address increasingly varied audiences, and learn to manage increasingly sophisticated ways to form sentences, paragraphs, and structures for narrating, explaining, and persuading. At the same time, students learn to use the composing process with increasing sophistication as an opportunity to specify, explore, and revise their own knowledge and ideas, even as they learn to communicate more effectively the results of their thinking.

(p. 9)

The subcategories of Goal 3 were written as:

3A - Students who meet the standard can use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization and structure.

3B- Students who meet the standard can compose well-organized and coherent writing for specific purposes and audiences.

3C - Students who meet the standard can communicate ideas in writing to accomplish a variety of purposes. (p. 1)

The Illinois Learning Standards were broken down into the following categories: early elementary, late elementary, middle/junior high school, early high school, and late high

school. For the purpose of this study, early high school, and late high school goals were the focus.

The established goals dictated by the Illinois Learning Standards were not definitive answers, but expectations of where a prepared student should and would be in their developing content knowledge and skill set. The objective of Goal 3 was reasonable for any student graduating from a reputable institution; however, the ability to have students write at a certain level unilaterally begged the question, “Could students meet state expectations when they did not all start from the same cognitive playing field?”

Background

Piaget, Dewey, Bruner, Friere, Vygotsky, and Bloom were traditional critical contributors to understanding the frame of student learning. Piaget (2000) established the formal operational stage of adolescents; here, adolescents could process abstract ideas beyond what was concretely in front of them. Within the formal operational stage, Piaget determined there were two subcategories: the almost full formal function (IIIA) represented by ages 11 or 12, and the full formal function (IIIB) represented by adolescents 14 or 15 and up. Piaget confirmed that the adolescent could stay at the almost full formal functional stage, where he/she could make determinations, but those determinations were simple enough that such thinking was considered generic and categorized as emergent formal operational thought (Rice & Dolgin, 2005). The full formal functional stage of cognition was where adolescents ideally achieved, thus enabling them to navigate a variety of information and determine commonalities and associations. This stage was the benchmark from which adult thinking grew.

While such stages and their descriptions were relevant, Piaget's cognitive stages were considered limited in their interpretation. The complexity of adolescent thinking often needed a more nuanced description, primarily because the adolescent stage straddled the child and adult world. The mental capacity of the individual, theoretically, could never emerge. An adolescent could remain in the almost full formal functional stage, and, therefore, never develop more sophisticated cognition. For this reason, the work of Vygotsky (1978) was an important consideration.

Vygotsky (1978), the educational theorist, created the concept of the zone of proximal development. The zone of proximal development was a basic recognition of the status of children and their learning. Vygotsky postulated that a child could learn within his/her own individual learning capacity, a child could learn with expert assistance (i.e., a teacher), or a child could not learn regardless of the support made available because he/she was not cognitively able to understand. With the tertiary component, prescribed curriculum would hypothetically fail the child, as would any curriculum. However, if a child was taught from a scaffold that was built upon the individual child's own a priori knowledge and experience, then potentially there would be a greater chance of learning taking place.

Friere's (1993) work spoke to the attitudes of education and the pitfalls of a system based on classicist attitudes. While his work was controversial, and often had socialist leanings, he addressed why there was a danger in creating uniformity in educational institutions, particularly with those who have economic hardships. While learning difficulty existed in all economic classes, there was a clear excess of failing students in the public and low-income school settings. The staggering rates of failure

were the impetus behind structured curriculum. Benchmarks of learning needed to be established in order to unify the Illinois school system, and on a smaller level, the Chicago public school system. However, Friere would say that it was the diminishment of the learner's voice that would actually be a detriment to his or her own learning. Friere coined the term conscientization (p. 140) with the understanding that pursued knowledge that revealed better understanding of the self was the pivotal point of change. In the application to education, students' participation in research or educational pursuits enabled them to broaden their own personal horizons. Such opportunity could be born from specific types of activities, curriculum, and writing prompts. The socialization of a child's learning environment was a critical component in impacting a child's educational experience.

Specifically, in recognizing the importance of social integration in the classroom, Dewey (1963) was an appropriate source when considering paradigms in education. Dewey called for an end to the classic teacher-centered classroom, and instead called for the creation of a student-centered classroom. Ideally, Dewey envisioned an organic leadership model as the classroom became a social, interactive pseudo-workshop. Dewey's philosophy of experience underlined the fact that students would make long term investments in their education if they had experiences that cultivated their learning. The learning experiences were not to be random ones, but experiences that were interactive and demonstrated continuity. Having a long-term goal for students to grow and reach changed the structure of a classroom, as it spoke to a child that was building upon his or her learning base, and not simply responding to seemingly disconnected themes and concepts. The constructivist model of learning through connecting

experiences was a platform from which modern educational paradigms patterned themselves. The constructivist standpoint called for the instructor to find touchstones of resonance for students in order for them to connect with the lessons. Constructivism purports that if students have a point of resonance, then the material—no matter what it is—becomes more accessible. Student connection, according to constructivism, advanced the student beyond a one dimensional, momentary educational experience. Causing experience to occur within learning enabled ownership through application. Particularly with writing, the student voice needed to be molded in order to have credibility.

Bruner (1966) weighed in on the cognitive development of young people and defined what constituted learning. His definitions and qualifications were much more traditional, and could be considered subjective; however, they did suggest measurable growth of the individual child. He concluded:

[G]rowth is characterized by increasing independence of response from the immediate nature of the stimulus; growth depends upon internalizing events into a “storage system” that corresponds to the environment; intellectual growth involves an increasing capacity to say to oneself and others, by means of words or symbols, what one has done or what one will do; intellectual development depends upon a systematic and contingent interaction between a tutor and a learner; teaching is vastly facilitated by the medium of language, which ends by being not only the medium for exchange but the instrument that the learner can then use himself in bringing order into the environment; intellectual development is marked by increasing capacity to deal with several alternatives simultaneously, to tend to several sequences during the same period of time, and to allocate time

and attention in a manner appropriate to these multiple demands. (pp. 5-6)

The 6 definitions, while qualitative in nature, were specific enough to apply as a filter to assess student learning. Additionally, the language by which Bruner determined what was qualified learning aligned with the very language the Illinois Learning Standards used in the Goal 3 articulation. Connectivity, synthesis, analysis, and language use were a shared measure for Bruner and the Illinois State Board of Education alike.

The goal of synthesis and analysis as the ideal state in which a student is engaged in instruction was capitalized upon by Bloom (1956). Bloom introduced the cognitive taxonomy that demonstrated a hierarchy of learning. Under the Bloom model, students grew from a basic understanding of knowledge to one that was in depth and held connectivity. Bloom's higher order thinking skills were delineated by a gradual movement from knowledge to comprehension, comprehension to application, application to analysis, analysis to synthesis, and synthesis to evaluation. The purpose of the movement from a lower or basic form of thinking skills to a higher, more complex form of thinking skills was to elevate the critical thinking ability of a student. The growth of a student who could take basic knowledge to knowledge that was evaluated and synthesized for a specific purpose showed a greater cognitive ability.

Research Questions

1. To what degree does a structured writing curriculum impact varying levels of high school student learning in preparing graduating seniors to achieve standardized writing competencies as defined by the Illinois Learning Standards?
 - a. To what extent does a structured writing curriculum address the state expectations of Illinois students?

- b. To what extent does a structured writing curriculum address national expectations of Illinois students?
 - c. To what extent does a structured writing curriculum address commercially packaged expectations of Illinois students?
2. In what way does historical cognitive learning theory support a structured writing curriculum for the classroom with varying levels of learners?

Description of Terms

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The yearly progress established by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act based on meeting or exceeding academic proficiency as determined through Math and Reading testing. (U.S. Department of Education, 2010)

Catalytic Validity. “[R]epresents the degree to which the research process reorients, focuses, and energizes participants towards knowing reality in order to transform it” (Lather, 1986, p. 272).

Cohen’s d. A means of determining effect size practicality whereas the effective size of .2 is deemed small, .5 is deemed medium, and anything .8 or above is deemed large in effect size (D.Daake, personal communication, April 17, 2010).

Conscientization. Also known as catalytic validity. The term conscientization is credited to Paulo Friere and speaks to how “respondents gain self-understanding and, ultimately, self-determination through research participation” (Lather, 1986, p. 272).

Construct Validity. Examining the theories that are placed before the researcher, and examining them through a critical lens, meaning theories that exist are not simply accepted because they are established; the conception of theory building is challenged for the sake of validating a context for an individual’s understanding. (Lather, 1986)

Constructivism. The belief that knowledge comes from one's experience; ultimately, knowledge is constructed through the learner's experience with information. (Dewey, 1963).

Dialogic. The utilization of dialogue.

Differentiated Instruction. Teaching with the understanding that students all learn differently and therefore different teaching techniques need to be applied in order to reach all types of learners in the classroom. (Estigarribia, 2007)

Endophasy. The inner voice of a person; the voice within that allows inner thought processes to manifest into external articulations, both oral and written. (Vygotsky, 1962)

Face Validity. Tied to construct validity as it "is operationalized by recycling description, emerging analysis, and conclusions back through at least a subsample of respondents" (Lather, 1986, p. 271).

Content Analysis. "Krippendorff's (as cited in Robson, 2002) definition, that 'content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context' (p. 21)... does have the virtue of stressing the relationship between content and context. This context includes the purpose of the document as well as institutional, social and cultural aspects" (p. 350).

High School Transformation project (HST). "[F]unded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and individual schools, is a multi-year (10+) effort to comprehensively improve achievement for all students. The project will address several challenges - raising expectations, supporting 9th – 11th grade success, creating and supporting great leaders and teachers, and providing students with a wide

range of options and opportunities” (Chicago Public Schools, 2008, p. 1).

Illinois Learning Standards. These “are the statements which define a core of essential knowledge and skills that all Illinois students enrolled in public schools are expected to know and be able to do” (Illinois State Board of Education, 2008a).

Instructional Design Systems (IDS). “[A] core component strategy. Each IDS is a unified system of curricular strategies, classroom materials, assessments, professional development, and personalized teacher coaching. Participating schools have 2 - 3 instruction options in English, Math and Science” (Chicago Public Schools, 2008, p. 1).

Learning Benchmarks. “[P]rogress indicators for gauging students’ achievement of each exit standard. They form the basis for measuring student achievement over time. In general, benchmarks for the early grades represent basic skills. Later benchmarks build in complexity and rigor from one level to the next, culminating in deep understandings demonstrated through complex performances” (Illinois State Board of Education, 2008c).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB). A federal mandate that states all children have the right to highly qualified teachers and schools that make adequate yearly progress; if a student is in residence of a school that does not make AYP, the child can opt out and attend a school that does meet standards. This is all contingent on space availability at the desired school (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

Performance standards. “[T]he knowledge and skills that students are to perform at various stages of educational development (performance descriptors) and the performance expectations (performance levels and assessment tasks) for student work (performance exemplars) at each of the stages” (Illinois State Board of Education, 2008a, p. 2).

Performance descriptors. “[S]tatements of how students can demonstrate the knowledge and skills they acquired” (Illinois State Board of Education, 2008a, p. 2).

Performance levels. “[D]escriptions of how well students have achieved the standards; that is, the range, frequency, facility, depth, creativity, and/or quality of the knowledge and skills they acquired” (Illinois State Board of Education, 2008a, p. 2).

Praxis. Reflective practice typically assigned to establishing and creating pedagogy. (Friere, 1993)

Prescribed curriculum. Curriculum designed with the intention of being implemented on a day-to-day basis ; ultimately, scripted curriculum.

Renaissance 2010. A Chicago-based directive to create, fund and enact 100 charter, contract and/or performance schools that were smaller in scale and more individualized in approach. (Renaissance 2010, 2009)

Scaffolding. The educational practice of building upon concepts to teach increasingly more complex and difficult concepts. (Langer & Applebee, 1987)

Syncretism. Established in the preoperational stage of child development and reflects the ability of a child to make connections between ideas (Rice & Dolgin, 2005, 123).

Triangulation. The educational technique based on utilizing three components in order to teach and reach students; the components are to complement and supplement understanding for the grasping of a larger concept (Lather, 1986).

Writing process. “[P]rewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing” (Illinois State Board of Education, 2008b, p. 5).

Zone of Proximal Development. Credited to Lev Vygotsky who determined that there were three capacities to student learning: (a) what a child can learn on his/her own; (b) what a child can learn with expert help (i.e., a teacher); and (c) what a child could not learn regardless of the assistance or expertise offered. (Vygotsky, 1978)

Significance of the Study

Traditionally, literacy encompassed reading ability. A student's ability to read was driven by sound and word recognition, comprehension, and application. Writing was a separate component entirely. Pedagogically speaking, teaching students to read in order to write was the traditional approach. However, such pedagogy did not address the true definition of literacy which ultimately focused on the ability to communicate in multiple ways. Whether through activity or dialogue, the constructivist called upon experience to better connect the student with his or her learning; the Frierian called for lessons that inspired praxis to underscore the necessity of personal connection with practice, the Vygotskian and Piagetian called for acknowledgement of cognitive limitations and instructional support so the psychology of the young person was factored into the construction of teaching. This said, if a structure was created that aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards, while, at the same time, embraced the goals of conscientization and a dialogic perspective, then writing became a skill, as well as a platform, for even greater educational and personal benefits.

The potential of having a structured writing curriculum that addressed the needs of the different cognitive abilities in a classroom was significant. If such a curriculum existed, then teachers would have a format by which to teach their class, while folding in the content they were required to teach. They would not have to create a curriculum

while still navigating the state and national goals. Students would have a structure from which to work and continuously grow each year. If such a curriculum proved to be effective, the fact that it cost nothing to reproduce was also significant. The structured writing program was created due to the lack of a curriculum, and the fact that the classroom was filled with students who had different writing capacities. The holistic nature of its development supported the findings of educational theorists and practitioners. This study determined if such a structured curriculum was effective.

Process to Accomplish

The purpose of this study was to determine to what degree a structured writing curriculum impacted varying levels of high school student learning and the preparation of graduating seniors to achieve standardized writing competencies as defined by the Illinois Learning Standards. The study determined if a formatted or structured writing curriculum could actually be utilized for students who were at varying tracks of instruction and understanding. To determine the effectiveness of the curriculum, student writing produced during a designated class time was utilized to measure proficiency and growth. The data collection of this exploratory study was based on a traditional four year high school career. The students entered in the autumn of 2003 as freshmen. They entered the community high school which took in all students. Students were placed in small schools through area of interest, or to establish class size. The students within this study looped with their English instructor. Looping refers to the practice of following students as they go from year to year; the English instructor served the students for their freshman, sophomore, junior and senior English courses. The instructor created a structured writing curriculum that was of no cost to the school, and was built upon the needs of learners

with varied abilities that entered the class. The instructor collected the portfolios of the students. Within the portfolios were student exams, notebooks, essays and assignments.

The assignments that were the focus of the study were exams that had time limits—i.e. a final exam testing period was approximately one hour. Students came to class, took the exam and turned it in before leaving. Their exams were created with a scaffolded method, meaning that each exam/essay called for a greater amount of information retention, as well as the continued synthesis of concepts, content, and skill. The writing curriculum's format would be the vehicle by which the essays would capture this scaffolded information and synthesis. The freshman year was spent structuring students' thinking with writing. The subsequent years built on honing that format and requiring a greater level of synthesis and analysis by the students.

As students' ability levels were determined throughout the course of their high school career, traditional tracking within the small school took place. Students took Survey of Literature as freshmen, which was an overview of literature and concepts, American Literature as sophomores, British Literature as juniors, and World Literature as seniors; these courses were offered as both regular level courses and honors level courses. At the junior level, certain students were tracked into the Advanced Placement English Language and Composition course, and, at the senior level, some students were enrolled in Advanced Placement English Literature. With this tracking, students received modified essays, sometimes different tests, and received assignments with a different level of frequency and difficulty. All work was placed in the students' portfolios, and then analyzed with test instruments to establish whether consistent, measurable growth was shown. The purpose of the testing instruments was to determine if the writing

curriculum did or did not serve different level learners, whether the writing curriculum did or did not move students in a forward direction with writing skills, and whether the writing curriculum did or did not move students forward to align their learning with the expectations of Goal 3 of the English Language Arts Illinois Learning Standard.

A quantitative analysis was conducted to determine growth or lack of growth. Student exams were evaluated using three test instruments. Then they were assigned a score based on the content, thought and mechanics that were produced. The scores were compared at varying increments of time to determine if indeed measurable growth occurred.

The first test instrument used for the purpose of this study was from the Illinois State Board of Education. Performance levels were determined across 6 dimensions: range, frequency, facility, depth, creativity and quality. The designation of “starting”, “approaching”, “meeting”, or “exceeding” determined the level of achievement within a writing task. See Appendix A for the performance level chart (Illinois State Board of Education, 2008a). Each area was assigned a point. “Exceeding” earned 4 points, “Meeting” earned 3 points, “Approaching” earned 2 points, and “Starting” earned 1 point. The total points were added up and then averaged to determine under which category the student essay qualified.

The second test instrument used for the purpose of this study was the American College Test (ACT) writing rubric (ACT, 2009a) (see Appendix B). Student exams were assessed using the 6 score range of the ACT writing rubric. The use of this rubric supplied evidence from a national standpoint as to the readiness or quality of the student work.

The third test instrument used for the purpose of this study was a writing rubric (Glencoe Literature, 2007) from the 2007 Glencoe Literature series (see Appendix C). Glencoe/McGraw was a major supplier of Chicago Public Schools textbooks. The rubric provided for teachers reflected what publishers thought would best serve the students of their textbooks. The focus groups and consultants that evaluated the rubric were representative of knowledgeable individuals who understood the requirements and expectations of the secondary education student; it was assessed value through points as well. The 6 point scale considered: ideas, organization, voice, word choice and fluency, and conventions. If the proposed structured writing curriculum's resulted in student work that met state, national, and marketed criteria, then the writing curriculum was a valid and inexpensive program to utilize for varied level learners.

Further, because the assessments changed as the students were exposed to the writing program, an assessment to evaluate the difficulty of the exams was utilized. The Rubric to Assess a PBL or Another Rubric (Rubric to Assess a PBL or Another Rubric) was the tool used to determine depth and quality of assignments and assessments. A panel of experts was assembled to categorize each given assessment along the rubric. The panel of experts, all English instructors, taught at a selective enrollment high school in Chicago. Upon determination, a representative gradation scale was created to address the increased difficulty of assessments and the use of the testing tools.

Specifically, the structured writing curriculum took students through a process that considered each element of a competent essay: introduction, body, conclusion, quote usage, citations, argument and synthesis of ideas. The objective of the instructor was not simply to create book reports or reports that took rote consideration, but, more accurately,

asked students to create a new idea. The writing was taught as a continuously growing body, as the depth of critical thinking was constantly developed in class. Throughout the courses, the teacher integrated social components to provide peer interaction and points of resonance in order for students to become more invested in the material. As identity formation is center in an adolescent's own developmental process, opportunities for exploration, sharing, and processing were important in forming a writing curriculum that addressed the whole child. The utilization of strategies within a classroom structure acknowledged the variables of adolescent need, student voice, and teacher persona. Prescribed education was thought to be the answer to a failing school system, but, with resources limited and varied student populations needing primary attention in writing development, evidence of a meaningful writing curriculum was worthy of evaluation.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

To consider the dynamics of what it takes to prepare graduating seniors to achieve standardized writing competencies as defined by the Illinois Learning Standards, it was important to deconstruct from where this achievement comes. The growth and cognitive maturity of a person is reflected in patterns; these patterns are important to consider when discussing adolescent cognitive ability and the development of a writing curriculum that served varied level learners. Three key areas--foundational understandings of the adolescent, the effect of socialization on students, and the development of writing curriculum for students—all needed to be reviewed in order to better understand the relation of theory with its potential relevance to an effective writing curriculum. These three areas gave foundation to the research questions.

Foundational Understanding of Learning

St. Augustine asked, “Is it clear to you, then, that language was instituted for this sole purpose—Either to teach or to renew the mind” (1924, p.11). The question was posited significantly earlier than noted renowned educational theory, but it actually spoke to the purpose of language in the individual. Language as a tool for teaching and renewal reflected the work of individuals like Piaget, Dewey and Vygotsky; the recognition of learning through language, and language as an indicator of understanding expanded to what theorists came to prove. Understanding how the use of language manifested to

improve writing skills was critical to this research.

Piaget (1970) established:

...knowledge is derived from action, not in the sense of simple associative responses, but in the much deeper sense of the assimilation of reality in to the necessary and general coordinations of action. To know an object is to act upon it and to transform it, in order to grasp the mechanisms of that transformation as they function in connection with the transformative actions themselves. To know is therefore to assimilate reality into structures of transformation, and these are the structures that intelligence constructs as a direct extension of our actions (p. 29).

Piaget's (1970) statement was significant in establishing the necessity of action, or, more accurately, interaction and knowledge. Such was the argument for experiential learning. A student must experience learning in order for it to resonate and create lasting touchstones. Particularly at the adolescent stage, Piaget argued that young people had the capacity for the synthesis of information. However, schools did not teach with such developmental ability as part of their curriculum (pp. 38-39). Piaget's categorization of the emergent formal operational stage (roughly age 11 to roughly 14) to the full formal operational stage (roughly age 15 and up) asserted that the internal voice when accessed created connections and logic (p. 40). Specifically, the adolescent had the capacity to hypothesize and therefore make logical connections, or dismiss illogical connections. According to Piaget, the differentiation between the stages was due to the sophistication of hypothetico-deductive reasoning (Rice & Dolgin, 2005, pp. 126-127). At the early stage, there was deduction; at the more advanced stage, there was deduction that was assimilated with the inclusion of reality (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969, pp. 148-149). In terms

of writing, use of evidence to formulate an argument was an appropriate mode by which to address the cognitive area of ability in the adolescent.

Elkind (1971), often considered the protégé of Piaget, further added to the understanding of the adolescent and his/her cognitive ability. He explained that at the age of adolescence, hypothesizing occurred. Young people could hypothesize and determine probability through logical discernment (p. 178). The opportunity to exercise this capacity existed within the formal education realm, but not necessarily in the real world, thus resulting in the often illogical responses that were associated with adolescent behavior. The adolescent's ability to process and possibly synthesize multiple issues was also considered a trait of the age group. This understanding addressed the writing curriculum and its focus on argument-based writing.

Tomlinson-Keasey and Eisert (1981) addressed how the development of an affective organization influenced cognitive development. Tomlinson-Keasey argued on behalf of Piaget and his structure d' ensemble model. The structure d' ensemble showed that interdependence and influence of affective factors developed intellectual capacity. Ultimately, adolescents who had a "highly structured value system" also had a "sophisticated logical understanding" of things (p.2). The impact of external factors on the affective cognizance of an adolescent was best represented and more effective through an organizational core model. Within the model, environment influenced cognitive structures and affective structures alike, but cognitive structures and affective structures were not reflective of one another and could be developed separately. The developed writing curriculum, while structured, was not rigid. The lack of rigidity potentially enabled students to scaffold their own learning. With Piaget's model, affective

structures could or could not affect cognition. The individual scaffolded learning as he/she understood it.

Bruner's (1986) constructionist view established that learning was not static. Bruner stated,

the language of education, if it to be an invitation to reflection and culture creating, cannot be the so-called uncontaminated language of fact and "objectivity." It must express stance and must invite counter-stance and in the process leave place for reflection, for metacognition. It is this that permits one to reach higher ground, this process of objectifying in language or image what one has thought and then turning around on it and reconsidering it. (p. 129)

Bruner's statement established that education was not a teacher-centered monologue where students had to accept and, in some fashion, grow and transcend a basic understanding. To expect value placement or deep ownership would be completely inappropriate if no personal response or challenge existed.

Bruner (1966) established 6 indicators of learning growth. Bruner explained that, for one, the nature of stimulus needed to be lessened as the child grew; this growth was part of independence (p. 5). Secondly, the teacher as the primary provider of stimulus needed to slowly take the proverbial back seat; a child who built their a priori knowledge bank showed growth (p. 5). Thirdly, as a student learned and experienced, those learning experiences became part of who the student was, and then became part of a student's greater level of comprehension. Fourth, an increased ability to communicate or articulate what "one has done or what one will do" (p. 5) through explanatory and predictive language was indicative of intellectual growth. Fifth, learning resulting from the

structured teacher/learner relationship demonstrated growth (p. 6). The use of language to communicate in the educational setting was critical; when that language was used to bring order to the learner's environment, learning had happened (p. 6). Lastly, the ability to not only manage, but synthesize several tasks or "alternatives" (p. 6) was a strong indicator of learning growth. A child who dealt with more than one, and, at the same time, several factors in a way that maintained order and then progression was indicative of learning. The six components were the necessary results of any theory of instruction that was proposed. The effectiveness of the tested writing curriculum attempted to incorporate these indicators of learning.

Mode of representation, economy, and power, according to Bruner (1966), were necessary in the creation of any instructional theory that addressed knowledge domains (p. 44). The mode of representation was ultimately how something was viewed, presented or represented; economy "relates to the amount of information that must be held in mind and processed to achieve comprehension" (p. 44, 45). Power was represented by the connectivity amongst subjects and concepts; while power was limited by the learner's capacity, it was present for the learner to achieve (p. 48). Bruner's theory was directly reflected in the instructor's efforts with the writing curriculum. The mode of representation was important in regard to the instructor's presentation of the writing curriculum; economy was shown through the scaffolded methodology, and power was found in the exam assignments and their evaluative components.

The goal of synthesis and analysis as the ideal state in which a student engaged instruction was capitalized upon by Bloom (1956). Bloom introduced the cognitive

taxonomy that demonstrated a hierarchy of learning. Under the Bloom model, students grew from a basic understanding of knowledge to one that was in depth and held connectivity. Bloom's higher order thinking skills were delineated by a gradual movement from knowledge to comprehension, comprehension to application, application to analysis, analysis to synthesis, and synthesis to evaluation. The purpose of the movement from a lower or basic form of thinking to a higher, more complex form of thinking was to elevate the critical thinking ability of a student. The growth of a student who could take basic knowledge to knowledge that was evaluated and synthesized for a specific purpose showed a greater cognitive ability. Written tasks that did not focus solely on basic knowledge and comprehension were appropriate in considering the writing curriculum's rigor.

Vygotsky's work (1962), while still being unraveled and studied, led to significant contributions of the cognitive growth framework, child development, and socialization. Vygotsky quoted :

...concept formation is a creative, not a mechanical passive, process; that a concept emerges and takes shape in the course of a complex operation aimed at the solution of some problem; and that the mere presence of external conditions favoring a mechanical linking of word and object does not suffice to produce a concept. In his view, the decisive factor in concept formation is the so-called determining tendency. (p. 54)

Vygotsky determined that the ability to attempt concept formation was reserved for the adolescent and older (p. 59). The phases he established towards concept formation are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1

Vygotsky's Phases Toward Concept Formation

Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
<i>Unorganized Congeries</i>	<i>Thinking in Complexes</i>	<i>Genuine Concept Formation</i>
Stage 1 Trial-and-Error	Complex 1 Associative Complex	Stage 1 Abstraction
Stage 2 Syncretism through Visualization	Complex 2 Collections Complex	Stage 2 Potential Concepts
Stage 3 Synchronizing Syncretic Groups	Complex 3 Chain Complex	Stage 3 Formation to Concrete Concept
	Complex 4 Diffuse Complex	
	Complex 5 Pseudo-Concept	

Vygotsky (1962) established that there were 3 phases towards concept formation. Phase 1, “unorganized congeries” (p. 59), reflected the baby who used his or her senses to come to some semblance of rationality with the items in his or her world. Phase 2 grew from trial, visual and grouped efforts for order to a stage named “thinking in complexes” (p. 61). Thinking in complexes established 5 increasingly more difficult benchmarks for advanced understanding and thought connectivity. Associative complex, the most basic, had a child match objects that were associated through some simple, noticeable bonds. Collections complex connected groups by a difference. Chain complex established the ability to alter one’s thinking when an additional component was added; a new line of thought was grown from the inclusion of something new. Diffuse complex established

bonds through seemingly unnoticeable links. Pseudo-concept complex's significance was that concept formation was done through the understanding and language of the adult world. This phase led to the genuine concept phase. "A concept emerges only when the abstracted traits are synthesized anew and the resulting abstract synthesis becomes the main instrument of thought" (p. 78). Concept formation with the ability to articulate was the normative state of the adolescent mind.

Mahn (2003) underscored the importance of concept formation and identity at the adolescent stage. "In addition to gaining a more profound understanding of reality and social relations, the adolescent begins to understand the complexity of "self" through the reflection and introspection resulting from conceptual thinking" (p. 134). The combination of the individual self in relation to the concept being taught, was a natural cognitive pairing of the adolescent.

Vygotsky (as cited in Wetsch, 1985, p. 18) held a genetic approach to learning. His goal was to determine what was naturally happening to a child with their developmental processes, rather than what was not happening. In ascertaining such an understanding, teaching and learning was approached from a more receptive standpoint.

Natural development produces functions in their elementary forms, whereas cultural development converts elementary into higher mental processes. It is the transformation of elementary into higher functions that Vygotsky usually had in mind when he spoke of how the nature of development changes (p. 24).

From Koffka (1962), Vygotsky established that development of any kind required learning and maturation (p. 95). This ultimately led Vygotsky to the conclusion that "...[s]ince instruction given in one area can transform and reorganize other areas of child

thought, it may not only follow maturing or keep in step with it, but also precede it and further its progress” (p. 96). Specifically with writing, it was not simply an extension of speaking orally, it was a completely new skill that had to be learned. It was a skill that did not utilize the concrete nature of sound or speech. Writing was an abstract product, meaning that the formation was contingent on mental exercise. Additionally, writing did not have a social component that allowed conversation to drive the argument or topic. The discussion was with one’s self (pp. 98-99). Writing was a deliberate act, and not simply a spoken response or innate reaction.

In consideration of concept learning, Vygotsky (1962) stated that concepts needed to be given so they could be developed; a child could hone a concept and then skill-build. One had to come before the other (p.101). This was significant to scaffolded learning; building and growing concept depth and difficulty was the natural way for a child to learn. Building off of base concepts enabled a child to develop skill. In basic terms, information had to be given, students then processed it, students then could grow with it as it became part of their repertoire.

Understanding Socialization and Students

While the target group of this particular study were adolescents, the understanding of learning processes through social interaction was critical as components of the writing program depended on the interaction between the student and the teacher, the student and the peer group, and the student and him/her self. Vygotsky (1962) stated that “the true direction of the development of thinking is not from the individual to the socialized, but from the social to the individual” (p. 20). His emphasis on the place for socialization in the development of an individual was important to understanding student growth and understanding.

Vygotsky's (1962) most notable contribution was the theory on the zone of proximal development (p. 103). This zone determined the ability of a child to learn within circumstance and maturation. With consideration of the "sensitive period" (p.104) in which a person was most receptive to learning, the zone of proximal development explained what the learning process was for a young person. A young person was either receptive to learning because of their biology and psychological maturity, a young person could push to further develop with assistance, or a young person just was not ready to grasp concepts—their biology and psychology did not enable a student to developmentally understand (pp. 103-104).

Vygotsky's (1962) work with endophasy or inner speech (p.130) demonstrated that the formulated written word was the most complicated form of speech (p. 144). The formulation of a written piece that included support/evidence, form, and purpose was a highly evolved demonstration of endophasy. For a student to be a successful writer, he/she had to go through the standard phases of writing, which included the draft. The draft was a preliminary speech that developed into a more polished speech (p. 144). Vygotsky explained that understanding the connotation of a word took a great amount of understanding beyond simple meaning (p. 146). Connotation was followed by word organization; words combined to create new meanings; clear communication then existed in the written language (p. 146). Following then, the "influx of sense" (p. 147) established how the continued exposure to words and their varied combination, carried meanings that built upon one another. Ultimately, Vygotsky wrote that inner speech "is a complex, dynamic process involving transformation of the predicative, idiomatic structure of inner speech into syntactically articulated speech intelligible to others" (p.

148). The ability of the student to demonstrate successful comprehension and application of writing expression supported Vygotsky's belief that "egocentric speech is a transitional stage in the evolution from vocal to inner speech" (p. 17).

Berthoff (1993), in echoing Vygotsky, introduced the term *Ineinandersein*; the term represented the conceptual movement from particulars to generality and the reverse (p. 7). The idea of concept building in students was not viewed as a part-to-whole construction, rather it was viewed as a constant movement back and forth to affirm, reaffirm, build, rebuild, and so on. The *Ineinandersein* was critical in writing as it was a process of cumulative parts.

Vygotsky (1978) explicated the zone of proximal development further as he spoke about endophasy and the development of the inner speech with the outer world. The interaction of the internal conversation with outside influence was a critical point of recognition as it meshed two areas that were interrelated, but often not spoken of as a point of maturation and cognitive development (p. 24). Vygotsky explained, "For the young child, to think means to recall; but for the adolescent, to recall means to think" (p.51). Ultimately, Vygotsky was explaining the development of abstract thinking, and the ability of a young person who was at the proper developmental stage to not simply recall information, but to process it as it was placed in the world, not simply from their personal experience.

The egocentric speech that was indicative of a young child's development changed to a more complex speech in a mature adolescent as endophasy held important connectivity to the greater world. Acknowledgement of "actual developmental level[s]" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 85) in children and, therefore, their level for learning was

Vygotsky's aim in articulating the egocentric to endophasic differentiation. The zone of proximal development "is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p.86). The independent child functioned at their actual developmental level; the learning child functioned through cooperative learning. The child who could not problem solve or learn per se, would not be able to as he/she did not exist within the zone of proximal development; it was significant to recognize what a student could do, or to recognize his/her actual developmental level and potential, and to teach within the zone to make the proper strides towards learning. Identifying what was known was critical to then presenting and actually imbuing what could be internalized by the student. Ultimately, an instructor's ability to recognize "the cycles and maturation processes that have already been completed... [as well as] those processes that are currently in a state of formation" (p. 87) allowed the teacher to address the child where he/she was cognitively prepared. This idea was further supported by Elkind (1976) who stated that presenting "the skill at the child's level of competency" allowed a child to start from their point of comfort and ability (p.129). The zone of proximal development was where scaffolding occurred; it was the teacher or cooperative learning that was the scaffold in the case of Vygotsky (as cited in Gaffney & Anderson, 1991, p. 184). Each young person's maturity level differed, and, therefore, learning achievement differed for each young person.

Further, Vygotsky (1978) recognized that imitation, while a common educational practice, if done by a student who had not yet understood the imitation they were enacting, actually did not learn the imitated concept (p. 89). However, considering the

zone of proximal development, the student who did imitate could be able to adopt and acclimate that imitation to his/her own repertoire in some capacity.

Specifically addressing the issue of writing with young people, Vygotsky established that it was not simply a motor skill; it was a developmental skill (1978, p. 106). Writing needed to be part of the natural learning process that gave students meaningful objectives and relevant purpose (p. 117).

Walker (2004) continued the discussion on the value of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development. He established that educational philosophers like John Dewey advocated group work for effective learning. Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development supported this through the psychological aspect it engaged. Cooperative learning was necessary for greater learning. According to Walker, Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (as cited in Walker) established that learning was done from a concrete perspective; but it was when students were raised from thinking concretely to abstractly that new, greater learning occurred. This was prospective development. Learning in isolation limited the ability to make the connections that were needed for greater understanding. Walker noted one study that showed students taught through a zone of proximal development design actually responded with two years of growth. The incorporation of language and group interaction were key contributors to the gathering of true knowledge.

Wertsch (1980) proposed that endophasy, which Vygotsky referenced, was not simply an evolved inner voice; both the inner and egocentric voice could be considered dialogic. Vygotsky (as cited by Wertsch) wrote "the human function [of the inner voice] becomes in essence a unique form of internal collaboration with oneself" (p. 153). The

necessary recognition of such an idea came when considering the social component of language. If the inner voice was an inner dialogue, than the writing process—the response to a paper assignment—was an internal dialogue in search of argument and articulation (Wertsch). In addition, Wertsch argued that there was an objective-driven aspect to Vygotsky’s work. A child would look to the adult to be given an objective. The stimuli needed to be clear and purposeful. With that, under the direction of the adult, the child could proceed. As the child understood the modeling of objective-driven stimuli, he/she then could self-regulate (1977, p. 51). Such was the importance of the assignment given to students; there needed to be enough clarity so that the student could proceed and self-regulate the assignment, after modeling had occurred. Having a clear objective allowed the student to respond effectively. Also, Wertsch (1979) established that the work Vygotsky did with language was not simply about words, but language as “communicative social interaction” (p. 4). The social component supported Dewey and educational theorists who argued that socialization of the classroom was critical for learning.

Appropriately, Dewey (1963) followed the discussion of Vygotsky. Dewey’s contribution on thought development echoed the movement from concrete to abstract thinking through the integration of the zone of proximal development. The development of complex thought was contingent on stimuli from an adult. With that, it was important to include Dewey’s much discussed social constructivism. Dewey (1963) stated, “The subject-matter of education consists of bodies of information and of skills that have been worked out in the past; therefore, the chief business of the school is to transmit them to the new generation” (p. 17). This statement was ultimately where the traditional

education separated from the progressive or new education. The clear separation between the student and the teacher, the informed and the uninformed was where Dewey challenged the education system. His theory placed the student in the process, and rather than have students taught information that was to be committed to memory or understood for the sake of the subject-matter, he reversed the lens and placed the student in the center. The teacher reached toward the student, and the student was still to reach further with that knowledge (p. 23). The information became knowledge with the student's interaction. Dewey's experiential continuum directed the educator to consistently create meaningful experiences so that growth was continuous. Progressive education charged the educator with the task of identifying need and creating the opportunity for experience (pp. 33, 40). Experiences were had naturally so one could not be dismissive of the human condition that called for socialization. The interaction of the student with the subject-matter, the teacher, their peers, and the environment was an "organic" (p. 25) experience. Dewey connected the experiential education with a democratic one—one that was driven by the learner (p. 34). This allowed the entire classroom to be a communal force for learning. As the students interacted with consistent educational experiences, their input created a scholastic community (pp. 51, 54).

For planning, teachers had to anticipate what would happen when eliciting experiences. Dewey (1963) explained that knowing of what the classroom consisted, knowing what had occurred historically, and knowing what was the best way to proceed was critical in experiential learning. There was a complexity to calculating human behavior, but the potential made the effort worthwhile (p.69). The aspect of planning was critical to the success of meaningful experiential learning. Dewey wrote, "Intelligent

activity is distinguished from aimless activity by the fact that it involves selection of the means—analysis—out of the variety of conditions that are present, and their arrangement—synthesis—to reach an intended aim or purpose” (p. 84). Objective-based teaching called upon the instructor to foresee the value and skill-building potential of subject-matter. This changed the approach toward teaching material; it asked that the material be the vehicle to teach developmental thinking. This objective-based learning was also holistic as “goal-embedded” (Palincsar & David, 1991, p. 125) instruction allowed for strategic understanding.

Freire (1993) entered the educational arena some time after Dewey (1963); however, his call for a student-centered education was driven by his socialist leanings. His views demanded the teacher not be the oppressive figure that dictated learning over the child. Particularly within the high-risk educational setting where poverty and family instability were a contributing factor to failure, Freire identified that certain interaction of the oppressed (the student) and the oppressor (the teacher) limited success. Echoing Dewey’s thoughts, Friere commented on the human condition, “Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift. It must be pursued constantly and responsibly” (p. 29). For the purpose of this study, it was important to go beyond the politically-charged language. While Friere spoke of revolt and the transformation of society’s hierarchy, the comparison was clear. The human factor could not be dismissed. Friere argued that to not recognize how human interaction altered the social landscape was inconceivable (p. 32-33). With that, the social component of the educational landscape could not be denied, and the importance of socialization within the classroom and through curriculum was relevant. Praxis or reflective practice was an ideal strategy for the classroom; students

that participated in reflective practice were ultimately creating ownership of their education through their experience (p. 33).

When discussing Friere (1993), the socio-economic factor should be addressed. Disparity of economics in school systems is very commonplace. While some school systems are monetarily stable or even wealthy, the public school system often carries a deficit. The stigma associated with public education is comprised of the economic truth, but it also reflects the traditional structure where the teacher is the knowledgeable one. Students are participants in the educational process in that they show up to be taught, not necessarily that they show up to learn to develop themselves. There is an important difference. The teacher-to-student exchange is limited to the one that controls the information, and the one that receives the information. The socialization of the classroom so that students are recipients of experiences to expand their repertoire of knowledge is a significant paradigm shift for a good portion of educators as well as educational systems.

Friere (1993) expressed that there had to be a transformation in how the students viewed their responsibility in the educational process (p. 45). Friere advocated the dialogic approach as opposed to the banking system which merely deposited information to the students. Critical conversations and intentionality were part of the problem-posing education of which Freire spoke; his problem-based approach empowered students to pursue their learning because it raised their level of cognizance (pp. 47, 53, 60). While Friere did venture into highly political language, he offered the idea of conscientization with the understanding that pursued knowledge that revealed a better understanding of the self was a pivotal point of change (pp. 140-141). This was the ideal in education where reflective action empowered a student beyond the classroom. As students

understand what they are doing, they see how they are doing something, and it is coming to that understanding which empowers them (Berthoff, 1993, p. 11).

Lather (1986) presented a predominately philosophy-based argument that infused Marxist and Freirian language. Despite the obvious slant of socialism, the concept and content of praxis was articulated as an ideal outgrowth of a successful classroom. Lather discussed emancipatory social research. At its heart, it was an attempt at philosophizing research intent, but Lather wrote about something greater; she wrote about ownership and authority in language:

For researchers with emancipator aspirations, doing empirical research offers a powerful opportunity for praxis to the extent that the research process enables people to change by encouraging self-reflection and a deeper understanding of their particular situations. (p. 263)

Lather established that praxis was achieved through three components: “the need for reciprocity, the stance of dialectical theory-building versus theoretical imposition, and the question of validity in praxis-oriented research” (p. 263). The issue of reciprocity spoke to a culture of educational return for the student, dialectical theory-building spoke to ownership of material, and evidence driven, non-fiction writing can be deemed an active practice of critical thinking. Lather wrote “reciprocity implies give-and-take, a mutual negotiation of meaning and power” (p. 263). Lather’s language spoke directly to the purpose and gains when writing was taught and understood by the student.

The second component of dialectical theory building was related by Lather:

Dialectical practices require an interactive approach to research that invites reciprocal reflexivity and critique, both of which guard against the central dangers

to praxis-oriented empirical work: imposition and reification on the part of the researcher...The search is for theory which grows out of context-embedded data, not in a way that automatically rejects a priori theory, but in a way that keeps preconceptions from distorting the logic of evidence. (pp.265-267)

Lather's interpretation of critical thinking was based on language that dealt with oppression. Despite this, the consideration of a priori knowledge and context-based assertions were skills that a good writer exhibited.

Lather (1986) also referred to triangulation—a popular education term. In this case, the inclusion of multiple data sources, methods, and theoretical schemes reflected the needs of what a teacher tried to instill in a young person. The synthesis of sources, ideas and strategies to create a strong argument was the ultimate goal of a teacher who was preparing a person to be competitive in college. Lather further included construct validity which called upon

...systematized reflexivity which reveals how a priori theory has been changed by the logic of the data becomes essential in establishing construct validity in ways that contribute to the growth of illuminating and change-enhancing social theory. (p. 271)

The significance was that students could prove arguments if they could provide evidence. This seemed obvious, but a student who was given the freedom to prove and believe whatever he/she wanted, still had to prove the argument; this was where the ability to challenge and change thinking came. This understanding was tied to what Lather included as face validity or the ability to see proof. This all directly connected to young people. The ability to convince a young person of a truth not based on their own

experience was highly difficult. Therefore, teaching them to prove through evidence and writing did challenge their very mindset. Finally, Lather ended with the connection to catalytic validity. The concept of catalytic validity had a broader goal, as it:

is premised not only within a recognition of the reality-altering impact of the research process, but also in the desire to consciously channel the impact so that respondents gain self-understanding and, ultimately, self-determination through research participation (p. 272).

What catalytic validity offered was the ability for individual change. Now whether this was something that actually happened through the proposed writing process, was one thing, but the goal was the same. Students who could see an argument to the end or reconstruct their own thinking were much stronger critical thinkers, and therefore much more empowered in their learning.

Ultimately, the social constructs of the learner's environment were critical to their experience; Eisenhart and Cutts-Dougherty (1991) wrote:

...in a very real sense then, students' memberships in different social groups are an organizing factor in their experience of formal education, with serious implications for school success and academic achievement. Social groups not only act to structure ways of perceiving the world, but also mediate what is perceived, what is learned, and what is transmitted in the school (pp. 36-37).

Such implications were important to consider when exploring adolescent learning.

Primarily, research determined that socialization of the adolescent should be considered in the classroom as well as in the development of curriculum.

The Development of Writing Curriculum for Students

Schrag (1988) wrote, “Thinking is an activity” (p.11). The statement was a basic one, but it established an important conceptual approach to teaching. To engage thinking as a task could cause every facet of classroom instruction to look differently. For the purpose of this study, if thinking were factored into the equation of writing instruction, not merely word and argument construction, there would be an additional level of awareness brought to the table. In the development of a writing curriculum, there were many trends and ideas that were implemented in classrooms. The idea behind them was to ultimately make students write better. Still, the National Assessment of Educational Progress report continually showed that American school children were meeting the minimum writing requirements, unable to write persuasively, analytically, or critically (Langer, 1991, p.14).

If there were “a science to composition” writing, de Beaugrande (1982) posed one (p. 232). His efforts were not to offer a clear cut solution, but to determine what was necessary in creating and/or utilizing an option that had potential for success. He indicated that components of inclusion should be:

(a) a model of the operations and controls involved in writing; (b) an account of how writing conditions differ systematically from speaking conditions; (c) an explication of strategies of decision and selection; (d) a means for decomposing the entire writing process into manageably small subtasks; (e) a prediction of the most preponderant difficulties in writing, that is, of the normal weak points in the production system; and (f) a set of criteria for evaluating and revising written texts. (p. 232)

The elements supported the psychology that Vygotsky (1978) expressed in how to best support students.

In supporting de Beaugrande's (1982) assertion, Flower and Hayes (2004) established that writing involved "the task environment, the writer's long-term memory, and the writing processes" themselves (p. 44). Their model (see Figure 1) demonstrated what was involved in the composition of an assignment (p. 45). While the model did not include the social factor, inclusion of the said factors was universal for the student and the process. The generalization of the Flower and Hayes model was not a simplification of the writing process, but a visual grasp of what did happen within classroom writing instruction and response.

Similarly, Chandler (2004) shared 4 types of writers (p. 111). The categorization of the writers did not diminish the process, but provided important language to frame what already existed. The 4 types were:

- *Architects* were defined as those who indicated frequent use of the 3-stage approach to writing (planning, writing and revising) who also indicated that their planning was mostly pre-planned.
- *Watercolourists* were defined as those who indicated frequent use of single drafts with minimal revision.
- *Oil Painters* were defined as those whose initial strategy was frequently that of writing down thoughts as they occur to them, organizing and revising them only later.
- *Bricklayers* were defined as those who frequently try to perfect each sentence before moving on to the next (p. 111).

Taking a socio-cognitive approach not only addressed the development of skills, but it also embraced the natural stimuli of socialization (Langer, 1991, pp. 17-18).

[L]earners do not learn rule-governed systems such as language by having the rules presented to them by others and then practicing the rules. On the contrary, they learn such rules in the process of interacting with others to complete take in meaningful and functional situations (p. 17).

Such a statement took into account the classroom environment, the student-teacher-classmate relationship, as well as the objective of content and subject. The classroom was where common and/or shared issues were present, and therefore there was a greater likelihood of student engagement if this commonality was recognized and utilized (p. 18).

Student engagement is often initiated through questioning. Wertsch (1998) established that teacher-student interaction was hindered due to the type of questions that were typically asked. Questions were typically ‘steered’ to specific answers. There was little evidence that “authentic questions” (p. 120) which motivated and required open-ended ideas and the cultivation of idea sharing was used. For the purpose of this study, the use of authentic questions was important when forming the essay questions for which the students were to respond. Wertsch (as cited in Nystrand) echoed this sentiment:

Authentic questions are questions for which the asker has not prespecified an answer...Dialogically, authentic teacher questions signal to students that the teacher’s interest in what they think and know and not just whether they can report what someone else thinks or has said (p. 120).

The authentic nature of learning occurred with connections made between activity and literacy and context and content; creating authentic, higher order thinking situations

should be the goal of the teacher (Melothe, 1991, p. 176).

In writing, according to Bryson and Scardamalia (1991) what separated novice writers from expert writers was the understanding of knowledge. In knowledge telling (p. 45), knowledge was articulated through a basic understanding the writer gathered about a said topic. In knowledge transforming, the challenge of writing enveloped rhetoric and content, so the effort to write as an expert was more exploratory than rote (p. 49). This was a greater level of achievement for any writer. It encompassed higher order thinking skills as well as enhanced the writing skills themselves.

Manning (2004) established that writing was directly connected to literacy; the product of those that had functional literacy and high literacy was explained:

Different from functional literacy that encompasses a finite set of skills, high literacy encompasses 1) complexity of thought, 2) generative ability for thinking and doing, and 3) competency in contextually elaborating on and extending from previous knowing into new applications. (p. 6)

Manning determined that cognitive learning was relational, not linear. Cognitive learning was growing knowledge and also knowing how to use knowledge. Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (1978) was contingent on the interpersonal and intrapersonal aspect of learning. Learning socially and through an individual experience, better secured true understanding, as well as discernment.

Learning best occurs through authentic activity...it is through activity that student generate complex levels of knowing and doing, and through activity, learners have an understanding of how and when to apply their thinking and doing across various interactions, experiences, and contexts. (pp. 26-27)

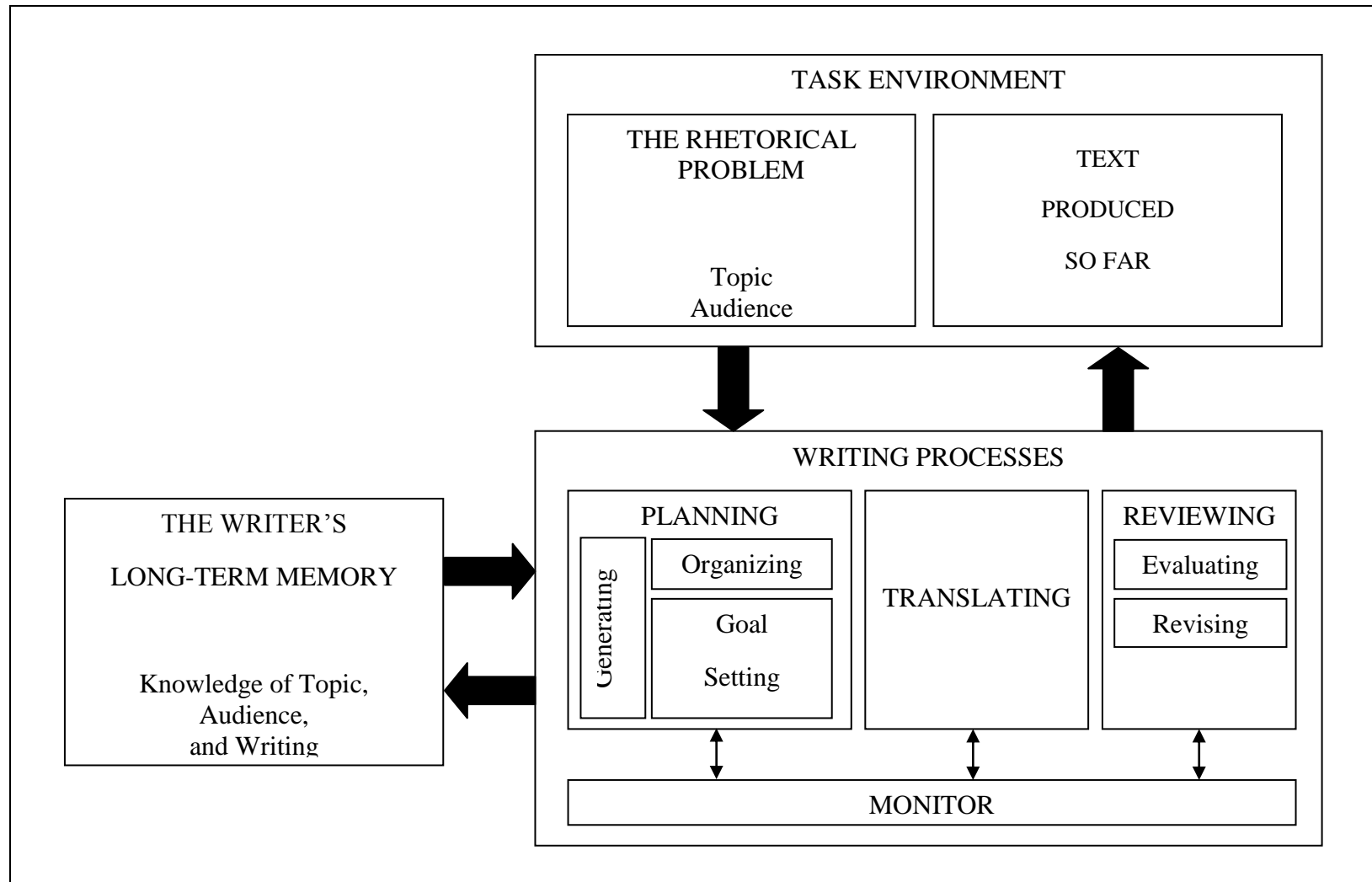


Figure 1. Flower and Hayes model (2004) illustrating how a written assignment is processed by a student

Manning's discussion was quite standard, but the author did support Lather's work on reification and the need for meaning with a humanizing goal. Gutierrez and Stone (as cited by Manning, 2004)

defined a syncretic framework as the principled strategic use of a combination of theoretical and methodological tools to examine individual actions, as well as the goals and history of those actions...They contend that a syncretic framework helps them systematically and strategically merge various theoretical constructs from social, psychological, and anthropological disciplines into a multiply informed method of study...By using a syncretic approach, they are enabled to examine and explain how classrooms are not monologic or one-dimensional, but rather complex social spaces that shape what is learning and how such learning occurs. (pp.52-53)

To support this, Griffith (2006) spoke of ethos—credibility. Griffith proposed that ethos of the author—the writing student—needed to be instilled because writing, in its best form, was transformative. David Fleming (as cited in Griffith)

...in his discussion of rhetoric in its modern manifestations, David Fleming (1998) presents a more ambitious view of rhetoric as a course of study, one 'whose end is the development of a certain kind of person: engaged, articulate, resourceful, sympathetic, civil' (p. 172). (p. 8).

The transformative potential of writing went beyond a skill set; it was potentially a means to communicate and establish an ethic through the written voice.

Further, Britton (2004) explained how the composing process took shape within writing instruction. The student in the participant role was engaged to take an operational

approach to writing--“informing, instructing or persuading”, or intellectual--“problem solving, speculating, theorizing”; the student in the spectator role took an experiential approach where their engagement in the writing disclosed a narrative approach and, therefore, levels of poeticism (pp.29-30). Categorically, Britton established that the modes—transactional (formal), expressive (communicative) and poetic--ultimately held the writer to the position of either participant or spectator (pp. 27, 34). Within those two positions, a student engaged operationally or intellectually, demonstrating evidence of a strong or weak endophasy, depending on the order and complex insight of the writing (p. 34).

Hobson (1990) wrote about the delineation between speaking and listening and writing and reading. Typically, such actions would seem dependent upon one another, but teachers, in teaching, did differentiate between the skills. Each component, however, was critical to a capable writer. No single aspect could be dismissed; verbalizing, comprehending, articulating, and applying needed to occur simultaneously in order for a student to be whole. Hobson wrote:

What is necessary now in senior high school is a balance between the realities that face students in the world and the implementation of pedagogical techniques based on the best information learning theorists have provided through reliable and exhaustive research. Such research indicates that the whole-language approach more than any other currently available to educators helps other students achieve a continuing aptitude for dealing with language in all its four aspects: speaking, listening, writing, and reading. (p. 27)

Hobson went on to say that:

Whole-language teachers put students before subject-matter, which is not a revolutionary arrangement; people, when you come to think of it have always been more important than things...When a whole-language approach is employed properly, it will accelerate the learning processes of students by beginning with things that interest them and mean something to them. (p. 27)

Hobson (1990) further discussed the social element of writing. The isolated nature of a standard writing instructional presentations left students with their own negative attitudes by which to judge their own insecurities. Integrating a social component allowed for the peer perspective; this was important and a priority for the age group. Hobson spoke about the aspect of encoding and decoding. Encoding was considered speaking and writing; whereas, decoding was determined as listening and reading. They traditionally were separated, but with the whole language approach they were not only aligned, they were symbiotic with one another and the effective writer.

Yennie-Donmeyer and Donmeyer (1993) addressed the issue of the traditional writing process.

Process writing is an approach to the teaching of writing which assumes that students learn to write primarily by writing. Rather than emphasizing the teaching of grammatical rules and rhetorical techniques, process writing emphasized the need for students to become actively engaged in the processes of composing, critiquing, editing, and rewriting. (p. 343)

Yennie-Donmeyer and Donmeyer presented that teachers felt they could teach writing by having students write. The formulaic or traditional approach to writing was faulty from

the beginning because “writing is an extremely personal, idiosyncratic and serendipitous process which cannot be easily fit into six-week units and cannot readily accommodate teacher directives and demands” (p. 344). This assertion directly supported the structured writing curriculum studied in this paper. Writing needed to be a part of the student’s own vision. Students struggled with investing in material, so, for this reason, students needed to find a point of connection. The personalization of an assignment made the effort to write more meaningful. A writing process allowed for a variety of opportunities to connect with the teacher, the material, and/or the strategies; a process built on what a student knew or would be able to know through practice and application was an appropriate way to structure a method (Miramontes & Commins, 1991, p. 85).

Along the same lines, Graham and Perin (2007) did a mixed method study on effective writing practices for adolescents. The critical questions they posed addressed the constant conflict of whether one learns to write or one writes to learn. Their results stated that “explicit and systematic instruction” (p. 320) in writing processing positively impacted writing results for the adolescent—this did not include grammar instruction. Additionally, there was evidence to the importance of scaffolding when teaching about writing processes. When creating specific activities that allowed for scaffolding as well as clear objectives, the student proved to do better with their writing and comprehension (p. 320).

Estigarribia (2007) discussed the critical nature of an effective essay question. The main way this occurred was by not simply creating writing topics that were satisfied by simple answers. What Estigarribia brought to light was that answers were cultivated differently in a “yes/no question” than “alternative questions”, which were questions that

called for greater thought in determination (pg. 1). While Estigarribia's dissertation centered on language use and the formation of questions, the author's study was important in that it brought an important point to the surface, the formation of questions--the type of responses and the expectation of depth--was established through writing assignments. It should be noted Estigarribia's study spoke to question formation from a primary age structure, i.e., "do you like apples?", "you like apples?" (p. iv); it did not elevate question formation to include essays.

Estigarribia (2007) included discussions on Vygotsky and the zone of proximal development. The author shared a diagram that differentiated the zone as "what the child can do on his/her own", "what the child can do with expert guidance", or "what the child cannot do even with help" (pg. 104). Additionally, the author discussed how the theoretical zone of which a young person was in, was different than the empirical one, meaning the capacity of each child was different, but they all could fall along the three phases of the zone's continuum. The empirical stage of the child was where differentiated instruction was addressed. Estigarribia stated:

For Vygotsky, the zone of proximal development was the conceptualization of the idea that learning proceeds in a social-interactional context and consists of internalizing problem-solving knowledge from the *interpersonal domain* (social cognition, interaction), and absorbing it into the *intrapersonal domain* (individual cognition). So defined, the zone of proximal development for a given domain of knowledge can be calculated empirically, for a given child, by determining experimentally what tasks the child can accomplish only with expert help." (p. 108)

Estigarribia's assertion was specifically discussing language acquisition, but the same could apply to writing skills and the growth of such skills. The author's work brought in the theoretical versus empirical aspect of the zone of proximal development.

Specifically in addressing writing curriculum, Moss and Bordelon (2007) examined a designed curriculum that focused on critical reading and expository writing in order to best prepare students for college reading and writing expectations. The program was taught to the instructors and the literature was viewed from a rhetorical standpoint, encompassing critical analysis and writing. The result was positive, for the most part, as students felt better prepared for post-secondary instruction. The coursework lasted an entire year and did utilize scaffolding with an emphasis on a priori knowledge and vocabulary. While students who came from English as a Second Language backgrounds asked for more direct instruction, there was an overall positive response from the students and teachers alike.

Wray and Lewis (2004) presented the apprenticeship model for teaching writing (p. 419). The apprenticeship model supported Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, through the use of the adult or able peer.

Demonstration (Teacher modeling)
Joint Activity (Collaborative writing)
Scaffolded Activity (Supported writing)
Independent Activity (Independent writing)

Figure 2. Wray and Lewis (2004) apprenticeship model as a method to teach writing

Beginning with modeling, integrating the social component, reinforcing the task through a supporting activity, and, lastly, enabling the student to work independently, was a fair model to support the cognitive psychology established by primary researchers. Perhaps, the area that could be questioned was that beyond the independent activity, there was no room for further support—this possibly looked like peer editing.

Langer and Applebee (1987), while looking to understand the attitude towards writing in the secondary classroom, came to understand that there was a clear expectation that writing was an English class function. In extending it to other subject areas, it took on a specific form. Still, the function of writing instruction was:

1. To draw on relevant knowledge and experience in preparation for new activities
2. To consolidate and review new information and experiences
3. To reformulate and extend knowledge. (p.41)

Such functions aligned with Bruner's (1966) own goals of learning. Additionally, the functions were not simply English class related, but extended to the function of writing in all curricular areas. Langer and Applebee found that "ownership, appropriateness, support, collaboration and internalization" (p.141) were all important. These areas were deemed necessary "for effective instructional scaffolding" (p. 141). Ownership reflected a student's understanding of the objective for a written task. Appropriateness reflected starting at the student's skill set before expanding upon it; support reflected the interactive adult or peer with task-oriented assignments to aid in learning. Collaboration reflected the interdependent relationship of the teacher and student with writing assignments, and, lastly, internalization enabled a student's palette of understanding to be

expanded based on their successful experience with scaffolded writing instruction (pp. 143-144).

Langer (1984) underscored the point that writing was not a primary focus of the Language Arts classroom. Writing instruction happened in a very superficial manner in most classrooms, and the amount of writing that actually took place did not scaffold or build critical thinking (p. 112). Textbooks, in addition, when reviewed, typically asked for a superficial response that did not take into account the ideas of internalization, scaffolding, and appropriateness (p. 116). Further, Miller (2003) emphasized this issue when writing, “In many classrooms contexts, interactions about literature cut off student from their own responses and reflection—even teachers who believe they are holding “discussions” insist on their own “correct” textual interpretations” (p. 289). The exploration of contextual understanding was limited to what the teacher accepted.

Applebee (1993) additionally commented on three styles of English instruction that had been adopted in American school systems. The earliest took on the form of instruction that “emphasized the importance of a common cultural heritage to both the growth of the individual and the preservation of national values and traditions” (p. 3), the second focused on the “the development of essential language skills” (p. 3); it was an approach that focused on skill building. The most recent was what has continued to develop—the child centered model that credited Dewey (1963) as its influence (p. 4). The model looked to address student interest as its determination of how to garner the most student participation. The goal of writing instruction, according to Applebee (1984), fell into one of four categories; creating permanence through revising and finalizing, creating “explicitness” (p. 577), understanding and constructing relationships between

information, and utilizing the action of writing for the exploration of ideas (p. 577).

Conley (2008) discussed the idea of cognitive strategy instruction. Specifically, cognitive strategy instruction called upon the idea of transposing instruction from the classroom to other areas of studies and then to the greater world. Cognitive strategy instruction, while not fully researched, aimed to take the micro-level of learning to the macro-level of understanding. “Cognitive strategies include activities such as asking questions to interrogate texts, summarizing, activating prior knowledge, and organizing and engaging prior knowledge with newly learned information” (p. 84). Such techniques were transposable across content areas, as well as pertinent to work-related skills.

Coker and Lewis (2008) continued the discussion of Conley (2008) in regard to instruction that was cognitively driven, rather than subject or content specific. In strong support of Graham and Perin’s (2007) work, they highlighted the quantitative results that indicated the eleven elements that were critical to successful writing instruction: writing strategies, summarization, collaborative writing, specific product goals, word processing, sentence combining, prewriting, inquiry activities, process-writing approach, study of models, and writing for content learning (pp. 237-238).

Emig (1971) studied “The Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders”. The work revealed that even the assignment carried levels of weight for the student. Emig wrote,

Internal aspects of the assignment that may bear upon the student’s writing process, and product, include the following specifications: (1) registers—the field of discourse; the written mode, and the tenor; (2) the linguistic formulation of the assignment; (3) the length; (4) the purpose; (5) the audience; (6) the deadline; (7) the amenities, such as punctuation and spelling; and (8) the treatment of written

outcome—that is, if the teacher plans to evaluate the product.... (p. 38)

With these 8 considerations, the teacher needed to better consider the obstacles that potentially hindered a student's product. Even the assignment itself, before the criteria was established, was weighted by the request of the teacher, what the expectations of the resulting assignment were, what was understood by the student, what was the student's capacity for success at such a task, and what was the student's "motivation" (p. 38) for successful completion of the task (p. 38). While such areas could not be micromanaged by the teacher, they should be noted in the overall plan so that a student, when considering such obstacles, felt they were surmountable.

Emig's (1971) study proved that most students did not do pre-plan work such as outlines and drafts (p. 92). Further, Emig noted the delineation between self-sponsored and school-sponsored writing activities. Self-sponsored writing activities received much more review, and Emig determined that this was caused by the integration of topics of the "self" or "human relations" (p.92). Similarly, school sponsored-writing was less likely to be reviewed (p.93). Emig found that teaching the standard five paragraph essay coupled with a lack of literacy instruction, actually was counter to all the recognized "good" writers of whom the students were given as examples (pp. 97-98). The rigidity that was prevalent in writing instruction did not align with the individualism that better sparked student engagement.

Conclusion

With that, reviewing how learning took place, how socialization played a role in the learning process, and how an adolescent writing curriculum had very specific considerations were critical to the assessment of the proposal in this study. The

recognition of where an adolescent should be cognitively influenced the measurement of student growth. Understanding the impact of socialization on curriculum was significant in assessing the content of the proposed structured writing curriculum; the acknowledgment of what traditionally accepted writing instruction included as determined by educational norms validated or invalidated the quality of the proposed writing curriculum.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Understanding adolescent learning revealed the impact of socialization, structure and cognitive maturity. A successful structured writing curriculum would seem probable when considering the zone of proximal development and age-appropriate development. The proposed study evolved from need in a public school that educated students who entered at varied levels of learning. While the reality was that students did enter classrooms at different ability levels, all students had to respond and meet set goals put forth by the Illinois Learning Standards. Specifically for this study, Goal 3—the Illinois Learning Standard goal for writing—was examined.

Research Design

To determine if a structured writing curriculum aided in bridging the gap between students of varied abilities and the state need, an exploratory study was conducted to measure the growth of writing ability in high school students. The study was a longitudinal quantitative content analysis. In responding to the primary question of the research, “To what degree does a structured writing curriculum impact varying levels of high school student learning in preparing graduating seniors to achieve standardized

writing competencies as defined by the Illinois Learning Standards?”, 3 rubrics were utilized as evaluation tools.

The Illinois State Board of Education 4 point framework defined writing success through 6 descriptors: range, frequency, facility, depth, creativity and quality (see Appendix A). The combination of these categories resulted in either a placement of the exam essay as “Exceeding” with a score of 4, “Meeting” with a score of 3, “Approaching” with a score of 2, or “Starting” with a score of 1. The implementation of this rubric responded to the research question that asked “To what extent does a structured writing curriculum address the state expectations of Illinois students?”

The second evaluation tool was the ACT (2009a) 6 point writing rubric (see Appendix B). Generally speaking, a 6 meant that the essay “demonstrate[d] effective skill” (p. 1); a 5 meant that the essay “demonstrate[d] competent skill” (p. 1); a 4 meant that the essay “demonstrate[d] adequate skill” (p. 1); a 3 meant that the essay “demonstrate[d] some developing skill” (p. 1); a 2 meant that the essay “demonstrate[d] inconsistent or weak skill” (p. 1); a 1 meant that the essay “demonstrate[d] inconsistent or weak skill” (p. 1); an essay that received no score was deemed “Blank, Off-Topic, Illegible, Not in English, or Void” (p. 1). The utilization of the ACT tool was significant to the research question that asked, “To what extent does a structured writing curriculum address national expectations of Illinois students?”

The third evaluation tool was the Glencoe Literature (2007) publishing company’s writing rubric (see Appendix C). Glencoe was a major supplier of textbooks to Chicago Public Schools, and the writing rubric aligned itself to the textbook industry’s understanding and marketing as required by educational institutions. Glencoe identified 5

areas for review: ideas, organization, voice, word choice and sentence fluency, and conventions; these were graded on a 6-point scale. The overall score was determined by considering the 5 different descriptors at the 6 score levels. The use of the rubric from the publishing company addressed the research question that asked, “To what extent does a structured writing curriculum address a marketed rubric that reflects the expectations of Illinois students?”

Another tool was adopted in order to evaluate the essay assessments themselves--the Rubric to Assess a PBL or Another Rubric (see Appendix D). The purpose of the rubric was for the university instructors to be more deliberate in the depth of assignments that were given to the students. Because the assessments of this study changed, it was important to determine a difficulty-level categorization for the assessments; in that way the scaffolded approach was captured to reflect the increased difficulty level of the given assessments.

Population

The institution, for the purpose of this study, was called City High School. The students who were the focus of this study entered their freshman year in the autumn of 2003 and were monitored through spring 2007, which was senior year for most of the students. State profile criteria reflected the status of the school. Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE) growth over time was one form of criteria. The PSAE was made up of the ACT and the WorkKeys assessment. The ACT or American College Test was the national test for junior level students; the WorkKeys component was a career-based skills assessment. In 2004, the average PSAE score was 12%, 2005 showed a 13% PSAE average score, 2006, the year the students of the study participated in the exam, resulted

in a 14% average, and 2007 showed a 15% PSAE score average. The state required that 62.5% of juniors meet expectations in order for a school not to be identified as a school on probation. (Interactive Illinois Report Card, 2010)

The racial breakdown of City High School is indicated in Table 2. (Interactive Illinois Report Card, 2010)

Table 2

Breakdown of City High School by Race (2003 through 2007)

	White (%)	Black (%)	Hispanic (%)	Native- American (%)	Asian (%)	Multi- Racial (%)
	2003-2004					
	3.1	16.8	79.1	0.8	0.2	0
	2004-2005					
School Year	2	22.6	75	0.3	0	0
	2005-2006					
	2.1	27.8	68.1	0.6	0.1	1.3
	2006-2007					
	2.1	31.8	63.5	0.7	0.1	1.7

The table shows that the majority of the students were from racial minorities.

City High School also had a large population of low income students, a high mobility rate, and had begun a trend towards a low graduation rate. Table 3 provides a breakdown of the high school's profile. (Interactive Illinois Report Card, 2010)

Table 3

Breakdown of City High School Profile Information (2003 through 2007)

	LEP	Low Income	Attendance	Mobility	HS Dropout Rate	HS Grad Rate
School Year	2003-2004					
	9.3	89.2	85.2	27.8	9.8	67.1
	2004-2005					
	8.9	90.8	86.6	23	7	71.4
	2005-2006					
	8.7	87.7	85.3	23.8	3.5	72.7
	2006-2007					
	7.8	90.6	76.6	28.1	8.7	55.2

This statistical and demographic information offered a general contextual understanding of what City High School was. The students, who were the subject of this analysis, were part of a small school structure. The small school within a school was a pioneer project of the Chicago Public Schools. The trend in Chicago, and in schools across the nation, was to create houses or learning communities where set numbers of students could be given focused, multi-pronged support. The students shared one math teacher, one science teacher, one English teacher, one history teacher, and one counselor. The goal was for these students to gather strength in sustained learning environments, to benefit from the familiarity that was honed by staying with teachers, and to develop and establish a community of learners.

Students were part of the evaluated group if they were exposed to the structured writing program over four consecutive years. By the end, twenty-four students had

consistent data for statistical analyses. Due to mobility, the number of student participants fluctuated. The racial makeup of the students who were the focus of the study are indicated in Table 4.

Table 4

Distribution of Race for Students Included in Statistical Analyses (4 Years of Exposure)

White	Black	Hispanic	Native-American	Asian	Multi-Racial
0	0	21	0	1	2
0%	0%	88%	0%	4%	8%

Within the small schools model, ideally, teachers “looped” with their students, meaning they followed them for their high school career. Further, the small school curriculum was designed with the understanding and appreciation of what interested the students and what proficiency issues the students needed to overcome. Teachers in the small school also had the option, program permitting, to block, meaning holding back-to-back class periods for sustained learning.

Further, the instructor was given preliminary eighth grade reading entrance scores. For the purpose of this study, and to honor the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations, a high level view of the scores are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Reading Skill Levels of Students Entering as Freshmen

Entering High School Grade Level	Percentage of Students in Study at Indicated Grade Level
8 th	31%
9 th	22%
10 TH	27%
11 th	9%
Students with IEP	9%

Data Collection

Student data was collected by the teacher who maintained folders of work students completed over the course of each year; this included final essay exams, assigned essays, and various writing tasks. The essay exams were utilized as the data to determine if growth occurred. The essay exams were given during formal testing periods that controlled for time, and allowed for the monitoring of distribution, completion and collection of the exams.

Educator feedback data was collected from a panel of 8 experts chosen because of their employment as English instructors at a selective enrollment high school in Chicago. Their feedback was gathered in 2 forms. The panel was asked to categorize the given essay exams using the Rubric to Assess a PBL or Another Rubric. The given exams were presented to each panel member, and, using the rubric, each panel member determined the level of difficulty for each essay exam (See Appendix E through L to view the given essay exams). The decision of the panel majority characterized each exam level as

Expert, Practitioner, Apprentice or Novice (See Appendix M for the results).

To further verify whether student skill levels were or were not increasing, the researcher utilized the panel of experts to review a new tool (see Appendix N). In reality, a freshman exam that received a grade of an “A”, was not equal to a senior exam that received a grade of an “A”, the expectation on a senior exam was much higher than that of a freshman exam. For this reason, a scale that addressed different assessments, as well as varying levels of difficulty and achievement, was created. The panel was then asked to review the created Adjustment Score Adjustment Scale (see Figure 3) and determine the viability and applicability of the new tool. Their responses were collected and, with their full acceptance, the scale was then applied to recode the scores for an alternative view of the results.

Analytical Methods

The exploratory study was a longitudinal quantitative content analysis that spanned 4 years. To determine the level of competency of each student essay exam, the collected essay exams were evaluated and given an agreed upon rubric score by an outside reviewer and the researcher. The outside reviewer serviced students of similar background as those in the study, and the reviewer had a background in standardized rubric application. All assessments were scored with the Illinois Learning Standards writing rubric, the ACT writing rubric, and the Glencoe publishing company writing rubric. The triangulation of these three scores reflected the state standard, the national standard, and the marketed standard. The determined scores were then entered for each student. The scores were compared at varying increments. Paired sample *t*-tests were utilized to determine if significant progress was made by the cohort of students. Paired

sample *t*-tests captured the comparative view of student mean scores at different time increments. Cohen's *d* was applied to establish effect size practicality.

Additionally, with the validation of the Assessment Score Adjustment Scale by the panel of experts, the scale was used to recode the results to determine another view of whether growth occurred. The scale established that students were taught from the level of Novice (0). Through four years of instruction, their skill set was intended to move them to Expert status on an Expert test. Recoding was completed based on the idea that 1.5 was Expert-level achievement on an Expert-level test using the ILS grading rubric, and 2.0 represented Expert-level achievement on an Expert-level test, using the ACT and Glencoe rubrics. The range accounted for four years of instruction, with .25 increments of growth on a year-to-year continuum (vertical), and on an achievement continuum within the grade level (horizontal); some levels shared a scale score (i.e. Apprentice Level Test/Novice Level Achieved, .25 and Novice Level Test/Apprentice Level Achieved, .25) as growth and difficulty were comparable. Paired sample *t*-tests were run again with the recoding from the Assessment Score Adjustment Scale.

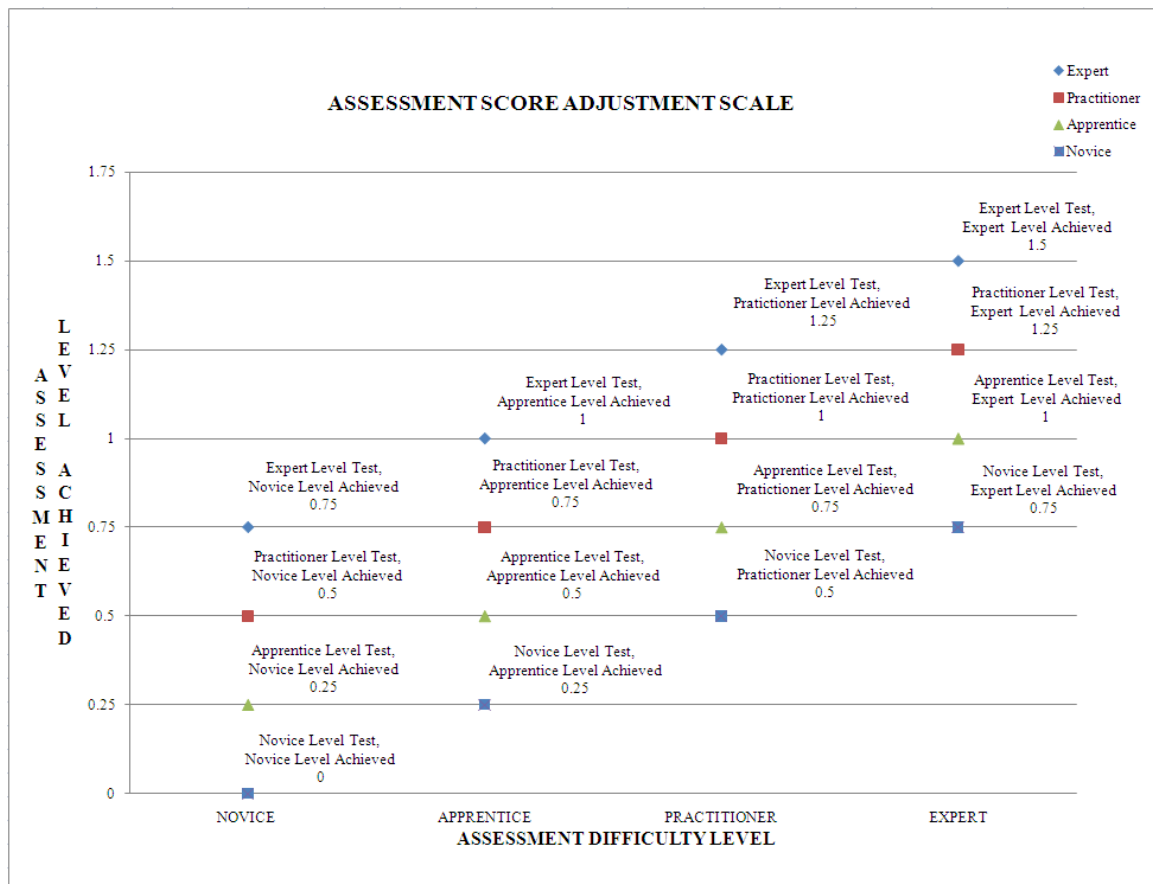


Figure 3. Assessment Score Adjustment Scale as accepted by the panel of experts.

To determine effectiveness or ineffectiveness, the result of the paired sample *t*-tests had to fall below a .05 significance level. Anything above .05 meant there was no significant growth. The varied paired sample *t*-tests were conducted for the ACT results, the ILS results and the Glencoe results, as well as the recoded scores. The results were analyzed and reported without the adjustment score and with the modified score. To further validate the results, Cohen's *d* was calculated for effect size. The purpose behind this determination was to establish effect size practicality.

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study. There was a high transiency rate in the school. This affected the consistency of collecting four years of data from students.

Student scores were only compared or tracked if there were four consecutive years of exposure. Also, being this was a content analysis, some student essays were not available as students took their exams or never participated in the exam due to absence.

Further, with the newly updated FERPA, determining whether students outside the cohort, not exposed to the structured writing curriculum achieved in writing was not able to be established. New legislation passed in 2008 reduced the availability of student information in that official agreements of mutual benefit were the main reason for disclosure to occur. In this way, the instructor's data was the primary source of information.

Lastly, as adolescents are maturing naturally, it is appropriate to recognize that some growth might be attributed to natural cognitive development.

Despite these limitations, students using the studied structured writing program could be measured from a national, state, and marketed standard in that the growth of the students and their response to the proposed program could be measured through the triangulation of the selected tools.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

Determining if a structured writing curriculum enabled students to meet state, national, and marketed expectations was the focus of this study. The study asked:

1. To what degree does a structured writing curriculum impact varying levels of high school student learning in preparing graduating seniors to achieve standardized writing competencies as defined by the Illinois Learning Standards?
 - a. To what extent does a structured writing curriculum address the state expectations of Illinois students?
 - b. To what extent does a structured writing curriculum address national expectations of Illinois students?
 - c. To what extent does a structured writing curriculum address commercially packaged expectations of Illinois students?
2. In what way does historical cognitive learning theory support a structured writing curriculum for the classroom with varying levels of learners?

The applied structured writing curriculum was used as the vehicle by which to determine if a uniform approach addressed the variance in student ability.

Findings

The results of the three testing tools demonstrate a varying level of growth, based on the length of exposure to the structured writing curriculum.

Illinois State Standards (ILS)—State Rubric

The Illinois Learning Standards (ILS) writing rubric was a necessary tool in that the subjects of the study were students of the Illinois system, and the rubric reflected what the Illinois State Board of Education deemed necessary for preparing students for a proper high school education. The ILS writing rubric addressed what the state considered representative of the expectations and needs for students to graduate high school, and be prepared for post-secondary education, and/or the workforce. Paired sample *t*-tests were run at 4 year, 3 year, 2 year and 1 year increments of exposure. Further, Cohen's *d* was calculated to determine if the effect size showed strong or weak practical significance.

Table 6

ILS Results for Paired Sample t-tests

Number of Subjects	Span of Time	Significance resulting from Paired Sample <i>t</i> -test	Cohen's <i>d</i> Results of Effect Size Significance
24	4 years	.007	.60 (medium)
20	3 years	.012	.62 (medium)
23	2 years	.083 (avg. of 2 tests)	.49 (medium)
21	1 year	.803	.06 (small)

ACT—National Rubric

As a nationally accepted assessment, the ACT was a legitimate indicator of student capacity and student success at post-secondary education. The ACT writing rubric, as a metric to evaluate student work, represented the impact of the structured writing curriculum from the expectations of a national rubric. Paired sample *t*-tests were run at 4 year, 3 year, 2 year and 1 year increments of exposure. Further, Cohen's *d* was

calculated to determine if the effect size showed strong or weak practical significance.

Table 7

ACT Results for Paired Sample *t*-tests

Number of Subjects	Span of Time	Significance resulting from Paired Sample <i>t</i> -test	Cohen's <i>d</i> Results of Effect Size Significance
24	4 years	.006	.62 (medium)
20	3 years	.005	.72 (medium)
23	2 years	.168 (avg. of 2 tests)	.40 (medium)
21	1 year	.803	.06 (small)

Glencoe Rubric—Marketed Rubric

Glencoe was a commonly used supplier of textbooks. The content and design of their textbooks and supplementals—like the writing rubric—were a normal reference that would be utilized and applied in classrooms. The Glencoe tool represented the marketed component provided to teachers and their students. The textbooks are heavily prepared and reviewed by experts in their field, and, for this reason, the Glencoe writing rubric was a legitimate measure to determine student writing capability. Paired sample *t*-tests were run at 4 year, 3 year, 2 year and 1 year increments of exposure. Further, Cohen's *d* was calculated to determine if the effect size showed strong or weak practical significance.

Table 8

*Glencoe Results for Paired Sample *t*-tests*

Number of Subjects	Span of Time	Significance resulting from Paired Sample <i>t</i> -test	Cohen's <i>d</i> Results of Effect Size Significance
24	4 years	.013	.55 (medium)
20	3 years	.088	.40 (medium)
23	2 years	.745 (avg. of 2 tests)	.07 (medium)
21	1 year	.358	.20 (small)

Score Adjustment

This study exposed a unique challenge. While the testing tools remained the same, the assessments did not. In the reality of a classroom, assessments change and become more difficult as students progress along their educational career. From a research perspective, the same assessment would be utilized to compare student achievement; however, students do not receive the same exam as a freshman as they do as a senior.

Curricula are often built on the scaffolding of content information. In the case of the structured writing curriculum presented in this study, the scaffold was skill-based. Students do mature cognitively, but the application of skill sets that address recognized standards does not occur naturally. Using of the Rubric to Assess Another Rubric to establish the essay exams' level of difficulty, and then quantifying student achievement resulted in the Assessment Score Adjustment Scale. The expert panel reviewed the adjustment scale. According to the expert panel, quantifying the variance in difficulty was appropriate. The experts shared the following in regard to the Assessment Score Adjustment Scale:

- “By the variance in rigor in the different levels, students in 4 different skill tiers will have exams that challenge them, while still progressing over the course of 4 years” (Panel Expert A).
- The variances between test levels do a nice job of allowing the students “wiggle [room]” (i.e. not asking for perfection) but asking that we can identify progress, said progress can be identified and charted from the beginning until the end” (Panel Expert B).
- It [the scale] seems to address variance by starting students out based upon their level of current understanding and then expecting standard levels of growth across the board” (Panel Expert C).
- “It appears that the ability level is brought into account when assigning scores and determining progress and comprehension. These types of adjustments and considerations are necessary to accurately evaluate progress” (Panel Expert D).
- “It [the scale] is fair and equitable in that it allows progression of learning at an individual level” (Panel Expert E).
- “This scale allows for steady improvements in student test scores. The difficulty level of the tests force students to achieve a higher standard. A student getting an A on an Expert level exam should not have the same value as a student getting an A on a novice exam” (Panel Expert F).

With the scale accepted as a fair means to quantify assessment and skill-level achievement, the inputted scores of the students were re-coded. Paired sample t-tests were run. Table 9, 10, and 11 illustrate the results.

Table 9.

Recoded ILS Results for Paired Sample t -tests

Number of Subjects	Span of Time	Significance resulting from Paired Sample t -test
24	4 years	.000
20	3 years	.000
23	2 years	.000 (avg. of 2 tests)
21	1 year	.000

Table 10.

Recoded ACT Results for Paired Sample t -tests

Number of Subjects	Span of Time	Significance resulting from Paired Sample t -test
24	4 years	.000
20	3 years	.000
23	2 years	.000 (avg. of 2 tests)
21	1 year	.000

Table 11.

Recoded Glencoe Results for Paired Sample t -tests

Number of Subjects	Span of Time	Significance resulting from Paired Sample t -test
24	4 years	.000
20	3 years	.000
23	2 years	.000 (avg. of 2 tests)
21	1 year	.001

The paired sample t-tests with the recoded student results showed that consistently, significant growth occurred.

Historical Cognitive Learning Theory

The results of the structured writing curriculum reflected Vygotsky's (1978) theory on the zone of proximal development. Within the zone, students could learn, students could be reached through aids in instruction, or students were not cognitively able to respond. The writing curriculum focused upon student need through a series of anchoring tools that were continuously referenced. The structured writing curriculum's general approach is captured in Table 14.

Just as Vygotsky(1978) purported, the attention to student limitation allowed for a focused approach of remediation. Using the structured writing curriculum, students adopted formal writing skills, were coached to apply formal writing skills, or were regularly exposed to the writing tools. The exposure allowed for cognitive maturation to eventually understand, adopt and incorporate the tools presented. Having a core group of tools that were than adaptable to a student's skill set allowed individualization to exist even through a structured curriculum. Further, the fact that the structured writing curriculum extended beyond one year, and one focal unit in literature demonstrated the crossover value of the writing skills that were developed. Students were taught skills, not content; students were taught to critically think, and not simply apply structures for isolated assignments. Vygotsky's work recognized, that while students might be at a certain age, it did not assume the student's ability level. Having a structured writing curriculum that scaffolded skills, while at the same time looped skills to reach students who did not grow vertically upon initial exposure, enabled students to improve upon their

writing skills, despite the varied skill level in which they entered the classroom.

Table 12

Zone of Proximal Development and the Proposed Structured Writing Curriculum

ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT			
Vygotsky's Theory	Students learn	Students learn with assistance	Student is not cognitively able to learn
Proposed Structured Writing Curriculum	Teach writing through instruction	<p>Teach writing through instruction and supporting strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driven by four foundational writing points • Anchored through a student created writing map • Communicated through a flexible format approach • Established in form, but independent from topic • Focused on written argument, not on selected answer • Taught in logical sequence of student creation • Centered on teaching critical components of standard writing expectations • Based in skill-building, not content review • Utilized assessments and writing assignments as a way to increase requirements of incorporated skill-building 	<p>Teach writing through instruction and repeated use of supporting strategies until student adopts concepts</p>

Conclusions

Exposure to the structured writing curriculum at 4 year increments did enable students of varied learning levels to meet state, national and marketed expectations. With the exception of the Glencoe rubric representing the marketed standards, students met state and national standards with 3 years of exposure to the structured writing curriculum. Exposure to the structured writing curriculum at a 2 and 1 year level did not show significant improvement. Students responded to the structured writing curriculum as the strategies were incorporated over at least a 3 year span of time. There was no evidence of significant growth when students were exposed to the structured writing curriculum for 2 years or less. A summarization of the results is shown in Table 13.

Using the adjustment scale, all scores were re-coded. Paired sample *t*-tests were run once again. The recoding addressed the fact that because the assessments became increasingly more difficult, there had to be a quantifiable acknowledgement representing such an increase in difficulty. Further, Cohen's *d* was calculated to determine if the effect size showed strong or weak practical significance. The results are indicated in Table 16. Again, the results demonstrated that the structured writing curriculum did impact the students ability to meet state, national and marketed standards.

With the Assessment Score Adjustment Scale applied, the results were even more notable. The national, state, and marketed standards were met with exposure to the structured writing curriculum at 4 year, 3 year, 2 year and 1 year increments of time, thus demonstrating that the structured writing curriculum had a significant impact on the writing skills of varied level learners.

Table 13

Summarization Table of 3 Testing Tools Results

Assessment	Significance Resulting from Paired Sample T-test	Significant
1 Year		
ILS, State	0.803	No
ACT, National	.803	No
Glencoe, Marketed	.358	No
2 Years		
ILS, State	.083 (avg. of 2 tests)	No
ACT, National	.168 (avg. of 2 tests)	No
Glencoe, Marketed	0.745 (avg. of tests)	No
3 Years		
ILS, State	0.012	Yes
ACT, National	0.005	Yes
Glencoe, Marketed	0.088	No
4 Years		
ILS, State	0.007	Yes
ACT, National	0.006	Yes
Glencoe, Marketed	0.013	Yes

Table 14

Summarization Table of 3 Testing Tools with Adjustment Scale Applied

Assessment	Significance Resulting from Paired Sample t-test	d^*	Significant
1 Year			
ILS, State	.000	1.21	Yes
ACT, National	.000	1.21	Yes
Glencoe, Marketed	.001	0.87	Yes
2 Years			
ILS, State	.000	1.68 (avg. of two exams)	Yes
ACT, National	.000	1.45 (avg. of two exams)	Yes
Glencoe, Marketed	.000	1.45 (avg. of two exams)	Yes
3 Years			
ILS, State	.000	2.87	Yes
ACT, National	.000	2.76	Yes
Glencoe, Marketed	.000	2.41	Yes
4 Years			
ILS, State	.000	2.65	Yes
ACT, National	.000	2.59	Yes
Glencoe, Marketed	.000	2.44	Yes

*Cohen's d shows strong effect size practicality at .8 and above.

Implications and Recommendations

The results of the study revealed that with financial constraints on educational institutions, it behooves school districts to consider effective structured writing programs—like the proposed curriculum—that serves the already existing programs of study, rather than replaces the curriculum. A skill-based structured design proves to be an effective means of teaching writing to varied level learners.

For future study, an increase in sample size is recommended to further verify the impact of the structured writing curriculum. Rather than conducting a content analysis, doing a cohort study that included a group of students not exposed to the writing curriculum would provide a valuable data comparison. Additionally, having an initial diagnostic writing sample would assist in characterizing the abilities of the students beyond an entrance score.

Further implication of the study revolves around work with the Assessment Score Adjustment Scale. What often challenges data collection is that when dealing with cognitive maturation and a hierarchical system, there are levels of accomplishment. Tests, however, at the high school level vary from year to year, but are produced by the same manufacturer. For example the freshman EXPLORE test, the sophomore PLAN test, and the junior ACT test are all created by the College Board, a recognized organization for standardized assessments. However, when teachers produce assessments, they do not typically have a standardized test bank. In using the Rubric to Assess Another Rubric and quantifying the increase in difficulty on a point scale through the Assessment Score Adjustment Scale, the uniformity of the rubric in conjunction with the points does allow for a teacher to evaluate the level of difficulty/rigor on a growing scale. The expert panel

recognized that the scale provided an important quantification when reviewing skillsets of freshman through senior year students. While this tool was developed for the purpose of this study, further work with the tool, and its application beyond writing seems appropriate. Consideration should be given to using the tool in teaching teachers how to create assessments that serve standards-based instruction.

The study revealed that a structured writing curriculum can effectively serve students at varied skill levels in writing. The study also resulted in a new tool that scored student achievement levels when applied to assessments of varying difficulty levels. The zone of proximal development, while an older theory, serves teaching methodology today. A student who is at grade level or is able to grasp concepts with assistance is able to learn. When students are cognitively unable to learn because their processing has not caught up to their conceptual understanding, then teachers must employ tools that assist students in scaffolding their skillsets. The results of the study demonstrated that sometimes learning does not occur until two years after a concept has been introduced and then repeatedly applied. With this understanding, scaffolding skillsets is not simply a vertical effort, but one that is built upon a student's own cognitive growth and his or her ability to adopt techniques to bridge the gap between instruction and application.

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APPENDIX A

Illinois State Board of Education

Illinois Learning Standards (ILS)

Writing Rubric (Illinois State Board of Education, 2008a)

Illinois State Board of Education

Illinois Learning Standards (ILS)

Writing Rubric

PERFORMANCE LEVEL =	RANGE +	FREQUENCY +	FACILITY +	DEPTH +	CREATIVITY +	QUALITY
Exceeding	Extensively	Consistently	Automatically	Profoundly	Inventively	Excellently
Meeting	Fully	Usually	Quickly	Deeply	Imaginatively	Well
Approaching	Partially	Occasionally	Haltingly	Cursorily	Commonly	Marginally
Starting	Narrowly	Rarely	Slowly	Superficially	Imitatively	Poorly

Appendix B

ACT Scoring Guidelines (ACT, 2009a)

ACT Scoring Guidelines

These are the descriptions of scoring criteria that the trained readers will follow to determine the score (1–6) for your essay. Papers at each level exhibit *all* or *most* of the characteristics described at each score point.

Score = 6

Essays within this score range demonstrate effective skill in responding to the task.

The essay shows a clear understanding of the task. The essay takes a position on the issue and may offer a critical context for discussion. The essay addresses complexity by examining different perspectives on the issue, or by evaluating the implications and/or complications of the issue, or by fully responding to counterarguments to the writer's position. Development of ideas is ample, specific, and logical. Most ideas are fully elaborated. A clear focus on the specific issue in the prompt is maintained. The organization of the essay is clear: the organization may be somewhat predictable or it may grow from the writer's purpose. Ideas are logically sequenced. Most transitions reflect the writer's logic and are usually integrated into the essay. The introduction and conclusion are effective, clear, and well developed. The essay shows a good command of language. Sentences are varied and word choice is varied and precise. There are few, if any, errors to distract the reader.

Score = 5

Essays within this score range demonstrate competent skill in responding to the task.

The essay shows a clear understanding of the task. The essay takes a position on the issue and may offer a broad context for discussion. The essay shows recognition of complexity by partially evaluating the implications and/or complications of the issue, or by responding to counterarguments to the writer's position. Development of ideas is specific and logical. Most ideas are elaborated, with clear movement between general statements and specific reasons, examples, and details. Focus on the specific issue in the prompt is maintained. The organization of the essay is clear, although it may be predictable. Ideas are logically sequenced, although simple and obvious transitions may be used. The introduction and conclusion are clear and generally well developed. Language is competent. Sentences are somewhat varied and word choice is sometimes varied and precise. There may be a few errors, but they are rarely distracting.

Score = 4

Essays within this score range demonstrate adequate skill in responding to the task.

The essay shows an understanding of the task. The essay takes a position on the issue and may offer some context for discussion. The essay may show some recognition of

complexity by providing some response to counterarguments to the writer's position. Development of ideas is adequate, with some movement between general statements and specific reasons, examples, and details. Focus on the specific issue in the prompt is maintained throughout most of the essay. The organization of the essay is apparent but predictable. Some evidence of logical sequencing of ideas is apparent, although most transitions are simple and obvious. The introduction and conclusion are clear and somewhat developed. Language is adequate, with some sentence variety and appropriate word choice. There may be some distracting errors, but they do not impede understanding.

Score = 3

Essays within this score range demonstrate some developing skill in responding to the task.

The essay shows some understanding of the task. The essay takes a position on the issue but does not offer a context for discussion. The essay may acknowledge a counterargument to the writer's position, but its development is brief or unclear. Development of ideas is limited and may be repetitious, with little, if any, movement between general statements and specific reasons, examples, and details. Focus on the general topic is maintained, but focus on the specific issue in the prompt may not be maintained. The organization of the essay is simple. Ideas are logically grouped within parts of the essay, but there is little or no evidence of logical sequencing of ideas. Transitions, if used, are simple and obvious. An introduction and conclusion are clearly discernible but underdeveloped. Language shows a basic control. Sentences show a little variety and word choice is appropriate. Errors may be distracting and may occasionally impede understanding.

Score = 2

Essays within this score range demonstrate inconsistent or weak skill in responding to the task.

The essay shows a weak understanding of the task. The essay may not take a position on the issue, or the essay may take a position but fail to convey reasons to support that position, or the essay may take a position but fail to maintain a stance. There is little or no recognition of a counterargument to the writer's position. The essay is thinly developed. If examples are given, they are general and may not be clearly relevant. The essay may include extensive repetition of the writer's ideas or of ideas in the prompt. Focus on the general topic is maintained, but focus on the specific issue in the prompt may not be maintained. There is some indication of an organizational structure, and some logical grouping of ideas within parts of the essay is apparent. Transitions, if used, are simple and obvious, and they may be inappropriate or misleading. An introduction and conclusion are discernible but minimal. Sentence structure and word choice are usually simple. Errors may be frequently distracting and may sometimes impede understanding.

Score = 1

Essays within this score range show little or no skill in responding to the task.

The essay shows little or no understanding of the task. If the essay takes a position, it fails to convey reasons to support that position. The essay is minimally developed. The essay may include excessive repetition of the writer's ideas or of ideas in the prompt. Focus on the general topic is usually maintained, but focus on the specific issue in the prompt may not be maintained. There is little or no evidence of an organizational structure or of the logical grouping of ideas. Transitions are rarely used. If present, an introduction and conclusion are minimal. Sentence structure and word choice are simple. Errors may be frequently distracting and may significantly impede understanding.

No Score

Blank, Off-Topic, Illegible, Not in English, or Void

APPENDIX C

Glencoe Writing Rubric (Glencoe Literature, 2007).

Writing Rubric: Writing a Literary Analysis

	Ideas	Organization
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essay demonstrates a complete understanding of the assignment. The essay makes a clear and insightful point about the subject. The essay shows a deep understanding of theme, plot, characterization, and other elements of literary analysis. The essay demonstrates a very clear purpose and focus. The ideas presented in the essay are fully elaborated. The development of the ideas is thorough and perfectly logical. The supporting evidence provides well-chosen direct references from the literary work. The evidence selected and presented provides effective support for the essay's main point. The essay demonstrates a great deal of originality and creativity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essay takes a clear and persuasive position. The opening provides a clear focus for the essay. The focus is clear and effective throughout the essay. Introduction is exceptionally clear, effective, and compelling—it grabs the reader's attention. Presentation of supporting evidence is exceptionally clear and thorough, with details that are explicit and vivid. The sequence of ideas and supporting evidence is exceptionally effective. Transitions provide a seamless progression of ideas. The conclusion very effectively reaffirms the focus.
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essay demonstrates a clear understanding of the assignment. The essay makes a clear point about the subject. The essay shows an understanding of theme, plot, characterization, and other elements of literary analysis. The essay demonstrates a clear purpose and focus. The ideas presented in the essay are elaborated. The development of the ideas is generally thorough and logical. The supporting evidence includes appropriate references from the literary work. The evidence generally supports the essay's main point. The essay shows originality and creativity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essay takes a clear position on the topic. The opening provides a focus for the essay. The focus is maintained throughout the essay. The introduction is clear and effective. Presentation of supporting evidence is clear and complete, with strong details. The sequence of ideas and supporting evidence is generally effective and logical. Transitions provide a progression from point to point. The conclusion reaffirms the focus of the response.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essay demonstrates basic understanding of the assignment. The essay makes a considered point about the subject. The essay shows some understanding of theme, plot, characterization, and other elements of literary analysis. The essay includes a purpose and focus, but it is not always clear. The ideas presented in the essay are explained, but not in great detail. The development of the ideas is mostly complete and generally logical. The supporting evidence includes some references from the literary work. The evidence somewhat supports the essay's main point, but some may be off the subject. The essay shows some originality and creativity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essay takes a position on the topic, but it is not entirely clear and may not be persuasive. The opening generally provides a focus. The focus is generally clear. The introduction is clear and attempts to catch the reader's attention. Presentation of supporting evidence is generally clear and includes details. The sequence of ideas and supporting evidence is generally effective but not always logical. Transitions are used. The conclusion recalls the focus of the response.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essay demonstrates some understanding of the assignment, but it is not complete. The essay suggests a point about the subject, but it is not clear. The essay shows an incomplete or sometimes inaccurate understanding of theme, plot, characterization, and other elements of literary analysis. The essay implies a purpose and focus, but it is rarely clear. The ideas presented in the essay are not completely explained. The development of the ideas is not entirely complete or logical. The supporting evidence includes few references from the literary work. The evidence may be inappropriate to the main point. The essay only occasionally shows originality or creativity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essay seems to take a position on the topic, but it is vague. The opening may not clearly provide a focus. The focus is not always clear. Introduction is not entirely clear or may not include an attempt to catch the reader's attention. Presentation of supporting evidence is generally clear but may lack details. The sequence of ideas and evidence is not always effective or logical. Transitions are not always used. The conclusion may not echo the focus of the response.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essay demonstrates little understanding of the assignment. The essay's point about the subject is unclear or may be missing. The essay shows little or an inaccurate understanding of theme, plot, characterization, and other elements of literary analysis. The essay may have a purpose and focus, but it is not clear. The ideas presented in the essay are not explained or may be inappropriate to the subject. The development of the ideas is generally incomplete and illogical. The supporting evidence includes a few inappropriate references from the literary work. The evidence is mainly inappropriate to the main point. The essay shows little originality or creativity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The position about the topic is not clear. The opening does not provide a focus. The focus is generally unclear. Introduction is not clear and may not include an attention-getter. Presentation of supporting evidence is somewhat unclear and lacks details. The sequence of ideas and evidence is not effective and may be illogical. Transitions are rarely used. The conclusion does not echo the focus of the response.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essay demonstrates no understanding of the assignment. The essay makes no point about the subject. The essay shows no understanding of theme, plot, characterization, and other elements of literary analysis. The essay has no purpose or focus. No ideas about the subject are presented. No references from the literary work are used. No evidence that is appropriate to the essay's main point is presented. The essay shows no originality or creativity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No position about the topic is given. No opening is used. The focus is unclear. Introduction is not clear and does not catch a reader's attention. No supporting evidence is presented. The sequence of ideas and evidence is random. Transitions are not used. No conclusion is given.

Voice	Word Choice & Sentence Fluency	Conventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer's voice is clear, consistent, and sincere throughout the essay. Writer's voice is perfectly attuned to the subject matter of the essay. The writer's voice is exceptionally appropriate to the intended audience of the essay. The essay's tone demonstrates exceptional sensitivity to the piece of literature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The word choice is exceptionally precise and accurate. The word choice is vivid and effective, with lively descriptive words used. When necessary, literary terms are used appropriately and effectively. Sentences vary in length and structure. Ideas are clearly and smoothly connected using transition words and phrases. The essay shows an excellent balance between emotional reflection and reasoned observations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All words are spelled correctly. The essay contains no errors in English usage, grammar, or punctuation. The essay contains no errors in capitalization.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer's voice is consistent and sincere throughout the essay. Writer's voice is appropriate to the subject matter of the essay. The writer's voice is appropriate to the intended audience of the essay. The essay's tone demonstrates sensitivity to the piece of literature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The word choice is generally precise and accurate. The word choice is effective, with descriptive words used. Generally as necessary, literary terms are used appropriately. Sentences vary somewhat in length and structure. Ideas are generally connected using transition words and phrases. The essay shows a good balance between emotional reflection and reasoned observations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almost all words are spelled correctly. The essay contains almost no errors in usage, grammar, or punctuation. The essay contains almost no errors in capitalization.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer's voice is somewhat consistent throughout the essay, but sincerity is not obvious. Writer's voice is generally appropriate to the subject matter of the essay. The writer's voice is generally appropriate to the intended audience of the essay. The essay's tone demonstrates some sensitivity to the piece of literature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word choices reflect thought but are not always precise or accurate. Descriptive phrasing is attempted but is not always effective or relevant. Some literary terms are used, generally appropriately. Sentences vary somewhat in length and structure but could use more variation. Ideas are usually connected using transition words and phrases, but not always. The essay shows some balance between emotional reflection and reasoned observations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some spelling errors occur, but not enough to impede understanding. The essay contains some errors in usage, grammar, or punctuation, but not enough to impede understanding. The essay contains a few errors in capitalization.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writer's voice is not always consistent, and sincerity may be lacking. Writer's voice is not always appropriate to the subject matter. Writer's voice is not always appropriate to the intended audience of the essay. The essay's tone demonstrates only occasional sensitivity to the subject. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word choices reflect thought but are often not precise or accurate. Descriptive phrasing is occasionally attempted but is not effective or is irrelevant. Some literary terms are used, but often not appropriately. Sentences only occasionally vary in length and structure. Ideas are only occasionally connected using transition words and phrases. The essay includes emotional reflection and reasoned observations but is overly reliant on one approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some spelling errors may impede understanding. Errors in usage, grammar, or punctuation may impede understanding at times. Errors in capitalization may intrude on understanding.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writer's voice is generally inconsistent and often insincere. Writer's voice is sometimes inappropriate to the subject matter, but often not. Writer's voice is sometimes inappropriate to the intended audience of the essay. The essay's tone demonstrates little sensitivity to the subject. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word choices are generally not precise or accurate. Descriptive phrasing is rarely used. Sentences and paragraphs may not flow together. Sentences rarely vary in length and structure. Ideas are rarely connected using transition words and phrases. The essay includes only emotional reflection or observation, but not both. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spelling errors impede understanding. Numerous errors in usage, grammar, or punctuation often impede understanding. The essay contains numerous errors in capitalization.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writer's voice is not consistent or sincere. Writer's voice is not appropriate to the subject matter. Writer's voice is not appropriate to the audience. The essay's tone demonstrates no sensitivity to the subject. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word choices are haphazard and inappropriate. Descriptive phrasing is not used. Sentences and paragraphs do not flow together. Sentences do not vary in length and structure. Ideas are not connected using transition words and phrases. The essay includes declarations but no reflection or observation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous spelling errors prevent understanding. Numerous errors in usage, grammar, and punctuation impede understanding. Numerous errors in capitalization impede understanding.

APPENDIX D

Rubric to Assess Another Rubric (Rubric to Assess a PBL or Another Rubric)

Rubric to Assess a PBL or Another Rubric

<http://its.monmouth.edu/facultyresourcecenter/rubrics.htm>

	Novice	Apprentice	Practitioner	Expert
Authenticity	• Content and skills are connected to later use in school only	• Content or skills are somewhat connected to life outside of school	• Content and skills are clearly connected to life outside of school, such as the work world	• Content and skills of tasks are highly relevant by connecting to students' lives right now
Open-Ended	• Tasks has only one correct response	• Task allows limited room for different approaches	• Tasks allows for different approaches based on the same content/skills base	• Task allows students to choose different assessment measures for the task
Complexity	• Task contains different skills mostly lower order	• Tasks contains many different skills and content	• Tasks contains many different skills and content, including higher level thinking	• Task contains many different skills and content, including higher-level thinking • Task contains opportunities for students to choose some of the skills and content
Curricular Connection	• Task is loosely connected to key skills and content in the curriculum	• Task is clearly connected to key skills and content in curriculum	• Task is clearly connected to key skills and content in curriculum • Time frame and scope of task match time frame and scope in the curriculum	• All of Practitioner, plus tasks incorporates the University's GenEd Goals and the program's defined curricular standards

APPENDIX E

Freshman Quarter 1 Assessment

To Freshman Members:

***You Have Learned A lot About Essay Writing. Now It Is Time To Show What You Do Know.
Be Patient. Do Your Best. You Know All of This.***

FOLLOW DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY!!!! THIS IS A PROCESS EXAM. READ THE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY. EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW IS EXPLAINED.

- 1) YOU MUST PRINT
- 2) PUT YOUR NAME IN THE RIGHT HAND CORNER OF EVERY PAGE
- 3) DO NOT USE THE BACK OF YOUR LOOSELEAF

PART I: (this is where the majority of your time should be spent)

You are now writing a complete paper on your own.

I expect a lot from you on this.

Using all your knowledge with *essay* writing, you need to write an essay on ONE of the following stories:

- OPTION A: ***Button, Button*** pg. 588
- OPTION B: ***Initiation*** pg. 267
- OPTION C: ***The Scholarship Jacket*** pg. 126
- OPTION D: ***The Cub*** pg. 315
- OPTION E: ***The Necklace*** pg. 70
- OPTION F: ***Thank You Ma'am*** pg. 373
- OPTION G: ***Snake Boy*** pg. 114
- OPTION H: ***The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*** pg. 36

FIRST You must come up with the topic using the *four writing points*. Keep in mind all the themes and arguments we have produced as a class.

***Brainstrom
Group Like Ideas
Key Terms
Thesis/Claim***

SECOND The essay must contain an *introduction paragraph*, at least 3 *body paragraphs*, and a *conclusion*

Keep in mind ALL of the requirements. You MUST use arrows and put a label in the margins of the paper to direct my attention to your:

- 1) ***Title***
- 2) ***Hook***
- 3) ***Title/author reference***
- 4) ***Brief synopsis***
- 5) ***Claim***
- 6) ***Each Topic Sentence***
- 7) ***Each Quote with proper citation***
- 8) ***Conclusion***

EXTRA CREDIT: Correctly using 5 vocabulary words in your essay will earn you extra credit. Circle your words.

APPENDIX F

Freshman Semester Two/Quarter Four Final Exam

PART II:

Turn in your scantron, and take a book.

Choose one essay topic below:

Remember write on the front side only and PRINT—be neat—thank you. Show all strategy work. I look forward to reading these.

OPTION A:

Consider the following quote:

“But I fear for you young people because you do not understand how strong is the bond of kinship. You do not know what it is to speak with one voice “ (Achebe, pg. 167).

Explain in a well-argued, 5 paragraph essay that includes all the necessary requirements, how this statement acts as a prophecy for the tribe of Umuofia. Remember you must use additional quotes from the book.

OPTION B:

Consider W.B. Yeats’ poem below. Explain in a well-argued, 5 paragraph essay that includes all the necessary requirements, how this poem reflects the evolution of the story *Things Fall Apart*. Remember you must use additional quotes from the book.

The Second Coming by W.B. Yeats

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tides loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of the innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

OPTION C:

In a well argued, 5 paragraph essay that includes all the necessary requirements, explain how and why a series of events showed and ultimately predicted the suicide of Okonkwo. Remember you must use additional quotes from the book.

OPTION D:

In a well-argued, 5 paragraph essay that includes all the necessary requirements, examine Nwoye’s role in the novel and his relationship to his father as it reflects the changing generation, times and society. Remember you must use additional quotes from the book.

OPTION E:

In a well-argued, 5 paragraph essay that includes all the necessary requirements, examine the concept of masculinity and femininity in the novel. Remember you must use additional quotes from the book.

OPTION F:

Explain in a well-argued, 5 paragraph essay that includes all the necessary requirements, how the gradual entry of the British administration into the tribal society and its final takeover of Umuofia was made possible by the introduction of the institutions it brought to the tribes. Remember you must use additional quotes from the book.

Take the essay that you wrote and rewrite each sentence into the format below. Make sure you print it neatly and in pen. For each section you may put in as many sentences as needed with a minimum of one.

CONGRATULATIONS ON STEPPING UP TO THE CHALLENGE AND SHOWING WHAT A STRONG STUDENT YOU ARE!

APPENDIX G

Sophomore Quarter Two/Semester One Final

SECTION II: READ THE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY

The American Literature we have studied ultimately begins with Puritanism and the Great Awakening, followed by the Age of Reason, Romanticism and, to the point we are in right now, transcendentalism. **WRITE A THOUGHTFUL ESSAY** explaining how these literary movements linked to each other moving from the first to the next.

You must use at least 4 quotes from 4 different texts to make your point. Your quotes should support your argument. All the rules of good essay writing apply.

REMEMBER: Focus on what you know—consider how each literary movement flows from one into the other, and go from there. There is a natural progression, locate it, understand it, and make that your claim. I look forward to reading these.

REMEMBER: Hook, title author reference sentence, brief synopsis, claim, topic sentences, quote set up, quote, quote explanation, strong analysis, strong ending—these will all be expected.

PRINT and write on fronts only.

THIS IS THE PROPER ORDER—CREATE YOUR ESSAY UTILIZING THE INFORMATION BELOW

PURITANISM/THE GREAT AWAKENING—focus on making a God-centered society

- Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God pg. 101

AGE OF REASON—focus on logic, reason and rational thinking in society

- The Autobiography of _____ pg. Pg. 109
- Speech in the Virginia Convention pg. 145
- The Declaration of Independence pg. 152
- The Crisis pg. 163

ROMANTICISM—focus on the individual and the emotional

- Dr. Heidegger's Experiment pg. 195
- The Masque of the Red Death pg. 227
- The Raven
- Miriam pg. 242

TRANSCENDENTALISM—focus on the development of the individual beyond the physical

- Self-Reliance pg. 266
- Walden pg. 273

DID YOU WRITE AN ESSAY THAT BEST REFLECTS YOU?

APPENDIX H

Sophomore Quarter Four/Semester Two Final

SECTION II: READ THE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY

HERE IT IS!

We have studied a variety of topics. You also have grown in your insight in reading important literature. As sophomores, you are now better able to see the larger themes and development in literature. In your essays, choose the topic you know you will do well with and best represent and reflect your appreciation and grasp of the knowledge.

CHOOSE TWO TOPICS FROM BELOW. You are creating 5 paragraph essays. One from part I and one from part II—PACE YOURSELF.

REMEMBER: ALL ELEMENTS OF A GOOD PAPER ARE EXPECTED. I also must see **QUOTE BLENDING AND THE TRANSITION STRATEGY** used.

Extra Points will be given you include some literary device (ex. Simile, metaphor, repetition, allusion, etc.

Also do not forget to properly cite and write in the past tense. No “I”, “you”, or “we” voice; use front sides of paper only and PRINT!

Part I.

OPTION A: Analyze the symbolism found throughout the story of *The Catcher in the Rye* and explain how it pushes the story forward.

OPTION B: Explain what Holden’s desire to be the catcher in the rye reveals about him as an individual.

OPTION C: Think about Holden’s vision of the nature of childhood and adulthood. Are the two realms as separate as Holden believes them to be? Where does he fit in?

OPTION D: The novel is structured around Holden’s encounters and interactions with other people. Does any pattern seem to emerge, or does anything change in his interactions as the novel progresses? How do Holden’s encounters with adults, children, women, and his peers evolve as the novel progresses?

OPTION E: Throughout the book, Holden longs for intimacy with other human beings. Discuss the different types of relationships Holden attempts and the different types of intimacy in the book.

OPTION F: Holden often behaves like a prophet or a saint, pointing out the phoniness and wickedness in the world around him. Is Holden as perfect as he wants to be? Are there instances where he is phony and full of hypocrisy? What do these moments reveal about his character and his psychological problems?

Part II.

OPTION A: Explain how the words of the Gettysburg Address are a springboard or starting off point to other documents written by African Americans in the Harlem Renaissance and/or the Civil Rights Movement.

OPTION B: Write a comparative essay on any two authors (ex. Hurston and Baldwin, King and Douglass, Truth and Hurston). Explain the similarities and differences in their messages.

OPTION C: Historically speaking explain how the tone of the writings changed for African-American writers from the early period of Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth to Martin Luther King Jr., Anne Moody, Lorraine Hansberry, Zora Neale Hurston and James Baldwin.

OPTION D: Explain how the role of power and economy play a role in the arguments of Civil War, Harlem Renaissance, and Civil Rights Movement literature.

TEXTS TO CHOOSE FROM:

The Catcher in the Rye

A Horseman in the Sky pg. 329

The Gettysburg Address pg. 340

Untie His Hands pg. 344

Ain't I a Woman pg. 348

Coming of Age in Mississippi pg. 689

I Have a Dream pg. 695

How It Feels to Be Colored Me pg. 785

My Dungeon Shook: Letter to My Nephew pg. 791

A Raisin in the Sun pg. 1046

For the Honors you are welcome to use *LETTER FROM BIRMINGHAM* if you have it.

ADD A ONE PARAGRAPH CRITIQUE OF EACH ESSAY WITH YOUR ANTICIPATED ESSAY GRADES.

I LOOK FORWARD TO GREAT INSIGHT AND ANALYSIS IN YOUR RESPONSES!

APPENDIX I

Junior Quarter Two/Semester One Final

FINAL EXAM SEMESTER 1

BRITISH LITERATURE

You have done a great amount of work this semester. You should be proud of yourself. I do mean that seriously. This final exam is the culmination of twenty weeks of work.

You have traveled from the Anglo-Saxon period to the Medieval period to the Renaissance and to the metaphysical poets of the 1700's. You have traveled over 1700 years in twenty weeks!

You will have to exhibit to me and impress me with your understanding of the nuances of the material and their overarching effect.

You must complete **2 essays** from the material we have covered. Each essay **MUST** include all elements of strong, thoughtful essays. This includes quotes with proper citations. I am looking for depth of content and insight. I completely realize that you are on a limited time frame. Each paragraph requires a minimum of 5 paragraphs from you.

OPTION 1:

Explain how through the Anglo Saxon Period to the Medieval Period to the Renaissance period and onto the metaphysical poets, God has remained not only a political force, but a literary one as seen through his presence in writings from Beowulf until the metaphysical poets.

OPTION 2:

Explain how the protagonist has changed over the historical periods in which we studied. Consider the character of Beowulf, some of Chaucer's characters, Caedmon of Whitby, the poetry topics, King Arthur, etc.

OPTION 3:

Explain how Francis Bacon's piece *Of Studies* and its three types of study (delight, ornament, ability) are reflected through chosen pieces of literature. Identify pieces of literature that reflect these areas. Recognize how they differ in depth and impact.

OPTION 4:

Legends from the Anglo-Saxon period and Medieval period gave readers a hero. Explain what the heroes of these periods possessed. In this one, you must consider the role of everything from Catholicism to valor (courage). Think about Beowulf, possibly, King Arthur, possibly Sir Gawain, Caedmon, others. Create a working definition of hero.

OPTION 5:

Consider the question: Can one person create culture? If so, how have the historical periods you have studied been affected by an individual's contributions. Identify individuals as seen through literature and explain how they created turning points or influences to the literature that followed.

OPTION 6:

The Renaissance is known as the rebirth of culture, art, music, etc. How is this true in consideration of the literature and how it changes from the Anglo-Saxon period to the Medieval Period to the Renaissance to the metaphysical poets.

Using fronts only and print. Remember this is a FORMAL essay and should be treated as such. Remember no personal words like “I” or “you”. Provide quotes and proper intro, body and conclusion paragraphs that is filled with thoughtful analysis.

I truly look forward to reading these, and I expect the understanding that you have demonstrated in class will be demonstrated on your Junior year, first semester final.

Show me what you know. Good luck!

HERE IS WHAT YOU HAVE COVERED. BE IMPRESSED WITH YOURSELF

<i>Beowulf</i>	Pg. 11	From <i>Genesis</i> , Chapter 2-3	pg. 230
<i>Caedmon of Whitby</i>	pg. 23	From I <i>Corinthians</i> , Chapter 13	pg. 232
<i>The Seafarer</i>	pg. 29	<i>Song</i>	pg. 237
<i>Sir Patrick Spens</i>	pg. 44	<i>A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning</i>	pg. 238
<i>Bonnie George Campbell</i>	pg. 45	<i>Holy Sonnet 4</i>	pg. 240
<i>Bonny Barbara Allan</i>	pg. 46	<i>Holy Sonnet 6</i>	pg. 241
<i>Get Up and Bar the Door</i>	pg. 47	<i>Holy Sonnet 10</i>	pg. 241
<i>The Canterbury Tales</i>	pg. 51	<i>Virtue</i>	pg. 245
<i>The Pardoner's Tale</i>	pg. 74	<i>Easter Wings</i>	pg. 246
<i>Morte d. Arthur</i>	pg. 81	<i>The Garden</i>	pg. 247
<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i>	pg. 87	<i>The Retreat</i>	pg. 251
<i>My Galley Charged with Forgetfulness</i>	pg. 120	<i>On My First Son</i>	pg. 254
<i>Whoso List to Hunt</i>	pg. 120	<i>Song: To Celia</i>	pg. 254
From <i>The Faerie Queene</i>	pg. 125	<i>To the Memory of my Beloved Master,</i> <i>William Shakespeare</i>	pg. 255
<i>Sonnet 26</i> [Sweet is the rose]	pg. 125		
<i>Sonnet 67</i> [Like as a huntsman]	pg. 126	<i>It Is Not Growing like a Tree</i>	pg. 257
<i>Sonnet 75</i> [One day I wrote her name Upon the strand]	pg. 126	<i>Queen and Huntress</i>	pg. 257
<i>Sonnet 79</i> [Men call you fair]	pg. 127	<i>To the Virgins, to Make much of Time</i>	pg. 259
<i>Sonnet 31</i> [With how sad step, O Moon]	pg. 129	<i>An Ode for Him</i> (Ben Jonson)	pg. 260
<i>Sonnet 39</i> [Come, Sleep! O Sleep]	pg. 129	<i>The Constant Lover</i>	pg. 261
<i>The Passionate Shepherd to His Love</i>	pg. 132	<i>Why So Pale and Wan</i>	pg. 262
<i>The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd</i>	pg. 132	<i>To Althea, from Prison</i>	pg. 262
<i>Sonnet 18</i> [Shall I compare thee to a ..]	pg. 136	<i>To Lucasta, on Going to the Wars</i>	pg. 263
<i>Sonnet 29</i> [When in disgrace with fortune]	pg. 137	<i>Shall I, Wasting in Despair</i>	pg. 264
<i>Sonnet 30</i> [When the sessions of sweet]	pg. 137	<i>On His Having Arrived at the Age of 23</i>	pg. 266
<i>Sonnet 73</i> [The time of year thou ..]	pg. 138	<i>On His Blindness</i>	pg. 267
<i>Sonnet 116</i> [Le me not to the marriage..]	pg. 138		
<i>Sonnet 130</i> [My mistress' eyes are nothing]	pg. 139		
<i>Tell Me Where is Fancy Bred?</i>	Pg. 140		
<i>Under the Greenwood Tree</i>	pg. 141		
<i>Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind</i>	pg. 141		
<i>It Was a Lover and His Lass</i>	pg. 142		
<i>Fear No More the Heat o' the Sun</i>	pg. 143		
<i>Macbeth</i>	pg. 149		
<i>Of Studies</i>	pg. 226		
<i>The King James Bible</i>	pg. 228		
<i>Psalm 8</i>	pg. 22		

APPENDIX J

Junior Quarter Four/Semester Two Final

BRITISH LITERATURE FINAL JUNIOR YEAR

This has been an exceptional year of learning. Your ability to hypothesize, claim and prove has shown your ability to further grasp college level thinking, understanding, and positing in order to drawn conclusion that effectively explain the role of you in the greater world.

As students of an American classroom, you are asked to connect and appreciate the contribution of the English people as it impacts the larger society.

Charles Darwin, and English biologist, developed the theory of survival of the fittest. It is defined as:

1. “a struggle for life in which only those organisms best adapted to existing conditions are able to survive and reproduce.”
2. “those who are eliminated in the struggle for existence are the unfit.”

Random House Unabridged Dictionary, Copyright © 1997, by Random House, Inc., on Infoplease.

So the question arises:

Does survival of the fittest apply in considering the development of the British people as their literature and all you have studied suggest?

Consider:

“What does the word “survival” mean in the greater scheme of life?”

“What does the word “fittest” mean in the greater scheme of life?”

Consider the Anglo-Saxon period and its movement towards land and the development of language in trying to grasp power. What about the Dark Ages, its brutality, and the rise of the Church’s power? How about the Renaissance period where war existed but the period became known for its art, music, literature—the people no longer exist, nor do many of the power structures, but the influence still does. Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* represents the flaw of man and his misunderstanding of power—where does this fit it? The parody *Lord of the Flies* further demonstrates power and control change along with an individual’s identity; children struggle for power as they have been taught to, until the adult presence resets the identity and power roles. The novel leaves you with the question “If the children are saved from corruption by the adults, then who saves the adults from corruption?”

In a thoughtful, provocative essay, FOLLOWING ALL THE ESSAY RULES, write an essay that proves your understanding of survival of the fittest in terms of cultural, societal, global development and sustainability as witnessed through the literature of the English people.

In thinking about your position, consider:

- 1) Where does the conflict of good vs. evil in *Beowulf* fit it? Did survival of the fittest play out here?
- 2) What about in the King Arthur works?
- 3) The poetry of the Elizabethan Age—it still exists today and inspires new poetry—what do they focus on—and does that follow along with the theory of survival of the fittest?
- 4) Think about *Vanity Fair*(pg. 282)
- 5) What about *Macbeth* and his understanding of survival of the fittest?

- 6) How about the whole small island symbol of *Lord of the Flies*, and how it represents the corruption of society as a whole. Does Jack dominate in the end? What kind of boy is he? Does Ralph dominate in the end? What kind of boy is he?
- 7) Finally, you should remember all of this eventually builds to creating a movement that calls for a group of English to separate and come to America. What does this mean?

This is a difficult essay—but fair. It encompasses all of your in depth discussions, readings, and all the work, then it asks you to compile your thinking over the course of the year into a cohesive essay that truly allows you to decide:

“What does survival of the fittest mean when looking back through English history?”

Introduction

Body paragraph 1:

Body Paragraph 2:

Body Paragraph 3:

Body Paragraph 4:

Body Paragraph 5:

Body Paragraph 6 [Regular]:

Body Paragraph 7 [Honors]:

Body Paragraph 8 [Advanced Placement]:

Conclusion:

Intro example:

Throughout English history, man struggled to create identity. Through war, art, music, science or literature, individuals have tried to carve out a place in time that would allow them to survive and leave a legacy for the ages. Charles Darwin, an English biologist, put forth a theory that claimed that survival was for the fittest. When looking through the literature that represents England, survival of fittest (can/cannot) be proven.

Remember, you need to use quotes and citations. You can use more than one piece per period. Yes, it does say 8 body paragraphs. You are allowed to use your Bedford Readers’s as well, as long as the writer is English.

Your conclusion needs to show an understanding that ties all parts of the literature together.

Honestly, I look forward to reading your essays. This has been an inspiring year of learning. Your potential for understanding and your growth as scholars is wonderful to witness. Do a great job, because it represents you. You are almost at Senior Year.

My best,

██████████

AP Junior Advanced Placement English Language and Composition

Final Exam Semester 1

In addition, you have rhetorically worked through many works that include all those listed from the original sheet and

- Marrying Absurd
- Black Men and Public Space
- Body Rituals Among the Nacirema
- Girl
- The Singer Solution to World Poverty
- I Have a Dream
- Shooting an Elephant
- A Modest Proposal
- Salvation

If rhetoric is the art of writing and speaking, explain what would make any of the literature we have studied examples of good rhetoric. In a thoughtful, provocative rhetorical analysis, identify and articulate the mode by which the author constructs his/her essay. Examine what rhetorical elements he/she uses and why they are effective. Consider the language choices and the tone of the piece. Incorporate quotes and quote analysis to buttress your point. I am looking for an esoteric response to the idea of what makes rhetoric powerful?

APPENDIX K

Senior Quarter 2/Semester One Final

WORLD LITERATURE [ALL LEVELS]--FINAL EXAM SEMESTER I

This semester we have had in-depth discussions on the nature of humanity. Its origins, its motivation, its complexity and its conflicts resonate throughout the literature of the world. Beginning from a religious perspective there has been a call for acknowledgement and dignity. Individuals struggle with their existence to themselves and their presence to the world. Whether it be through caste and a societal hierarchy, a disregard for human life, or the guilt that drives a person to live an altered life, the world is not so different, as, regardless of the nation, regardless of the belief system, regardless of the economic and educational background, there is struggle, and it is that struggle that makes them part of the oppressed or oppressor equation. No one wants to be oppressed, but no one wants to admit to wanting to be an oppressor—yet it is the state by which people strive. It is with this conclusion that you must examine world literature in its truest sense. The Brazilian educational thinker, Paulo Friere wrote in his famous book “Pedagogy of the Oppressed”:

The oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom. Freedom would require them to eject this image and replace it with autonomy and responsibility. Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift. It must be pursued constantly and responsibly. Freedom is not an ideal located outside of man; nor is it an idea which becomes myth. It is rather the indispensable condition for the quest for human completion...

The oppressed suffer from the duality which has established itself in their innermost being. They discover that without freedom they cannot exist authentically. Yet, although they desire authentic existence, they fear it. They are at one and the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalized. The conflict lies in the choice between being wholly themselves or being divided; between ejecting the oppressor within or not ejecting them; between human solidarity or alienation; between following prescriptions or having choices; between being spectators or actors; between acting or having the illusion of acting through the action of the oppressors; between speaking out or being silent, castrated in their power to create and re-create, in their power to transform the world. This is the tragic dilemma of the oppressed which their education must take into account.

Considering the words of Paulo Friere, critically analyze the texts that you have read this semester. Consider the conversations, the analyses, and the essays that you have produced that dissect and peel apart the literature. Using a minimum of three texts, and using Paulo Friere's explanation of humanity's struggle, examine and explain how mankind fights with their identity.

**DO MEN OR WOMEN ULTIMATELY STRIVE TO BE AN OPPRESSOR IN
SOCIETY?**

In this I expect your text choice to reflect a true understanding of a character and their dilemma in relation to their society. Do not get caught up in little comparisons. I am looking for you to acknowledge the WHOLE struggle of a character or the WHOLE purpose of a story, not a minor piece of it. A good essay will reflect an understanding of what Friere is saying while making DIRECT reference to his words, it will then articulate this understanding poetically through the examination of texts. Do not minimize the argument. Ask yourself: What are the themes that echo throughout each piece? What characters reflect the conflict between the true self and the persona that is projected? What is the impact of the altered persona? Consider what has been read carefully.

I look forward to reading these essays because I anticipate depth of thought, clarity of presentation, craftsmanship in writing, and, most of all, a collegiate grasp on English interpretation.

Respectfully,

██████████

APPENDIX L

Senior Quarter Four/Semester Two Final [All Levels]

FINAL EXAM:
Senior Year 2006-2007
[REDACTED] WORLD LITERATURE

Dear [REDACTED] scholars:

I give you your final in the form of a letter. Some of you own the word “scholar”; others of you wish to disown it as knowledge makes you uncomfortable, and then there are some who have yet to accept what it means to see knowledge as a good attribute to possess. World Literature has called upon you to become citizens of the world. You must not simply be told what you need to think, but understand why reading, writing, and, above all else, active thinking are just as important as learning how to dress, talk and act. Because without thinking to dress the soul that you are growing into, you are simply exposed to the world, unarmed, without defense, naked, without protection, without simply knowing, and that is the power of what you do in your education. You do not simply meet the deadlines, answer the questions, and write the essays, you ready yourself.

So while we have so many good memories, and we have grown in mind and goal, you are your own person, you are your own inspiration and how powerful that inspiration is, is yet to be determined. So in the last words that you will leave to me, write an essay—thoughtful, of course—formal, of course—and articulate the critical nature of the study of world literature. Starting with religion and then moving through community and identity—that is the very path that you have taken. You have started with your beliefs, participated as a member of this learning community called the [REDACTED] and in so going, have become a young man or young woman who is developing their identity. World literature is a prescription of thinking. Utilizing any and all material at your disposal, formulate an essay that answers the question, **If the world consisted of a person’s neighborhood, is that world big enough?** Explain how or how not the boundaries of one’s neighborhood in reference to the scope of the world does or does not enable an individual to become an effective citizen. Examine this through the lens of literature. Prove your point utilizing pieces of literature to show how the learned perspective of others enhances or limits one’s thinking, and how literature broadens or reduces the breadth of one’s soul.

As you write, reflect. As you write, analyze. As you write, explain. Your conclusion answers the question of whether you can function beyond the steps of your house, the block on your street and the walls of a building that you at this very moment center your lives around. I look forward to reading your formal essays that has a minimum of 3 body paragraphs, and even more, I look forward to the language, deliberation and analysis that you will share.

Proud, hopeful, and anxious for you and your future,

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

APPENDIX M

Essay Exams with Determined Difficulty Level Indicated

YEAR	EXAM TOPIC	ASSESSMENT PERIOD	EVALUATED CATEGORY
Freshman	<p>Write an essay on <u>ONE</u> of the following stories:</p> <p>OPTION A: <i>Button, Button</i> pg. 588</p> <p>OPTION B: <i>Initiation</i> pg. 267</p> <p>OPTION C: <i>The Scholarship Jacket</i> pg. 126</p> <p>OPTION D: <i>The Cub</i> pg. 315</p> <p>OPTION E: <i>The Necklace</i> pg. 70</p> <p>OPTION F: <i>Thank You Ma'am</i> pg. 373</p> <p>OPTION G: <i>Snake Boy</i> pg. 114</p> <p>OPTION H: <i>The Secret Life of Walter Mitty</i> pg. 36</p>	November 2003	Apprentice
Freshman	<p>Choose one:</p> <p>OPTION A: Consider the following quote: “But I fear for you young people because you do not understand how strong is the bond of kinship. You do not know what it is to speak with one voice “ (Achebe, pg. 167). Explain how this statement acts as a prophecy for the tribe of Umuofia.</p> <p>OPTION B: Consider W.B. Yeats’ poem <i>The Second Coming</i>. Explain how this poem reflects the evolution of the story <i>Things Fall Apart</i>.</p> <p>OPTION C: Explain how and why a series of events showed and ultimately predicted the suicide of Okonkwo.</p> <p>OPTION D: Examine Nwoye’s role in the novel and his relationship to his father as it reflects the changing generation, times and society.</p> <p>OPTION E: Examine the concept of masculinity and femininity in the novel.</p> <p>OPTION F: Explain how the gradual entry of the British administration into the tribal society and its final takeover of Umuofia was made possible by the introduction of the institutions it brought to the tribes.</p>	June 2004	Practitioner
Sophomore	Explain how the literary movements of Puritanism, the Great Awakening, the Age of Reason, Romanticism and transcendentalism linked to each other.	January 2005	Practitioner
Sophomore	<p>CHOOSE ONE FROM EACH SECTION:</p> <p>PART I:</p> <p>OPTION A: Analyze the symbolism found throughout the story of <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> and explain how it pushes the story forward.</p> <p>OPTION B: Explain what Holden’s desire to be the catcher in the rye reveals about him as an individual.</p> <p>OPTION C: Think about Holden’s vision of the</p>	June 2005	Practitioner

nature of childhood and adulthood. Are the two realms as separate as Holden believes them to be? Where does he fit in?

OPTION D: The novel is structured around Holden's encounters and interactions with other people. Does any pattern seem to emerge, or does anything change in his interactions as the novel progresses? How do Holden's encounters with adults, children, women, and his peers evolve as the novel progresses?

OPTION E: Throughout the book, Holden longs for intimacy with other human beings. Discuss the different types of relationships Holden attempts and the different types of intimacy in the book.

OPTION F: Holden often behaves like a prophet or a saint, pointing out the phoniness and wickedness in the world around him. Is Holden as perfect as he wants to be? Are there instances where he is phony and full of hypocrisy? What do these moments reveal about his character and his psychological problems?

Part II.

OPTION A: Explain how the words of the Gettysburg Address are a springboard or starting off point to other documents written by African Americans in the Harlem Renaissance and/or the Civil Rights Movement.

OPTION B: Write a comparative essay on any two authors (ex. Hurston and Baldwin, King and Douglass, Truth and Hurston). Explain the similarities and differences in their messages.

OPTION C: Historically speaking explain how the tone of the writings changed for African-American writers from the early period of Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth to Martin Luther King Jr., Anne Moody, Lorraine Hansberry, Zora Neale Hurston and James Baldwin.

OPTION D: Explain how the role of power and economy play a role in the arguments of Civil War, Harlem Renaissance, and Civil Rights Movement literature.

CHOOSE TWO:

Junior

OPTION 1: Explain how through the Anglo Saxon Period to the Medieval Period to the Renaissance period and onto the metaphysical poets, God has remained not only a political force, but a literary one as seen through his presence in writings from Beowulf until the metaphysical poets.

January 2006

Practitioner

OPTION 2: Explain how the protagonist has changed over the historical periods in which we studied. Consider the character of Beowulf, some of Chaucer's characters, Caedmon of Whitby, the poetry topics, King Arthur, etc.

OPTION 3: Explain how Francis Bacon's piece *Of Studies* and its three types of study (delight, ornament, ability) are reflected through chosen pieces of literature. Identify pieces of literature that reflect these areas. Recognize how they differ in depth and impact.

OPTION 4: Legends from the Anglo-Saxon period and Medieval period gave readers a hero. Explain what the heroes of these periods possessed. In this one, you must consider the role of everything from Catholicism to valor (courage). Think about Beowulf, possibly, King Arthur, possibly Sir Gawain, Caedmon, others. Create a working definition of hero.

OPTION 5: Consider the question: Can one person create culture? If so, how have the historical periods you have studied, been affected by an individual's contributions. Identify individuals as seen through literature and explain how they created turning points or influences to the literature that followed.

OPTION 6: The Renaissance is known as the rebirth of culture, art, music, etc. How is this true in consideration of the literature and how it changes from the Anglo-Saxon period to the Medieval Period to the Renaissance to the metaphysical poets.

ADDITIONAL FOR AP STUDENTS:

If rhetoric is the art of writing and speaking, explain what would make any of the literature we have studied examples of good rhetoric. In a thoughtful, provocative rhetorical analysis, identify and articulate the mode by which the author constructs his/her essay.

Junior	"What does survival of the fittest mean when looking back through English history?"	June 2006	Expert
Senior	Do men or women ultimately strive to be an oppressor in society?	January 2007	Expert
Senior	If the world consisted of a person's neighborhood, is that world big enough?	June 2007	Expert

APPENDIX N

Expert Panel Handout for Proposed Assessment Score Adjustment Scale

Degree of Difficulty Determination

Utilizing the same rubric from before, can variance between test levels that share the same rubric be measured?

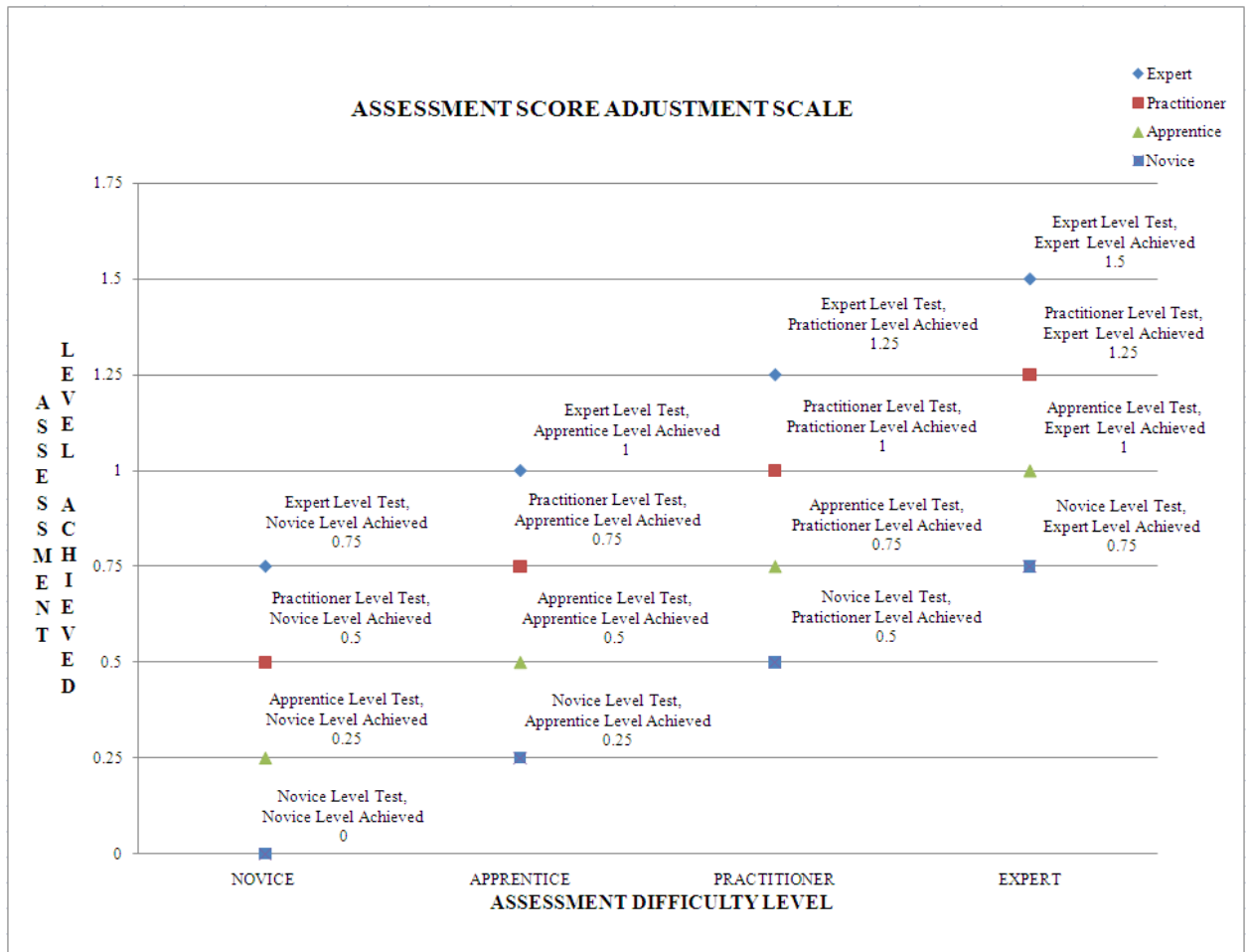
Assessment Rubric:

Rubric to Assess a PBL or Another Rubric

<http://its.monmouth.edu/facultyresourcecenter/rubrics.htm>

	Novice	Apprentice	Practitioner	Expert
Authenticity	• Content and skills are connected to later use in school only	• Content or skills are somewhat connected to life outside of school	• Content and skills are clearly connected to life outside of school, such as the work world	• Content and skills of tasks are highly relevant by connecting to students' lives right now
Open-Ended	• Tasks has only one correct response	• Task allows limited room for different approaches	• Tasks allows for different approaches based on the same content/skills base	• Task allows students to choose different assessment measures for the task
Complexity	• Task contains different skills mostly lower order	• Tasks contains many different skills and content	• Tasks contains many different skills and content, including higher level thinking	• Task contains many different skills and content, including higher-level thinking • Task contains opportunities for students to choose some of the skills and content
Curricular Connection	• Task is loosely connected to key skills and content in the curriculum	• Task is clearly connected to key skills and content in curriculum	• Task is clearly connected to key skills and content in curriculum • Time frame and scope of task match time frame and scope in the curriculum	• All of Practitioner, plus tasks incorporates the University's GenEd Goals and the program's defined curricular standards

On the graph below, the degree of difficulty between each test is suggested.



The explanation for your consideration:

Students are taught from the level of Novice (0). Through four years of instruction, their skill set is intended to move them to Expert (1.50) status. The “0” to “1.50” range accounts for four years of instruction, with .25 increments of growth; some levels share a scale score (i.e. Apprentice Level Test/Novice Level Achieved, .25 and Novice Level Test/Apprentice Level Achieved, .25) so growth is equitable. The chart above posits that variance in difficulty can be quantified.

For instance,

- “B” on a Novice level test is represented by .5
- “B” on an Apprentice level test is represented by .75
- “B” on a Practitioner level test is represented by 1
- “B” on an Expert level test is represented by 1.25

Therefore, a student score can be replaced with the adjusted scale score to determine his/her true level of proficiency.

Ie.

Level of Assessment	Score Achieved by Student	Re-coded score	Growth Percentage
Novice	A (Expert)	.75	50%
Novice	B (Practitioner)	.50	33%
Novice	C (Apprentice)	.25	17%
Novice	D (Novice)	0	0%

Where your assistance is needed:

- 1) Does the “Assessment Score Adjustment Scale” address variance in difficulty between test levels?

- 2) Explain why or why not.

Your contribution to this project is greatly appreciated.

My best,



