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Writing, Collaborating, and Cultivating: Building Writing Self-efficacy and Skills Through a Student-centric, Student-led Writing Center

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WRITING, COLLABORATING, AND CULTIVATING: BUILDING WRITING
SELF-EFFICACY AND SKILLS THROUGH A STUDENT-CENTRIC,
STUDENT-LED WRITING CENTER
by
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Signature Page

Acknowledgments

Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do.

Albert Bandura, 1977

Bandura's theory stresses observation, modeling, and reliance on a guide to help the learner and grow. I leaned on Bandura's theories often throughout the past four years, and I have many to thank for allowing me to observe their classrooms, for being my best-practices models, and for guiding me to success.

This milestone would not have been possible without the support of family. First, I want to thank my husband, Chris. Thank you for your patience, your understanding, and your guidance. Your belief in me matters and is often the lighthouse I navigate towards when I'm in the dark sea of research. I appreciate all that you do for me every day! To my sons and their partners, Dustin and Maya, Brady and Meghan, I began to pursue education as a career because of all you taught me. Each time I work with a student, I think of you and what I would want a teacher to do for you. Thank you, family, for keeping me going towards my goals, for workout dates, for coffee talks, and for our monthly BFF (Barton Family Fun) outings. You keep me grounded and rejuvenated.

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To my supportive principals, Mr. Robert Horn and Mr. Keith Ball, I thank you. You both have graciously given precious space for the writing center in the heart of the Etowah campus. Your support of the student leadership and your support of my research allows the writing center to thrive. I am also forever indebted to you Mr. Ball, for making my dream of achieving my doctoral degree a reality. You took a chance on me as a new teacher with a newly minted bachelor's degree and teaching certificate; then, you supported the growth of my career every step of the way. In fact, you inspired me to leap

to a higher degree. It was a little comment that you made to me in the hall, after a particularly rough first week as a new teacher, that united a dream of mine to an achievable goal. "Dr. Barton, how's it going?" you called out and stopped to listen to what I had to say. When I reminded you that I was a long way from being a Dr. Barton, you told me "put it out there Barton, and it will happen." When I returned four years later to ask for your support of my doctoral research proposal, your enthusiasm for the writing center buoyed me to towards the future and towards the creating of a peer-tutoring world that thrives on the Etowah campus.

Dedications

I dedicate this work to all the students of Etowah High School. May you always find the WACC to be a place where you can go and feel welcomed and supported. To my student directors Aubrey Gerber, Spencer Hayes, and Anna Henderson, this research would not have been possible without you! Your dedication to leading our writing center and serving our Etowah community amazes me.

To my beloved WACC family, both present and past, this work is a direct result of your leadership and sacrifice. Whether the memory of your graduation day fades in the distance or shines shortly, I hope that as you continue your life's journeys that you carry with you the knowledge of just what a legacy your leadership and sacrifice continue to provide our community.

Finally, to my AP Lang students who were the basis for this study, thank you for willingly participating; I am forever indebted to you. Your support for me and my research over the past seven months overwhelms me at times. From cheering me on through national and state presentations of our work, from taking time to check in on my progress towards my goals, you make me proud to represent *you* and *your s*chool. Although icebergs often loom in our path, we have found the best way to navigate the waters is to move *#forward*. Thank you, Class of 2019.

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ABSTRACT

WRITING, COLLABORATING, AND CULTIVATING: BUILDING WRITING
SELF-EFFICACY AND SKILLS THROUGH A STUDENT-CENTRIC,
STUDENT-LED WRITING CENTER
by

Heather J. Barton

This quantitative study examined the effectiveness that a peer-tutoring model facilitated through a writing center has on student writing self-efficacy and writing skills. Students completed a pre-survey of beliefs and attitudes towards writing and a pre-assessment of writing before embarking on a unit of study that required students to utilize the writing process, including extensive revision. During the writer's workshop class time, students in the experiment group were assigned to attend three peer-tutoring sessions with a trained writing center tutor. After completing the writing task assigned, all students completed the post-survey of beliefs and attitude towards writing. The post-survey and the polished writing task were compared with the pre-survey and pre-assessment to assess the effectiveness of the peer-tutoring model. Findings suggest that the model does increase writing self-efficacy and writing skills. Further expansion of the research population into a wide variety of instructional settings as well as an examination into the effect of a writing center peer-tutoring model on varied demographics might allow schools to examine the secondary school writing center model as an efficient way in which to promote a student body's growth in writing literacy.

KEY WORDS: Writing self-efficacy, help-seeking behaviors, the writing process, writing center, peer tutoring.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

English teachers often lament the juggling that occurs within a writing-centric classroom, but for me, the juggling of activities, curriculum, and feedback left me feeling as if I was shortchanging my students and their education. I knew that students needed time to write often, but I struggled to give away precious instructional time to allow students to write; I knew that students thrived when writing in a classroom that embraces the writing process stages, but I struggled moving beyond a one-draft approach to writing. In fact, I found that I spent hours upon hours poring over student drafts, providing what I thought was useful feedback that students would incorporate into their writing without any involvement of the student within the feedback cycle. I handed back the drafts and conferenced with each student, but the lack of involving the student in the feedback process led to a failure of the connection between my feedback and the student's growth. The less than compelling experience of process writing in my classroom led me to search for a way to empower my students as the owners of their writing process all while creating a writing-centric classroom environment that cultivated a feedback-rich writing culture.

Statement of the Problem

Building self-efficacy in writing requires time and patience on the part of an educator and time on task for the student learner. With the demands on classroom time always growing, and the added complication of including the learning of standards other than writing, the growth of the writer often falters. These pressures lead educators to assign writing that does little to support the building of process writing skills. As a result,

I searched for an instructional strategy that embraces the growth of self-efficacy and writing skills through a process approach to writing.

Research Questions

- **Research question one (RQ1):** Is there a significant difference in student's self-efficacy for writing between those who receive peer tutor feedback and those who do not?

- **Research question two (RQ2):** Is there a significant difference in student's synthesis and argumentative writing skills between those who receive peer tutor feedback and those who do not?

Purpose and Significance of the Study

Writing evolves through the removal of isolation during the writing process, especially when shifted towards a process that prioritizes the sharing of ideas and expressing needs with others (Boscolo & Gelati, 2013; Hidi & Boscolo, 2006; Prior, 2006). Thus, Prior (2006) states that "all writing is collaborative, involving divisions of labor and forms of coauthorship" (p. 58). With writing moving away from one task, one draft, one conversation between teacher and student, the shift in how educators perceive a writing task must change. Teachers and students must communicate throughout the process of writing, especially when the assessment shifts away from a grade at the end and commences when the action of the writing process begins. Assessment of writing also helps students increase writing proficiency when given in connection with time to discuss with peers and teachers, followed by a period of revision. Thus, through consistent, formative feedback between the writer, peers, and the teacher, writing skills increase while also simultaneously supporting the writer's self-efficacy.

With the removal of the isolation and a classroom focus on the building of a writing process culture, the constraint of instructional time becomes more than apparent. How do we move past the limitations of time when we provide the space to write? As a result, this study will determine the role that formative peer-feedback plays in the development of writing self-efficacy and writing skills when employed via a writing center model.

Local Context

This quantitative study compares the writing skills and writing self-efficacy of 71 students in my Junior Advanced Placement English Language (AP Lang) and Composition classes. All students completed a Self-Efficacy and Writing (SEWS) survey and completed a pre-writing assessment. Then, students participated in an interactive introduction to rhetorical writing and received support from me during the process of producing a post-writing assessment based on a given writing prompt. Half of the students received further intervention by participating in peer-tutoring sessions within the school's established writing center. The sessions follow established protocols (Appendix J) of peer-tutoring in writing with the goal of helping students to continue to improve their rhetorical writing skills. The protocols establish a routine that tutors follow from the inception of the appointment with the client (in this instance, participant), the collaborative session in which the tutor and client work together towards an established goal, and the conclusion of the session complete with takeaways for continued improvement of writing skills. Finally, students completed a post-SEWS survey and post-writing assessment. The writing assessment, evaluated by a team of the researcher and

two AP Language colleagues, used established assessment protocols to ensure inter-rater reliability.

Positionality

I am the teacher of record for all of the participants in the study, and I have served in my role as a teacher at this school for eight years. I believe that the key to student success in our high-stakes culture includes a supportive writing-centric classroom that not only provides students with feedback but also provides different methods for students to access feedback within their Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978).

Because of my belief in the benefits of a feedback-rich writing culture, I researched, proposed, and piloted a secondary writing center at my school that opened in August of 2015, the third such secondary writing center in the state. During the 2015-2016 school year and the 2016-2017 school year, I worked to build leadership capacity within the student tutors to model and implement effective peer-tutoring protocols, built an environment that supports students throughout the writing process, and strived to make the center a go-to location for those seeking support during the process of writing.

Conceptual Framework

Vygotsky (1978), a pioneer in the field of sociocultural theory of learning, believed that development of skills principally takes place through a form of apprenticeship learning. In education, the apprenticeship model involves interaction with teachers and peers; the ultimate goal of this model supports the moving of students through their zone of proximal development (ZPD) with guidance as needed during the learning process. Social cognitive theorist Albert Bandura (Pajares & Valiante, 2006), further hypothesized that learners play an integral part in facilitating what they are to

learn. He believed that what students felt about their abilities, good or bad, determines the

level of success the student achieves. The belief in one's abilities directly relates to the

risks a learner willingly seeks as a means to improve skills acquisition. Pajares &

Valiante (2006) further quantify this argument by stating that self-efficacy determines the

level of engagement or disengagement, a student applies to a given task. If the learner

feels that the task is one in which he/she demonstrates proficiency, the learner exerts

more effort towards the task. Conversely, if a student lacks efficacy within a particular

task, he/she will assume that the task is hard before even attempting to try the introduced

skill. With a lowered sense of efficacy, the learner creates a circular pattern that leads to

an emotional lowering of writing self-efficacy because of an avoidance of a skill

perceived as too challenging.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework Illustration
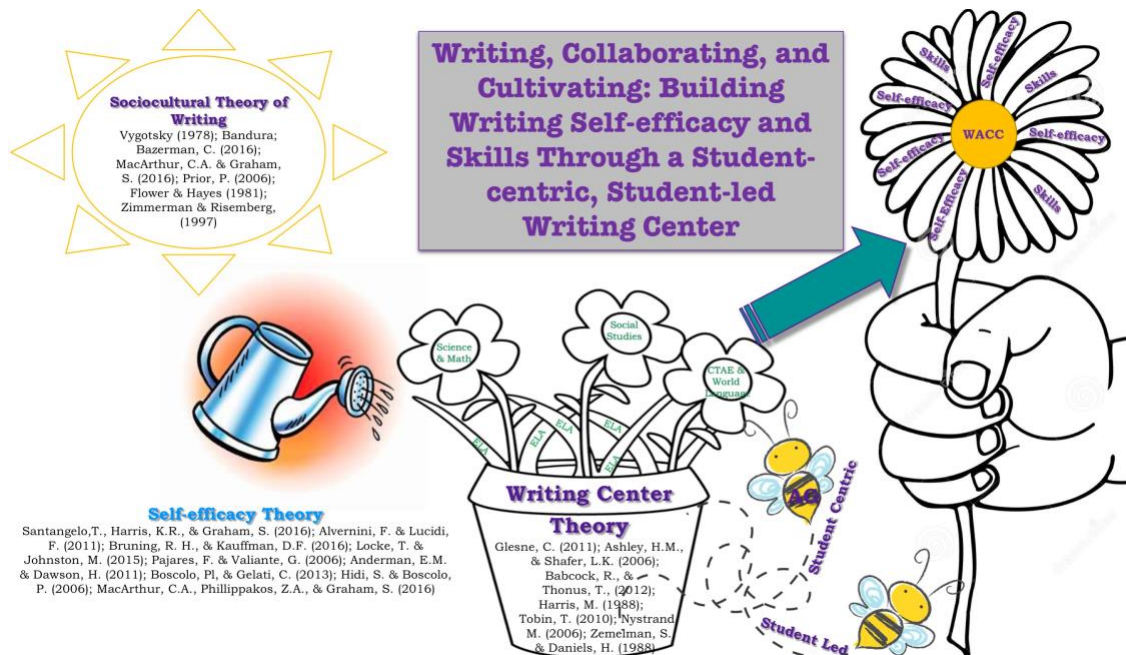
One way in which support and nurturing of writing thrives is through the process approach to writing. In this approach, students and teachers strive to master writing skills by utilizing a framework of community and support. Students are encouraged to brainstorm, revise, collaborate, and share published writing. The process approach to writing allows students to become literate and well-versed in the participation within various Discourse communities (Gee, 1996). While writing efficacy and motivation are studied continuously (Bruning & Kauffman, 2016; Schultz, Hull, & Higgs, 2016), often the results are not replicated because of the vast differences in the environment and protocols for the teaching of English. Further, many within the English Education field bemoan the large class sizes and the lack of release time to consistently and pervasively provide the individualized feedback that a writer needs; researchers point to ways in which strategies like a peer-tutoring program helps to expand our writing classroom walls. The large classroom sizes diminish the supportive feedback-rich writing-centric classroom environment desired by English teachers

Ideally, all writing would take place in the supportive environment of a classroom, but the reality is that writing often is completed, at least partially, outside of the classroom in an isolated manner. Without the motivation of peers and teachers to encourage continuation, revision, and additions, writing skills do not increase and grow. Taking Vygotsky and Bandura's theories into consideration, I began to experiment with the nature of expanding our writing community beyond the classroom walls, ultimately emphasizing the building of an instructional strategy of peer-tutoring. A writing center (Ashley & Shafer, 2006; Babcock & Thonus, 2012; Glesne, 2011; Harris, 1988; Nystrand, 2006; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988) community brings together learners from

all areas of writing and all disciplines of education. Through a staff trained in peer-feedback, a culture grows in which students build self-efficacy all while students and teachers grow a thriving, feedback-rich community, and student leadership skills flourish.

Review of Relevant Terms

The inclusion of the terms below supports and clarifies their use within the study.

- Peer-feedback and writing. Because of the essential nature of writing, educators know that effective writing instruction must take place in the supportive environment of a classroom or with the support of a mentor or guide alongside the learner (Bandura, 1977). If a student feels supported throughout the writing process, the student witnesses the increase in his/her skills and perceives an increase in growth of his/her writing abilities. Through a feedback-rich environment, the student often states that the nature of writing instruction becomes the desired activity worthy of the student's pursuit instead of avoiding the activity altogether (Babcock & Thonus, 2012; Pajares & Valiante, 2006; Zemelman & Daniels, 1998). Thus, effective use of a peer-feedback model provides student growth in writing skills at a faster rate than feedback from a teacher alone.

- Process Writing Approach. In many ELA classes, students are instructed in the writing process approach due to research that indicates students who use a process approach to writing achieve higher levels of writing proficiency (Goldstein & Carr, 1996; Greenwald et al., 1999). The "the art and soul of writing" (Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2006, p. 285), moves students through established phases of the

production of a piece of text. Often, the stages involve some level of brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.

- Writing Center Model**.** The implementation of a peer-tutoring writing center improves student self-efficacy while also increasing student performance (both tutor and writer). Also, the model provides access for those students identified as at-risk and promotes resources to faculty in other content areas (Ashley & Shafer, 2006; Brizee, Sousa, & Driscoll, 2010; Harris, 1988; Tan Bee, 2009; Tobin, 2010). Additionally, a writing center model sets the school apart from others as an example that demonstrates a response through action to the literacy crisis that began in the 1970s out of concerns that United States students lagged in the necessary skills that adult literacy requires (Sheils, 1975). Our nation continued to fall behind the USSR in advancements in science, math and technological advances as well as the ability to communicate through writing. Today, the literacy crisis continues for various demographics of students who lack preparation for the rigors of college writing (Harris, 1988, 1992; Turner, 2006). The primary objective of a writing center is to increase the abilities of writers entering college and careers through a collaboration of the writing process by building "competency and confidence" through peers trained in intervention and support (Tobin, 2010). What makes the writing center model useful is that unlike the classroom where a grade is attached to the feedback, the writing center feedback is more individualized and tailored to the needs that the writer expresses and desires (Barnett, 2006; Brizee, Sousa, & Driscoll, 2010; Jones, 2001).

- Writing Genres and Writing Skills. Writing assessments for high-stakes testing involve a thesis-driven examination of a student-developed argument and its connection to the synthesizing of multiple sources as a means of support for the argument. Students not only need to develop a clear, strong thesis, but also must organize and elaborate on the thesis through the presentation of evidence and counter-evidence. When using the synthesized work of others, students must cite the source using appropriate measures. Finally, the construction of the student's writing must demonstrate sentence fluency and an understanding of the conventions of spelling and grammar (MacArthur & Graham, 2016).

Organization of the Study

Chapter one introduces the problem that led to this research study, the research questions, the significance/purpose of the study, a review of the relevant terms, and limitations of the study. Chapter two examines the relevant literature related to the problem investigated. Chapter three includes an examination of the methodology and experiment procedures used to conduct the study's research and gather the data. Chapter four explores the statistical results of the experiment. Chapter five summarizes the treatment findings, conclusions, and provides a discussion relevant to the needs for continued study in the area of peer-tutoring centers located in high schools.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Whether writing a lab report, a letter to the editor, a research paper, a college application letter, or thousands of other writing tasks, the process of writing thrives when met with an authentic, collaborative, supportive environment (Elbow, 1998; Hillocks, 1995; Kirby & Crovitz, 2013). The ideal writing classroom prepares students for the rigors of writing in the adult world while building within students the skills and beliefs necessary for success in writing beyond the classroom. With an increased emphasis on high stakes writing (for national and state standardized tests), the time available to devote to the process of writing for authentic purposes dwindles (Hillocks, 2002). Also, the average ELA classroom often exceeds the National Council for the Teachers of English recommended teacher caseload of 80 students per teacher of writing (Harris, 1998). With these pressures, teachers often must choose between preparing students for authentic adult writing or preparing students to write for tests that prize the first draft over substantive revisions as a result of the sustained writing process. The pressures of teaching writing result in the assigning of fewer authentic writing process pieces and limited feedback from the writing community created by the teacher.

Researchers warn that without supportive strategies and authentic writing assignments revised through the writing process approach, self-efficacy in writing decreases, and students fail to see the importance of the revision writing process (Elbow, 1998; Graham & Perin, 2007; Gresham, 2010; MacArthur & Graham, 2016). Gresham (2010) reiterates the point by stating that the first reason that writing is critical is that "writing teachers teach a series of skills as well as approaches" (147). Even though

writing educators believe this to be true, students often feel that they know all there is to know about how to write by the time they enter into our high school classroom. They splatter their paper with ideas, pretend to edit and revise when instructed, and hand in the splattered mess as a polished paper. Done. If students lack the background knowledge required to access the process of writing, writing quality suffers, and students fail to master necessary writing skills.

Educators know that students must learn the skills of writing to succeed in life. Like speaking, the ability to write promotes an image of a learner as either educated or lacking. When students enter the workforce, the stakes for writing grow from being for the grade to be about whether or not they receive a paycheck. "Workplace writing is not only often a shared task, but it also carries high stakes" (Coker & Lewis, 2008, p. 235). Students will need to be able to effectively write in a multitude of situations: for their boss, to their boss, for a client, to a client and in ever-increasing, multimodal ways. Students will need to know how to analyze writing they receive (instructions, requests) and respond in a manner that fits the situation. The skills associated with the various and circular stages of the writing process remains a vital skill that students must learn to achieve success in their adult writing lives.

One area in which there is a gap in sustained research is in the area of peer-tutor secondary writing centers. While writing centers are housed in and managed by the English department, the goal of a writing center is to support writers in all curricular areas support faculty and to support community needs (Harris, 1988; Tobin, 2010; Threadgill, 2010). An authentic writing center model provides support for students in all aspects of writing and all disciplines such as "lab reports, history term papers, job and

school applications, resumes, and writing contests" (Harris, 1998) as well as in the areas of high stakes test preparation. This type of model is one that not only provides legitimacy to the need for skills in writing but also truly prepares students for life outside of the English language arts classroom. Further, the model can take on different settings that go beyond the one on one tutoring sessions by conducting writing workshops that provide focused mini-lessons on research skills, grammar and mechanic usage, and ideas formation. The model can also help faculty in the creation of collaborative presentations and manuscript formation for publication.

According to Harris (1998), writing centers that are most effective are the ones that move from a student-centric existence to a community-centric existence. Inviting the community to come into the writing center for tutorial instruction offers tutors and tutees the opportunity to see the importance of writing as a life skill, while also promoting a community that understands the need for writing in everyday life. Additionally, writing center theorists point to ways in which strategies like the writing center can help to expand our writing classroom walls. Building a writing community that focuses on shared support and feedback for writers of all levels and abilities provides scaffolded support throughout the writing process (Ashley & Shafer, 2006; Barnett, 2006; Brizee, Sousa, & Driscoll, 2010; Driscoll & Perdue, 2014; Harris, 1998). While research exists into the best practices for the creation of a secondary school writing center, little research exists into the connection between the effectiveness of a peer-tutoring writing center a student's self-efficacy and writing skills.

Theoretical Framework

The roots of this study are grounded heavily within the field of sociocultural theory of

writing. There remains a key understanding that writing is less about "how people should

write" (Prior, 2006, p. 54) and more about the "social, historical, and political contexts of

writing" (Prior, 2006, p. 54). Research in this area explores the nature of the social value

of writing for emerging learners by detailing why and when people write; the

consequences of writing; how writing happens; and how writing is learned (Bazerman,

2016; McArthur & Graham, 2016; Prior, 2006; Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997).

Through a social cognitive framework of the study, researchers can examine how

accomplished writers develop and maintain self-efficacy in writing in tandem with

writing skills. They examine the environmental, behavioral, and personal habits and how

writers use these habits to self-monitor progress.

Using a sociocultural approach to writing instruction goes to the core of this

study's theoretical underpinnings. First, the research examination began with the

positionality of the educator and the learner and how that positionality within a

collaboratively constructed curriculum impacts the writing systems of students (Beach,

Newell, & VanDerHeide, 2016). To authentically build cognitive skills in writing, a

student must develop the skills within an environment designed to push students towards

a discourse of what and when they learn. More importantly, a sociocultural focus of

writing instruction focuses attention on the interconnectedness humans have with people

of diverse and varied backgrounds. Students must co-construct understanding of the

world and be able to write and communicate effectively about nature of the discoveries

uncovered through writing. Thus, a sociocultural approach moves away from a focus on

skills to a focus on an individual's ability to converse and write for varied audiences, genres, and purposes.

Writing Theory Evolution – A Historical Look

Writing emerged as an essential educational tool in 1845 as a result of Horace Mann calling for a standardized assessment tool that measured a student's learning in a non-biased manner (Yancy, 2009). Thus, research in the earliest of times centered around pedagogical best practices in the instruction of form and function (grammar, syntax) whose proper usage when implemented by a teacher allowed the learner to demonstrate mastery of goals in other disciplines under study. With the emergence of a new focus on the writing process in the 1960s, the pedagogy of writing shifted to a social constructivist view of the writer as a consumer and the writer as a producer of texts. The change in focus ultimately led to a view of writing instruction that centered on a process of steps one undertakes while navigating the process and production of writing. Today, writing meets a crossroad of pedagogical aims. Educational agencies at the federal and state level often decry for a return to Horace Mann's form-and-function writing (Nystrand, 2006; Yancy, 2009). The desire for form-and-function writing arises from the nations increased obsession with high stakes testing. Still, others point out that students must possess the writing skills necessary to thrive in our global world (Driscoll & Perdue, 2014; Harris, 1998). Thus, much research (Brizee, Sousa, & Driscoll, 2010; Nystrand, 2006; Yancy, 2009) While tension remains to balance high stakes testing needs with writing life skills, research in the development of socially constructed approaches to writing instruction continue to thrive. Educators and stakeholders equally seek ways in which to situate writing instruction within secondary schools that support both camps. Ultimately, the aim

of research surrounds the need to unite all stakeholders in an examination of what is required for a learner to demonstrate writing proficiency.

Science, Grammar Skills, and the Social Construction of Writing.

The 1960s and 1970s writing theory work circled notions of social construction and form and function. As a result of Sputnik, the Space Race, and Civil Rights influences on society, writing theory grew from a mind sent of social construction (Nystrand, 2006; Yancy, 2009). Writing theory focus shifted again in the 1970s in response to articles like Newsweek's Merrill Sheils's (1975) "Why Johnny Can't Write." Sheils decried an educational system that was "willy-nilly, [...and responsible for...] spawning a generation of semi-literates" (58). Based on findings by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Sheils called for immediate intervention in classroom teachings of writing literacy or the need to prepare to intervene for an entire generation who would be unable to communicate through writing except at the most elementary of levels.

The reason for the sharp decline, according to Sheils, centered around the teens and young adults increased use of television entertainment. Adding to his concerns, was the fact that schools moved away from a focus on skills (grammar, spelling) to an approach that allowed students the freedom of expression and self-exploration in connection with reading and writing. Sheils condemned the move away from skills acquisition while identifying the self-exploration shift as the very reason for the decay of literacy in the United States. Arguing that these changes require a return to the foundations of formalist writing curriculum, Sheils urged the need for research and best

practices which honor formal syntax and grammar through memorization and rote practice.

Postmodern Writing Theory Expands Bandura's Social Constructive Theory

The postmodern era of writing research method shifts research of writing away from instructional methods to an area that explains what writing looks like from views other than pedagogical (Nystrand, 2006). Thus, the shift in focus led researchers to return to the examination of writing through a sociocultural theoretical framework. Today, the explosion of social media creates an environment in which writing is an everyday, everyday necessity and one's ability is marked and measured by how well he or she writes. The explosion of social media-centric writing leads us to the need to rethink of writing as a 'social task,' one in which both the audience and writer enter into a relationship "built on opportunities to learn to write authentic texts in informal, collaborative contexts" (Yancy, 2009). As research continues from a sociocultural perspective, researchers interest lies in the way that writing is taken up in all aspects of school and collegiate disciplines, in the workplace, in communities, and in "the rhetoric of everyday life" (Nystrand, 2006, p. 22).

With the emergence of new technology and social media, many teachers and researchers expressed frustration with the lack of cohesive pedagogical methods about writing instruction (Coker & Lewis, 2008; Nystrand, 2006). With the advent of social media, teens and adults write more consistently than in previous generations. However, the writing lacks sophistication necessary for success in endeavors of higher education. How can writing then be both a benefit and a drawback to youth development of skills? The need for students and adults to effectively communicate through written means,

particularly within our globally collaborative world, cries for researched best-practices within every classroom that connect student writing tasks with real-world assignments. Researchers and teacher practitioners must understand writing as a social endeavor, one in which both the audience and writer enter into a relationship "built on opportunities to learn to write authentic texts in informal, collaborative contexts" (Nystrand, 2006, p. 21). When a student receives a grade for a piece of writing, he or she often believes that his or her work ends, leading to a stop in the formation of ever-increasing writing skills, and even more important, feedback from peers and teachers. This approach in itself limits the further increase in writing proficiency by centering on a grade, not on one's skill formation.

Self-efficacy and Writing

According to Vygotsky's (1978) research during the Social-constructivist movement of the 1980s, the culture, and nature of the production of writing progress through a collaborative practice steeped within our culture and experiences; the nature of social-constructed writing thrives throughout our globally connected world today, accentuating the art of writing production. The art of writing involves the intersection of many disciplines coming together: cognitive, metacognitive, and linguistic abilities combine in the creation of a written response or task in varied, often multimodal forms. However, writing also involves our interactions with the world around us through our experiences; in the classroom, this communication receives support through collaboration with teachers and peers who encourage the process of writing throughout the task (Hidi & Boscolo, 2006). Educators know that students must learn the skills of writing to succeed in life. Like speaking, the ability to write promotes an image of a learner as either

educated or lacking. When students enter the workforce, the stakes for writing grow from

being for the grade to be about whether or not they receive a paycheck. According to

Coker & Lewis, "workplace writing is not only often a shared task, but it also carries high

stakes" (Coker & Lewis, 2008, p. 236). Students must possess the skills necessary to

write in a multitude of situations: for their boss, to their boss, for a client, to a client and

in ever-increasing, multimodal ways. Students must possess the skills necessary to

understand how to analyze writing they receive (instructions, requests, contracts, political

messages) and respond in a manner that fits the situation. Thus, the vital skills of writing

are one that adults must possess to compete in our global world.

Bandura's Social Turn

Albert Bandura led a 'social turn' in writing theory. The social turn shifted the

focus of writing research to ways in which the writer must situate a piece of writing

within a world that acknowledges the writer's perspective and experiences (Nystrand,

2006; Pajares & Valiante, 2006). Bandura theorized that through a socially constructed

focus, the writer takes up the integral part of facilitating what and how he or she learns.

Further, Bandura hypothesized that student self-belief of his or her writing ability

remained a reliable indicator of future success. Thus, student self-efficacy in writing

leads a student to choose the course of action about his or her educational journey.

Pajares & Valiante (2006) further examined Bandura's argument by stating that a writer's

level of self-efficacy determines the level of engagement or disengagement, a student

invests in a given task. Overall, the implications of the student's writing self-efficacy

confirm what Bandura introduced through the social cognitive theory: teachers play a

pivotal role in the development of self-efficacy through a collaborative network of

feedback and guidance as the student navigates the process of writing. For students with negative self-efficacy, the student often continues to wallow in the negative, never trying unless he or she receives positive motivation. Thus, the construction of a supportive learning environment helps the writer to develop skills at their self-determined pace and provides the vital foundation with which a student builds self-efficacy in writing. Self-efficacy in writing develops through habitual practice and builds over time, but self-efficacy in writing decays rapidly. In some instances, the decrease comes after only one specific negative interaction, such as a lower grade than what the student believed he or she achieved. Due to the fragile nature of self-efficacy in writing development, an educator's classroom strategy must include a collaborative, supportive environment that reinforces positive moves throughout the production and process of writing while working with students individually in the area of writing skills.

Writing Center Theory

The writing center is a model that emerged as a response to the literary crisis of the 1970s (Harris, 1988; Kent, 2010; Fels & Wells, 2011), which began as a result of t Sheil's Newsweek article lamenting the future of our country because of a looming writing literacy crisis. The National Writing Project (NWP), the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and the National Commission on Writing banded together to develop solutions that would enact change. Thus, the birth of a writing center model began to grow at the college level as a response to the crisis, which according to Turner (2006) was not a result of students lacking the ability to write, but rather a result of cuts in critical areas of instructional time and funding. The benefits of a writing center bridge the gap of lost instructional time and funding and move the idea of a writing center as a

pipe dream to the gritty reality of the necessary role that the writing center can address in writing literacy.

The writing center model is one that provides support for a community of writers across all curriculums through collaboration and socialization amongst peers, educators, and the community (Harris, 1988; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988; Barnett, 2006; Jones, 2001; North, 1984). Writing is the very essence of our world, the air we take in, swirling around our students each day. Giving students the space to build writing efficacy within a community of writers it the first step. Creating an environment that fosters collaboration and cooperation is the next step. As the stakes for writing literacy competency continues to mount, the need to have effective writing instruction that goes beyond the borders of the classroom also increases.

The existence of writing centers at the secondary level are nearly non-existent (Kent, 2010; Fels &Wells, 2011). Many factors exist that keep secondary writing centers from increasing, including the pressure on secondary writing center directors to juggle both a full teaching load and the directorship of a center as well as funding and space allotment to an endeavor often misunderstood by administrators. While writing centers are housed in and managed by the English department, the goal of a writing center is to support writers in all curricular areas, support faculty, and to support community needs (Harris, 1988; Tobin, 2010; Threadgill, 2010). An authentic writing center model provides support for students in all aspects of writing and all disciplines such as "lab reports, history term papers, job and school applications, resumes, and writing contests" (Harris, 1998) as well as in the areas of high stakes test preparation. This type of model is one that not only provides legitimacy to the need for skills in writing but also truly

prepares students for life outside of the English language arts classroom. Moreover, the

model can take on different settings that go beyond the one on one tutoring sessions by

conducting writing workshops that provide focused mini-lessons on research skills,

grammar and mechanic usage, and ideas formation. The model can also help faculty in

the creation of collaborative presentations and manuscript formation for publication.

Peer Tutoring in the Writing Center

While models differ in the conducting of a writing center session (peers,

professional writers, graduate students, or teachers) the most effective model is one in

which the teacher of record is not the tutor. Further, research supports that the key to

learner success resides in the peer form of tutoring (Harris, 1988; Turner, 2006).

Regardless of the tutoring structure, "the ideal situation for teaching and learning writing

is the tutorial, the one-on-one, face-to-face interaction between a writer and a trained

experienced tutor; and the object of all this interaction is to intervene in and ultimately

alter the composing process of the writer" (North, 1984, 28). The sessions, although

designed to be brief and focused increase the collaborative nature of writing by helping

the writer with a process for finding answers that he/she seeks. The tutor needs a reward

for the time served, and in the case of a model that uses peer tutoring the reward given is

often in-service hour completion. Each session is designed to be brief and focused on

writer's specific requests for help (grammar, ideas, structure, flow). For a session to be

productive, tutors must be well versed in how to ask questions and in how to build a

relationship of trust. Risks in writing are honored and are grounded in support of the

writer's goals. Also, writers are encouraged to experiment with new ways of thinking

about the writing process. Overall, the session is a non-threatening experience that flows based on the individual need expressed by the writer.

To support writers, tutors must possess solid writing skills and polished soft skills; Thus, tutor training is a high priority. Training can occur before the center opens but must continue on a consistent basis to help tutors grown in their expertise. The focus of training is on how "collaborative learning works," the writing process, assessing writing needs through rubric models, grammar mini-lessons, and effective writing strategies (Harris, 1988). Further, the writing center model cannot work without a connection to the classroom teachers whose students use the center. Building an extension of the classroom that helps to support the students and the faculty remains a crucial area of research. Faculty can also use the tutoring staff as a student-eye view of proposed rubrics and writing prompts to receive vital feedback from the view of a student.

Summary of Implications

Researchers and educators agree that self-efficacy allows students to determine the level of success possible. In writing, the nature of self-loathing and self-doubt spirals exponentially due to a hyper-focus on perfection of writing structure from our society. In many instances, students enter a classroom with a concrete sense of their writer selves as either accomplished or lacking. Those that identify their writing ability as lacking will avoid writing tasks all together or are reluctant to take chances in writing, which we know develops a writer's sense of skills. A vast body of research indicates the direct correlation of writer's self-efficacy and academic success through quantitative analysis (Bruning et al., 2013; MacArthur & Philippakos, 2010; MacArthur, Philippakos, & Graham, 2016; White & Bruning, 2005); However, these quantitative studies examine

writing self-efficacy from a teacher to student-driven model, resulting in a gap in the examination of writing self-efficacy that includes a trained peer-tutoring model.

According to Bruning et al., (2013), the shift of quantitative measures must now examine writing-based instructional strategies that go beyond the teacher-student model to ones that examine varied instructional strategies and the effects of these strategies on student writing self-efficacy, such as peer-tutoring. Lacking within the writing self-efficacy field, researchers urge for continued examination of motivation and self-efficacy of writing (Bruning et al., 2013; MacArthur & Philippakos, 2010; MacArthur, Philippakos, & Graham, 2016; White & Bruning, 2005), primarily when used to measure the effectiveness of emerging instructional strategies. Further, a need exists for studies that examine motivation, self-efficacy, and self-regulatory behaviors and the connection to gender, race, ethnicity, and instructional setting. While this study focuses solely on the nature of writing self-efficacy, the quantitative study of this area creates a pathway into an examination with further research implications. By using a quantitative approach to research of writing self-efficacy as it relates to the use of a peer-tutoring model, researchers, educators, and students' knowledge of effective writing interventions and preparedness have the potential to increase not only writing efficacy but also ability.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Through a quasi-experimental design, this study examined the effect a peer-tutoring writing center model has on writing self-efficacy and writing skills. The study was conducted prior to, during, and after a unit of study that introduced writing skills associated with argumentative and synthesis writing. Participants came from a sample of convenience within the four sections of the researcher's population of students. All students were new to the researcher, and all students elected to take the advanced placement course in place of the college prep level offered to their cohort. All in the researcher's classroom population received a letter of assent to participate and a letter of consent for parental/guardian permission (Appendix L). Seventy-four participants returned both forms and were the basis for this study.

Research Questions

This study examined the relationship of a writing center peer tutoring model on student writing self-efficacy and student writing skills. The research questions guiding the study are as follows:

- **Research question one (RQ1):** Is there a significant difference in student's self-efficacy for writing between those who receive peer tutor feedback and those who do not?

- **Research question two (RQ2):** Is there a significant difference in student's synthesis and argumentative writing skills between those who receive peer tutor feedback and those who do not?

Research Design

To examine the effectiveness of a peer-tutoring writing center on student writing self-efficacy and student writing skills, I conducted a quasi-experimental study (Table 1) using survey data and student writing samples within my four sections of Advanced Placement English classroom. Students all completed the same pre/post survey and pre/post writing assessment; all students received the same lesson introduction to argumentative and synthesis writing; students received the same support from the researcher throughout the writing process. The treatment group received three additional tutoring sessions from trained peer-tutors within the writing center during the process writing phase of the unit.

Table 1: Quasi-experimental Pre-test, Post-test Design

	Group | Control *n = 35*	**Group | Treatment** *n = 36*
Pre-test | SEWS	x	x
Pre-test | Writing Skills	x	x
Instruction	x	x
Peer-tutoring		x
Post-test | SEWS	x	x
Post-test | Writing Skills	x	x

The school is a traditional 9-12 high school located in the suburbs of a large metro area in the Southeast. Three years ago, the researcher conducted a pilot writing center, when the participants of the study were 8th-grade students. During that pilot phase, protocols for tutor training and tutor sessions were developed and implemented by the researcher (Appendix J). Since that time, the writing center evolved into a robust center of trained peer-tutors that are predominately seniors with a few juniors who volunteer to

join and train as tutors in September of each year. Even with the services offered by peer-tutors increasing, administrators at the site wanted evidence of the effectiveness of services, particularly in the area of writing skills assessment, that went beyond appointment numbers and statistics of how many students in each subject and grade level utilized the facility. Thus, the researcher developed the study to provide research-based evidence on the effectiveness of the peer-tutoring writing center model.

Value of Specific Methodology

The value of a quantitative study supports the gap in research (Fels & Wells, 2011; Kent, 2010) that examines the effect of peer-tutoring secondary school writing centers while also providing research-based data that examines the effectiveness of a peer-tutoring writing center model and the connection to writing self-efficacy and writing skills. The secondary writing center research that does exist often examines how to open and operate a writing center, case studies of tutors, or case studies of student learners. The gap of quantitative data leaves many administrators hesitant to earmark funds for a center without evidence of its effectiveness. In particular, a quasi-experimental design was utilized as a result of the members of the control and treatment group inability to be randomized (Creswell, 2014). In the case of this study, the limitation on randomization was due to the need to use "naturally formed groups (e.g., classrooms)" (p. 168).

Participants

Participants in the study were high school students enrolled in the researcher's four sections of 11th-grade Advanced Placement Language and Composition classes at a large suburban public high school in the Southeast. Even though the course is an advanced course, the district allows any student who desires the rigor of the course to

enroll. Thus, the participants vary in instructional performance and range from identified gifted, former English language learners, and students with disabilities, yet all possess the desire to pursue an advanced course of study within the ELA program as evident in their voluntary enrollment within the advanced course. Each participant was given and signed a form of assent to participate; each participant's parent or guardian signed a form of consent allowing the student to participate. Through the quasi-experimental design of the study, a target sample size of 71 students was divided into the control or the treatment group based on the course schedule of classes.

Instruments

This study was conducted using data gathered by the researcher before and after a unit of study that examined the introduction to the skills necessary for argumentative and synthesis writing. The data analysis of the pre/post survey was conducted by using the district's Office 365 software platform. By using this platform, the researcher was able to protect the privacy of the respondent as each participant must present a district-issued unique username in order to access the software platform. Once the surveys were complete, the data was examined using an independent samples t-test. The data analysis of the pre/post writing skills assessment was first evaluated by three AP Language teachers using a Student Writing Sample Protocol in use at the school site. The raw data were examined via an independent samples t-test for comparison of the means between the pre and post writing and between the control and experiment groups. Data were collected using the following instruments:

1. Student Self-Efficacy and Writing Survey (SEWS), (Appendix A),

2. Diagnostic Rubric (Appendix B),

Table 2: *Research Question, Related Instruments Used to Measure, & Analysis*

	Research Question	Related Instrument	Analysis
RQ1	Self-Efficacy in Writing	SEWS	IS T-Test
RQ2	Writing Skills	Diagnostic Rubric	IS T-Test

Table 3: *Variables and Related Instruments*

Variable	Time of Measurement	Means of Measurement
V1: Self-Efficacy in Writing	Pre/Post Test	SEWS
V2: Writing Skills	Pre/Post Test	Diagnostic Rubrics

Self-Efficacy Assessment Through the Self-Efficacy for Writing Scale (SEWS)

The SEWS, created by Pajares and Valiante (1997), measures student beliefs in regards to three significant constructs necessary for writing success: idea formation and generation; convention and grammar; and self-regulatory behaviors. Validity and use of the scale serve as the basis of several seminal quantitative research studies (Bruning et al., 2013; Pajares, 2007), with many using the scale in the examination of writing efficacy, motivation, and self-regulation throughout the writing research community. Bruning et al. (2013) found the three-factor model an acceptable fit and found high reliability with Cronbach's alpha rating of 0.884 (31). The SEWS adheres to Bandura's theory that using a zero to one hundred scale for rating (Bandura, 2006; Pajares, Hartley, & Valiante, 2001; Shell et al., 1989) which requires respondents to rate themselves on a 0 to 100 scale in increments of 10 (10, 20, 30, 40, etc.), provides validation for the data

gathered. A rating of a 100% by the respondent indicates a belief that the learner is

confident that the task labeled in the question is within their ability; a 50% indicates an

equal chance that the respondent could or could not perform the task labeled; and a 0%

indicates that the respondent does not believe that he/she can complete the task listed in

the question. Bandura favors the use of a broader range for self-efficacy surveys because

the broader range provides a more reliable way to measure responses as a result of the

inherit middle responses on surveys and the avoidance of extremely high and extremely

low range responses (Bandura, 1990, p. 312). Likewise, Pajares, Hartley, & Valiante

(2001) state that a 10-interval scale "provides a stronger predictor of performance due to

the respondent's answers distribution over a larger range of alternatives" (p. 312). Thus,

the 0-100 range in 10-point intervals provides reliable results with a stronger predictor of

respondent performance on the questions prompted for an answer.

For the goals of this study, the Bruning et al. (2013) SEWS scale was altered from

the original sixteen questions to ten questions to limit the focus of the survey to an

examination to self-efficacy specifically by removing questions that related to self-

regulatory behaviors and motivation. Thus, the ten question scale consisted of a possible

score range from zero to one thousand for each participant.

Survey completion took place within a writing lab at the school site via computer

and the district's Office 365 survey software. The researcher administered the survey by

reading the instructions (MacArthur, Philippakos, & Graham, 2016), informing students

that the answers are not right or wrong, but one's belief. The researcher repeated the

process of the survey at the end of the unit cycle. Data generated included the student ID

(lunch number) for the organization of participant's responses while allowing anonymity

of the responses gathered by the researcher.

Table 4: SEWS Questions and Related Research Question and Dependent Variable

	Question	RQ	Dependent Variable
1	I can think of many ideas for my writing.	RQ1	DV_SEW
2	I can put my ideas into my writing.	RQ1	DV_SEW
3	I can think of many words to describe my ideas.	RQ1	DV_SEW
4	I can think of a lot of original ideas.	RQ1	DV_SEW
5	I know exactly where to place my ideas in my writing.	RQ1	DV_SEW
6	I can spell my words correctly.	RQ1	DV_SEW
7	I can write complete sentences.	RQ1	DV_SEW
8	I can punctuate my sentences correctly.	RQ1	DV_SEW
9	I can write grammatically correct sentences.	RQ1	DV_SEW
10	I can begin my paragraphs in the right spots.	RQ1	DV_SEW

Note: **DV = Dependent Variable; SEW = Self-efficacy in Writing**

Writing Skills Assessment

Using their unique student ID, each participant digitally submitted a response to

the pre and post writing assessment. The assigning of a participant number further

randomized each unique student ID and ensured that the identity of the student remained

unavailable during the writing sample rating process. As a means to assess the writing,

the researcher created a zero to a nine-point diagnostic rubric that mirrors the holistic

rubric developed by the College Board for the assessment of writing for the Advanced

Placement English Language exam (Table 6). The nine-point rubric examines the writing

holistically by awarding students for what they do well. While the rubric applies to a

multitude of writing genres and forms, the two writing forms used for this study and

subsequent assessments was argumentative and synthesis writing. For the assessment of

writing, the AP Lang Professional Learning Community (PLC) worked in tandem to

conduct blind assessments and the resulting comparison of ratings and scores; ultimately

this process allowed for the calibration of scoring within the AP Lang PLC (Auerbach,

LaPorte, & Caputo, 2004) and the resulting development of a Student Work Sample

Protocol (SWSP) (Appendix C).

Table 5: Diagnostic Rubric (zero to nine points) – Adapted From College Board

Score	Reasoning
9	● **Main Idea**- clear, concise, excellent ● **Evidence** - excellent illustrations that makes concrete connections. ● **Analysis & So What?** - particularly yet carefully reasoned demonstrating ability to persuade. ● **Link** - sees and makes connections to thesis. ● **Style** - impressive control of vivid vocabulary with infrequent errors.
8	● **Main Idea** - solidly developed ● **Evidence** - excellent illustrations yet not fully developed. ● **Analysis & So What?** - effectively reasoned demonstrating ability to persuade. ● **Link** - makes connections to thesis. ● **Style** - ability to control a wide range of elements, not flawless
7	● **Main Idea** - intelligent, yet less effective ● **Evidence** - effective illustrations, sound organization ● **Analysis & So What?** - somewhat imaginative. ● **Link** - present, but not clearly related to thesis. ● **Style** - a few lapses in syntax present that do not distract from content, prose style strong.
6	● **Main Idea** - adequate, but not WOWSERS! ● **Evidence** - some illustrations, but missing other opportunities ● **Analysis & So What?**- significantly less imagination and risk taking; a 'safe' paper, carefully done though not with significant intellectual leaps. ● **Style** - some lapses in diction or syntax may be present, but for the most part, the prose conveys a writer's ideas clearly
5	● **Main Idea** - Unnecessarily imprecise ● **Evidence** - Predictable illustrations ● **Analysis & So What?**- General and illustrations are limited or superficial ● **Style** - uneven development though the prose is generally clear – the essay has "moments" when it's an effective essay
4	● **Main Idea** - If a thesis exists, it is hiding and it is up to the reader to find it. ● **Evidence, Analysis, So What?** - The writer may misunderstand or misrepresent the task or use inappropriate or insufficient evidence and illustrations. ● **Style** - While the prose usually conveys the writer's ideas, it generally suggests inconsistent control over the elements of writing – such as grammar, diction, and syntax; organization is usually rambling
3	● **Main Idea** - No discernible thesis; may misread or substitute a simpler task, thus only tangentially addressing the question ● **Evidence, Analysis, So What?** - an assortment of rambling generalizations or a paraphrase takes the place of cogent analysis; ● **Style** - there is little attention to structural and rhetorical techniques; the prose reveals consistent weaknesses in the control of elements of writing, a lack of development and organization, grammatical problems, and a lack of control
2-1	● **Main Idea -** No discernible thesis

	• **Evidence** - No evidence presented • **Analysis & So What?**- No analysis presented; generalized speak that rambles. • **Style** - Severe lapses in style/mechanics that make the paper unreadable.
0	• **No evidence submitted**

Student work sample protocol.

The Student Work Sample Protocol (SWSP), designed to build consistency and inter-rater reliability within the professional learning community of writing teachers, begins with teachers discussing the prompt and desired outcomes, reading the writing sample together, responding to the writing sample generally, and then reaching a consensus of the assessed grade attached to the writing sample. This protocol was established by the AP Lang PLC as a means of developing a calibrated approach to writing assessment. The AP Lang PLC began by unpacking and identifying power standards connected to the skill of synthesis and argumentative writing. From there, the AP Lang PLC determined the desired results they expected to see in the student samples that connected with the holistic nature of the AP Lang rubric. Next, the team read three essays silently and recorded a number that corresponded to the Nine-Point rubric. With all three essays scored and read, the AP Lang PLC team shared the score and discussed a rationale for each score. For this study, the three scores were averaged to determine an overall score. Possible scores ranged from zero to nine with a score of zero indicating no evidence of synthesis and argumentative writing skills while a score of nine indicates an advanced ability and control of synthesis and argumentative writing skills.

After using the SWSP on the pre-writing assessment, the AP Lang PLC identified the top most commonly missed skills and concepts by the group of participants and discussed/developed a rationale as to why the students did not master the writing concepts. These areas and concepts became the basis for the subsequent instructional plan

and for the post SWSP session in which the AP Lang PLC looked for growth and mastery of writing concepts following the instructional phase and the treatment group's participation in peer-tutoring sessions. Future areas of study would include the validation of this process.

Procedures

The researcher requested and received permission from the district's Office of Assessment and Accountability and from Kennesaw State University's Institutional Review Board to conduct the experiment (Appendix K). Data from the survey were collected using the District's Office 365 survey platform which required each student to log in with their unique username and password issued by the district. Data from the writing assessment were collected using the district's learning management system which also required each student to log in with their unique username and password issued by the district.

All students completed a diagnostic pretest of writing skills necessary for mastery of the state end of course (EOC) writing assessment. Within the classrooms, students received the same instructional preparation and handouts on the nuances of the EOC writing for the argument/synthesis genres. Then, students completed the SEWS (see Appendix G) as a means of determining his/her self-efficacy in writing and self-regulatory behaviors before assignment of the mastery writing task. After the completion of the lesson and activities on argument/synthesis EOC writing, the control group received no further instructional intervention while the treatment group attended a series of three required peer-tutoring sessions over a period of two weeks in the writing center with a trained student tutor. Once the assessment window closed, all students completed a

post-SEWS and a post-writing assessment of writing skills formed similarly to the pre-assessment.

Both the pretest and posttest of writing skills were assessed by the AP Lang PLC using the same rubric from the pre-assessment (Appendix B) and the SWSP. Each student only provided their unique student ID (a string of numbers with no identifying information) as identification of their unique essay. Further, all essays were downloaded from the learning management system as a whole and printed in a one-batch process. This allowed for the integrity of the anonymity of each participant and the subsequent group (experiment or control) in which each participant was assigned. The student ID was connected to a participant number and that participant number was recorded in the upper right-hand corner of each essay by the researcher.

Table 6. Summary of Analyses

TEST	Purpose	Unit of comparison
t test for independent means	Test for equated groups on pretest measure of dependent variable. Non-randomized groups cannot be assumed to be equal.	Control group pretest SEWS mean compared to that of the treatment group Control group pretest Writing Skills mean compared to that of the treatment group
t test for independent means	Test for significant difference after treatment phase on post- test measure of dependent variable	Control group post-test SEWS mean compared to that of treatment group Control group post-test Writing Skills mean compared to that of treatment group

Day One

      After turning in the consent and assent forms, all student completed the SEWS pre-survey of self-efficacy and self-regulatory beliefs (Appendix A). Then, the students completed a prewriting assessment modeled after the AP Language Examination and graded using the SWSP (see Appendix B and C). The assessment, conducted through the district's survey platform, required students to log in with their unique student identitication number (ID), and complete a typed/written response to the prompt provided. Upon completion, the written sample was assessed by the AP Lang PLC by using the designed rubric.

Days Two – Five

      At the beginning of this phase of the experiment, all students received the assignment sheet for the post-writing assessment (Appendix F). Then, both the control and intervention students received instruction on writing components that support success on the final writing assessment through an interactive writer's workshop (Appendix G) and lecture (Appendix H). Each segment of the lecture included information on intro/conclusion writing, MEAL Plan body paragraphs (Appendix I), and in-text citations. Support in the classroom consisted of stations designed for small group work sessions supported with graphic organizers, models, and manipulatives On Day Five, all students received a reminder to submit the post-writing assessment on Day Ten by 11:59 PM via the district's learning management system platform. No further reminders of due dates were given to the control group. No further reminders of the required tutoring session or due dates were given to the experiment group.

Days Six – Ten

Students within the experiment group attended three (3) 15-minute sessions with a trained peer (Appendix J) in the Writing Center before school, during designated workshop time, during their lunch hour, or after school. Then, the students completed a post-writing assessment of paired texts modeled after the state EOC. The assessment, conducted through the district's learning management system, required students to log in with their unique student ID and complete a typed/written response to the prompt provided.

Day Eleven

All student completed a post-survey of SEWS utilizing the district's survey platform. The post-writing assessment was reviewed by the AP Lang PLC using the same rubric from the pre-assessment and the Student Work Sample Protocol (SWSP).

Data Analysis

An independent samples *t*-test was used to determine if a significant difference exist between the control and intervention group relating to the dependent variables of self-efficacy in writing and writing skills. During the pre-assessment phase, group means of SEWS and writing skills were examined to determine whether the control and treatment groups were equated. With normalized distribution established, the independent samples *t*-test was used for the post-assessment and post-survey to determine if a significant difference exists between the control group and the intervention group in relation to the dependent variables.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The purpose of the quantitative study was to find if there was a statistically significant difference in writing self-efficacy and writing skills between students who received peer-tutoring through a writing center and those that did not receive peer-tutoring. Through a quasi-experimental design, the control and treatment group were compared via the pre and post survey SEWS results and the pre and post writing assessment results of the participants.

Table 2: Research Question, Related Instruments Used to Measure, & Analysis

	Research Question	**Related Instrument**	**Analysis**
RQ1	Self-Efficacy in Writing	SEWS	IS T-Test
RQ2	Writing Skills	Diagnostic Rubric	IS T-Test

Table 1: Quasi-experimental Pre-test, Post-test Design

	Group | Control *n = 35*	**Group | Treatment** *n = 36*
Pre-test | SEWS	x	x
Pre-test | Writing Skills	x	x
Instruction	x	x
Peer-tutoring		x
Post-test | SEWS	x	x
Post-test | Writing Skills	x	x

Table 6: Summary of Analyses

TEST	Purpose	Unit of comparison
t test for independent means	Test for equated groups on pretest measure of dependent variable. Non-randomized groups cannot be assumed to be equal.	Control group pretest SEWS mean compared to that of the treatment group Control group pretest Writing Skills mean compared to that of the treatment group
t test for independent means	Test for significant difference after treatment phase on post- test measure of dependent variable	Control group post-test SEWS mean compared to that of treatment group Control group post-test Writing Skills mean compared to that of treatment group

Results: Writing Self- Efficacy

To answer in Research Question One - Is there a significant difference in student's self-efficacy for writing between those who receive peer tutor feedback and those who do not – participants completed the SEWS pre-survey via the district's Office 365 platform. The students provided feedback to ten statements relating to self-efficacy in writing. Participants rated themselves on a scale from 0 to 100 for each question on the scale; the total score range possible was 1000. A rating of a 100 on an individual question indicated that the participant was positive of being able to perform the task; a 50 indicated that the participant felt that he/she had an equal chance that he/she could or could not perform the task; a 0 indicated the participant was sure that he/she could not perform the task.

The researcher administered the survey by reading the instructions (MacArthur, Philippakos, & Graham, 2016), informing participants that the answers are not right or

wrong, but one's belief. Data generated included the student ID (lunch number) provided

by the district. The number, unique and not immediately identifiable to a specific student

was further anonymized by assigning a participant number used throughout the data

examination.

Table 4: SEWS Questions and Related Research Question and Dependent Variable

	Question	**RQ**	**Dependent Variable**
1	I can think of many ideas for my writing.	RQ1	DV_SEW
2	I can put my ideas into my writing.	RQ1	DV_SEW
3	I can think of many words to describe my ideas.	RQ1	DV_SEW
4	I can think of a lot of original ideas.	RQ1	DV_SEW
5	I know exactly where to place my ideas in my writing.	RQ1	DV_SEW
6	I can spell my words correctly.	RQ1	DV_SEW
7	I can write complete sentences.	RQ1	DV_SEW
8	I can punctuate my sentences correctly.	RQ1	DV_SEW
9	I can write grammatically correct sentences.	RQ1	DV_SEW
10	I can begin my paragraphs in the right spots.	RQ1	DV_SEW

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare writing self-efficacy

beliefs between the control and treatment group. There was not a significant difference of

pre-survey responses between the control (M = 742.86, SD = 115.95) and the treatment

(M = 696.67, SD = 108.02) groups; t(69) = 1.74, p = .086. This suggest that there is no

difference between the two groups as a result of the pre-survey phase.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics: Pre-Survey Independent Sample T-test

SEWS Pre-Assessment Survey	Means	Std. Deviation
Treatment Group (*n=36*)	742.86	115.595
Control Group (*n=35*)	696.67	108.127

At the end of the study, participants completed the SEWS again. The control group ($n =$ 35) was associated with a post-survey score of $m = 756.67$ ($sd = 126.942$). By comparison, the treatment group ($n = 36$) was associated with a numerically larger score of $m = 762.86$ ($sd = 108.127$). As evident in Table 6, the distribution between the control and experiment group was sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a *t*-test (i.e., Skew <|2.0| and kurtosis <|9.0|; Schmider, Ziegler, Danay, Beyer, & Buhner, 2010). Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's *F* test, $f(69) = .602$, $p= .441$. The independent samples *t*-test was not associated with a statistically significant effect $t(69) = .21$, $p = .835$. Thus, the peer-tutoring writing center model of feedback did not significantly increase a student's self-efficacy when compared to the control group's lack of peer-tutoring sessions. Cohen's *d* was estimated at .052, which is a small effect based on Cohen's (1992) guidelines that states a small effect size is .20 or smaller.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics: Post-survey Independent Samples T-Test

SEWS Post-Assessment Survey	Means	Std. Deviation
Treatment Group (*n*=36)	762.86	108.127
Control Group (*n*=35)	756.67	126.942

Although there is not a statistically significant difference between the control and treatment group's reporting of writing self-efficacy during this study, there are several areas of interest and explanation for the results. In Table 7, the SEWS Comparison by Quartiles for the Treatment group indicates a higher sense of self-efficacy in writing by 80-point increase in the median score between the pre and post-survey. Likewise, there

was a higher sense of self-efficacy with an increase of 10 points in the median score of

the Control group. Even though there was an increase in point values for both groups in

median, quartile three, and maximum range, the treatment group show a higher level of

self-efficacy growth when compared to the control group.

Table 9: Comparison of SEWS Results by Quartiles

SEWS Comparison	Treatment Group (*n*=36)				
	Minimum	Quartile One	Median	Quartile 3	Maximum
Pre-Survey	520	608	710	790	880
Post-Survey	510	648	790	860	960

SEWS Comparison	Control Group (*n*=35)				
	Minimum	Quartile One	Median	Quartile 3	Maximum
Pre-Survey	430	695	760	815	960
Post-Survey	470	715	770	840	970

When examining the data in a graphical formation, exciting data emerges. Even though

the data lacks statistical significance, there is practical significance of improvement in

self-efficacy belief for the treatment group (median to maximum range) when compared

to the control group. Several limitations of the study resulted in this outcome. Research

shows that self-efficacy takes time to nurture and grow (Bandura, 1990; Bruning et al.,

2013; Pajares, Hartley, & Valiante, 2001). The short timeframe for the study may have

impacted the ability to nurture and foster the growth self-efficacy in writing. Further, the

demographics of the participants often have a heightened sense of their self-efficacy

related to writing. As a result, the growth realized might be more drastic in a different

demographic of participants and in a study designed to examine self-efficacy over a

longer timeframe.

Figure 2: Box Plot Comparison of pre and post survey results
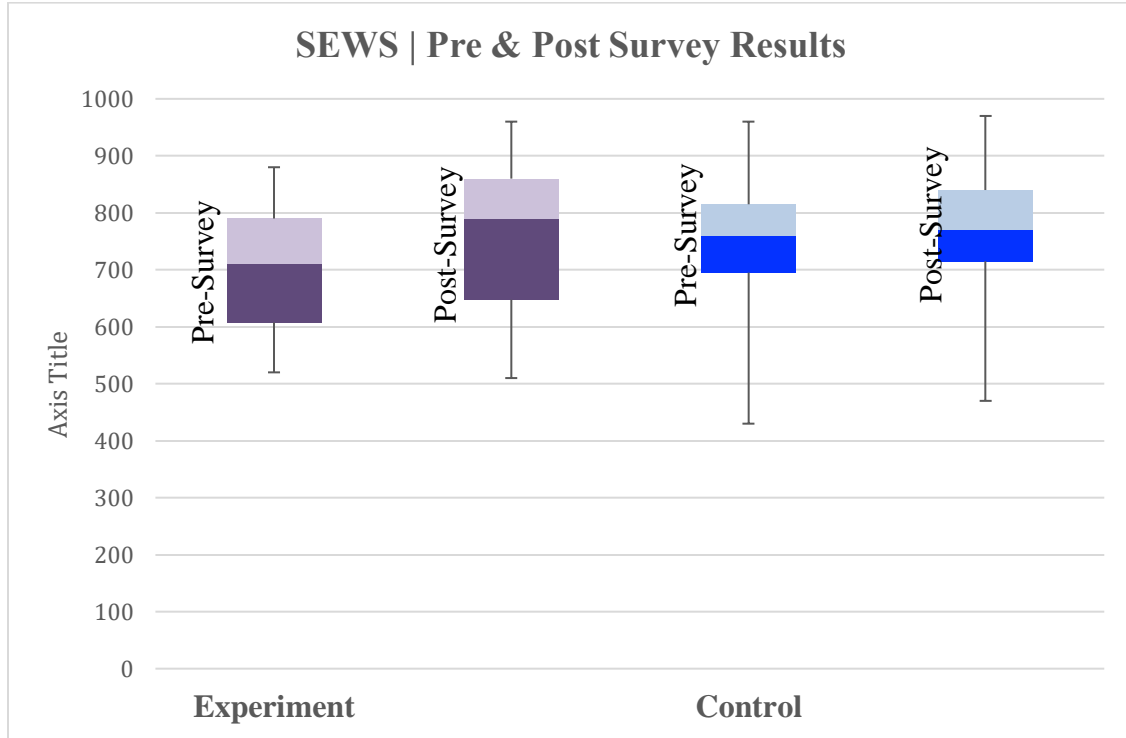
Figure 3: Bar Chart Comparison of Pre and Post survey results
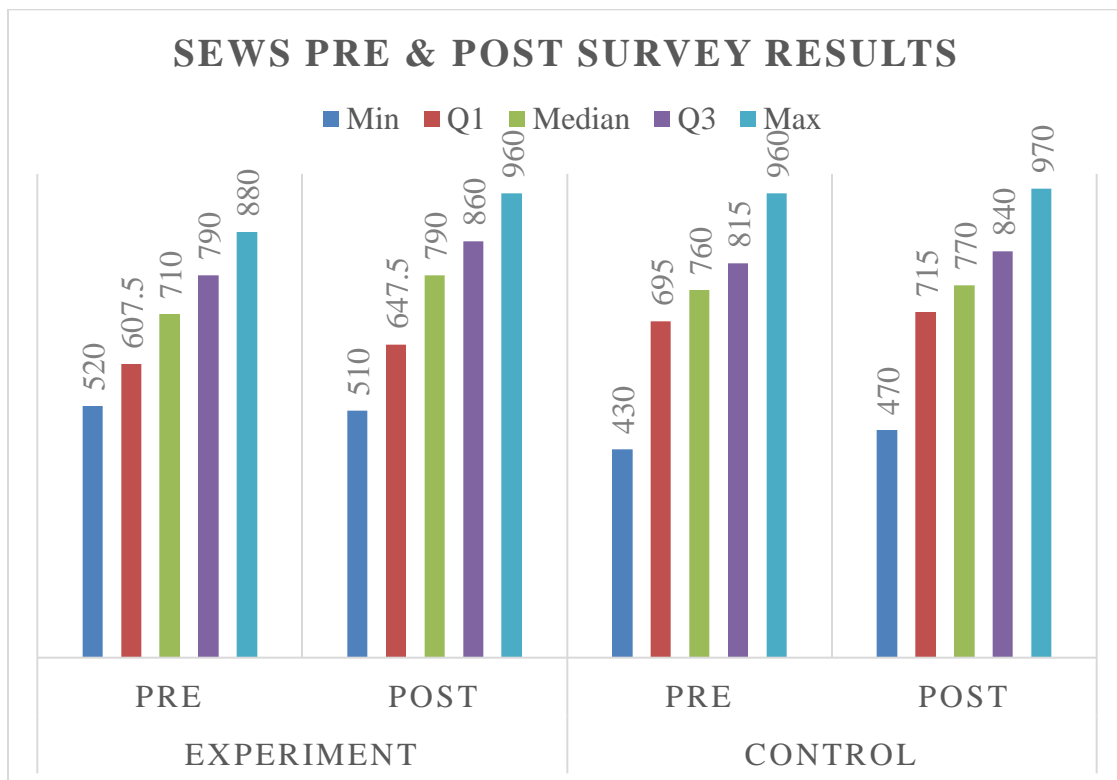
Results: Writing Skills Assessment

After the pre-assessment of writing skills, an independent samples t-test was

conducted to compare the pre-assessment means of the control and the treatment group in

order to test the equality of the groups (Table 9). With equality established, an

independent samples t-test was conducted to answer the research question, is there a

significant difference in student's synthesis and argumentative writing skills between

those who receive peer tutor feedback and those who do not? The pre-assessment results

indicate a lack of significant difference in the scores for the control group (m=3.60,

sd=.914) and the treatment group (m=3.67, sd=.926) due to the Levene's Test for

Equality Variances which tests the homogeneity of variances assumption. The results of

the Levene's Test (f=.076; sig=.783), indicate that the two groups are not significantly

different as the significance value was above the .05 threshold.

Table 10: Pre-Assessment of writing skills independent samples t-test.

Pre-Assessment of Writing Skills	Means	Std. Deviation
Treatment Group (*n*=36)	3.67	.926
Control Group (*n*=35)	3.60	.914

To test the hypothesis that there is a significant difference of student's self-

efficacy for writing when using a writing center model consisting of peer tutor feedback,

an independent samples *t*-test was performed. As evident in Table 9, the distribution

between the control and experiment group was sufficiently normal for the purposes of

conducting a *t*-test (i.e., Skew <|2.0| and kurtosis <|9.0|; Schmider, Ziegler, Danay, Beyer,

& Buhner, 2010). Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested

and satisfied via Levene's f test, $f(69) = 5.495$, $p = .441$. The independent samples t-test

was associated with a statistically significant effect $t(69) = .-2.92$, $p = .005$. Thus, the

peer-tutoring writing center model of feedback was associated with a statistically

significantly higher score on the writing assessment for those in the experiment group

than those in the control group. Cohen's d was estimated at .692, which is a medium

effect based on Cohen's (1992) guidelines that states a medium effect size is between .50

and .79. Table 10 compares the control and experiment group's mean difference for the

post assessment. The control group ($n= 35$) was associated with a post-assessment score

of $m = 5.49$ ($sd = .919$). By comparison, the treatment group ($n= 36$) was associated with

a numerically larger score of $m = 6.06$ ($sd = .715$).

Table 11: Post-assessment of writing skills independent samples t-test.

Post-Assessment of Writing Skills	Means	Std. Deviation
Treatment Group ($n=36$)	6.06	.715
Control Group ($n=35$)	5.49	.919

When comparing the results of the pre and post writing assessment, the mean scores

indicate a growth of 2.39 points for the treatment and a growth of 1.89 points for the

control group (Table 11).

Table 12: Writing Assessment - A comparison of pre & post results

		Mean	Std. Deviation
Treatment Group (*n*=36)	Pre-Assessment	3.67	.926
	Post-Assessment	6.06	.715
Control Group (*n*=35)	Pre-Assess.	3.60	.914
	Post-Assess.	5.49	.919

The statistically significant growth in argumentative and synthesis writing skills is further evident when examined in relation to distributions across the range of data. Each of the statistics (Table 12, Figure 3) for the data range for the treatment group (minimum, Q1, median, Q3, maximum) is higher or equal to that of the control group.

Table 13: Comparison of Writing Skills Assessment by Quartiles

Writing Skills Comparison	**Treatment Group (*n*=36)**				
	Minimum	Quartile One	Median	Quartile 3	Maximum
Pre-Assessment	1	3	4	4	5
Post-Assessment	4	6	6	7	7

Writing Skills Comparison	**Control Group (*n*=35)**				
	Minimum	Quartile One	Median	Quartile 3	Maximum
Pre-Assessment	2	3	4	4	5
Post-Assessment	3	5	5	6	7

Figure 4: Boxplot of Writing Assessment - A comparison of pre & post results

Writing Assessment | Pre & Post Comparison
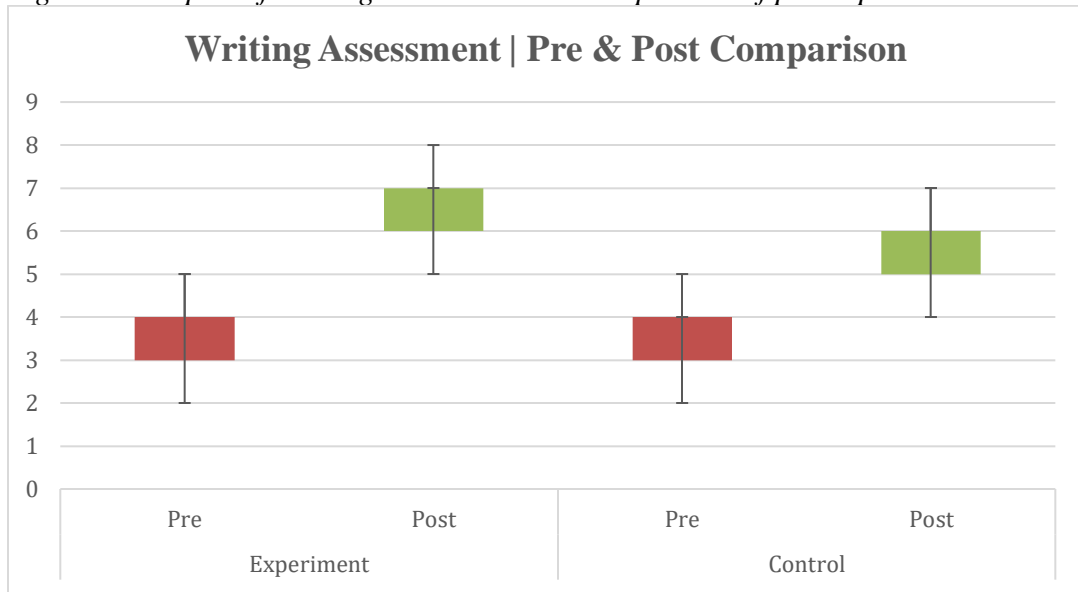
While scores were relatively close for the pre-assessment of writing skills, the scores for the treatment group graphed higher than that of the control group for the post-assessment of writing skills (Figure 4). The data suggests that the peer-tutoring writing center model supports a learner's improvement of writing skills.

Figure 5: Bar Graph of Writing Assessment - A comparison of pre & post results

COMPARISON OF PRE & POST WRITING ASSESSMENT
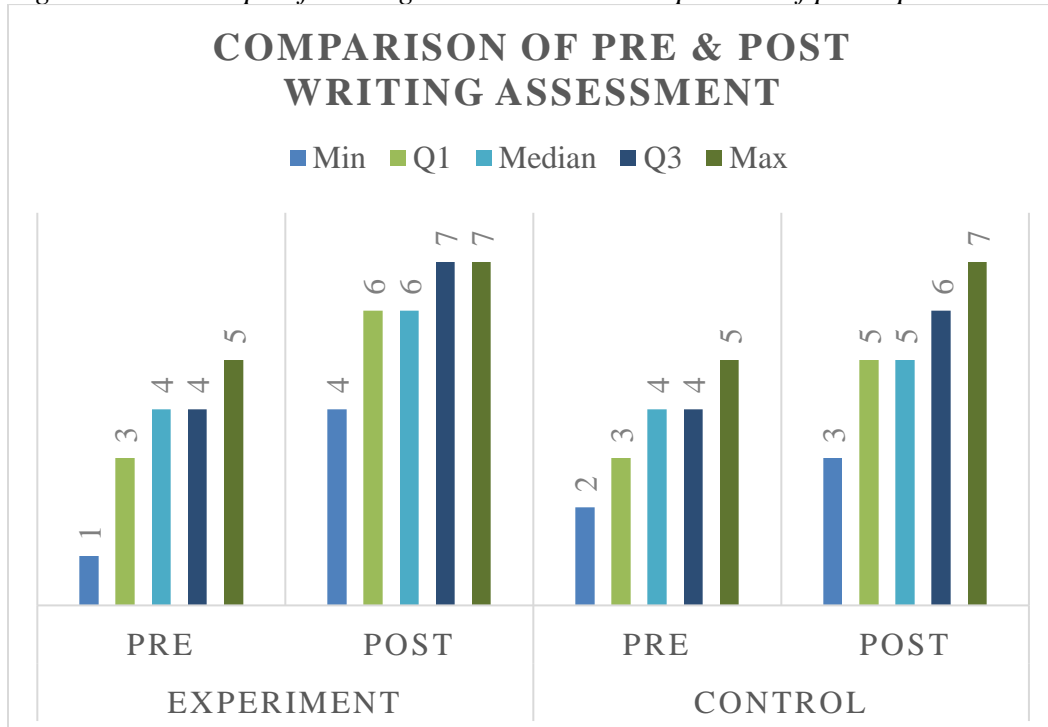
Discussion of Results

In the student survey, the data do not show a statistical difference between the original reporting of self-efficacy and the post reporting of self-efficacy. While the statistical findings do not support the conceptual framework notion that through the support of learners, a consistent community of writers cultivates the development of writing skills and writer's self-efficacy (Bruning & Kauffman, 2016; Schultz, Hull, & Higgs, 2016)., the small sample size, the inflated beliefs of self-efficacy for this demographic of participants, and the limited length of the study were three areas that might have impacted the results. Thus, a longer study and an increase in the population examined would support further research into the area of the peer-tutor's effect on a writing center client attending an appointment over several different visits.

Conversely, the results of writing skills did show a statistically significant increase in writing skills based in the post-assessment. Further, the effect size was medium indicating that the model of peer-feedback when coupled with in-class instruction does help clients grow writing skills at a faster rate than those who do not use the peer-feedback writing center model. Through a meta-analysis of instructional programs and strategies, John Hattie (2012) examined peer-tutoring and found that the implementation of peer-tutoring equates to about 1.5 years of growth for the typical learner. The effect that peer-tutoring has on writing skills was evident in this study's results which showed a larger difference between the participants.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

Chapter five will review the findings while examining the implications for future areas of study and research.

Restatement of the Research Questions

- **Research question one (RQ1):** Is there a significant difference in student's self-efficacy for writing between those who receive peer tutor feedback and those who do not?

- **Research question two (RQ2):** Is there a significant difference in student's synthesis and argumentative writing skills between those who receive peer tutor feedback and those who do not?

Discussion of Findings

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a statistical difference in the mean scores between participants who received the support of peer-tutoring through a writing center model with their peers who did not. The theoretical underpinnings of the study relied on the sociocultural theory of writing as it connected to the constructs of self-efficacy research and writing center research. A quantitative independent samples *t*-test was used to examine the effectiveness of a peer-tutoring writing center model on student self-efficacy and writing skills. The participants of the study were 71 students enrolled in the researcher's classes. The SEWS survey (Bruning et al., 2013), well established and used by writing theory researchers, was applied to an examination of secondary students actively engaged in the writing process. This research supported a gap (Kent, 2010; Fels & Wells, 2011) in research that examines the effectiveness of a secondary school peer-

tutoring writing center and its relationship to self-efficacy and writing skills acquisition.

Further, the results of the study indicate that the treatment group realized a growth in

writing skills when compared to their peers while self-efficacy increases were not

statistically significant for the treatment group when compared to the control group.

Research Question One: Writing Self-Efficacy

The key to the improvement of writing beliefs includes the incorporation of a

feedback-rich writing process focused community (Nystrand, 2006; Prior, 2006).

Although many teachers desire this structure, often class sizes limit the amount of valid

and consistent feedback, and time one can devote to a process-oriented approach to

writing instruction. The need for creative solutions is even more critical when increases

in writing literacy within an ELA framework also positions the student for success across

all curricular areas. The development of a student-led, feedback-rich writing center

provides an instructional strategy that meets the desire of writing teachers to provide

support for the student throughout the process steps of writing. An authentic writing

center model provides support for students in all aspects of writing and in all disciplines

as well as in the areas of high stakes test preparation. The writing center strategy not only

provides legitimacy to the need for skills in writing but also prepares students for life

outside of the English language arts classroom by helping students build habits that

include the seeking of support from those accomplished within an area of study. Student

leaders, trained in all aspects of feedback, provide a community approach to writing that

perceives the craft as more than a function of the English classroom, translating student

success beyond the classroom walls. Through a staff trained in feedback, a culture grows

in which students and teachers grow into a community of feedback and growth, and student leadership skills flourish.

The SEWS, created by Pajares and Valiante (1997), measures student beliefs in regards to three key areas of writing skills: idea formation and generation; convention and grammar; and self-regulatory behaviors. Validity and use of the scale serve as the basis of several seminal quantitative research studies (Bruning et al., 2013; Pajares, 2007), with many using the scale in the examination of writing efficacy, motivation, and self-regulation throughout the writing research community. Bruning et al. (2013) found the three-factor model an acceptable fit and found high reliability with Cronbach's alpha rating of 0.884 (31). The SEWS adheres to Bandura's theory that using a 0 to 100 scale for rating (Bandura, 2006; Pajares, Hartley, & Valiante, 2001; Shell et al., 1989) which requires respondents to students rate themselves on a 0 to 100 scale in increments of 10 (10, 20, 30, 40, etc.), provides validation for the data gathered. A rating of a 100% by the respondent indicates a belief that the learner is positive that the task labeled in the question is within their ability; a 50% indicates an equal chance that the respondent could or could not perform the task labeled; and a 0% indicates that the respondent does not believe that he/she can complete the task listed in the question. Bandura favors the use of a wider range for self-efficacy surveys due to the fact that the larger range provides a more reliable way to measure responses as a result of the inherit middle responses on surveys and the avoidance of extremely high and extremely low range responses (Bandura, 1990, p. 312). Likewise, Pajares, Hartley, & Valiante (2001) state that a 10-interval scale "provides a stronger predictor of performance due to the respondent's answers distribution over a larger range of alternatives" (p. 312). Thus, the 0-100 range in

10-point intervals provides reliable results with a stronger predictor of respondent performance on the questions prompted for answer.

Both groups reported growth in self-efficacy in writing between the pre-survey and post-survey. However, the growth was of a practical nature and not a statistically significant growth. Factors that could have affected this outcome were the relative short time span of the experiment. Researchers of self-efficacy theory report that a writer's level of self-efficacy remains a reliable indicator of future success (Bandura, 1977; Pajares & Valiante, 2006). Further, researchers point to the idea that growth in writing self-efficacy takes a long period of time to cultivate (Bandura, 1990; Bruning et al., 2013; Pajares, Hartley, & Valiante, 2001). Self-efficacy is a habit that requires time to build but remains fragile and susceptible to crumbling doubt. Teachers must understand that a student's perception of their skills far outweighs the actual skill set in which we quantifiably measure. Avoidance of any writing task might be the result of low self-efficacy, and educators must find a way in which to remove the avoidance behaviors with positive reinforcement of skill building through writers' workshop and other collaborative measures.

Connected to the idea of writing in a collaborative, supportive space is the area of self-efficacy. If a student feels that he/she does not possess "good" writing skills, and all writers at times feel a lack of frustration with the process, the motivation to write will wane. If a student feels supported throughout the writing process, the student witnesses the increase in skills and feels appreciated by the teachers and peers for their ability to persevere through the process; the student often states that the nature of writing instruction becomes something one is willing to undertake instead of avoiding (Bandura,

1990). Regardless of the concerns that can hinder the motivation to write, researchers and teachers must remember how much motivation to write, a belief in one's self-efficacy, and the continuation of increasing the skills of writing production intersect within a socially-constructed focus on writing instruction. With continued reduction in funding for teachers and the reduction in curricular time dedicated to writing instruction, the need for a support network of writers outside of the classroom emerges as a viable instructional tool within our academic world. Through the implementation of a writing center model lead by students, steeped in a collaborative writing culture, our teachers and students will together increase motivation and self-efficacy for writers while also increasing writing skills.

Research Question Two: Writing Skills

Both of the groups reported a growth in writing skills from the mid 3.0, a score deemed as ineffective on the scale, to above a 5 which is deemed adequate on the 9-point scale. The significant increase that the treatment group had over the control further supports the nature of peer-feedback as a viable means in which to support the growth of skills. Further, when that peer-feedback comes in the form of a trained protocol-based writing center system, the growth significantly provides an area for further research to examine.

Although the nation is far removed from the Cold War Era of Sheil's (1975) *Newsweek* Article bemoaning the lack of writing skills in youth, the cry heard over forty years ago still rings through the halls of elementary, middle, secondary, and post-secondary schools. Writing is a life-long skill that impacts not only one's ability to communicate but also often one's ability to earn a living (Coker & Lewis, 2008). Thus,

the results of the study demonstrate the importance of a writing center peer-tutoring model as a method that improves writing skills.

Limitations of Findings

Some of the limitations of the study include the small sample size of 71 students. However, the sample size does include a wide variety of learning levels, past ESL status, past special needs status, and students who economically disadvantaged that mirrors the percentage of economically disadvantages students within the school. The limitations of size and demographics could be addressed in future studies of secondary writing centers staffed by peer-tutors. In addition, this study does not examine the effect of the peer-tutoring writing center model on different genders, races, and ethnicities. Further study in this area is warranted for future consideration.

The results of the study found that the model of peer-tutoring does increase writing skills and in a practical sense, has an impact on writing self-efficacy. Even so, there exist many areas in which continued research and investigation are warranted. One area of need includes expansion into the examination of a peer tutoring model on a more diverse demographic of students (Ashley & Shafer, 2006; Brizee, Sousa, & Driscoll, 2010; Harris, 1988; Tan Bee, 2009; Tobin, 2010). Often, those most in need are the ones who are either reluctant to seek out help with their writing or with limited access to tutoring supports in other areas (parents, paid services, etc.). A study of varied demographics of students would support further the effectiveness of the model.

Another limitation of the study includes the lack of large sample size and the abbreviated timeframe. By expanding the participants in the study and extending the timeframe to several months, an examination of student beliefs in the building of self-

regulatory behaviors can commence. Building self-regulatory behaviors at the secondary

level support students transitioning into an adult world of college and careers. Thus, an

examination into the area of peer-tutoring and the development of self-regulatory

behaviors is warranted for future studies.

Relationship of Findings to Literature Review

The growth in self-efficacy and writing skills demonstrates a need for further

dialogue into the effectiveness that a writing center model provides through the nature of

an individualized approach to learning. In fact, "the ideal situation for teaching and

learning writing is the tutorial, the one-on-one, face-to-face interaction between a writer

and a trained experienced tutor; and the object of all this interaction is to intervene in and

ultimately alter the composing process of the writer" (North, 1984, p. 28). In today's

typical high schools, one can see a diverse demographic of students that includes students

with intellectual gifts, students with disabilities, students with limited English writing

skills, and students who live in poverty. The peer-tutoring writing center shines in its

access to materials for all students, particularly those at risk, by providing individualized,

tailored tutoring sessions (Ashley & Shafer, 2006; Brizee, Sousa, & Driscoll, 2010;

Harris, 1988; Tan Bee, 2009; Tobin, 2010). The unique needs of these learners remain a

challenge for the classroom teacher to meet in the small amount of class time each week.

With the addition of a peer-feedback writing center, the lessons learned in the class are

extended, and the tools needed are available well past the actual class time allotment.

Furthermore, Jory Brass (2008) cautions teachers to avoid, "the potential discontinuity

between home and school" (473) for students who may not have an avid writer at home

to model the importance or logistics of writing. By providing a dedicated place for all

students, the community of writing grows to one that far surpasses the classroom walls.

Writing skills evolve when coupled with the sharing of ideas and expressing

needs with others during the process of writing (Boscolo & Gelati, 2013; Hidi & Boscolo,

2006; Prior, 2006). Thus, Prior (2006) states that "all writing is collaborative, involving

divisions of labor and forms of coauthorship" (p. 58). With writing moving away from

one task, one draft, one conversation between teacher and student, the shift in how

educators perceive a writing task also changes. Teachers must communicate throughout

the process of writing, particularly when assessment shifts away from a grade at the end

and commences when the action of the writing process begins through consistent,

formative feedback. As a result, this study will determine the role that formative peer-

feedback plays in skill and self-efficacy development when applied through a writing

center model.

While much research exists about post-secondary writing center effectiveness,

little research exists in the area of the secondary school writing center and the

effectiveness of a peer tutoring model. Even further, research that does exist at the

secondary writing center level often focuses on a qualitative examination of how to begin

a writing center with little to no research into why and to what extent a peer-tutoring

writing center supports literacy within a high school community. Administrators, who

must balance the constraints of finances with the most effective services for students,

often want to examine the outcome (the why). Thus, the ability to provide research that

examines the efficiency of a post-secondary peer-tutoring model provides administrators,

teachers, and stakeholders with vital information missing from current research and

allows for a conversation to begin about the nature of peer-tutoring through a writing center model as a viable tool to support learners within a high school setting.

In high school settings, writing often begins and ends individually with students producing a piece of writing outside of the support system of a classroom. When a teacher of writing incorporates a process approach to writing, the nature of the task becomes one that prioritizes the sharing of ideas and expressing needs with others (Boscolo & Gelati, 2013; Hidi & Boscolo, 2006; Prior, 2006). Yet, even in a writing process setting, writer's often face roadblocks and need added support and communication not only from their teacher, but also from their peers. Further, the assessment of writing also helps students increase writing proficiency when given in connection with time to discuss with peers and teachers, followed by a period of revision. Thus, through consistent, formative feedback between the writer, peers, and the teacher, writing skills increase while also simultaneously supporting the writer's self-efficacy.

A classroom-rich writing community within a classroom is not without pitfalls and constraints; however, the pitfalls surround the large class sizes that strain a teacher's ability to effectively work with all learners and the constraints of instructional timed paired with a need to prepare students for high-stakes testing still remain. As a result, the purpose of the study is to examine the role that formative peer-feedback and to determine the role peer-feedback plays in the development of writing self-efficacy and writing skills when employed via a peer-feedback centric writing center model.

Locke & Johnston (2015) look at the stages a writer goes through from novice to advanced and the process utilized by the writer to improve composition skills. Aligning the philosophical approach to writing with that of seminal researchers Hayes and Flowers

(1980), the article explores process writing as it relates to student preparedness for the rigor of college composition classes. One of the key areas in which I want to use the writing center is in the preparedness of skills for the rigor of college writing across all curricular and content areas. Writing often becomes the way in which students demonstrate understanding in courses but often the students are not aware of how to shift to different genres (styles) of writing required in varied curricular areas.

Implications for Future Research

The future of a secondary writing center model continues to bloom and grow. In January of 2018, I began work with colleagues all over the United States as we organized and began the very first national organization dedicated to supporting and promoting writing centers in secondary schools. The Secondary Schools Writing Center Association (SSWCA), of which I am the at-large representative, hopes to pool action research such as this study so that interested learning communities can build their own writing centers. To that end, the need for research in the future will continue to hold a place of importance, relevance, and need.

Challenge – Local Lack of Use

Challenges that remain to my local center include the lack of consistent use of the writing center by a wide number of students. Solutions to the challenge include developing a model that requires a visit for all students early in the school year so that the students to experience the writing center model; this model was not a part of this experiment as students could elect not to participate. There are significant benefits to requiring participation. According to Tan Bee's (2009) meta-analysis study of writing centers, the most vulnerable students, particularly those with disabilities and English

language learners, used the tutoring structure once as a requirement, were more likely to return for further help and support. Thus, a study that examines the effectiveness of a peer-tutoring writing center model would further support our most vulnerable students.

Future Research Need – Self-efficacy Longitudinal Study

While teachers may see a task as authentic, the real person determining authenticity is the leaner (Behizadeh & Engelhard, 2014). Thus, measuring writing self-efficacy, writing interest, and mastery goal orientation in relation to the learner's perceived authenticity of a task urges educators to situate the creation of writing within authentic, real-world scenarios that help students build writing self-efficacy. For tutors, the authenticity of writing remains magnified and realistic. Future research that examines the significant difference of writing skills of pre and post tutor training would support the model as one that increases skills for more than the tutee.

While promising in relationship to self-efficacy and writing skills, the data shows a need for further the discussions of a writing center in the creation of a community that spreads writing literacy beyond the student body (Harris, 1988; Tobin, 2010; Threadgill, 2010). The writing centers that are most effective are the ones that move from a student-centric existence to a community-centric existence. Inviting the community to come into the writing center for tutorial instruction offers tutors a look at the importance of writing as a life skill and promotes a community that understands and embraces the need for writing skills in everyday life. Future research into the effects of a secondary writing center on the community outside of the school is warranted.

Research into the length of time that best supports skills acquisition and self-efficacy is another avenue of needed research. The sessions, although designed to be brief

and focused increase the collaborative nature of writing by helping the writer with a process for finding answers that he/she seeks. The tutor must be rewarded for the time served, and in the case of a model that uses peer tutoring the reward is in-service hour completion. Each session is designed to be brief and focused on writer's specific requests for help (grammar, ideas, structure, etc.). For the session to be productive, tutors must be well versed in how to ask questions and in how to build a relationship of trust. Risks in writing are desired, and the goal is to have a writer experiment with new ways of thinking about the writing process. Overall, the session is a non-threatening experience that flows based on the individual need expressed by the writer.

Research Needs - SWSP

A major curriculum objective for the entire school surrounds writing literacy that prepares students for writing assessments. Writing assessments for high-stakes testing involve a thesis drive examination of a student-developed argument and its connection to the synthesizing of multiple sources as a means of support for the argument. Students not only need to develop a clear, strong thesis, but also must organize and elaborate on the thesis through the presentation of evidence and counter-evidence. When using the synthesized work of others, students must cite the source using appropriate measures. Finally, the construction of the student's writing must demonstrate sentence fluency and an understanding of the conventions of spelling and grammar. With the curricular objectives in mind, the AP Lang PLC team worked to create the SWSP as a basis for this study. While the protocol worked and quickly became a staple within our AP Lang PLC, the team would like to test the scale and protocol for validity and use in future studies of writing skill assessments.

Researcher Comments

The Sociocultural theory of writing instruction remains the core of my philosophy of writing instruction. As a result, I sought and researched ways in which to expand writing instruction into areas outside of the classroom that would promote the growth of writing skills. Kwon et al. (2016) suggest that out-of-school structures help to increase a student's agency and connection away from the positionality of a teacher as an authority. Further, learners need new and unique instructional strategies that connect the desired content skills of writing with the authentic positionality of the learner in varied environments. The peer-tutoring writing center instructional strategy is one that I believe fills this call. Thus, not only the learner benefits from peer-tutoring as the tutor often grows as a writer and as a leader. My true desire is to see the empowerment of a diverse group of students in using the services of writing centers and in leading writing centers through tutoring.

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Appendix A

Student Self-Efficacy and Writing (SEWS) Survey

Students differ in how confident they are about doing various writing activities and assignments. Please rate your confidence that you can do each of these writing tasks by answering selecting a number that represents your percent of confidence. For example:

- 100% means you are positive you can do it;

- 50% means you think there is an equal chance that you could do it or not.

- 0% means you are sure you cannot do it;

Read each sentence and select the number that best represents how confident you are about doing that task (adapted from MacArthur, Philippakos, & Graham, 2016).

Survey Questions:

IDEA FORMATION & GENERATION (E)
1. I can think of many ideas for my writing.
2. I can put my ideas into my writing.
3. I can think of many words to describe my ideas.
4. I can think of a lot of original ideas.
5. I know exactly where to place my ideas in my writing.

CONVENTIONS & GRAMMAR (E)
6. I can spell my words correctly.
7. I can write complete sentences.
8. I can punctuate my sentences correctly.
9. I can write grammatically correct sentences.
10. I can begin my paragraphs in the right spots.

(adapted from: Bruning et al., 2013)

Appendix B

Writing Assessment Rubric

Score	Reasoning
9	**Main Idea**- clear, concise, excellent **Evidence** - excellent illustrations that makes concrete connections. **Analysis & So What?** - particularly yet carefully reasoned demonstrating ability to persuade. **Link** - sees and makes connections to thesis. **Style** - impressive control of vivid vocabulary with infrequent errors.
8	**Main Idea** - solidly developed **Evidence** - excellent illustrations yet not fully developed. **Analysis & So What?** - effectively reasoned demonstrating ability to persuade. **Link** - makes connections to thesis. **Style** - ability to control a wide range of elements, not flawless
7	**Main Idea** - intelligent, yet less effective **Evidence** - effective illustrations, sound organization **Analysis & So What?** - somewhat imaginative. **Link** - present, but not clearly related to thesis. **Style** - a few lapses in syntax present that do not distract from content, prose style strong.
6	**Main Idea** - adequate, but not WOWSERS! **Evidence** - some illustrations, but missing other opportunities **Analysis & So What?**- significantly less imagination and risk taking; a 'safe' paper, carefully done though not with significant intellectual leaps. **Style** - some lapses in diction or syntax may be present, but for the most part, the prose conveys a writer's ideas clearly
5	**Main Idea** - Unnecessarily imprecise **Evidence** - Predictable illustrations **Analysis & So What?**- General and illustrations are limited or superficial **Style** - uneven development though the prose is generally clear – the essay has "moments" when it's an effective essay
4	**Main Idea** - If a thesis exists, it is hiding and it is up to the reader to find it. **Evidence, Analysis, So What?** - The writer may misunderstand or misrepresent the task or use inappropriate or insufficient evidence and illustrations. **Style** - While the prose usually conveys the writer's ideas, it generally suggests inconsistent control over the elements of writing – such as grammar, diction, and syntax; organization is usually rambling
3	**Main Idea** - No discernible thesis; may misread or substitute a simpler task, thus only tangentially addressing the question **Evidence, Analysis, So What?** - an assortment of rambling generalizations or a paraphrase takes the place of cogent analysis; **Style** - there is little attention to structural and rhetorical techniques; the prose reveals consistent weaknesses in the control of elements of writing, a lack of development and organization, grammatical problems, and a lack of control
2-1	**Main Idea -** No discernible thesis **Evidence** - No evidence presented **Analysis & So What?**- No analysis presented; generalized speak that rambles. **Style** - Severe lapses in style/mechanics that make the paper unreadable.
0	**No evidence**

Appendix C
Student Work Sample Protocol

SECTION 1: Design

Unpacking the standards:
Introduce, **establish**, and **write** arguments to support claims using valid, relevant, and sufficient evidence. **Create** an organization that logically sequences claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. |ELA GSE 11-12: W1 a, d , W5 |

Name of Common Assessment & Explanation of Process:
Argumentative & Synthesis Introduction

What concepts/standards/questions must students demonstrate?
Identify the top 3-5   - Thesis construction using the open thesis model   - Employment of classical oration moves; synthesis of ideas through evidence and analysis   - MEAL Plan body paragraph construction

SECTION 2: INSTRUCT – *See Appendix G & H*

SECTION 3: ASSESS

Calibrated to the Advanced Placement Nine Point Scale

Score	Grade	Reasoning
9	98%	**Main Idea**- clear, concise, excellent **Evidence** - excellent illustrations that makes concrete connections. **Analysis & So What?** - particularly yet carefully reasoned demonstrating ability to persuade. **Link** - sees and makes connections to thesis. **Style** - impressive control of vivid vocabulary with infrequent errors.
8	93%	**Main Idea** - solidly developed **Evidence** - excellent illustrations yet not fully developed. **Analysis & So What?** - effectively reasoned demonstrating ability to persuade. **Link** - makes connections to thesis. **Style** - ability to control a wide range of elements, not flawless
7	90%	**Main Idea** - intelligent, yet less effective **Evidence** - effective illustrations, sound organization **Analysis & So What?** - somewhat imaginative. **Link** - present, but not clearly related to thesis. **Style** - a few lapses in syntax present that do not distract from content, prose style strong.
6	85%	**Main Idea** - adequate, but not WOWSERS! **Evidence** - some illustrations, but missing other opportunities **Analysis & So What?**- significantly less imagination and risk taking; a 'safe' paper, carefully done though not with significant intellectual leaps. **Style** - some lapses in diction or syntax may be present, but for the most part, the prose conveys a writer's ideas clearly
5	75%	**Main Idea** - Unnecessarily imprecise **Evidence** - Predictable illustrations **Analysis & So What?**- General and illustrations are limited or superficial **Style** - uneven development though the prose is generally clear – the essay has "moments" when it's an effective essay
4	70%	**Main Idea** - If a thesis exists, it is hiding and it is up to the reader to find it. **Evidence, Analysis, So What?** - The writer may misunderstand or misrepresent the task or use inappropriate or insufficient evidence and illustrations. **Style** - While the prose usually conveys the writer's ideas, it generally suggests inconsistent control over the elements of writing – such as grammar, diction, and syntax; organization is usually rambling
3	65%	**Main Idea** - No discernible thesis; may misread or substitute a simpler task, thus only tangentially addressing the question **Evidence, Analysis, So What?** - an assortment of rambling generalizations or a paraphrase takes the place of cogent analysis; **Style** - there is little attention to structural and rhetorical techniques; the prose reveals consistent weaknesses in the control of elements of writing, a lack of development and organization, grammatical problems, and a lack of control
2-1	60% -55%	**Main Idea -** No discernible thesis **Evidence** - No evidence presented **Analysis & So What?**- No analysis presented; generalized speak that rambles. **Style** - Severe lapses in style/mechanics that make the paper unreadable.

Appendix D

TRAINING PROGRAM FOR PEER TUTOR

Phase 1: Application & Interview
Interested students within the rising 11th grade and 12th grade cohorts may apply to become a tutor within the writing center in the spring. Each applicant must have a minimum of a 3.5 weighted GPA, an English teacher recommendation, a non-English teacher recommendation, and a writing sample accompanying the application. All approved applicants are offered an interview session. During the interview, conducted by one faculty member and one writing center student leader, inter-personal skills are reviewed as well as the answers to the following questions: Why do you want to be a part of the writing center?; How do you define leadership and tutorship?; Give me one word you would use to describe yourself? Why?; What is one thing you think you need to work on? Why?; What would you do to convince a student that the writing center is worthwhile?; How do you evaluate success?

Phase 2: The Training Program Begins
All applicants who successfully complete the interview process become tutors in training and will be paired with a mentor (a lead tutor) during the process. Each trainee will complete a two part process in order to become full tutors. The trainee will complete the Order of the Writing Center training program. This video program, a self-paced examination of everything from session basics to how to work with diverse students, guides students through the expectations of a writing tutor. After each module (listed below), the student must take and pass a quiz over the content. Simultaneously, each trainee will collaborate on four varied session in order to implement content learned through the training protocol program. After each session, the mentor and trainee will conduct a debrief while reviewing the training protocols. Should a mentor feel as if the trainee is not ready for the next session, the mentor will include a faculty member in the debrief in order to review training protocols and the trainee's ability to be an effective peer tutor.

Part I – Training Protocols & Procedures

Module 1 – Greeting a Client	Module 2 – Conducting a Session
• Writing Center norms overview • Creating a welcoming environment • Establishing student needs • Creating a session Agenda	• Reviewing assignment & rubrics • Who holds the pencil? Who reads the paper? Who marks on the paper? • Giving advice • Encouraging notetaking, creating a check list
Module 3 – Concluding a Session. • Review the agenda • Review notes and answer residual questions • Invite student to schedule next appointment	**Module 4 – Reporting a Session** • Writing a report • Providing feedback to the teacher • Sending to the teacher
Module 5 – 'What to Do' • The unruly or "For a Grade" student • Drive-by student • Clueless student • Unmotivated student • Quiet/Anxious student • Friends	**Module 6 – Interviewing the Expert** • Diverse students – Interview with a special needs teacher and an ESOL teacher on how to help students on how to work with students with different educational, language, and cultural needs.
Module 7 - Grammar & Specialty APA, MLA, Senior Project, Research Writing, & Common Grammar Errors	

Part II – Training Practice & Progression

Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
Trainee will observe a session conducted by the mentor.	Trainee will practice session skills by conducting a session with the mentor (mentor will bring a piece of writing for peer feedback).	Trainee and mentor will conduct a session in tandem.	Trainee will conduct a session solo while mentor observes.

Appendix E

Prewrite Assessment

An extended constructed response requires you to read two texts and then synthesize the

facts, definitions, details and other information in response to a proposed question. While

you will need to use the texts as evidence, you will develop your own ideas and use your

own words to respond to the question. Make sure you cite the sources and evidence that

you use (adapted from Georgia, 2014).

Now that you have read Stephen King's *On Writing* and [chosen text] create a plan for
your synthesized argumentative essay.

Think about ideas, facts, definitions, details, and other information and examples you
want to use. Think about how you will introduce our topic and what the main topic will
be for each paragraph. Develop your ideas clearly and use your own words, except when
quoting directly from the source texts. Be sure to identify the sources by title when using
details or facts directly from the sources.

Write an essay that synthesizes the sources as a means to support your position as to the
importance of literacy.

 Now write your informational essay. Be sure to:
- Use information from the two texts so that your essay includes important details.
- Introduce the topic clearly, provide a focus, and organize information in a way
  that makes sense.
- Develop the topic with facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information
  and examples related to the topic.
- Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion.
- Clarify the relationship among ideas and concepts.
- Use clear language and vocabulary to inform about the topic.
- Provide a conclusion that follows the information presented.
- Check your work for correct grammar, usage, capitalization, spelling, and
  punctuation.

Appendix F

Assignment Sheet – Literary Narrative

Freeing the Reader & Writer Within

"I read with equal parts joy and desperation. I loved those books, but I also knew that love had only one purpose. I was trying to save my life."
Sherman Alexie, "Superman and Me"

"If you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot. There's no way around these two things that I'm aware of, no shortcut."
Stephen King, *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*

What is literacy? How have reading and writing saved your life? What earliest memories do you have of reading and writing? Was it a specific genre similar to King's experience? For this shared public writing, you will create your own *Memoir of the Craft*, by sharing a particular experience (or set of related experiences that led you to recognize and define the role that reading and/or writing play in your life. Was there a trigger moment that shaped your desire to read and write - or to avoid it all cost?

Remember, move beyond the telling of your tale. Articulate the role and value of reading and writing, think deeply. You'll notice that the more memorable moments you share in your writing come to life through your chosen diction and detail.

Part 1: Journaling to Brainstorm
Write down bits you can remember of the life of your reading and writing self. Don't worry about getting the pieces in the right order or even which facts occurred when. Just record whatever you can remember. Here are some suggestions to help nudge this remembering:
- Books you loved as a child. Books you read in school. Books that you read on your own & enjoyed.
- Memories of seeing someone else read, someone who loved to read, someone who read to you.
- Your favorite literary characters or a genre that always captures your imagination
- Stories that you write and are proud of.
- Stories that you dream of writing.
- Other memories about reading and writing.

Part 2: Towards Public Writing
From your journaling in part 1, focus on one thing - an incident, a person, a memory, a recurring theme - and explore it further. With your words, keep pushing at the edges of what you see and remember. Then work this remembrance into a form (a poem, letter, vignette, story) to share with others.

Appendix G

Unit of Study
The Writer's Workshop and Writing Style Introduction
AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE, MILESTONES, SAT, and ACT TEST SKILLS

Unit Essential Question What type of writing will the AP test, Milestones, SAT, & ACT require me to master?	Learning Outcomes – students will • Students will be able to write a précis (academic summary). • Students will be able to use the MEAL Plan strategy to develop cohesive body paragraphs. • Students will be able to demonstrate synthesized connections between works of non-fiction through the writing activities.		
Standards (GSE) 11-12	**Reading**	**Writing & Language**	**Speaking & Listening**
	RI 1; RI 2; RI 3; RI4; RI 5; RI 6;	W3; W4; W5; W6; L1; L2; L3;	SL1; SL3; SL4;
Assessments:	Writing Sample 1: Diagnostic Writing (Diagnostic only) Writing Sample 2: Literacy Narrative (Diagnostic only)		

Day 2 – The MEAL Plan
What writing strategies can I use to examine and write about a given topic?

Activation (DOK 2)**-** Silent Reading – go back to *On Writing* and find a key section where you believe that King examines how he became a writer. . As you read, notice what you notice, make a note of words you need to know or the key elements of the passage.

Teaching Strategies (DOK 3)
1. **Large Group Lecture –** Students are to take notes throughout the interactive introduction to MEAL Plan writing through Classical Oration Arrangement.
2. **In collaborative partnerships**, discuss the areas you identified as important. Discuss and decide on one member's passage to use as your model. Using the MEAL Plan graphic organizer fill in the information detailing King's main idea, his evidence, his analysis of the evidence, and his link back to his main idea.
3. Groups will share their work with class.

Summarization (DOK 3) **- Individually**, students will brainstorm in a rush write their own literacy narrative.
- Books you loved as a child. Books you read in school. Books that you read on your own & enjoyed.
- Memories of seeing someone else read, someone who loved to read, someone who read to you.
- Your favorite literary characters or a genre that always captures your imagination
- Stories that you write and are proud of.
- Stories that you dream of writing.
- Other memories about reading and writing

Homework: Read and annotate Sherman Alexie's "Superman & Me"

Day 3 – Writer's Workshop 1: Diction
How does a writer's choice of words describe or define an idea?

Activation (DOK 2)- Free write – create a list of words that describe you, define you, or are a stereotype you often hear about you.

Teaching Strategies (DOK 3)
Begin with modeling: Ask students to read silently a piece of text & answer two questions dealing with the subtlety of word choice.
- Working with a **collaborative partner**, create a list of medical terms.
- Shift papers and the new **collaborative partners** will write a sentence based off of one of the words that characterizes art.
- Shift again and the new **collaborative partners** will create a sentence based off one of the words that characterizes food. Partners will share their sentences with the class.

Alexie's Text
- Using Alexie's essay, students will identify the **most evocative paragraph** and write a response as to why - what is he doing that makes you pick that passage?
- Finally, students will discuss their observations with the **large group.**

Summarization (DOK 3) **- Individually**, students will brainstorm & draft towards a public piece of writing paying close attention to the use of diction.

Homework: Read and annotate Frederick Douglass's "Learning to Read & Write"

Day 4 – Writer's Workshop 2: Detail
How can detail further an audience's understanding?

Activation (DOK 2) **-** Who Done it? Students will examine a visual text and listen to a crime scenario. Using the details present, students will craft an answer to what happened during the crime.

Teaching Strategies (DOK 3)
1. The class will shift into **collaborative group** and will be given a mentor sentence and questions to examine. Groups will complete the questions verbally and prepare to share with the class (11 mentor sentences available). Groups will share their work with class.
2. In the **collaborative groups,** students will answer the following questions relating to Douglass's essay. After completion, the **large group** will share answers and ideas.

Douglass's Text
3. What is the thesis of Douglass's narration? How well is it supported and developed by the body paragraphs? Explain.
   - The first couple of sentences in the story, though simple, are very powerful. How do they serve to set up the mood of the piece and the reader's expectations?
   - How would you describe Douglass's writing style and level of language? Does it reveal anything about his character? Justify your response.
   - Explain the way in which the author uses comparison and contrast.
   - What is Douglass's definition of *abolition*, and how does he help the reader define it? How does this method contribute to the reader's understanding of the learning process?

Summarization (DOK 3) **-** In **collaborative groups**, students will share their drafts and receive feedback.

Day 5 – Writer's Workshop 2: Imagery
How can images be used to rhetorically effect an audience?

Activation (DOK 2) **–** In **Collaborative Partners**, one member will share in detail their favorite meal. Then as a **large group**, we will discuss what elements of language were used to make the conversation memorable. **Discussion** – can imagery be a rhetorical tool?

Teaching Strategies (DOK 3)
1. The class will shift into **collaborative group** and will be given a mentor sentence and questions to examine. Groups will complete the questions verbally and prepare to share with the class (11 mentor sentences available).
2. Groups will share their work with class.
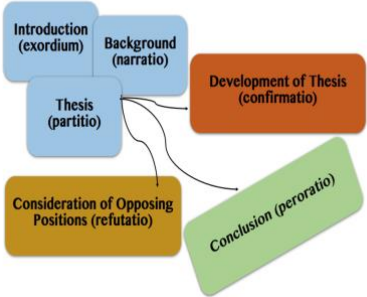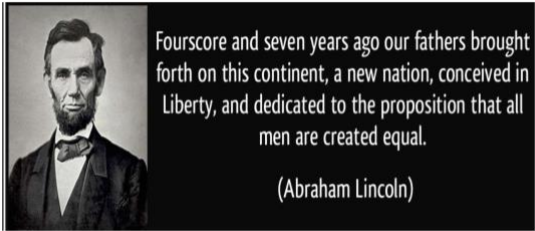3. Individually, students will draft a literacy narrative.

Summarization (DOK 3) **-** In **collaborative groups**, students will number Welty's paragraphs 1-25. Then the students will…
   ● Choose **ONE** of the following pairs of paragraphs to as a focus: Paragraphs 1 & 2; Paragraphs 6 & 7; Paragraphs 9 & 10; Paragraphs 14 & 15; Paragraphs 24 & 25
   ● Re-read the chosen paragraphs carefully, annotating anything that helps you think about the question "How does Welty use such techniques as diction, detail, imagery, and example to convey the reader's experience of reading (which includes listening)?" Complete your answer to this question and turn in for assessment.
   ● Discuss your annotations and observations in class with the kind of detail and precision as we have the Voice Lessons.
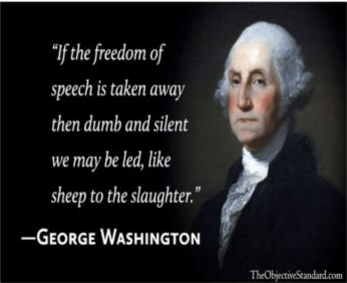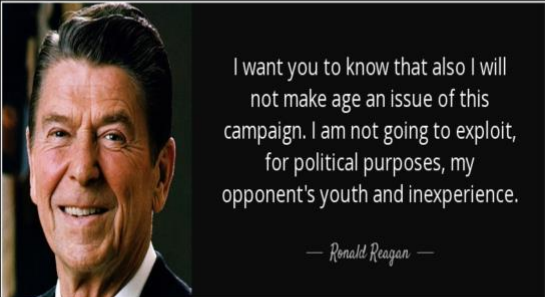
Appendix H
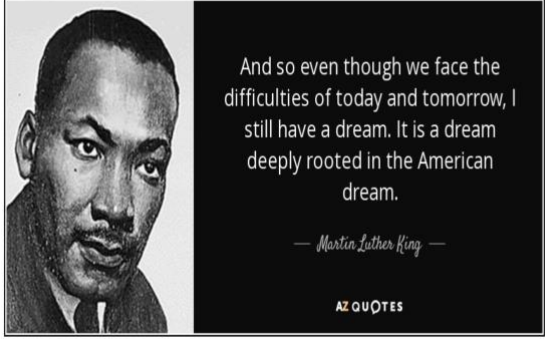
Lecture – Classical Oration Arrangement

Classical Oration Arrangement A Six Part (*not paragraph*) Model	
Introduction - Background - thesis A Six Part (*not paragraph*) Model	**Introduction:** You introduce the subject (or problem) and purpose of the discourse, usually employing the persuasive appeal of ethos - gains your readers' interest and willingness to listen - demonstrates that you are fair and reasonable - shows how the issue is important to the audience, the good of the community, everyone - establishes your qualifications on this topic *establishes some common ground with your audience **Background:** You provide background material (context) that's important to the topic or argument - with a timed writing, assume that your reader has not seen the prompt and, thus, will require some setting up of the topic - if the task asks you to respond to another writer's idea, then you must mention his/her name and paraphrase his/her idea - you might sketch out what people generally talk about when the topic comes up or what has compelled you to discuss it - the amount of background needed will depend on your audience's prior knowledge on the topic

	Thesis (In Four Parts): You commit to a thesis (the main claim), a position that reflects your original thinking; previews which part or parts you intend to address and how those parts will be arranged (more on thesis writing in Unit 2).
DEVELOPMENT OF THE THESIS "If the freedom of speech is taken away then dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter." —GEORGE WASHINGTON TheObjectiveStandard.com A Six Part (*not paragraph*) Model	**Development of thesis** (body MEAL paragraphs): You offer detailed support for the position in your thesis (the main claim) - organize paragraphs by ideas that support your thesis and not by evidence type - support can be in the form of logical reasoning, factual evidence, examples, illustrations, etc. (the CHELPSS) - mostly logical appeals (logos), but could also include emotional appeals (pathos) ==Give Handout for MEAL Plan==
Consideration of opposing positions I want you to know that also I will not make age an issue of this campaign. I am not going to exploit, for political purposes, my opponent's youth and inexperience. — *Ronald Reagan* — A Six Part (*not paragraph*) Model	**Consideration of Opposing Positions:** You reasonably consider possible objections to your thesis and try to levelheadedly counter those objections, showing why your thesis and supporting arguments are still better than the others - support can be in the form of logical reasoning, factual evidence, examples, illustrations, etc. - consists of concession and/or refutation and/or qualification

	Conclusion: You draw together the entire argument and move the audience to action
Conclusion And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. — *Martin Luther King* — **AZ QUOTES** A Six Part (*not paragraph*) Model	- should include one or more of the following: - addresses the "so what" question—why your thesis matters - reinforces your credibility and offers an emotional appeal - makes clear what you want the audience to think or to do - sounds like a conclusion by offering a satisfying closure

Appendix I

MEAL PLAN

	EXPLANATION
M	**MAIN IDEA** What's the main idea or point? This is your *topic sentence* for the body paragraph and your main idea or point should address a *universal* idea you want your audience to know/believe. Having trouble starting? Write down "This paragraph is about…" and then finish the thought. Cross of the "This paragraph is about" and revise the rest into that clear, strong topic sentence! 1. *This paragraph is about* why Steelman is a better superhero than Green Muscle. 2. ~~*This paragraph is about*~~ why *is* Steelman a better superhero than Green Muscle? Steelman's ingenuity makes him a better superhero than Green Muscle because this quality allows him to reason and make decisions based on his intellectual abilities.
E	**EVIDENCE/EXPLANATION/EXAMPLES** Elaborate on the main idea. Depending on the type of writing, you might use more than one of these 'e's! • *Evidence* – What does the main idea of the paragraph need to support it? • *Explanation* – Do you need to explain key terms, concepts, or events? What information in the paragraph may be especially complex or unclear? *Examples* – Other main ideas are best suited to examples, either from personal experiences or research, to illustrate or highlight elements of the main idea.
A	Once the main idea has been stated and supported, it is time to break that information down and analyze it. What more do your readers need to understand about the evidence or examples you provided? How can you make it clear that you are interpreting this information in a certain way? In other words, this is the section of the paragraph where the *SO WHAT? HOW? WHY?* OR *WHO CARES*? of your evidence is explained.
L	Linking refers to the link between the paragraph, your main idea, and the paper's thesis. Ask yourself…*how does this paragraph contribute the overall effectiveness of the paper?* You must make the connection clear. Avoid assuming your reader automatically 'gets it' – your job as a writer is to make it impossible for a reader to miss how this paragraph supports your goals for the paper.

Now THAT's a Plan!
(adapted from the Kennesaw State University Writing Center)

Appendix J

THE TUTORING SESSION
A three-phase approach: Introductions & Identifications; Collaboration Middle Ground; and Conclusion Takeaways

Phase 1: Introduction and Identification (Agenda Creation)
This phase sets the tone for the entire session. Introduce yourself to the student writer and welcome him or her to the writing center.

- Keep in mind that not all people view handshaking, humor, or physical proximity in the same way, so 'read' the body language of the writer. Creating a comfortable environment for the student writer is key.
- Ask the writer why he or she came today and any specifics about the assignment you might need to know. For instance: Do they have an assignment sheet? A rubric? Even if the student does, have the student explain their understanding as you read through the sheet. Specifics about the assignment should be discovered through conversation.
- Listen closely as the student tells you why he or she came to the center and identifies any areas of concerns that he or she would like you to discuss. If discussion wanes during this phase, ask questions to help keep the conversation going: 'what seems new about this assignment?' or 'what were the writer's initial thoughts when the assignment was being explained in class?'.
- Write down the reason for the visit in the form of goals (if it helps), to serve as a visual reminder of the agenda that you created collaboratively with the students.

Phase 2: Collaboration Middle Ground
During this phase, you and the student will work together- note: "work together". The tutoring session must be collaborative and not just a time for the Ninja to edit the paper while the student sits and waits. The goal of the WACC is to improve the student's writing, not write it for them. Go through the draft with the student and focus on the identified areas of concern discussed in Phase 1.

- Do not require the writer to read the paper aloud; this can feel very intimidating to many. Invite the writer to read the draft aloud, explaining that many errors are found as we read the paper in this manner, but do not make it a requirement.
- Keep the paper between you and the writer and avoid writing directly on the paper. Instead, invite and guide the student to make changes or notes on the draft as you discuss changes and ideas.
- Be an active listener. Let your responses be informed by what you hear the writer say (even more than by what the writer writes.)
- If you and the writer feel there are different priorities for working on the paper, you should acknowledge the writer's priorities first and then respectfully suggest things that you think might also be important.
- Tutoring does not have to proceed in the order of the paper

If the student has some form of a draft
- Rather than begin with details or line-by-line reading, continue to use conversation to get a sense of the whole.

- Invite the student to ask questions, make comments, jot notes, but make sure that the exchange of ideas is constructed through dialogue.

If the student does not have a draft
- If the writer has not begun writing, use dialogue to help brainstorm or outline. Focusing on sections of the writing will require you to get familiar with the content.
- Create a form of an outline, mind map, etc. for the student to take away from the session.

If the student needs help with final revision
- Point out one or two areas that would help improve the student's writing. Give the writer a few minutes to rewrite as you advised, and then read aloud the new part together.

If the student needs help with MLA, APA, etc.
- Guide students to tools such as the Hacker Style Guides, APA Style Guide, and Purdue OWL.

Phase 3: Conclusion & Takeaways
Review suggestions with the student and welcome the writer to return.
- When there are ten minutes left, let the writer know that the session is drawing to a close and review what you have done together.
- Ask the writer if you can provide any resources to help them work on the paper after the session is over (a handout, a web address).
- Invite the writer to make another appointment if more time is needed.
- After the session, the writer completes a survey via email.
- The ninja will complete a client report form after the session.
- The conference forms go into our database and serve as a record of the conference, in case a student needs proof.

Remember - respect is important and those that feel respected will return!

Appendix K

Research Study Approval

University Approval

9/20/2017

Heather Barton

RE: Your followup submission of 9/20/2017, Study #18-083: Writing, Collaborating, and Cultivating: Building Self-regulation, Self-efficacy, and Motivation Through a Student Centric, Student Led Writing Center

Dear Ms. Barton,

Your application for the new study listed above has been administratively reviewed. This study qualifies as exempt from continuing review under DHHS (OHRP) Title 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(2) - educational tests, surveys, interviews, public observations. The consent procedures described in your application are in effect. You are free to conduct your study.

NOTE: All surveys, recruitment flyers/emails, and consent forms must include the IRB study number noted above, prominently displayed on the first page of all materials.

Please note that all proposed revisions to an exempt study require submission of a Progress Report and IRB review prior to implementation to ensure that the study continues to fall within an exempted category of research. A copy of revised documents with a description of planned changes should be submitted to irb@kennesaw.edufor review and approval by the IRB.

Thank you for keeping the board informed of your activities. Contact the IRB at irb@kennesaw.edu or at (470) 578-2268 if you have any questions or require further information.

Sincerely,

Christine Ziegler, Ph.D.
KSU Institutional Review Board Chair and Director

cc: jdail1@kennesaw.edu

District Approval

Tuesday, August 15, 2017 at 8:24 AM

Ms. Barton,

I wanted to let you know that we received the Confidentiality Agreement and Dr. Scrivner has approved your research project to be conducted at Etowah HS. They have not set up the email feature on our printers yet so I will place a copy of the signed permission form in the county mail to you at EHS. Please be sure your Principal receives a copy of the signed permission form for his school records.

Thank you,

Sarah Tusing
Administrative Assistant to the Director
Student Assessment Department

P. O. Box 769, Canton, GA 30169
770.721.6206 Office
770.721.6305 Fax
sarah.tusing@cherokeek12.net

"Leveraging Knowledge and Resources with Innovative, Effective Practices"

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM WITH CHILD ASSENT STATEMENT

Title of Research Study: Writing, Collaborating, and Cultivating: Building Writing Skills and Writing Self-Efficacy Through a Student Centric, Student Led, Peer Feedback-Rich Writing Center

Researcher's Contact Information: Heather Barton, (678) 643-9874, hbarton2@students.kennesaw.edu.

Your child is being invited to take part in a research study conducted by **Heather Barton** of Kennesaw State University. Before you decide to allow your child to participate in this study, you should read this form and ask questions if you do not understand.

Description of Project
The purpose of the study is to determine if there is a significant difference in a student's belief in their writing ability, their ability to seek help, and their writing skills when they receive tutoring through the use of a writing center peer-feedback model. The assignment being used in this experiment is a part of our normal classroom assignments. It adheres to Georgia 11th grade/American Literature standards and your student would complete this assignment as a matter of routine. I am asking for your permission to use the results of their performance as data for my study. Student names and identifying information will be kept confidential.

Explanation of Procedures
All Students Will:
1. Complete a pre-survey of 16 questions that asks the student to rate themselves in relation to their beliefs in their ability to write and in their ability to seek help with their writing.
2. Respond to a diagnostic writing prompt modeled after writing required for the Georgia Milestones EOC and AP Language test.
3. Receive a lesson on classical oration and rhetoric, thesis writing, synthesis formation, and argumentative evidence writing.
4. Complete a post-survey of the same 16 question survey.
5. Respond to a new diagnostic writing prompt modeled after writing required for the Georgia Milestones EOC and AP Language test.

Some Students Will:
1. Receive tutoring from a peer trained in writing for the Georgia Milestones EOC and AP Language test. Tutoring will take place before school, after school, during lunches, or during class time.

Time Required

All assigned tasks will occur within our allotted classroom time and are general tasks that students would complete normally. I am asking for the use of the data for my study. Eventually, all students will receive peer tutoring services through the writing center as a matter of classroom routine. The total lesson length for this writing task is 11 non-consecutive days.

Risks or Discomforts

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts associated with this study.

Benefits

By allowing your child to participate in this study, I will be able to examine the significance our Etowah Writing Center plays in the writing development of our current and future Eagles.

Compensation

Since the lesson used as a part of this stud is a normal classroom assignment, no compensation, credit, or demerit will be awarded for participation. If a student chooses to not participate, they will complete the task assigned, but their results will not be contributed to the study.

Confidentiality

The results of this participation will be confidential. Students will use only their Student ID in responding to the survey and in submitting the written diagnostic. Further, the researcher will assign a random number to each student to keep all information confidential and unidentifiable to those viewing the study.

Use of Online Surveys

Students will utilize the password protected school Office 365 platform to submit their survey results. Students will use their password protected school TurnItIn account to submit their writing diagnostics.

Consent to Participate

I give my consent for my child,

_____, to participate in the research project described above. I understand that this participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty. I also understand that my child may withdraw his/her assent at any time without penalty.

_____
Signature of Parent or Authorized Representative, Date

_____

Signature of Investigator, Date

_____
_____

PLEASE SIGN BOTH COPIES OF THIS FORM, KEEP ONE AND RETURN THE OTHER TO THE INVESTIGATOR

Research at Kennesaw State University that involves human participants is carried out under the oversight of an Institutional Review Board. Address questions or problems regarding these activities to the Institutional Review Board, Kennesaw State University, 585 Cobb Avenue, KH3403, Kennesaw, GA 30144-5591, (470) 578-2268.

CHILD ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Hello students, this is Ms. Barton. Your parent has given permission for you to be in this study, but you get to make the final choice. It is up to you whether you participate. I am inviting you to be in a research study that will examine the effectiveness of our Etowah Writing Center (WACC). I want to determine if there is a significant difference in your belief in your writing ability, your ability to seek help with your writing, and writing skills when you or a peer receives tutoring through the use of a writing center peer-feedback model. The assignment being used in this experiment is a part of our normal classroom assignments. It adheres to Georgia 11th grade/American Literature standards and you would complete this assignment as a matter of routine. I am asking for your permission to use the results of your responses to the survey and writing performance as data for my study. I will keep your names and identifying information confidential.

If you decide to be in the study, I will ask you to do the following:
1. Complete a pre-survey of 16 questions that asks you to rate yourself in regards to your ability to write, your ability to seek help with your writing, and your writing skills.
2. Respond to a diagnostic writing prompt modeled after writing required for the Georgia Milestones EOC and AP Language test.
1. Participate in a lesson that will help you navigate classical oration and rhetoric, thesis writing, synthesis formation, and argumentative evidence writing.
2. Complete a post-survey of the same 16 question survey.
3. Respond to a new diagnostic writing prompt modeled after writing required for the Georgia Milestones EOC and AP Language test.

Some students will also be asked to do the following:
1. Receive tutoring from a peer trained in writing for the Georgia Milestones EOC and AP Language test. Tutoring will take place before school, after school, during lunches, or during class time.

You do not have to answer any question you do not want to answer or do anything that you do not want to do. Everything you say and do will be private, and your parents will not be told what you say or do while you are taking part in the study. When I tell other

people what I learned in the study, I will not tell them your name or the name of anyone else who took part in the research study.

If anything in the study worries you or makes you uncomfortable, let me know and you can stop. No one will be upset with you if you change your mind and decide not to participate. You are free to ask questions at any time and you can talk to your parent any time you want. If you want to be in the study, sign or print your name on the line below:

_____

Child's Name and Signature, Date

Check which of the following applies *(completed by person administering the assent.)*
- ☐ Child is capable of reading and understanding the assent form and has signed above as documentation of assent to take part in this study.
- ☐ Child is not capable of reading the assent form, but the information was verbally explained to him/her. The child signed above as documentation of assent to take part in this study.

_____

Signature of Person Obtaining Assent, Date

Appendix M – Raw Data

PART_NUM	Pre Write	Post Write	Pre SEW	Post SEW
1	5	6	880	960
2	3	6	820	940
3	4	6	630	820
4	3	7	730	860
5	4	6	740	740
6	5	6	660	820
7	5	6	600	790
8	5	4	660	720
9	4	7	530	570
10	3	7	690	640
11	4	6	520	640
12	5	6	760	930
13	3	4	760	870
14	4	6	800	900
15	4	7	670	640
16	2	6	800	770
17	5	6	790	790
18	2	7	530	510
19	3	5	760	860
20	4	5	790	870
21	3	7	610	690
22	3	6	690	620
23	3	7	850	920
24	4	5	570	530
25	5	6	650	640
26	4	5	520	660
27	3	5	520	570
28	4	7	810	830
29	3	6	790	830
30	4	7	690	840
31	3	6	730	650
32	3	6	540	650
33	3	6	800	820
34	3	6	790	800
35	5	7	810	930

36	1	5	590	780
37	3	3	680	650
38	3	4	660	620
39	4	5	550	630
40	4	6	660	770
41	4	5	770	840
42	5	7	790	870
43	5	5	930	960
44	4	5	760	840
45	3	5	740	820
46	3	5	720	730
47	4	7	780	760
48	4	6	570	540
49	5	7	960	970
50	4	6	830	950
51	2	5	770	720
52	5	5	780	710
53	4	6	510	470
54	3	6	710	750
55	4	5	850	790
56	4	6	710	730
57	4	6	760	840
58	4	7	430	470
59	3	4	470	480
60	2	5	730	750
61	3	6	770	760
62	3	6	850	780
63	2	4	730	790
64	4	6	950	950
65	4	6	750	800
66	4	5	860	840
67	2	4	600	710
68	2	6	750	740
69	4	5	840	860
70	5	7	820	920
71	3	5	810	800