AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

<u>Barbara Gail Ellis</u> or the degree of <u>Doctor of Philosophy</u> in <u>Curriculum and Instruction</u> presented on <u>January 4, 1990</u> .

Title: <u>Major Inhibitory Factors in the Assessment of Themes by Oregon High School English Teachers</u>.

Abstract Approved:

Dr. Marcelene Ling

This study's purpose was to provide data on major inhibitory factors experienced by a third of Oregon high school English teachers in areas of: attitudes, behaviors, and physical and emotional effects of theme assessment.

Methods employed two analyses: (1) statistical testing of the independent variable of teaching experience (1 to 2, 3 to 5, 6 to 10, and 11+ years) applied to twelve null hypotheses by the Chi-Square test for significance; and (2) descriptive analysis of frequencies.

Hypotheses were stated to measure no significant differences between years of experience and twelve assumptions about: 1) number of themes assessed per month,

2)hours spent per month on theme assessment, 3)assessment turnaround time, 4)amount of commentary given, 5)perceptions that most students do not seem to apply assessment suggestions to subsequent themes, 6)fatigue affecting judgment in assessment, 7)perceptions that assessment may adversely affect eyesight, 8)feelings of despair over students making the same errors previously pointed out, 9)perceptions that burnout is related to assessment, 10)perceptions that a journalism copyediting course would be unlikely to lessen assessment time, 11)the belief that composition should be taught as a separate course, 12)perceptions that a teachers' short course on assessment would have practical application to an increased theme load.

Measured by Chi-Square, the first hypotheses was rejected; the other eleven were retained.

Descriptive analyses supported null hypotheses results and yielded conclusions about: 1)assessment loads and teachers behaviors, 2)in-service training and assistance, and 3)attitudes about a national standardized theme structure, theme writing per se, and work loads of other disciplines.

Recommendations include smaller and fewer classes, a separate composition course, and further assessment training,

Suggestions for further research include investigating the lack of militancy in high school English teachers, feasibility of shifting assessment training to Education Departments, applicability of copyediting training, studying teachers' physical and emotion-related ailments.

Major Inhibitory Factors in the Assessment of Themes
by Oregon High School English Teachers

by

Barbara Gail Ellis

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APPROVED:

Redacted for Privacy
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Professor of Education in charge of major

Redacted for Privacy
_____

Chairman of Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Redacted for Privacy
_____

Dean of School of Education

Redacted for Privacy
_____

Dean of Graduate School

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Barbara Gail Ellis

January 4, 1990

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

MAJOR INHIBITORY FACTORS IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THEMES

BY OREGON HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the discipline of English one of a teacher's duties
is to read student compositions (sometimes called themes, or
essays) and assess the effort of the students for such
elements as content, organization, writing style, language
usage, thinking ability, as well as the "conventions":
spelling, grammar, and mechanics such as punctuation. Some
teachers call the assessment practice grading; others call it
marking; still others describe it as correcting, despite the
perception concerning the term's negative connotation. In
this study, the effort will be called assessment, for the
most part.

Whatever term is used, an English teacher's evaluation
of student writing is tightly bonded to all the composition
precepts taught in the classroom. It is highly personalized
tutoring. Students, parents, administrators, educators, and

the general public know what assessment is. It is that red, lavender, black or blue marking that prods or praises a young writer's efforts; a marking which announces that those efforts have been given attention by a teacher. When compositions are returned without assessment markings--as can be the case--the response can be disappointment or anger, or the conclusion that the teacher is not doing her/his job.

Most people know what assessment is, but it is chiefly an English teacher who knows how assessment is done. However, it is probably the case that most English teachers are not aware of the high cost of assessment's consequences, in terms of dollars, and in terms of its behavioral, attitudinal, physical, and emotional effects on instructors themselves. Because students and other outsiders rarely see the assessment effort required or expended for the four or five classes the teacher may be instructing, how could they be aware of the efforts involved in performing what some perceive as a vital component of composition instruction?

Early in their careers, English teachers may think that all teachers spend as much time as they do on papers or other instructional effort. However, most soon learn from the remarks of colleagues who have spoken up about the unique "homework load" of teachers of writing, and about the economic, physical, and emotional consequences. Those colleagues usually have not reported such information to the

general public, but, rather, to professional meetings or in professional publications. Back in 1897, Thurber railed about this literally backbreaking stewardship, remarking that the reading of "juvenile writing in great quantities" would impair anyone's physical and emotional health (Donelson, 1982, p. 230).

The first issue of The English Journal contained this much-quoted jeremiad, written more than seventy-five years ago:

> ...if good [composition] teaching can be done
> under present conditions, it is passing strange
> [sic] that so few teachers have found out how to
> do it; that English composition teachers as a
> class, if judged by criticism that is becoming
> more and more frequent, are so abnormally
> inefficient. For every year the complaints
> become louder that the investment in the
> English teaching yields but a small fraction of
> the desired returns. Every year teachers resign,
> break down, perhaps become permanently invalided,
> having sacrificed ambition, health, and, in not a
> few instances, even life, in the struggle to do
> all the work expected of them....Much money is
> spent, valuable teachers are worn out at an
> unhumanly rapid rate, and the results are
> inadequate or wholly lacking. From any point of
> view--that of taxpayer, teacher, or pupil--such a
> situation is intolerable. (Hopkins, 1912, p. 1)

Because journalism teachers face a similar assessment situation, this same issue of The English Journal included an article with comment about the inhibitory factors involved in processing composition efforts from those heading for the newspaper business:

> How can the teacher read and criticize
> and reread the thousands of pages of written
> work that are produced every month in every
> composition class, without danger to his health
> or his sanity? (Scott, 1912, p. 175)

Hopkins' and Scott's remarks appear to be timeless. Nothing about theme-assessment conditions or attitudes seems to have changed, for three years ago a fairly new Michigan English teacher wrote the following in The Clearing House:

> Is it fair for someone like myself [sic] to spend some 25 hours a week outside of class, reading and marking essays, when another teacher, making the same pay, has to spend virtually no time outside of school? The answer is obvious. The question is whether any school system is willing to meet the challenge of teaching kids to write with a commitment to some sort of change. With no change in the present system of equal student contact across the curriculum, there will be little change in the success teachers have with writing instruction. Some, like myself [sic], who... miss sleep, and neglect families, will continue to have some limited success, as long as our will and health (both mental and physical) hold out. But don't count on it. (Soule, 1986, p. 100)

Theme assessment is totally unlike evaluations done in such fields or subjects as art, athletics, biology, economics, history, science, or vocational education. There is no check list or multiple-choice evaluation form of student writing. Most English teachers have been taught that effective theme assessment cannot be accomplished without thoughtful judgment and marks and comments that will be meaningful to the student writer. The time required for effective theme assessment can be enormous: if a teacher with one-hundred and twenty students takes only ten minutes per composition, he or she will spend over twenty hours in assessment per assignment. And if writing improvement occurs only with frequent practice, the burden on most writing teachers becomes clear.

While the nation's high school English teachers might have suspected members of their profession also were suffering adverse effects in fulfulling perceived expectations of students and others concerning assessment, they probably have not known the full extent of its consequences to their minds, bodies and lives. Further, unreasonable expectations about assessment loads, whether self-imposed or imposed by others, undoubtedly affects assessment negatively. All of the negative effects of unreasonable theme assessment demands (short term and long term and those affecting the teacher and those affecting the student writer) were included in this study under the terms major inhibitory effects.

Intent and Scope of the Study

It is clear that for at least the last seventy-five years there has been criticism of English teachers' effectiveness in teaching high school students to write. While the criticism may be more strident during one period as compared to another, such criticisms are consistently and repeatedly voiced at one place or another across the land and have certainly not abated. During the same period of time there is also increasing evidence that the expected work load for teachers of writing has been high, if not the highest for

all teachers in all disciplines. Such load has been
suspected of causing resignations, emotional breakdowns, and
other health problems. Hopkins called the situation
intolerable in the year 1912.

The question is what, if anything, has changed for the
teachers of composition? What is the problem, its nature and
extent? Are composition teachers aware of problems endemic
to their profession?

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this study was whether there
are major inhibitory factors affecting the high school
English composition teachers' ability to assess themes? If
so, what are the nature and scope of such factors, determined
by self-reports of five hundred and three Oregon teachers?

A literature search revealed, there have been several
relevant articles and studies utilizing historical, critical
and analytical methods. No major empirical study of problems
associated with assessment of student writing was located.
Certainly, there was no study attempting to determine the
perceived incidence, magnitude, and breadth of problems
involved.

Justification of the Study

There are many reasons to determine the inhibitory factors associated with theme assessment, including economic, educational, and practical issues. Some of the important justifications are covered in this section.

Informal Inquiry

When this study was in an early stage of formulation, letters were sent and telephone calls were made to former colleagues and local English instructors who are teaching composition at the high school level. Some of the responses follow:

A teacher with 25 years of experience in Maine:

> Finding out how a lot of us assess themes is something that all English teachers have wanted to know about.

A teacher in the first half of her first year:

> I'd like to find out what other English teachers are doing; what assessment techniques they are using.

A teacher with two years of experience in Oregon:

> In my school, I must be the only English teacher who likes correcting themes. I'd like to know if I'm all alone out there. Am I the only one not going blind from correcting papers? When I talk about the great stuff I see, I get dirty looks in the [faculty] lounge. Is it this way all over [with English teachers] or what?

A teacher with sixteen years of acclaimed efforts with students who has begun graduate school:

> I am taking a leave of absence next year to build another business mainly because of the paper

load. Please do not think my present burnout
influenced my response--I have felt this way since
the beginning of my career.

Millie Davis, director of the National Council of
Teachers of English's (NCTE) affiliate member service,
reported (personal communication, 1989) that as of December
1989, no comprehensive study has been done by the NCTE or its
one hundred thirty affiliates around the country that
measured more than the number of themes assessed by a
teacher, number of students in English classes, and some
assessment techniques; that there has been no comprehensive
study of behavior, attitudes, and the physical and emotional
factors related to theme assessment as experienced by high
school English teachers.

Criticism of Writing Instruction

Central value always has been placed on language
instruction in this and other societies. Reading and writing
generally have been the usual measures of accomplishment.
Perhaps one indicator of the value is criticism of writing
instruction based on the abilities of students assumed to
have been instructed--which is a matter of historical record
for at least three centuries. For example, the seventeenth-
century philosopher/writer John Locke is reported to have
said:

> If any one among us have [sic] a facility or
> purity more than ordinary in his mother tongue it

> is owing to chance, or his genius or anything
> rather than to his education or any care of his
> teacher. (Aldrich, 1972, p. 181)

Composition teaching is done in a classroom with lecture and discussion, and sometimes in student conferences. However, the principal portion of such instruction generally has been invested in students' writing efforts, when teachers read and mark writings, usually after regular classroom hours. The two processes of lecture and assessment are linked; however, the heaviest burden of teaching writing and by far the heaviest number of hours are involved in assessment. Therefore, when educators, administrators, parents, and the public criticize teachers because students are perceived to be unable to write effectively, theme assessment has been indicted, along with other pedagogical factors.

Early in this century, English teachers' efforts in composition began to be subject to criticism by national committees and commissions. Harvard's former president James B. Conant conducted an intensive study of twenty-two high schools in eighteen states, concluding that forty-one percent were inadequate in training students to master formal composition (Conant, 1959). He recommended that students write fifteen hundred words per week, in effect suggesting the establishment of a national standard. However, Conant did not study the work loads of writing teachers in the twenty-two schools, nor did he indicate awareness of the time

requirements for writing teachers to assess fifteen-hundred words per week for each student.

In 1983 the National Commission on Excellence in Education, in its report _A Nation at Risk,_ surveyed a portion of the nation's high schools and found composition skills wanting. The next year, the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reported that between 1969 and 1979, ten to twenty-five percent of seventeen-year-olds "had serious difficulty in putting words on paper" (Boyer, 1984, p. 27). In December of 1986, after tabulating 55,000 writing samples from fourth, eighth, and eleventh grades, the NAEP reported that few students could "write adequately except in response to the simplest of tasks" (Lawrence, 1986, p. 27).

The common perception of many lay people and educators generally is that young people cannot write as well today as their elders can. That perception appears to be accompanied with the notion that English teachers' work loads have decreased and that teachers work less now than they did twenty years ago.

Economic and Social Implications

Negative economic and social implication of past and current assessment loads are found either implicitly or explicitly in the previous citations of Hopkins, Scott, and Soule. If these reports are accurate, then the economic and social costs are high indeed. One indicator of

these costs is the relative absenteeism rate of English teachers compared with teachers in other academic areas.

Those who must hire substitutes for ailing teachers are well aware of which high school fields have the highest number of instructors calling in sick. The economic cost is understood when it is known that so long as a teacher has sick-leave time accrued, the district must pay the salary of a teacher who is ill and the per-diem cost of hiring a substitute teacher. For example, an official reported that two hundred twenty-seven substitutes must be hired each day on average in the Portland, Oregon high school district, a system of some thirty-seven hundred faculty members; that the greatest numbers of per-capita substitutes required are in the areas of English and mathematics (Dutton, personal communication, 1989).

In Corvallis, Oregon, a district spokesperson (Kitchell, personal communication, 1989) reported that even though absenteeism data include teacher in-service days for the academic year 1988-89, English had the highest per capita percentage of absent teachers (11.97%), with science teachers next highest (7.53%).

No literature was found with national or regional per-capita sick-leave/disability data for high school or college teachers. However, if the Portland and Corvallis data are accurate and representative, then two notions begin to take

shape: first, the economic, social and individual absentee-
ism costs of English teachers are high; and second, a
relatively high rate of absenteeism may be related to the
student writing assessment loads for English teachers. This
inference is reasonable unless one can muster the evidence
that English teachers are by nature more predisposed to
illness than teachers in most other fields, or they are less
responsible than others in their use of sick leave time.

There are important economic and social implications to
inhibitory factors related to theme assessments, both for
society and for the individuals concerned as well. Extra-
ordinary waste is involved when people who have undergone
years of undergraduate, post-baccalaureate or graduate
education to gain certification for secondary teaching, then
become depressed, disenchanted, and/or quit. According to
one study, the linkage between teaching and burnout "has
increasingly become a national problem" (Panzer, 1984, p.
3003).

There are several studies available relative to burnout
among faculty in secondary schools. For example, Scott
(1985) reported that English was no different from math when
stress was concerned; Kitowski (1984) found that in her
sample group of burned-out English teachers, most respondents
mentioned that "although English teaching offers intrinsic
rewards, the heavy workload resulting from large classes and
composition teaching is particularly stressful" (p. 341).

According to data compiled within the Oregon Department of Education School Finance and Data Service Information Office, there were more new teacher hirings in English than within the other core disciplines. The data are presented in Table 1, revealing a fairly stable number of English teachers within the state during the past three years (even though high school enrollments have increased during the period), with an eight percent average of new hires. It should also be noted that English has the greatest number of teachers compared to other disciplines, thus an eight percent new-hire rate in English is considerably more expensive than the same percent rate in fields with fewer teachers.

Table 1. 1986-1989 Oregon High School Faculty Additions.

Discipline	1986-87					1987-88					1988-89				
	I*	E	T	TT	%	I*	E	T	TT	%	I*	E	T	TT	%
English	48	82	130	1515	9	47	77	124	1530	8	47	55	102	1509	7
Soc. Studies	38	34	72	1110	7	29	34	63	1129	6	26	34	60	1139	5
Gnl. Science	21	16	37	461	8	18	14	32	444	7	11	15	25	402	6
Mathematics	41	29	70	924	8	34	36	70	969	7	40	26	66	960	7
Music	15	28	43	324	13	16	26	42	339	12	14	19	33	337	10
Physical Ed.	13	23	36	671	5	20	19	39	681	6	10	29	39	676	6
Business Ed.	20	17	37	573	7	18	16	34	556	6	14	13	27	539	5
Ind. Arts	11	17	28	431	7	4	9	13	428	3	6	15	21	424	5
Special Ed.	11	26	37	300	12	9	23	32	328	10	12	25	37	326	11

I=Inexperienced   E=Experienced   T=Total New Faculty   TT=Total Faculty
%=Percentage of New Faculty to Total Faculty

Statistics, Courtesy School Finance and Data Service Information, Oregon State Department of Education

A per-diem cost of seventy-five dollars to hire a substitute for an ailing English teacher is certainly an expense. However, replacement costs can involve expenditures of thousands of dollars to a school district. Having to spend public monies to replace an English teacher can involve the expenses of recruiting, hiring, moving, supervision, and orientation to students and teaching situations.

The economic justification for an assessment study has its base in all of the foregoing dollar information. However, there may be additional, intangible costs: a Corvallis principal (Behn, personal communication, 1989) remarked that absenteeism ultimately adversely affects students' educational experience and that therefore society is as shortchanged as these students.

Implications for the English Profession

Thirty years ago, a teacher named Walker Gibson was invited to appraise the English profession in the National Council of Teachers of English Distinguished Lecture series. Teachers may become inured to pronouncements of their perceived shortcomings from outsiders, but probably not when it comes from within their ranks. He wrote:

> Our teaching of English composition, by and
> large [sic] has been a shambles. In the schools
> it is the area where teachers feel most at sea,
> confessing themselves most in need of self-
> confidence and assistance. In the college level,

especially in the universities, it falls
characteristically into the least experienced
hands, where it is pawed and plied into a
thousand inchoate shapes. The composition
teacher, as everyone knows, can show no
respectable theory; his discipline boasts no
scholarship but is planned by dolts, manned by
drudges, and avoided if possible by everyone
(cited in Burton, 1973).

Reports of large-scale empirical research about

assessment and its consequences were limited. The

data reported in this section on absenteeism and turnover,

for example, were obtained as a result of direct inquiry

because it was not reported in the literature or public

pronouncements from members of the English profession.

The first empirical study in English was reported in

1909 by the Modern Language Association (MLA). The MLA that

year polled more than twelve thousand teachers and

administrators "to gather certain data bearing upon the

general situation [of teaching English] with a view to

general publicity" (Hopkins, 1912, p. 8). Hopkins indicated

that most administrators refused to supply data on costs and

labor even though it always has been public information.

Despite the MLA's promptings by letters and at

conventions, the response was so slight that it led to

Hopkins inclusion of a self-report insert immediately

following his explanation in The English Journal about the

state of composition cited earlier. He asked Journal readers

to report such things as class enrollments in English and

other disciplines, a breakdown of the day and evening hours of an English teacher, annual salary costs of all school subjects, and costs on equipment and each student (pp. 8-8A).

The response to his survey revealed that English was the most inexpensive discipline in a high school ("a little above seven dollars a year for each pupil") with scientific and vocational subjects costing from fifty to one-hundred percent more than English (pp. 568-569). After tabulating the results, he reported that:

> ...English makes the heaviest demand upon the time of teachers, and that science is apparently next; but that there is nothing in any other subject to parallel, in either time demand or physical strain, the theme reading of the English teacher...even when giving more time to their work than any other teachers do, English teachers cannot do one-half what they know to be necessary to the maintenance of efficiency. (p. 569)

There have been surveys by the National Council of Teachers of English, as reported by Davis (1989), and revelations about poor teaching conditions reported in late 1989 by the National Conference on College Composition and Communication. Some of the issues explored in the NCCCC study had to do with assessment's relationship to assignment frequency, the value and types of assessment commentary, and various types of oral and written assessment.

The literature chapter also touches briefly on the rise of what will be called the <u>assessment industry</u> throughout this research. Such an industry involves vendors who are

contracted by school districts to evaluate the writing proficiency of students in both elementary and secondary schools. For example, in 1989 the Corvallis, Oregon school district had established a $30,000 contract with Northwest Regional Educational Laboratories of Beaverton, Oregon (Auty, personal communication, 1989). A NREL staff member provided teachers with the testing material so that coaching could be done in advance of the assessment, and also instructed them to find other activities for the learning disabled and those for whom English is a second language. The staff member then trained twelve Corvallis area evaluators to assess students' compositions.

Four class periods were devoted to the assessment, and computer results identified which teachers had students with the highest (or lowest) scores. Despite the assurances of Diederich (1969) that a national composition curriculum is not likely, assessment vendors in several states now use rating scales developed by him at the Educational Testing Service in New Jersey (Quellmalz, 1984). Both a NREL and a Corvallis school staff member have admitted that the assessment industry's evaluation work may propel the nation's English teachers to "teach to the test" (Vickie Spandel, personal communication, 1989).

The assessment industry has been the subject of several studies. Adams (1985) found evaluators were grading sample

themes by minute details; Miller (1958) found evaluation
problems among evaluators; Kincaid (1953) concluded that it
would be easier for an evaluator to judge writing if the
writer might have had writing opportunities on different
topics on the same day and on the same topics on different
days.

This study did not investigate perceptions about or the
effects of the assessment industry. However, the study
instrument included four items about a national standardized
theme structure.

Several empirical studies in other composition areas
have been done, some with large samples of English teachers.
Specifically, such studies have concerned theme frequency,
the value of teacher commentary, peer editing and evaluations
by students.

There are several studies dealing with the frequency of
theme assignments and their linkage to students' writing
proficiency. Among them are Arnold (1963), Buxton (1958),
Christiansen (1964), Lokke & Wykoff (1948), McColly & Remstad
(1963), Sutton & Allen (1964), and Wolf (1966).

Studies on commentary's value have been done by Bata
(1972), Gee (1972), Sommers (1982), and Taylor & Hoedt
(1966). Research also has been done on the value of both
positive and negative commentary by teachers on themes; for
example, Gee (1972), Halloran (1982), Seidman (1967), and
Stevens (1973). Teachers' subjectivity concerning assessment

has been studied by Kistler (1985), Michlin (1977), Moore

(1984), and Schumann (1966).

Other studies have included students' evaluation of

peers' themes: Blind (1984), and Katstra, Tollefson & Gilbert

(1987).

Implications for Generalizations

In other words, no sizable portion of high school

English teachers has been surveyed about other vital

assessment practices and consequences. Yet this information

is of major importance in raising awareness about such

practices and consequences of several audiences (the English

faculty, administrators, the public, and institutions

training high school English teachers), particularly

considering purported damage to English teachers' morale and

health, to the public treasury, as well as to the overall

writing proficiency of students.

The result was a decision by the researcher to launch a

substantive, many-pronged self-report study to collect and

analyze data surrounding theme assessment practices and

consequences.

The study would involve Oregon high school English

teachers. Could Oregon results be extrapolated to represent

the rest of the United States? Dr. Helen Berg, director of

Oregon State University's Survey Research Center (SRC),

regularly observes state statistical data that provide

analysis of a variety of interests, agriculture to family

finances. Berg noted that with an issue of high school

English teachers and theme assessment, it was possible to

generalize the Oregon results to the other forty-nine states

(personal communication, 1989).

Limitations of the Study

At least one research specialist has defined a study's

limitations as some element:

> ...that the researcher knows [that] may
> negatively affect the results or generalizability
> of the results but over which he or she probably
> has no control...Two common limitations are
> sample size and length of the study.
> (Gay, 1989, p. 86)

The sample size and the lengthy instrument attempted in

this study was designed to overcome these two chief

confounding elements.

The sample was to be a third of a state's high school

English teachers and an instrument was to have more than one

hundred items involving three areas: behaviors, attitudes,

physical and emotional effects.

Veracity of subject response also is seen as a

limitation in any self-report survey. The potential exists

for the halo effect or gratitude stemming from the Hawthorne

effect; or, on bipolar scales, a respondent may express what

he or she perceives are mandatory responses. There are also

the factors, particularly in this survey, that discontent,

exhaustion, multiplicity of activities, or dislike of survey instruments could provide far different responses than those obtained if teachers had the benefit of dispassion concerning instrument items.

Moreover, there is the traditional bias involved with random surveys: that only those interested will respond. At bottom, however, is the fact that the subject sample was to be so large that these limitations were not an issue. McMillan & Schumacher (1984) say that the more items, the higher the reliability of survey results; and it is a well-known rule in statistics that, as Freedman (1978) says: "As the size of the sample goes up, the standard error for a percentage goes down" (p. 332). Further, Gay (1987) says for descriptive research, ten percent of a population is considered minimum; this study attempted to reach more than thirty-three percent of a population.

Definition of Terms

Assessment: The evaluation of a composition based on a criterion set by someone who assigns a rating or grade to the work. Assessment is used instead of such traditional terms as grading, marking, or correcting.

Breakouts: Dividing data categories into subcategories.

Inhibitory Factor: An external element that negatively affects a teacher's ability to evaluate formal compositions.

Theme: A formal written exercise done in prose. This term is used interchangeably with essay or writing sample and generally consists of two or more pages of work.

Restatement of the Problem

The problem to be dealt with by the researcher was whether there were major inhibitory factors affecting the high school English teachers' ability to assess themes. If there were, the study would explore the nature and scope of those factors through a self-report instrument that would involve a significant number of Oregon high school English teachers.

Operational Null Hypotheses

The study's results were to be subjected, as is customary, to a test of significance as well as descriptive analysis. Many studies rest solely on the results of hypotheses concerning data being analyzed by a test of significance; equally, other studies rest on descriptive analysis. This study rests on both types of analysis, each contributing equal roles.

The test of significance appropriate for a self-report is the non-parametric Chi-Square analysis. Accordingly, the research was to state null hypotheses identifying no significant difference in an English teacher's experiential base. The twelve null hypotheses were:

Ho^1 – There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the number of themes assessed per month.

Ho^2 – There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and how many outside hours were spent per month on assessment of themes.

Ho^3 – There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the amount of turnaround time spent between collecting themes and returning them to students.

Ho^4 – There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the amount of commentary written in theme assessment;

Ho^5 – There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the perception that most students do not seem to apply assessment suggestions to subsequent themes.

Ho^6 – There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and fatigue affecting judgment in assessing themes.

Ho^7 – There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the perception that assessment adversely affects eyesight.

Ho^8 – There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the feelings of

despair over students' making the same errors that have been pointed out to them in previous themes.

Ho[9] - There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the perception that burnout is related to assessment of themes.

Ho[10] - There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the perception that a journalism copyediting course would be unlikely to lessen the time spent assessing themes.

Ho[11] - There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the belief that composition should be taught as a separate course.

Ho[12] - There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the perception that a teachers' short course on theme assessment would have practical application toward an increased theme load.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Teacher assessment of composition has been part of almost every culture's educational system since Babylonian youths used sticks on clay tablets, according to Trever (1936). Up to the present century, copying key documents and literary masterpieces rather than doing original work has been the way students have learned to write. Athenian youth of 495-429 B.C. copied literature first and _then_ attempted grammar, both with the same seeming lack of enthusiasm of today's counterparts. The bilingual (Greek and Latin) work done in the Ciceronian times (106-43 B.C.) with stylus on wax tablets was orally assessed by tutors and erased by thumb for revision (Webster, 1947). As Cicero explains his writing lessons:

> [Under] Diodotus the Stoic...I practiced much in Latin, but more often in Greek partly because Greek, offering more opportunity for stylistic embellishment, accustomed me to a similar habit in using Latin, but partly too because the foremost teachers, knowing only Greek, could not, unless I used Greek, correct my faults nor convey their instruction. (Lewis & Reinhold, 1955, Vol. 1, p. 497)

When carbon ink, dip-and-scratch pens, and sheets of birch or alder appeared in the first century (Durant,

1944), teachers began the formal assessments of the last 2000 years. This was verified in October 1988 when fresh archaeological discoveries at an Agricolan fort (77-84 A.D.) near the Scottish border yielded eleven hundred documents including a schoolboy's copying of Virgil. There, in the margin, was the spikey scrawl of a teacher who commented "segn," an abbreviation of "segnis" (sloppy), the forerunner of today's marginalia "awk" (awkward) or other codified commentary (Longworth, 1988).

A literature review provides considerable illumination about how such past composition assessments have affected teachers in terms of physical and emotional consequences, attitudes, and behavioral patterns.

This review chapter has been divided into three sections: 1) the physical and emotional impacts of the assessment workload, 2) attitudes concerning teacher training and bias, 3) behaviors concerning frequency, methods of assessment, methods of overload avoidance, commentary, the assessment industry, and teacher militance.

The Physical and Emotional Effects

For nearly a century, the literature has carried complaints concerning the physical and emotional challenges presented by the logistics of a teacher assessing the

composition output of one hundred twenty-five to one hundred fifty students. Many researchers and teachers have provided computations for a census of one-hundred thirty students per instructor (Applebee, 1966; Christenbury, 1979; Hopkins, 1912; Krest, 1986; Larkin, 1979; Sommers, 1982; Stanford, 1979; Waber, 1987). They have estimated that four to ten minutes of assessment per theme amounts to from nine to twenty-two hours for one-hundred and thirty compositions. Those, like Sommers, who consider commentary as the most vital component of individualized instruction may use thirty-three to forty-three hours if they spend fifteen to twenty minutes per theme.

Even if assessment is done only once per month, the time and effort would seem to justify the profession's century-old plea for a maximum per-teacher enrollment of from eighty to one-hundred students (Conant, 1959; Hopkins, 1912).

At Harvard, where the prospect of writing fifteen-minute daily themes and weekly formal compositions drove away poet Robert Frost as a student (Gradgent, 1930), a teaching assistant reported he assessed more than eight hundred "dailies" per week, working days and parts of the evenings (Rodd, 1983, p. 63). All faculty at the turn of the century were required to take a turn at much of this work load. The traditional senior faculty view was

reflected in the action of Harvard's renowned scholar
Francis J. Child who once threw a chair across the room in
complaint about his still having to assess compositions
(Anne R. Gere, personal communication, 1989).

Among the first studies concerning how much time
teachers spent on the composition component of an English
course was one done in 1965 under the co-sponsorship of the
University of Illinois' Department of English and the
National Council of the Teachers of English, and funded by
the United States Office of Education. Researchers took a
cross-section of English teachers from one hundred fifty-
eight high schools in forty-five states.

As reported by Applebee (1966), the results showed
that teachers spent only 15.7 percent of classroom time
emphasizing composition; literature had 52.2 percent.
However, he added the essential information that:

> Teachers report that they spend over half
> as much time reading and correcting papers as
> they do teaching classes, a condition that
> simply does not obtain for any other subject
> in the curriculum. Given this knowledge, we
> can begin to appreciate why it is that
> teachers appear to spend such a small amount
> of class time (some 14 percent) teaching
> composition. It would suggest that teachers
> are not reneging on the task of teaching
> composition, but that they have come to
> depend enormously on the process of teaching
> writing by correction--on instruction after
> the fact and after the act. (pp. 278-279)

Stanford (1979) expounded on the teachers' physical and emotional health as they relate to theme assessments. In a book that compiled time-saving assessment techniques of over thirty contributors, he said that prudent teachers recognized the importance of sufficient family, social, and personal time in maintaining sound emotional and physical health. Many other observers (Hopkins, 1912; Scott, 1912; Soule, 1986; Thurber, cited in Donelson, 1982) have cited the debilitating effects of assessments on a teacher's emotional and physical health.

The possibility of assessments having a relationship to absenteeism, burnout, and turnover has been raised in the first chapter of this study with data supplied by school district personnel offices and the Oregon State Department of Education (pp. 10-15).

Attitudes Toward Assessment

Teacher Treatment and Training

Stamina also may be affected by depression linked to centuries of Society's low regard for composition teachers, which was first reported during the Roman empire when teaching of writing was done by slaves or Greek freedman

(Durant, 1944). Tacitus' view of the rhetorical institutes (55-115 A.D.) is not flattering: "It is hard to tell whether the place itself, or their fellow-scholars, or the character of their studies, do their minds most harm" (p. 763).

Rodd (1983) traces the one hundred five-year-old official start of English departments, noting that originally they played mendicant in recruiting other writing-related disciplines from fields that were only too pleased to be rid of composition assessment. Once composition coursework was included in the curriculum, however, the English faculty soon "viewed the process of teaching composition with a mixture of repugnance and resignation" (p. 63). From the departmental beginnings, it was literature that English faculties really wanted to teach. Waber (1987) states:

> In addition to the unappealing work load,
> potential teachers were hardly immune to the
> public criticism and constant flagellation to
> which English teachers were exposed. (p. 31)

Applebee (1966) complained that twenty percent of the schools studied in the NCTE-University of Illinois survey were using lay assessors and asked: "Do we consider [the composition] aspect of teaching so demeaning or so unimportant that we can slough it off on non-professionals?" (p. 279).

It also is possible that the status is attributable to what high school faculties remember about undergraduate composition courses. Lindsey (1976) noted that composition duties usually are given to teaching assistants, graduate students, those with master's degrees or to "neophyte Ph.D.s in English suffering their servitude" (p. 113).

As recent as this October, Wallace (1989) observed that in Oregon's public colleges and universities, there is overuse of temporary faculty (part and full time) and graduate students; they're paid little. When financial exigencies struck the state system this past year, Wallace noted that Portland State University eliminated seven of the required freshman composition courses fall quarter and planned to cut thirteen more.

Oregon is not alone with such values. Nationally, the plight of composition faculties drew the focus of one English organization at a 1986 Wyoming conference (Slevin, personal communication, 1989). A white paper emerged. This was the Statement of Principles and Standards for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing, issued in October 1989 by the National Conference on College Composition and Communication, citing the treatment of those training future teachers to teach and assess writing at the high school levels:

> More than half the English faculty in two-year colleges, and nearly one-third of the English faculty at four-year colleges and universities, work on part-time and/or temporary appointments. Almost universally, they are teachers of writing, a fact which many consider the worst scandal in higher education today. These teachers work without job security, often without benefits, and for wages far below what their full-time colleagues are paid per course. Increasingly, many are forced to accept an itinerant existence, racing from class to car to drive to another institution to teach....Even when, as is often the case, these faculty bring to their academic appointments the appropriate credentials and commitments to good teaching, their low salaries, poor working conditions, and uncertain futures mar their effectiveness and reduce the possibilities for loyalty to the institution's educational goals. All lose: teachers, students, schools, and ultimately a democratic society that cannot be without citizens whose education empowers them to read and write with critical sophistication. (p. 330)

Kinnamon (1981) says that hiring low-echelon faculty unlikely to stay longer than two years means that a "department can economize and still provide the illusion of quality instruction" (p. 18), noting that at his school an administrator wanted to develop a semipermanent cadre of evaluators at a starting salary of twelve thousand dollars.

Judy & Judy (1981) sum up undergraduate training of future high school English teachers:

> Although interest in teaching writing has increased dramatically in the past two decades, the sad fact remains that teachers of writing are not well respected. Many colleges persist in seeing freshman writing as a necessary evil instead of an opportunity to teach, and high schools often give

the new teachers a heavy composition load, a sure
sign that the senior faculty doesn't want to teach
writing. (p. 26)

The literature is full of indictments about

undergraduate English departments being remiss in training

future teachers for composition instruction, particularly

assessment (Arnold, 1964; Boiarsky & Spanjer, 1982; Cherry,

1973; Conant, 1963; Greenbaum & Taylor, 1981; Hickman,

1975; Lindsey, 1976; Smith & Rattigan, 1982; Sommers, 1982;

Wagner, 1976; Watson, 1981; White, 1985).

Aldrich (1972) lays blame for high school composition

incompetency on a vicious cycle of high school and college

educations, demonstrable chiefly in the paucity of frequent

formal writing and, thus, in few assessments. He asks:

> Why, then have not Johnny's English teachers,
> specialists all, required more of him? Because
> they cannot write either, nor do they know how to
> teach others to do so. They, after all, travelled
> the same road to Freshman Composition...With
> little practice following completion of <u>their</u>
> Freshman Composition requirement, their occasional
> How-to-Do-It or Advanced Composition course in
> preservice training did nothing to overcome their
> inadequacies. (p. 184)

Shortcomings in training English teachers might be

addressed by education departments, according to a plan

envisioned by Lindsey (1976). He suggested setting up a

composition unit made up of professional writers and

journalists as well as successful high school and college

composition teachers, and specialists in reading, speech, psychology, and education.

He explains why he prefers such a program be run by a department or college of education rather than an English department:

> Any prolonged dialogue about the teaching of skills or of the necessity for examining the empirical information attendent to teaching writing is viewed as educationism, which they [English departments] conceptualize as EVIL, a selling out to trade school mentality. This ethic, along with inadequate teacher preparation and lack of career opportunity for composition teachers, leads the writer tenaciously to assert in the strongest possible terms that most English faculty...are not able to formulate programs in composition that will diagnose, prescribe, and cure in the several areas of composition for each student. (pp. 115-116)

However, one self-report study involving one-hundred fifty-five North Carolina public high school teachers in the 1983-84 academic year, measured English teacher training provided by both an education and an English department. Jones (1985) found:

> Overall, there was no difference significant at $p < .05$ between the assessments of English teachers whose training was the primary responsibility of the English Department and those whose training was the primary responsibility of the Education Department regarding English major content courses and teaching strategies utilized during student teaching. (p. 404)

The Jones study, however, did not particularize theme assessment training, but she did report respondents concurring "that English major content courses needed to

include information actually taught in public secondary schools" (404).

Sparse assessment training seemingly has been uncovered by those instituting composition workshops (Cherry, 1973; Greenbaum & Taylor, 1981), especially after the singular 1974 Bay Area Writing Project which triggered many other imitations. Cherry noted that almost all attending a Philadelphia seminar "honestly acknowledged their own insecurity with regard to composition instruction" (p. 135), the same honesty registered by Greenbaum & Taylor's study of a similar program.

When Sommers (1982) compared computer commentary on compositions with that of thirty-five professors, she found that their "mean-spiritedness, and lack of pragmatic assessments could be attributable not only to what was not covered in teacher-training or writing workshops, but in rarely reading compositions for meaning or in comments to motivate revisions" (p. 154). Considering the resentment Zemelman (1986) discovered high school teachers have toward experts in composition (mostly professors) at those sessions it would seem remarkable that they still attend such meetings.

White (1985) concurs, terming present training to be almost nil and what exists to be marginal in organization and scholarship:

> It is hard to find much agreement even on
> such crucial matters as curriculum, textbooks,
> and proficiency standards ...We need to recognize
> that composition is probably going to remain the
> stepchild of rather unwilling English departments,
> that research in teaching and learning to write
> will continue to scrape by on the edges of
> several disciplines, and that few of those who
> will teach writing in American schools and
> universities will get much training or background
> as part of their regular education. (pp. 241-242)

Subjectivity in Assessment Practices

Themes cannot be assessed the same way a student's

algebra or chemistry assignments can be assessed. There is

no teachers' key, and rarely immutability concerning

mastery of the subject's body of knowledge. By contrast, a

student's theme work is a creative effort that is critiqued

by a teacher on the basis of whatever writing standards

and, often, personal values she or he holds. The student's

dilemma on opening days of class is whether the teacher has

a bias for "linguistic etiquette" of the language purist or

whether the bias is toward "anything goes."

Perrin (1965) provides a familiar set of conservative

standards that have both the prescriptionist writing values

of the 1750s when English was being forced into Latinate

grammar and the societal values ("linguistic etiquette")

still held by many today:

> Schools attempt to carry on their work in
> what they assume to be the language of the upper
> social classes, Standard English. Students who

go into the professions, into many branches of business,and into most white-collar jobs continued to use Standard English more or less consistently. Those who go into manual labor and the less well-paid and less socially elevated jobs often used Nonstandard English... The objection to Nonstandard is not that its grammar is "bad," but that it is inappropriate to the readers for whom college students and college graduates write and to the subjects they are handling. (p. 25)

Yet many English teachers subscribe to the liberalized views of Bergen Evans who could tell hundreds of Portland, Oregon English teachers that: "English is a living language. In the South, there's nothing wrong with writing 'it's real hot!'" (personal communication, 1964). At the same end of the spectrum is Rico (1983) whose book Writing the Natural Way swept away prescriptionist rules, and, instead, advocated devices such as clustering, recurrence, creative tension, "the trial web," language rhythm. Blaming the "weight of rules" for inhibiting written self-expression, she says:

Our [writing] loss begins in school, when the process of writing is taught to us in fragments: mechanics, grammar, and vocabulary. Writing becomes fearful and loathsome, a workbook activity. Students write as little as possible and, once out of school , they tend to avoid the entire process whenever possible. (p. 16)

In one year, a student may undergo the theme assessment of a strict adherent of Standard English; the

next, the assessment may be done one with liberal views of Nonstandard English.

The Gere (1984) study also pointed up the differences among teacher values. Some prefer that students concentrate on correct form and "tightly controlled assignments" (p.354); other teachers focus on work displaying creativity and personal growth. Unfortunately for the latter type of teacher and those believing the process of writing may be more worthy of emphasis than the product, Wolcott (1987) says that Society generally demands the rigid formula writing done in memos, reports, letters, proposals. Wolcott contends compositions in large-scale "outside" assessment scorings are geared toward that end so that students failing to match rigid strictures will suffer the baleful consequences.

If there is subjectivity in assessment of the framework of a theme, many empirical studies and informal experiments reveal its presence not only in weighing the worth of a theme's content, but in weighing the overall worth of the student who wrote it. Diederich (1974) cites one instance where teacher-evaluators raised grades an average of one level when falsely told by researchers that the compositions were written by honors students (pp. 11-12). "Grading is such a suggestible process that we find what we expect to find" (p. 12), Diederich noted.

Thorndike and Hillegas in 1912 attempted to construct an

instrument to objectify assessments, with reliability.

Noyes (1912) describes their efforts:

> ...[to construct a] concrete scale of
> measurement...to establish standards of
> composition that will make it possible to
> compare the work done in one school with that
> done elsewhere and to make it difficult for
> mere opinion to control so much of our
> schoolroom practice. (p. 532)

Sommers' study noted that teachers were guilty of

appropriating the student's text, confusing students by

mixed messages in one paragraph that asked them to edit and

develop; she also found teachers failed to denote

prioritization of revision problems so that errors of

conventions assumed the same dimension as lack of

organization, content, or logic. She reported that her

teacher subjects seemed to be more concerned with

conventions than content, logic, or organization.

Follman & Anderson (1967) cite several significant

studies on the wide variety of assessment practices used in

the nation's classes (Diederich et al., 1961; Ebel &

Damrin, 1960; Huddleston, 1954; Meckel, 1963). When

Freedman (1979) had teachers evaluate themes deliberately

designed with strengths and weaknesses in content,

organization, sentence structure and conventions, she

concluded that "specific, definable parts" (p. 161) did

influence assessment, particularly when weak content was concerned.

Three dissertations examined other aspects of assessment subjectivity: Hrach (1983) was unable to discern whether writing experience and tolerance of ambiguity did not affect assessment; Schumann (1966) reported that evaluators with specific criteria were more likely to be less liberal in assessment that those with none; and Michlin (1977) found that although knowledge of a student's social caste had no adverse effect upon assessment:

> ...teachers were more negatively disposed toward high ability and higher-status students with attributed low effort than they were toward low-ability or lower-status students with low efforts. (pp. 112-113)

Gere, Schuessler & Abbott (1984) investigated the gender bias and found that women were far more likely than men to have anxiety about writing and, thereby, a greater concern about assessment for correct usage. They cite the studies of Barron, 1971; Gilley & Summers, 1970; Key, 1972; Kramer, 1974; Lakoff, 1975; and Thorne & Henley, 1975, all concluding that women are far more sensitive than men with "linguistic indicators of lower status" (Gere, et al., p. 358) and therefore more likely to avoid them.

A non-empirical investigation of the assessment of two thousand themes by fifty instructors detected significant

conflictive markings by the same teachers, and ignorance of

professional writing styles, according to Sloan (1977). He

also reports that much of the commentary carried:

> ...religious and socio-political attitudes. Not
> even pretending to improve style, they asserted
> their views outright. Whether the tone was
> chastening or pontifical, their marginalia and
> endnotes boiled down to propaganda for various
> biases. (p. 372)

Brannon & Knoblauch (1982) indicated that teacher bias

against students' seeming lack of experience in life and

writing might be reflected in assessment. If their

experimental subjects thought the work was done by adults,

assessments were more positive (p. 159). In another

exercise, it was reported that teachers were unable to

discover glaring composition flaws in classic works devoted

to composition by E.B. White, Jacques Barzun, George

Orwell, and H.W. Fowler (Williams, 1981), errors they would

have cited if told the works were from students.

The usual analytic assessment was portrayed by White

(1985) to be the most familiar and ancient, the most common

modality of evaluation despite its "time-consuming, uneven,

allegedly pernicious qualities" (p. 121), and teacher bias.

In presenting a case for a reliable, systematic

assessment scale, White noted that student complaints about

assessment concentration focused on conventions instead of

content did have some validity where analytic evaluations were concerned:

> There is a confrontational air to the whole business, sometimes conveyed with barely buried metaphors of violence....The devastating study of such grading....shows that the same student paper will normally receive a wide variety of teacher responses, some of them contradictory, few of them very useful. When one teacher rewards as creative what the next teacher punishes as unsuitable, or when teacher comments appear to be quirky and hostile, students are justified in ignoring most of what their writing teachers tell them. Under such conditions, students are likely to feel that judgments about their writing are largely a matter of chance or personal taste and that revision is pointless. (p. 123)

Assessment Behaviors

Frequency of Assessments

Stanford (1979), Newkirk (1979) and others have said that the eighty-student enrollment advocated as ideal by Hopkins (1912) is highly unlikely; they believe that one-hundred and thirty students per teacher is a more realistic ratio. The aspect of frequency of theme assignments plays a role as a teacher faces what has been called the "assign-assess" syndrome by Sorensen & Sorgman (cited in Stanford, p. xiii). The recommended theme-a-week, proposed by Conant (1959), has drawn vigorous objections in the literature since 1912 when Hitchcock (1912) exclaimed:

> We have been composition-mad for 10 years. Never mind what Harvard thinks and does. Methods

partially successful in a college may not be
appropriate for secondary schools. There is such
a thing as overtraining. A few furlongs of the
right sort of composition may be vastly more
effective than as many miles of the humdrum
variety. (p. 273)

However, almost simultaneously, a spokesperson for

Columbia's journalism faculty reported that their students

wrote fifteen hundred words per week (Cunliffe, 1912)

without the collapse of the faculty. He also exclaimed:

There must be written themes, and many of
them. The remedy for overwork in correction...
lies in the increase in the number of instructors
and not in a decrease of the number of themes.
(p. 593)

The frequency-of-writing issue has been identified as

one of the six major trends occupying the literature from

1952-1961 (Mehaffie, 1971) with Stanford (1979) contending

that frequency's benefits are a "myth" generating only

teacher ingenuity to escape an avalanche of papers to

assess (pp. xiii-xiv). His book How to Handle the Paper

Load furnished readers with the ideas of thirty-one

contributors on how to avoid frequency of assessment.

Among the ideas included were the use of journals, precis

assignments, free writing, peer and self-assessment, and

extensive revisions.

Demands for frequency have incited several empirical

studies, the landmark research of Purdue's Lokke and Wykoff

(1948) underscoring many writers' belief that to write

takes writing, and that, of course, means frequent
assessment. The Buxton study (1958) based conclusions on
writing improvement on the factor of intensive assessment
as well as revision (p. 709). Some, more current,
quantitative studies disclaim this view, but many of them
have been challenged on methods employed by the researchers
and, hence, their conclusions about the dubious value of
writing frequency.

Arnold (1964) reported no significant differences were
tied to frequency for four groups of Florida high school
sophomores whose writing was assessed from STEP Essay and
Writing tests and essays that were assessed by English
teachers. Her results rest on a group that wrote weekly
themes of two hundred fifty words, all evaluated
intensively. She concluded no evidence supports that
1)intensive evaluation is more effective than moderate
evaluation, 2)frequent practice is in itself a means of
improving writing, 3)any combination of frequency and
intensity of evaluation is more effective, 4)any
combination of frequency and evaluation is more effective
for one ability level than another (p. 1022).

Arnold claimed in a journal article (1964) that
Buxton's much-cited 1958 study "found that performance of
three groups did not differ significantly" (p. 11).
However, study of Buxton's dissertation carries his overall

conclusions in comparing writers, writers/revisers, and non-writers was that writers/revisers "showed the most significant improvement" (p. 709). This group wrote sixteen weekly essays and received vigorous assessment, commentary, and thirty to fifty minutes of class discussion.

Five major studies (Burton & Arnold, 1963; Christiansen, 1964; McColly & Remstad, 1963; Sutton & Allen, 1964; Wolfe, 1966) that conclude frequency is not related to improvement were found suspect by Hunting (1969). He raised the question confronting today's assessment industry about whether the most rigorously trained outside assessors still are objective when evaluating composition samples with Likert scales for criteria such as richness and soundness of ideas, choice and arrangement of words, style, and interest and sincerity (p. 39).

The study he considered to be the most empirically sound, yet seriously confounded was Sutton & Allen's survey of five sections of Stetson University freshmen who wrote twelve test themes. Hunting concluded that "practice which is merely frequent, unaccompanied by instruction or motivation, may hurt writing more that improve it" (p. 35). Among the numerous deficiencies he found were: (1)no class discussion on writing during the entire experiment,

(2)researchers failed to define "writing practice" or
"composition," making it difficult to discern if the same
kind of discourse was done, (3)students wrote on the first
and last six days of the term without knowing why they were
doing so, (4)the subject group of one hundred forty-eight
students dwindled to one hundred twelve, presenting skewing
problems, (5)suspected "weariness and boredom" factors
confronted raters assessing twenty-seven hundred samples
under deadline pressure. The most serious defect he cited,
however, concerned assessment bias:

> These [criteria] are all subjective matters,
> and putting a number on them does not change
> their essential character. An experimenter may
> elect to make graphs and paradigms based on such
> data, but all his correlations, extrapolations,
> interpolations and confabulations do not prove
> anything. In this instance, these five reports
> may in fact do our profession a disservice
> because they might allow a lot of people to stop
> doing what they more than anything in the world
> would like to stop doing. Surely nothing would
> bring more joy to an English teacher than the
> good news that theme-writing has been proved to
> be a waste of time. (p. 39)

Arrayed against such research are the numerous
citations underscoring the view that despite the
circumstances surrounding assessment frequency, it is
necessary if composition mastery is to be attained
(Aldrich, 1972; Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, & Schoer, 1963;
Cherry, 1973; Conant, 1959; Cunliffe, 1912; Grabar, 1974;
Hardaway, 1975; Hipple, 1984; Koch, 1978; Lindemann, 1987;

Lokke & Wykoff, 1948; Reinfeld, 1973; Shaughnessy, cited in Flinn, 1979; Soule, 1986).

Hardaway (1975) counters Hitchock's earlier athletic metaphor about excessive writing assignments, cited previously, with: "Writing is like exercise; talking about it doesn't produce the same results as doing it" (p. 579).

The writing proficiency of the British, says Shaughnessy (1977), may stem from the requirement of one thousand words per week, compared to the three hundred fifty words per week done by American high school students (p. 9). French students, according to Fowler (1989), have the highest proficiency for composition in the Western world at high school graduation. Their total language environment is provided by a faculty that has benefitted from teachers who had that same kind of focused training. Such advantage is attributed to the pressure of graduation being dependent upon students passing three nationally assessed baccalaureate essay examinations.

Fowler also found that composition teachers devote twelve to twenty-four hours per week preparing lessons and assessing writings via an intensive analytic system of "long hours spent alone, red pen in hand" (p. 4). He notes that French teachers also are exempt from advising, clerical duties, monitoring halls, campus, cafeteria, buses, and restrooms.

Reinfeld (1973) denounces the lack of frequency in American high schools for inadequacies that college composition teachers are asked to remedy. He cites the advent of free writing, the emphasis on grammar books rather than formal composition and, chiefly, teacher avoidance of assessments:

> The excuses for not doing [them] that high school teachers make--too many classes, too many students, too many levels of ability, too many things to cover, too many other duties--all seem to amount to "too much like work," based on the thoroughness with which nothing is done in so many high school English Classes. (pp. 55-56)

Methods of Assessment

The literature revealed that, in the main, there are three chief assessment systems, each with modified applications: 1) analytic, 2) holistic, and 3) primary trait.

Analytic Assessment

Analytic assessment is fairly autonomous, time-consuming, and built on requirements a teacher deems vital to development of composition skills (Mullis, 1984; Odell & Cooper, 1980; Reising & Stewart, 1984; White, 1985). Analytic assessment involves reading a composition with an eye toward evaluating several components: content,

organization, style, and conventions. Commentary may be put in the margins and at the end, followed by a grade.

Attempts to systematize analytic assessment are not new. Noyes (1912) describes the efforts of Hillegas and Thorndike in removing subjectivity. They used model sample writings with ten levels of rankings. Diederich (1974), considered a rating-system pioneer, in 1961 conceived the idea of high, middle, and low categories by evaluating compositions on scales based on ideas, organization, wording, flavor, usage, punctuation, spelling, and handwriting; the first two categories get twice the value of the remainder (Cox, 1986).

Cast (cited in Braddock, et al., 1963) declared that analytic measurement may find errors [style, e.g.] overlooked by "crude, mechanical, quantitative dissection" methods and "though laborious and unpopular, [it] appears almost uniformly the best" tool (p. 13). A proponent of holistic scoring, White (1985), characterized the analytic system as:

> ...uneconomical, unreliable, pedagogically
> uncertain or destructive, and theoretically
> bankrupt. It nonetheless remains the dominant,
> almost universal, approach to the grading of
> student papers. (pp. 112-124)

Holistic Assessment

Holistic assessment started in the early 1970s. It was principally for mass evaluations by the Educational Testing Service and, later, the College Entrance Examination Board (Garnes, 1987). Instead of assessing a composition's many components, pairs of evaluators render verdicts on a "single, global quality" (Mullis, 1984, p. 16). The work is read for overall impression only. An "anchor" writing sample is used as a baseline for low- to high-level ratings measured by four to eight scoring rubrics (Baron, 1984; Binkley, 1977; Brossell, 1986; Faigley, et al., 1985; Garnes, 1987; Horner, 1978; Lindemann, 1987,; Meredith, 1987; Moore, 1987; Myers, 1980; Sachse, 1984; White, 1985).

Specificity of topics and reliability are said to be hallmarks of holistic assessment. A teacher can construct rubrics for judgment (e.g., Is description included? Does the writer move from the abstract to concrete? Does the content follow the topic sentence? Are there severe problems with conventions?)

White (1985) contends that holistic scorings:

> ...accomplish the stated goals of clarifying
> the assignment and the criteria for evaluation,
> but the classroom use of the guide expands the
> audience for writing beyond the teacher,
> increases student ability to read one another's
> and their own writing, leads to improved

revision and improved motivation for writing in
general, and--possibly most delightful of all--
reduces the excessive time demands for grading
on the conscientious writing teacher. (p. 132)

The chief disadvantage cited for holistic assessment
is that students generally get no commentary on progress.
Cooper (cited in Lindemann, 1987) points out that a rater
does not have to stop to comment, and thus spends no more
than two minutes assessing each composition (p. 202).

Primary-Trait Assessment

Primary-trait assessment was developed in the late
1970s by the joint efforts of Lloyd-Jones, Klaus et al.,
Mullis, and the National Assessment of Educational Progress
organization (cited in Faigley, et al., 1985). Essentially,
it fine-tunes the holistic system, answering the criticism
that different types of writing (resumes, business letters,
essays, magazine articles, etc.) need different thrusts for
different audiences. Thus, this method involves a
student's overall writing abilities in a variety of writing
types (Odell & Cooper, 1980). Binkley (1977) notes that
scoring is based on competence, consistency, and
progression of ideas, and the evaluator then assesses the
composition with a total rating.

Like the holistic method, primary-trait assessment
uses a low- to high-rating system, ignoring organization

and conventions. Unlike the holistic system, however, its topic specificity, tailored to a single classroom, makes it topical and criterion-referenced rather than norm-referenced (White, 1985). A teacher can enter commentary (Odell & Cooper, 1980, p. 42).

Odell & Cooper see some disadvantages to primary-trait evaluations despite growing use in national, state, and district assessments. Disadvantages they list are that identification of a topic and design of a scoring criteria fitted to it both take considerable time and effort for a teacher. They also warn that the mastery of writing varieties does not indicate a student has proficiency (p. 42).

Methods of Handling Assessment Overload

Given the traditional public demand of composition competence on one hand and class overloads and non-teaching responsibilities on the other, teachers have filled the literature with suggestions on how colleagues can handle assessments overload.

If English teachers have looked for relief from the present theme load, the prediction for the 1990s and beyond shows none, according to Allen & Ollila (1982):

> Centralization and bureaucratic control
> affect what is taught in English ...Veteran
> teachers with no English training teach English:

few young English majors enter the profession.
Class sizes consistently increase, and the
composition of classes varies from the
physically handicapped to the socially
maladjusted to the educationally illiterate.
(p. 209)

Computerized Assessments

One hope has been that the computer eventually will do
assessments. Such expectations rest on increasingly
sophisticated software able to assess much: identify
spelling and punctuation errors, spot wordy or misused
phrases--suggesting alternatives, do stylistic analysis of
sentence types, sentence beginnings and lengths, and rate a
reading-level score (Sommers, 1984).

One computer experiment is twenty years old, but it
generated interest from several assessment authorities.
Slotnik & Knapp characterize it as "simply an interesting
laboratory phenomenon" (cited in Dieterich, 1972, p. 1265),
but it drew contempt from Macrorie (1969) who considered
all software unable to assess themes. He felt that
computerized assessments seem equivalent "to freeing the
slaves" (p. 229), but, still, teachers would have to deal
with what he perceived as lifeless work, for he had found
compositions in general to be:

...alike--all grey, and all so dry dead that not
even live maggots crawled out of them. Rating
this writing involved making distinctions
between papers without distinction. And no one

has ever done well at that job. [Software
designers] talked the computer into doing just
as badly. (p. 232)

Journal Writing

Another assessment technique that has been used by
thousands of English teachers in the last twenty years has
been journal writing. Now used in many disciplines other
than English, the journal method allows students to write
without worrying about the traditional rules of formal
composition. This modality is explained as a means to make
writing more palatable to students, to help students warm
up for a writing assignment, and, possibly, to provide
extensive small-muscle practice.

Obviously, if the student is not subject to
traditional composition rules, the teacher's assessment
load may be a fraction of that expended on formal writing.
Flinn (1979) points up that teachers who decide to use the
journal modality need to avoid her early mistakes:

Students regarded my journal assignments
as busy work and filled their pages with the
trivia of breakfasts and bus rides or with the
superficial details of their romances. What
they wrote in their journals had no relation at
all to their "real" papers. (P. 9)

Free Writing

Free writing, espoused by Peter Elbow (1973) and
others, is a method of brainstorming on paper where

students shunt aside the usual strictures of formal

composition and let the words flow. Little assessment is

necessary. As Elbow explains this process:

> The idea is simply to write for ten
> minutes (later on, perhaps fifteen or twenty).
> Don't stop for anything. Go quickly without
> rushing. Never stop to look back, to cross
> something out, to wonder how to spell
> something, to wonder what word or thought to
> use, or to think about what you are doing.
> If you can't think of a word or a spelling,
> just use a squiggle or else write, "I can't
> think of it." Just put down something. The
> easiest thing is just to put down whatever is
> in your mind. If you get stuck it's fine to
> write "I can't think what to say, I can't
> think what to say" as many times as you want;
> or repeat the last word you wrote over and over
> again; or anything else. The only requirement
> is that you <u>never</u> stop. (p. 3)

Rico's (1983) writing-the-natural-way technique is an

offshoot of Elbow's method, but it involves the stricture

of thinking, initially, in the nonlinear process of

clusters: one idea triggers another in a form of

brainstorming on the right side of the brain. She recounts

that suddenly almost all students could write. Moreover,

as Rico put it:

> Another by-product of clustering seemed
> to be a significant drop in errors of
> punctuation, awkward phrasing, even spelling.
> At first I was puzzled, but it soon became
> clear that, once students discover something
> to write about or at least a sense of
> direction, the become so involved in

> expressing this direction, they worry less
> about how the parts fit together or what
> errors they might be making than about
> communicating the whole thought. (p. 11)

However, Cheshire (1982) dealt with the free-writing

technique, reporting that her study showed it failed to

produce significant effects on fluency, nor did it have an

effect on eliminating writing apprehension.

Bain (1988) and others (Brannon & Knoblauch, 1982;

Flinn, 1979; Lindemann, 1987; Mahieu & McCray, 1979; Moore

& Reynolds, 1979) still suggest that teachers assign a

variety of writing: journals, book reports, free writing,

drafting workshops, exercises ("not filling in blanks, but

ones asking students to write sentence combining, for

example," (p. 73), or to ask students to pick the best of

several compositions for assessment. Flinn and Moore &

Reynolds say this significantly reduces assessment,

overload. As Bain tells teachers:

> If you do not develop good defensive
> strategies for having your students write
> without your having to grade every piece of
> work, you will burn out or retreat to filling
> in blanks and not teaching writing. (p. 73)

Shorter Compositions

Another recommended "defense" against the assessment

overload suggested by many (Allen & Ollila, 1982; DuBreuil,

1912; Hitchcock, 1912; Lynch, 1982) is assigning shorter

compositions--a precis, for example, that brief, meaty summation about a subject. The acme of this modality appears to be in Work (1979) who suggests "microthemes." Students reduce a topic to its absolute essentials in sentences to earn grade categories of "impressive" (an A), "good" (a B), etc. Work says: "I have no more long papers to labor through, my grading time has been greatly reduced" (p. 83).

Other Systems

Some teachers (Bartlett, 1979; Krest, 1987) advise staggering theme due dates so that a teacher "is never overwhelmed by sets of papers which must be graded en masse" (p. 63).

Some recommend declining to correct careless work (DuBreuil, 1912; Ellis, 1989; Harris, 1979; Hitchcock, 1912). Others (Irmscher, 1979; Krest, 1987; Lindemann, 1987; Mahieu & McCray, 1979; Pearce, 1983) assess only a percentage of compositions--one out of ten is advised by Cramer (1972). Shuman (1979) uses a series of four two-minute exercises, each passed among students to be completed in a "writing roulette" system which "need not require intensive reading and grading" (p. 4).

Many sources in the literature have strongly advised teachers to avoid being "ferrets" stalking minutiae

(DuBreuil, 1912; Hitchcock, 1912; and Judy & Judy, 1981).

As Kitzhaber (1963) characterizes ferrets:

> A misused semicolon or an off-center idiom
> afflicts them like an uncontrollable itch, and
> they are not comfortable again until they have
> scarified the error with a red pencil. (pp. 58-59)

Some recommend giving no grades (Blinderman, 1969;

Dieterich, 1972; Irmscher, 1979; Martia, 1970). McDonald

(1975) advocates a teacher do a ten- to-twelve-line typed

summation at year's end for the student's school file; it

would list course aims, assignment types, revision results,

strengths, weaknesses, and improvements. However, Irmscher

admits that a no-grade mode could lead to no compositions,

class-cutting, or minimal efforts when students finally are

asked to write.

Novel Approaches

Several novel approaches were found: DuBreuil (1912)

gave gold stars and Buchholz (1979) suggests a contract

system which thousands of teachers use despite its

laborious bookkeeping and self-designated negative impact

on students who may set their sights too low (often

deliberately, he admitted). Vogler (cited in Dieterich,

1972) says using cassette tapes for commentary takes "the

burden out of marking themes" (p. 1265); several others

agreed with him (Beach, 1976; Dieterich, 1972; and McGrew, 1969).

Conferences

Conferences were strongly suggested as a time saver that also permitted personal composition counseling and indicated to students that a teacher cared about progress. As Judy & Judy (1981) stated:

> Let the student see clearly that you care about the writing as communication, that both the ideas and the sharing of ideas is important to you. (p. 103)

Fassler (1978) indicated some of the perils of rendering instant assessments: "There must be analysis, summary, and some indication of priorities" (p. 189). Judy & Judy pointed out conferences have the advantage of "being done on school time, instead of over the weekend when you'd rather be doing something else" (p. 104). As to the use of the class period, the recommended twenty-minute conference per student for an enrollment of twenty-five involves ten class periods.

Self-Assessment

Self-assessment can halve the work load, according to Grady (1972) and others (Beck, 1982; Lindemann, 1987; Lynch, 1982). Grady suggests providing students with self-evaluation scales and annotation instruction so they can

respond to assessment, correct errors, and grade their own work. Students are said to learn editing and rewriting from this procedure and, for the teacher, there's the "sense of being freed from an isolated and possibly fruitless labor" (p. 330).

Peer-Evaluation

Pearce (1983) warned that despite the popularity of the assessment-saving peer-evaluation technique, many students regard it as threatening to surrender compositions for classmate critiquing. Usually, such a preliminary assessment is on such things as what peers like about the work, what facts/ideas could be added, and what helpful changes could be made. Land & Evans (1987) also said research indicated students' lack of enthusiasm for this method:

> [They] may be telling us to be careful about how we used [their] classmates as audiences. Peer pressures, friendships, development of self-esteem, and other social and psychological forces may be so intense for high school students that it is quite difficult for them to function as a helpful peer audience. (pp. 115-116)

The possibility of total participation in peer-evaluation groups would seem to be unrealistic, given the usual interactional dynamic between controllers, contenders wishing to be controllers, passive aggressives, willful

antagonists, and the non-participants. Foster & Naranjo (1979) emphasize these disadvantages of peer-evaluation, adding that: "many of those who do join in spend portions of the session daydreaming" (p. 238).

Peer evaluations do relieve the assessment overload, according to several sources in the literature (Hitchcock, 1912; Jerabek & Dieterich, 1975; Pearce, 1983; Richard, 1973; Roth, 1979). Many teachers echo Hardaway (1975): "It saves agonizing hours ..." (p. 578).

Empirical evidence supporting this method's contribution to writing fluency is not supported by a study of Katstra, Tollefson & Gilbert (1987). But Lagana's 1972 study (cited in Jerabek & Dieterich, 1975) noted that peer evaluation was:

> ...at least as effective as traditional teacher evaluation; moreover, it cuts down the teacher's out-of-class time commitment. (p. 185)

Revisions

As to revisions, Beach & Eaton (1984) are among those who believe these pieces rarely accomplish the intention of polish. At least two studies (Bracewell, Scardamalia & Bridwell, 1980; National Assessment of Educational Progress, 1977) report that only high school seniors polish writing through the revision process. Others have found most high school students to have difficulty in

critical assessment of their own work (Beach, 1976;

Bridwell, 1980; Sommers, 1980).

The use of a Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension scale

revealed that anxious students gained little satisfaction

from writing and even less from revision.

Cross-Grading by Colleagues

Some assessment techniques may add to the teacher's

work load. The cross-grading dynamic described by Raymond

(1976) means that an instructor's compositions are first

assessed and graded by a colleague and then returned for

the instructor's assessment; if a student disputes the

grade, a third colleague referees the decision, but the

original teacher obviously must weigh that evaluation. The

cross-grading system of Cunliffe (1912) and Larkin (1979)

mean that instructors only exchange compositions for

grading.

Check and X Systems

Buchholz (1979) offers the Freeman-Hatch Behavioral

assessment system whereby an instructor uses check marks

(four equal an A, three a B, etc.) each time a

composition meets the established criteria; at semester's

end, checks are converted to a grade, meaning that time

must be allotted for conversion and ensuring corrections have been made.

Haswell (1983) used the X system, marking the letter X in the margins to indicate a conventions error. A student must identify and correct for the revision. Drost (1979) utilizes a similar system, indicating that the intimidation and onerousness in self-editing reinforces exact compliance on conventions (pp. 58-59).

Lay Readers

Corbin (cited in Denby, 1968) reported "more schools abandoning than adopting the use of lay [outside] readers" (p. 1220), a key source by which a teacher's assessment duties were curtailed. Yet Dieterich (1972) reported an eighty-six percent satisfaction rate of districts using volunteer assessors. Though most English departments no longer employ readers, empirical research done by the Hawaii State Department of Education in 1969-1970 attested to their efficacy, Dieterich said:

> [The department] found no significant differences among students who had lay reader service and those who had participated in other treatments, and revealed that teachers with lay readers had faster correction of papers and more conferences with their students. (p. 1265)

Commentary

Commentary is at the heart of the assessment issue, the one aspect of theme evaluation that takes the most time, thought, and energy of a high school English teacher. The literature is full of articles on whether commentary is necessary, whether students really want commentary or bother to read it--particularly if they perceive the teacher as having unsatisfiable demands. The literature also explores the kinds of commentary given and their relative merits in either ease of application or guidance to the student writer. Moreover, some journal articles made specialties out of the art of writing marginalia comments (notations in the margins) and endnotes (summary remarks at the theme's end) citing dos and don'ts.

Brown (cited in Kitzhaber, 1963) indicates that some intensive pre-writing instruction might save an English teacher from assessment overloads and the frustration of seeing students repeat errors that consume so much evaluation time:

> We do not help him [the student] far in getting ideas, save in a very general way, and we hesitate to put a plan on the blackboard lest he copy it and use it. We give him only the lightest straw to clutch...yet expect him to come out safely, and to find pleasure in the struggle...Then we spend many precious minutes showing him...how to tear his ideas all apart and rewrite them into a new theme. (pp. 54-55)

Christenbury (1979) characterizes assessment

commentary as:

Demanding, incredibly time consuming,
[commentary] is a process which requires an
almost religious dedication. Yet.... [it] is
not only difficult for teachers, but for most
students, it is deadening.
(p. 113)

How much commentary, therefore, should be given?

Harris (1979) and empirical studies of Arnold (1963), the

National Council of Teachers of English (cited in Stiff,

1967), and Bata (1972) seem to show that intensive

annotation is no more effective than partial effort.

Bata's research revealed that marginalia is no more

effective in gaining writing improvement than are endnotes.

Several indicated commentary was necessary and even an

essential component in helping a student to improve formal

composition skills (Buxton, 1958; Diederich, 1963; Gee,

1972; Irmscher, 1979; Kitzhaber, 1963; Miller, 1982; and

Seidman, 1967). However, there were others who did not

agree (Harris, 1979; Horvath, 1988).

The literature revealed commentary controversy existed

as it concerned whether it should contain praise, truth,

overly critical appraisal, and, also, whether one should

reduce all the foregoing to what Kehl (1970) called

"cryptocomment" (commentary reduced to code).

Macrorie (1970), however, warns that the student has "little confidence [and] is easily knocked out" (p. 68) so that if nothing can be praised, and endnote of "keep writing" may suffice. If professional writers or professional journal contributors suffer depression from editors' commentary, it would appear that the student-- whose developing ego and affinity to writing as a career is problematic--can scarcely be expected to deal well with emotional body blows disguised as constructive criticism (personal communication, Bill Ellis, 1989).

Horvath (1988) found: "scorn, hostility, condescension, flippancy, superficiality, or boredom" in his research of teachers' commentary (p. 273). Sommers (1982) empirical study comparing commentary made by computer and thirty-five instructors from New York University and the University of Oklahoma indicated that the machine's "calm, reasonable language" was a departure from most of the professors' remarks which were full of "hostility and mean-spiritedness" (p. 149).

Diederich (1963) recommended commentary of praise:

> Outpouring of red ink not only does no good but positive harm, Its most common effect is to make the majority of students hate and fear writing...the art of the teacher--at its best--is the reinforcement of good things. (p. 58)

Sullivan (1986) was among those who warned against giving praise indiscriminately lest it give:

> ...a false sense of [students'] capacity and achievement and also makes them less willing to accept constructive criticism. It unwittingly offers them sanctuary in an ivory tower from which they can (and frequently do) scorn any attempt to help them improve their organization or logic. (p. 51)

Barzun (1954) defends the acerbic comment, however, demanding a teacher's right to "vividly express... annoyance at being bored, baffled, and outraged by bad writing" (cited in Kehl, p. 973).

"Cryptocomment" was cited as saving assessment time, the presumption being that students had been told by teachers what such coded items as coh, CS, awk, frag all meant. Lisman (1979) used marginalia Xs, forcing students to find out their offenses. Sommers (1982) indicated that cryptocomments seem to represent inability to direct specific changes, or represent laziness or cruelty:

> In effect, the teacher is saying to the student, "Somewhere in this paper is imprecise language or lack of awareness of an audience and you must find it." The problem represented by these vague commands is compounded for the students when they are not offered strategies for carrying out these commands. (p. 153)

In sum, although commentary may be the one element that consumes the most assessment time of teachers, it would appear from the literature that it is not about to be

abandoned for a letter grade as the only indication an

instructor has carefully evaluated the composition.

<u>Errors Analysis</u>

Pioneer efforts made chiefly by Shaughnessy (1977) in

writing have been linked to language psychology with the

finding that once <u>patterns</u> of errors are identified by

students (omitted inflections, verb problems, tense misuse,

repeated misspellings of the same words) these frustrating

mistakes no longer consume assessment time. A teacher

helps a student overcome repeated difficulties by a

technique Shaughnessy called <u>errors analysis</u>.

Bartholomae (1980) points out that the in-depth errors

diagnosis must involve both teacher and student. The

student must do most of the pattern analysis. He concluded

that error patterns are based on: (1)guessing about

conventions or usage, (2)inability to transfer aural

language to visual forms, (3)cultural or ethnic practices

in writing, (4)carelessness, or (5)misapplied logic of one

language to the illogic of the English language

(pp. 257-267).

Lindemann (1987) cautions teachers to be cognizant

that consistent errors "reflect unique rules and hypotheses

students have devised to attempt [written] communication"

(p. 215). Kroll & Schaefer (1978) state that: "Helping

students to understand the source of their errors can

produce changes even in errors that resist drill" (p. 247).

Commentary (marginalia or endnotes) takes thought,

time, and effort, but it has many proponents. As Barzun

states about the tradeoffs of energy and result:

> To point these lessons up in minute detail
> to a student of average powers is, of course,
> time-consuming--but what else is the teacher
> there for? Time spent on reading and writing,
> in any subject, is never a waste; and the reward
> almost always comes, often astonishingly great ..
> A new world of motion and of feeling is opened out
> to the student, a source of some anguish balanced
> by lifelong delight. (p. 52)

The Assessment Industry

The ramifications of the impact of the assessment

industry upon the English classroom might be far greater

frequency of composition and the attendant evaluations. An

adjunctive result leading into that possibility is a far

more nationally standardized composition than the classic,

five-paragraph formula. As Wolcott (1987) states about

outside assessment competencies:

> It ...behooves writing instructors
> to acknowledge that the tests are a reality
> and that, in fact, they represent as legitimate
> a purpose for our writing instruction as do the
> many other writing situations our students will
> encounter ... we must also concede that
> assessment samples serve valid purposes and that
> in the deadlines and product-accountability
> which they impose, such writing tests may more
> closely resemble real-world writing tasks than
> do some other composition assignments. (p. 43)

Despite the assurances of Diederich (1969) that a national curriculum is not likely (p. 8), the spread of rating systems already would appear to put such a curriculum in place. The literature reveals at least two dozen measurement scales up to 1985, most of them built on the combination of holistic and primary-trait instruments (with local variations) that grew out of Diederich's analytic scaling system. Williams (1984) indicated that the industry was beginning a "collaborative effort to systematically study the writing assessment process" (p. 19). Assessment industry journals (Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice, Journal of Educational Measurement), conventions, and other communication avenues are filled with data that can be applicable anywhere in the nation.

Teacher Militance

With the literature's foregoing revelations about teacher assessment practices and inhibitory factors surrounding composition conditions, the researcher endeavored to discover evidence indicating that members of the English profession had used militancy in trying to achieve the kind of work life, prestige, and salary/benefits enjoyed by newspaper and magazine

copyeditors as a result of strikes and collective bargaining by the American Newspaper Guild.

Back in 1912, the chair of the National Committee on English Composition Teaching, reported that a survey on labor and equipment revealing the heavy work demands put on English teachers, the low cost of the discipline in high school, and teacher preparation would result in no recommendations for change, but would aim for "complete publicity for its report" (Hopkins, p. 56).

Activism in the last years includes the issuance in October of that previously cited "Statement of Principles and Standards for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing." That document called the working conditions of college and university composition teachers "the worst scandal in higher education today" (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 1989, p. 33).

In listing the demands concerning teaching conditions, the document's guidelines included limiting class enrollments from fifteen to twenty students with remedial sections having no more than fifteen per course. No instructor should have more than sixty students, it said. The document also advocates opportunities for continuing professional development as well as having reasonably private office space, clerical support, and supplies (pp. 335-336).

When this researcher called James Slevin, the chairman behind this document, his response indicated that efforts would not go beyond actions carried out by English teachers in bygone years. The statement was being sent to ten thousand people in rhetoric and English departments as well as to those who direct the nation's colleges and universities, he said. Presentations would be made shortly to such groups as the Association of American Colleges, the American Association of Higher Education, the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the American Council on Education, and the American Association of University Professors.

In addition, Slevin and his committee would work with the six regional accreditation agencies to get the document's guidelines accepted by the review teams visiting English departments in higher education institutions. They also will be working to gain the support of Academe magazine and The Chronicle of Higher Education (Jim Slevin, personal communication, 1989).

What about a strike of all composition teachers in the nation? Slevin said that tactic had been suggested and remains an issue. "In urban areas, a strike isn't possible because schools could get substitutes; but in other areas a strike is possible," he said.

One staff member at the National Council of Teachers
of English explained why English teachers as a whole did
not resort to militant action to obtain the goals that such
instructors have sought for decades:

> Look, most English teachers and [college]
> composition instructors and part-timers are women.
> For many, what they get is a second income. For
> others, it's their only income. Besides, it's not
> as important for women to strike (Anonymous,
> personal communication, 1989).

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to provide empirical
data supporting the findings on suspected major inhibitory
factors concerning the assessment of themes as may be
experienced by a large number of Oregon high school
teachers. The factors were to be in the three areas of
attitudes, behaviors, and the physical and emotional
effects involved in assessing themes.

The methods used were to survey and analyze data
obtained by the Ellis cross-sectional instrument designed
by the researcher to collect information concerning the
three areas. Gay (1987) defines cross-sectional surveys as
collecting information "at some point in time from a sample
which hopefully represents all relevant subgroups in the
population" (p. 192). The three areas under investigation
comprised several issues that ultimately were to be
included in a lengthy instrument: there were fifty-eight
main items, fourteen with subset items (for example, one
main item had twenty-five subset items) so that respondents
could answer a total of one hundred nineteen items.

The collected data were subjected to two analyses:
1) Chi-Square to test results for significance, and
2) descriptive analyses.

For the test of significance, Chi-Square was applied to twelve null hypotheses comparing the responses of all samples to choices within items involving those three areas.

Chi-Square again was applied to responses when the total sample was collapsed into two subgroups: subjects who had from one to five years of teaching experience and subjects who had more than six years of teaching experience.

For descriptive analyses, the response frequencies also were divided into two categories: one category included the overall responses of the subjects; the other category included division of those overall responses into subcategories that were based upon the years of teaching experience (1-2 years, 3-5 years, 6-10 years, and 11 or more years).

In the category breakouts, the researcher calculated each of the four levels of experience by percentages of total responses contained in an instrument's item.

The twelve null hypotheses tested in this study stated that there were no significant differences between an English teacher's years of experience and:

Ho^1 – The number of themes assessed per month.

Ho^2 – How many outside hours are spent per month on assessment of themes.

Ho^3 – The amount of turnaround time spent between collecting themes and returning them to students.

Ho^4 – The amount of commentary written in theme assessments.

Ho^5 – The perception that most students do not seem to apply assessment suggestions to subsequent themes.

Ho^6 – Fatigue affecting judgment in assessing themes.

Ho^7 – The perception that assessment adversely affects eyesight.

Ho^8 – The feelings of despair over students' making the same errors that have been pointed out to them in previous themes.

Ho^9 – The perception that burnout is related to assessment of themes.

Ho^{10} – The perception that a journalism copyediting course would be unlikely to lessen the time spent assessing themes.

Ho^{11} – The belief that composition should be taught as a separate course.

Ho^{12} - The perception that a teachers' short course on

theme assessment would have practical

application toward an increased theme load.

Overview

This chapter will provide details about the methods

used in this study to achieve the purpose of the research

undertaken.

The chapter begins with subject selection. It will be

followed by a section about the instrument divided into

units: 1) background on the development,

2) construction of items, 3) a brief description of each

item, and 4) treatment of the issues of validity and

reliability. The remainder of this chapter will include

sections on data collection and entry procedures, and both

statistical and descriptive methods of analysis.

Subjects

The reasearcher set about to draw a large, randomly

selected sample of a population of Oregon's high school

English teachers. The sample size (N=503) exceeds the

numbers specified in Cohen's tables for that purpose (Gay,

1987, p. 115). The general rule is that as the size of the

sample goes up, the standard error for a percentage goes

down" (e.g., Freedman, 1978, p. 332); Gay (1987) writes

that for descriptive research, "ten percent of the population is considered minimum" (p. 115).

Projected printing and mailing costs of this self-report survey were six dollars per subject (envelopes, postage, printing of instrument, cover letter, follow-up postcard, data entry) which made a survey of all of Oregon's English teachers prohibitively expensive. Consultation with senior research assistant Pam Bodenroeder of the Survey Research Center (SRC) of Oregon State University revealed that sampling a third of a population would yield results with the same statistical probabilities as the entire population. Gay (1987) also says a sample, rather than a population, is adequate for inferences. Moreover, as was stated in Chapter One, Berg (personal communication, 1989) has said that on the issues surrounding theme assessment it is possible to generalize that Oregon responses reflect those of English teachers in the other states.

The sample was to be as broad based as possible so that it would represent high school English teachers in various types of school districts: rural, urban, suburban, small, medium, large, affluent, middle-income, and disadvantaged. By doing so, it was assumed that the survey would cross the areas of teachers' ages, gender,

educational background, teaching experience and abilities, socio-economic strata, location, physical and emotional variations, attitudes, and lifestyles.

The Oregon Department of Education reported that as of September 1, 1987, there were fifteen hundred nine English teachers in the state's public high schools at the start of that fall academic term. It was expected by the researcher that some individuals on the Department's master list did indeed sign a contract, but either might not have actually reported for service, or that others, originally listed for the English departments, might be channeled into other disciplines by school officials who decided to fill late vacancies.

The decision finally was made by the researcher to survey a third or those teachers on a random-selection basis; in other words, there would be five hundred and three subjects selected for this study out of fifteen hundred and nine instructors.

With the mailing list purchased from the Oregon Department of Education, the researcher used the random-selection method. Beginning with the first name on the list, the researcher selected every third name.

The final list of subjects was duplicated by the researcher, each name given a number for the purpose of subject identification.

Development of the Instrument

A literature search revealed there was no existing instrument that included the breadth of issues planned in this study relating to theme assessment. A preliminary instrument of issues in various formats (coded, open, simple bipolar, semantic differential scales) was constructed to investigate the three areas of study: attitudes, behaviors, and the physical and emotional effects related to teacher assessment of themes.

A Delphic panel that eventually arrived at a one hundred percent consensus on the instrument's validity involved: Donald Weiss of the English Department of Western Oregon State College; Lorraine Stickney from Gorham High School, Gorham, Mine; and Peggy Elefant, and English teacher from Crescent Valley High School, Corvallis, Oregon. Carla Harris, Kathleen Walton, and Fred Zwahlen, all of Oregon State University's Technical Journalism Department.

Many issues were explored for inclusion on a questionnaire: fatigue, eyesight loss, neck and back pains. Among the emotional issues were burnout, despair about students' failure to grasp writing fundamentals, dislike of assessment duties, and resentment about the perceived light take-home work load of teachers

in other disciplines. Behavioral issues included the number of themes assessed, the amount of time spent on each theme, turnaround time, and emphasis regarding composition skills. Attitudes or beliefs surveyed included issues of teachers' feelings about improving assessment skills, perceived strengths and weaknesses in assessment, views on assessment workshops, classes in speedreading and journalism copyediting, a national standardized theme structure, lay readers, and undergraduate training on theme assessment.

Mail survey construction and procedures were obtained from Dillman (1978) and Gay (1987), corroborated by two staff members from the Survey Research Center of Oregon State University (SRC): director Dr. Helen Berg, and senior research assistant Pamela Bodenroeder. These sources provided guidance on issues of item format (open-end, closed, simple bipolar, semantic differential scales) best suited to some lines of questioning, diction, unbiased and neutral item construction, methods of eliciting high response levels, and guidance from the SRC on coding items for ease in data entry for statistical analysis. These sources also were consulted to keep the items' presentation both neutral and dispassionate.

Description of Instrument Items

The final draft of the one hundred nineteen-item survey instrument is included in Appendix A.

On the whole, the instrument employed several formats to elicit data on the three areas suspected of inhibiting assessment of high school themes by Oregon's English teachers: closed, open-end, and both simple bipolar and semantic differential scales.

Seventy (59%) of the one hundred nineteen items called for short answers of one or two words. Twenty open-end questions were somewhat evenly distributed throughout the instrument, with some encouraging lengthy answers. For example, one item asked: "If you had an opportunity to offer advice in a textbook aimed at preparing English teachers for correcting themes, what would you say?"

The remaining questions used a semantic differential scale for obtaining ratings on a number of bipolar adjectives. Questions ranged from asking respondents to rate the degree of emphasis they gave on writing elements (spelling, punctuation, usage, organization, substance, accuracy, clarity, conciseness, readability, style, reasoning, thinking ability, creativity, humor, legibility) to a main question with fifteen subordinate items concerning increased theme load.

The remainder of the chapter will describe each item in the order in which it appeared in the instrument.

Ten demographic items open the instrument and pertain to experience, class enrollment, theme content, assignment frequency, writing atmosphere, theme length, and assessment behaviors. The intention was to gain knowledge of English teachers' assessment circumstances, regardless of the gender. Thus, the usual questions about gender and age were excluded because they were not deemed crucial to this survey's overall thrust.

Questions 11 through 13 dealt with writing abilities and class size. Question 14 was about the effectiveness of a rigorous theme-writing program, and was intended to determine whether the respondents believed in frequent theme assignments. Question 15 asked whether the class period provided sufficient time for teaching writing, an inquiry aimed at learning whether composition might have less emphasis than the rest of the course work.

Questions 16 through 24 began with the type and amount of commentary used by teachers as well as assessment emphases (content, organization, logic, conventions). Then, the questions dealt with assessment issues, including writing improvement. Finally, that group of questions closed with items about the order in which teachers assess themes.

Questions 25 through 36 focused on attitudes and
teachers' perceived assessment needs. Questions 37 through
43 focused on resources likely to be used by the
respondents (textbooks, journals, lay readers).

Question 44 on burnout was used as a bridge from
behavioral and attitudinal sections to questions concerning
the physical and emotional aspects of assessment. It asked
whether teachers thought burnout was attributable to theme
assessment. Questions 45 through 53 inquired about
fatigue, concentration, surroundings, eyesight, back and
neck pains, and home-life demands.

Questions 54 through 56 were about assessment as a
whole; respondents were asked whether assessment was
irksome or enjoyable and whether it evoked despair or
resentment.

The last two inquiries concerned solutions to
assessment situations. Question No. 57 offered fifteen
commonly suggested ideas gleaned from the literature. The
final question, 58, was an open-ended extension of the
previous question. There were fifty-eight, many of which
contained subsets of items, as indicated here. Therefore,
the responses to main questions and subset inquiries were
counted individually and comprised a total of one hundred
nineteen items.

Pilot Study and Content Validity

In dealing with pretesting an instrument, Gay (1987) points out that this pilot-study procedure:

> ...yields data concerning instrument deficiencies as well as suggestion for improvement. Having two or three available people complete the questionnaire first will result in the identification of major problems. The subsequently revised instrument and the cover letter should then be sent to a small sample from your intended population or a highly similar population. (p. 199)

Accordingly, in early January three English teachers from the group of consultants (Elefant, Harris, and Walton) received preliminary drafts of what was then a one hundred six item instrument. They were asked to answer the items, to time their completion rate, and to provide suggested changes of the instrument. Bodenroeder (SRC) also received a draft.

Completion of this questionnaire required ten to thirty-five minutes for the three teachers. Their extensive critiques eliminated some items, brought about additions, and caused modifications in others.

The next draft addressed such feedback and was sent to Bodenroeder in mid-February for a review not only on the instrument's data entry applicability, but also for item clarity, coding, and placement. Changes were made in all except twenty-four items; the changes ranged from coding numbers and adding a third option to the two selections of,

say, "yes" and "no" in a simple bipolar item to altering word choice and reversing the choice order.

The subsequent draft was sent out for review March 8, 1988 to all the members of the researcher's doctoral committee and to Dr. Wayne Courtney, a specialist in educational research and statistics at Oregon State's College of Education.

Of the four types of validity tested in an instrument (content, construct, concurrent, and predictive), content was the most appropriate to this study. Gay (1989) says content validity:

> ...is the degree to which a test measures an intended content area...[it] requires both item validity and sampling validity. Item validity is concerned with whether the test items represent measurement in the intended content area and sampling validity is concerned with how well the test samples the total content area. (p. 130)

Gay further says that content validity is determined by experts of the instrument's content. The reviews of this study's instrument were done by such experts. Revisions made were based on the judgments of the aforementioned professionals in conference with the researcher.

Reliability

Bruning & Kintz (1987) point out that "when a test is lengthened, the reliability increases" (p. 223), a factor in the study's instrument which had one hundred nineteen items.

Maresh (personal communication, 1989), an SRC statistician and Starmach (personal communication, 1989), a statistics consultant, both said the traditional tests for reliability, such as Cronbach's Alpha, Pearson product-moment correlation (Pearson R), and the split-half correction procedure, all were said to be inapplicable to this type of instrument. Citing Norusis (1988), Maresh said that with the wide array of item choices (yes/no, sufficient time/insufficient time, unlikely/likely, is related/is not related) measuring a variety of attributes in three areas (attitudes, behaviors, and physical and emotional effects of theme assessment), the questions could not be equated as is the case with test scores or when a variety of questions are limited to, say, attitudes. Moreover, twenty questions were open-ended and, obviously, could not be tested for reliability in internal consistency.

A second measure for reliability traditionally used by the SRC has been the correlation of data from two questions that essentially ask for responses to the same question. This instrument did have correlative items that dealt with the same issue (e.g., copyediting, commentary), but they were eliciting the different information.

A third measure of reliability used by the SRC is the question, "Is there any reason to doubt an instrument's reliability?" Maresh cited three indicators that to the SRC demonstrate unreliability: 1) a poor response rate, 2) respondents' misunderstanding or confusion over items, 3) a high rate of respondents skipping items.

This reliability measurement applies to the study instrument. Maresh further said that a heavy and lengthy response to the open-ended questions provide a fourth indicator used by the SRC on its thousands of research studies to measure reliability: That respondents are more than willing to give answers beyond a simple response.

Data Collection

The overall strategy for obtaining a high response rate with the instrument was furnished by Dillman (1978), and corroborated by Berg (personal communication, 1987). The traditional method is to follow the mailing of an instrument with a reminder postcard a week later; two weeks later respondents are sent a reminder letter with another questionnaire and stamped return envelope. A month later the number of nonresponders are tabulated; once the researcher determines the number of responses desired, he or she locates the subjects by telephone and asks for an explanation of why the instrument was not returned. Nonresponders are not asked to return the instrument, for such a coercive tactic, if it is successful, is considered to bias response.

The following procedure was established for this study by the researcher and appropriate consultants.

Seventy percent response was the goal set for the research. The rationale was that this rate is significant. Gay (1987) indicates an acceptable response percentage is sixty percent.

The trial mailing on March 26 involved the first eighty-eight subjects in the sample; because they were arranged by zip codes, the packets containing cover letter,

questionnaire, and stamped return envelope went to the following Oregon communities: Baker, Huntington, Halfway, Philomath, Corvallis, Monroe, West Linn, Lake Oswego, Milwaukie, Colton, Oregon City, Estacada, Gladstone, Canby, Sandy, Molalla, Astoria, Seaside, Warrenton, Scappoose, Clatskanie, Ranier, Vernonia, St. Helens, and Coos Bay. The response rate was an immediate 68%, with seventeen respondents requesting the study's eventual results.

Because teachers were the subjects, April was determined to be the best time for mailing the survey instrument. That would avoid the teachers' end-of-the-term activities; even first-year teachers would have had sufficient experience in assessing themes by April to be able to respond to the instrument.

The instrument, the cover letter (see Appendix B), and the stamped return envelope were combined and inserted into an envelope to which the mailing label was affixed. The envelopes already were sorted by zip codes to ensure the fastest handling by the U.S. Postal Service. They were mailed on March 31 at the Corvallis, Oregon, post office.

A reminder postcard (see Appendix C) was sent to respondents on April 8, followed by a reminder letter (see Appendix D) on April 18 that also included another

questionnaire coded with the nonresponder's number, and a stamped return envelope.

As instruments were returned, their coded numbers were checked off the master list. The names and addresses also were recorded of teachers who requested copies of the results.

To gain maximum response rate, the final procedure was to call nonresponders by contacting the schools indicated on the mailing labels in the master list to obtain the recommended response percentage. A telephone list was constructed by randomly selecting every fourth name among the nonresponders. Forty-nine subjects were called by the researcher between May 17 and 19, 1988 (see Table 3, p. 97).

The survey period ended June 2, 1988.

Data Entry Procedures

The raw data were taken to the Survey Research Center where the responses were coded for computer treatment with the StatGraphics program. The frequencies were tabulated and ready for statistical and descriptive analyses on July 15, 1989.

Statistical Treatment

A cross-sectional survey such as this study involves counts (frequencies) and comparisons of responses in the study's three areas of inhibitory factors involved with Oregon's high school English teachers. The appropriate test for significance on frequencies is the non-parametric Chi-Square analysis, according to sources (Courtney, 1988; Fox, 1969; Gay, 1987; McMillan & Schumacher, 1984; Thorne, 1980). If the cell sizes are smaller than five, Bruning and Kintz (1987) suggest that correction be done with the Yates test; plans were made to accomplish this task.

Analysis

The data of this study were analyzed in two ways: statistical testing of twelve null hypotheses and descriptive analyses of all instrument items.

Tests of Significance

The computer package of StatGraphics was used to analyze the data.

Chi-Square was used to analyze the twelve null hypotheses on both overall responses. Then, on the data collapsed into two categories of teaching experience levels (1 to 5 years and 6 years and beyond). The Yates test

would be used to adjust data with cell sizes smaller than five. The Alpha levels were set at the usual .05.

The hypotheses tested would involve determining whether there was an association between three suspected major inhibitory factors in theme assessment (attitudes, behaviors, physical and emotional effects) and the four independent variables of years of experience: 1 to 2 years, 3 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years, and 11 years and beyond.

Precedent for such categorization of experience has been set by Singer (1984); she found that the tenure of a teacher was positively related to teaching enthusiasm when she set levels of 1 year, 1 to 6 years and 7-12 years; the latter groups was found to be the least enthusiastic about teaching.

The independent variables also were to be collapsed, as noted, from those four aforementioned groups into two groups to allow for cell sizes smaller than five.

Descriptive Analysis

The data also were to be compared for the categories of years of experience. Frequency comparisons first were to be done on the response of all teachers.

Then, comparisons were to be made on breakouts of the four independent variables of years of experience (again,

1 to 2 years, 3 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years, and 11 years and beyond).

The comparisons would be achieved by determining the percentages of each experience category according to the variety of responses offered in an instrument item.

Additional comparisons were to be made by collapsing the four experience categories into two categories (1-5 years and 6 years and beyond).

Summary

This chapter began with an overall description of the methods that would be used to analyze the data and a listing of the twelve null hypotheses to be tested by Chi-Square. It was followed by sections on subject selection, an explanation of the development of the survey instrument, a description of instrument items, and information on a pilot study of the instrument. Content validity and reliability of the instrument were detailed as were data collection and entry procedures. The chapter closed with sections on analyses of the data by both the Chi-Square test of significance and descriptive analyses. What follows are the results of those analyses.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Research results from the instrument will be
presented in this chapter. The first part describes the
response from the subjects. The remaining two sections
deal with the two forms of analyses from the frequency
responses: the Chi-Square test for significance and
descriptive analyses.

At the outset, it should be noted that the words
correct and grade and their derivatives were used on the
instrument for reasons of clarity to respondents and
appear in this chapter when the instrument items are
cited. The word assess and its derivatives also are
used in this and subsequent chapters.

The first section will describe the response from
subjects.

The second section will show findings derived from
application of statistical tests of significance to the
twelve null hypotheses of the study. The hypotheses are
based on the independent variable (four categories of
experiential years in teaching) being both contrasted
and compared with twelve dependent variables tested by
the Chi-Square statistic.

The third section will report descriptive findings
based on quantitative summation procedures profiling
English teachers' behaviors, attitudes, the physical/
emotional impact of theme assessment. All were
determined by frequencies on one hundred nineteen
descriptive variables. The main determinant also is the
independent variable of assessment experience
categorized by length of service (1 to 2 years, 3 to 5
years, 6 to 10 years, and 11 or more years).

Response From Subjects

The return of survey instruments was three hundred
ten, or sixty-two percent of the sample, of which two
hundred eighty-three were usable; this number is far
above the basal thirty, generally considered adequate in
social-science research.

Telephone calls made on a randomized basis to a
fourth of the one hundred ninety-three unobtainables
brought the total response rate to seventy percent,
considered a significant amount for any scientific
study. McMillan & Schumacher (1984) attest that the
return rate on a mail survey generally is fifty to sixty
percent.

The following table contains the response data.

Table 2. Sample Size, Number of Respondents.

Total possible population	Total sample contacted	Total response	Total response percentage	Total response percentage with telephone contact	Total usable instruments
1509	503	310	62%	70%	283

The tactic for gathering the remaining data from the unobtainables was to tally a list of those who were non-responders and contact every fourth name by telephone. The calls were made May 17 and 19. There were forty-nine subjects contacted. They were not asked to return the instrument, for the focus of the telephone survey was just to determine _why_ they had not responded.

All those contacted were asked the following question:

> This is the Oregon State doctoral candidate who sent you a questionnaire on correcting themes a few weeks ago. I'm doing a random telephone check around the state to see if you haven't sent back the questionnaire, if there's a reason.

All but five were contacted on May 17, the remainder two days later. The researcher closed the survey June 2. Only one instrument missed the deadline and was discarded.

All mailing forms are included in the appendix of this study.

Table 3 provides data on the telephone followup system and would seem to be helpful for any future researcher intending to use a cross-sectional mailed survey to high school English teachers.

Table 3. Rationale by Nonresponders on the Mailed Survey.

Number of non-responders	Percentage of non-responders	Reasons for not responding
15	31%	No longer at the school
8	16.3	No time to respond
6	12.2	Will return questionnaire
4	8.2	Don't teach English anymore
4	8.2	Never have taught English
3	6.1	Lost questionnaire
2	4	Had questions
2	4	Didn't like questions
1	2	Form was frustrating
1	2	Was ill
1	2	Retired
1	2	Did return questionnaire
1	2	No reason

N=49

Only one question (No. 11) had to be discarded. None of the pretest group caught the potential misunderstanding from that question which surfaced from the subjects. The average class size should have been stated. Question No. 3 did not have to be discarded because the respondents understood it; any replication of the instrument doubtless should add the clarifier "per student" to that item.

Second, it was discovered that one group in the independent variable (those who had been teaching from 1 to 2 years) had only ten respondents. This group was vital to the study and so the Yates correctional factor was applied to comply with the Chi-Square measurement's demand of at least five subjects to a matrix cell.

In addition, it was decided to perform two Chi-Square measurements on the samples to take account of that small group for the on-to-two years experience category; accordingly, the four groups were collapsed into two groups: teachers with from one to five years of experience and teachers with from six and beyond years of experience. In the descriptive analyses section, the text includes both the overall frequencies of all four independent variables and the separate breakouts of the four groupings; the ten subjects in the one to two years of experience can be examined for their singularity of response compared to the other three groups.

Test of Significance Results

Twelve null hypotheses were tested for significance. Chi-Square procedures were used to determine whether the observed groupings were significantly different from the expected.

The alpha level of .05 was used to test the null hypotheses.

The tests demonstrated that of the twelve hypotheses, only one (Ho[1]) was rejected in both cases (combined categories and collapsed categories). The Chi-Square process indicated rejection of another hypothesis (Ho[4]) when it was tested in the combined categories, but it was retained when the four categories were collapsed into two categories. Moreover, when the data was collapsed into just two categories (from the independent variable's four categories) for tighter measurement and tested by Chi-Square procedures, two other hypotheses (Ho[3] and Ho[7]) were rejected; the collapse involved combining cohorts with 1 to 2 years experience with 3 to 5 years and combining cohorts with 6 to 10 years with those having 11 or more years.

Results (hypothesis by hypothesis) are described in this first section.

The first four null hypotheses dealt with assessment behavior patterns of the teachers.

Ho[1] There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the number of themes assessed per month.

This hypothesis was rejected by the statistical test. Years of experience apparently do make a statistical difference in the number of themes assessed.

The Chi-Square results for all four groupings of the independent variable yielded 41.0471 with a significance level of .0000. See Table 4. When the data was collapsed into the two groups described above for tighter measurement, the null hypothesis again was rejected by a Chi-Square result of 24.4794 at a significance level of .0001. See Table 5.

Ho^2 There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and how many outside hours are spent per month on the assessment of themes.

This hypothesis was retained by the Chi-Square result.

The null hypothesis was retained for the four groups according to Chi-Square results of 6.0606 with a .4164 significance. See Table 4. On the collapsed two groups, the result was 2.2043 at a .3321 significance level. See Table 5.

Ho^3 There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the amount of turnaround time spent between collecting themes and returning them to students.

This third behavioral null hypotheses was retained. See Table 4. When the collapsed data was processed by

Chi-Square measurement, the hypothesis was rejected.
See Table 5. Teachers with six or more years of
experience outnumbered those with less than six years in
returning assessed themes within one to three days and,
therefore, weighted the result; the former group
numbered 80, the latter, 13. Chi-Square results for the
four groups of the independent variable was 11.9050 with
a significance of .2187; but the hypothesis was rejected
for the collapsed groupings of the variable by a Chi-
Square result of 12.9194 and a significance level of
.0048. Experience seemed to play a significant role in
turnaround time.

Ho[4]   There is no significant difference between an
        English teacher's years of experience and the
        amount of commentary written in theme
        assessment.

The null nypothesis was rejected when subjected to
Chi-Square on four groups with a result of 19.2834 and a
significance level of .0228. See Table 4.

This null hypothesis was retained by application of
Chi-Square on collapsed groups with a result of 5.2075
at a .1572 significance level. See Table 5.

Application of Chi-Square showed no overall
significant difference between experience and turnaround

time between a teacher's collecting and returning compositions.

Tables 4 to 5 show test results from the separate procedures applied to the first four hypotheses of the study.

Table 4. Chi-Square on Inhibitory Behavioral Factors, Ho^1 to Ho^4.

Null hypothesis	Chi-Square result	df	Significance	Decision
Ho^1	41.0471	12	.0000	Reject
Ho^2	6.0606	6	.4164	Retain
Ho^3	11.9050	9	.2187	Retain
Ho^4	19.2834	9	.0228	Reject

(p= .05)

Table 5. Chi-Square for Two Collapsed Groups on Behavior, Ho^1 to Ho^4.

Null hypothesis	Chi-Square result	df	Significance	Decision
Ho^1	24.4794	4	.0001	Reject
Ho^2	2.2043	2	.3321	Retain
Ho^3	12.9194	3	.0048	Reject
Ho^4	5.2075	3	.1572	Retain

(p= .05)

Null hypotheses five through nine focused on the inhibitory factors of the physical and emotional impact of theme assessment (the dependent variables) for the independent variable of years of experience.

Ho[5] There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the perception that most students do not seem to apply assessment suggestions to subsequent themes.

The fifth null hypothesis was retained.

The Chi-Square result was 7.2125 with a significance level of .0654. See Table 6. When the data was collapsed into two groups, the result was 3.2497 with a significance of .0714. See Table 7.

Ho[6] There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and fatigue that may affect judgment in assessing themes.

This null hypothesis was retained.

The Chi-Square result was 3.6815 with a significance level of .2979. See Table 6. When data were collapsed for further fine-tuning between two groups of teachers, the result was .1408 with a significance of .7074. See Table 7.

Ho[7] There is no significant difference between an

English teacher's years of experience and the

perception that theme assessment may adversely

affect eyesight.

Ho[7] was retained also by the Chi-Square results of

1.7187 with a .6327 significance. See Table 6.

However, Ho[7] was rejected for the collapsed groups by a

Chi-Square result of 10.3311 with a significance level

of .0013. See Table 7.

Ho[8] There is no significant difference between an

English teacher's years of experience and the

feelings of despair over students' making the

same errors that have been pointed out to them

in previous themes.

The null hypothesis was retained by Chi-Square with

a 2.4812 result and a .8705 significance level. See

Table 6. Ho[8] also was retained for collapsed cohort

groupings by .4735 with a .7891 significance level. See

Table 7.

Ho[9] There is no significant difference between an

English teacher's years of experience and the

perception that burnout is related to theme

assessment.

Ho[9] was retained by a Chi-Square of .1238 with a

.9888 significance level. See Table 6. For the

collapsed data, the result was .0000 with a 1.0000

significance. See Table 7.

In summary, for the fifth through ninth null

hypotheses, most decisions were to retain (except for

the Chi-Square procedure when applied to Ho[7]) the four

categories of the independent variable that had been

collapsed into two groups for definitive results; thus,

there was a significant difference between experience

and the perception that assessing themes is related to

many elements of emotional burnout.

The rejection of the seventh null hypotheses by

application of Chi-Square measurements may possibly be

related to the finding from descriptive analysis of the

data that teachers with one to five years experience had

a far higher percentage of affirmative responses to the

item than did those with six or more years in the

classroom (77.5% v. 69%).

What seemed to be indicated by the results are

respondents' perceptions that students ignore commentary

on themes, (thus causing despair to teachers), that

composition assessment may harm eyesight, and that

fatigue apparently does affect assessment judgment.

Tables 6 through 7 provide summations from the

significance test of Chi-Square.

Table 6. Chi-Square on Inhibitory Physical, Emotional Factors, Ho^5 to Ho^9.

Null hypothesis	Chi-Square result	df	Significance	Decision
Ho^5	7.2125	3	.0654	Retain
Ho^6	3.6815	3	.2979	Retain
Ho^7	1.7187	3	.6327	Retain
Ho^8	2.4812	6	.8705	Retain
Ho9	.1238	3	.9888	Retain

(p= .05)

Table 7. Chi-Square for Two Collapsed Groups on Physical, Emotional Factors, Ho^5 to Ho^9.

Null hypothesis	Chi-Square result	df	Significance	Decision
Ho^5	3.2497	1	.0714	Retain
Ho^6	.1408	1	.7074	Retain
Ho^7	10.3311	1	.0013	Reject
Ho^8	.4735	2	.7891	Retain
Ho9	.0000	1	1.0000	Retain

(p= .05)

The last three null hypotheses centered on the inhibitory attitudes on four proposed solutions

concerning theme assessment (the dependent variable) as it relates to a teacher's experience.

Ho^{10} There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the perception that a journalism copyediting course would be unlikely to lessen the time spent assessing themes.

The Chi-Square test result was 5.5748 to retain the hypothesis with a significance level of .1342. See Table 8. Ho^{10} also was retained for collapsed groups with a Chi-Square result of .9382 to retain and a significance of .3327. See Table 9.

Ho^{11} There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the belief that composition should be taught as a separate course.

Ho^{11} was retained when subjected to Chi-Square with a result of 5.4309 to retain and a .1428 significance. See Table 8. The null hypothesis, when involving the collapsed grouping by a Chi-Square result of 2.7341, also was retained with a .0982 significance level. See Table 9.

Ho^{12} There is no significant difference between an English teacher's years of experience and the perception that a teachers' short course on

theme assessment would have practical

application toward an increased theme load.

The Chi-Square result was 4.5411 to retain and a

significance of .2086. See Table 8. Ho^{12} also was

retained for collapsed cohorts with Chi-Square results

of .8932 to retain and a .3445 significance level. See

Table 9.

To sum up the results, the last three null

hypotheses were retained.

Tables 8 through 9 offer summations on these

hypotheses.

Table 8. Chi-Square on Inhibitory Attitudinal Factors, Ho^{10} to Ho^{12}.

Null hypothesis	Chi-Square result	df	Significance	Decision
Ho^{10}	5.5748	3	.1342	Retain
Ho^{11}	5.4309	3	.1428	Retain
Ho^{12}	4.5411	3	.2086	Retain

(p= .05)

Table 9. Chi-Square for Two Collapsed Groups on Attitudinal Factors, Ho^{10} to Ho^{12}.

Null hypothesis	Chi-Square result	df	Significance	Decision
Ho^{10}	.9382	1	.3327	Retain
Ho^{11}	2.7341	1	.0982	Retain
Ho^{12}	.8932	1	.3445	Retain

$(p= .05)$

The next section of this chapter provides an in-depth descriptive analysis of Oregon's high school English teachers as they responded to the survey instrument's focus on behaviors, attitudes and the physical and emotional impact of theme assessment. This type of analysis provides further information surrounding the testing of the twelve null hypotheses.

Descriptive Analyses of Respondent Frequencies

This section of the chapter contains a descriptive analyses of frequency distributions from 310 respondents, a third of Oregon's high school English teachers (total: N=1509; survey-contact: N=503, as of September 1987), of which 283 were found to be usable. Response to the 119 items in the instrument fluctuated

from 279 to 147 answers. All responses will be found in Appendix E.

For additional help to the reader, all responses have been sorted by breakout tables that indicate four levels of experience: two years, 3-5 years, 6-10 years, and 11 or more years. The rationale behind these four experience levels has the precedent of Singer (1984) whose breakouts determined a positive relationship between years of service and enthusiasm for teaching. "Teachers with less [sic] than one year of service were most enthusiastic, followed by teachers with 1-6 years. Teachers with 7-12 years were least enthusiastic" (p. 112).

The researcher collapsed the four age levels, when testing for significance, into 1-5 and 6 years and beyond. However, the breakout levels used in this study allow for far greater precision in measuring the years (1-2, 3-5, 6-10, 11+).

Some of the tables are repeated in this section. Within the text, the frequencies include both respondents' total percentages and the total number of respondent frequencies.

The section begins with demographics and assignments, followed by a descriptive analyses in the

three inhibitory factors of assessment (behaviors attitudes, and physical and emotional impact) by relating these dependent variables to the independent variable of a teacher's years of assessment experience. Data from some open-ended items are included.

The text contains both information about the overall frequency counts from all respondents (see Appendix E) as well as breakouts, where necessary, of the total counts (see Appendix F).

Breakouts are of two kinds: by the four categories of experience (1-2 years, 3-5 years, 6-10 years, and 11+ years) and when data was measured by Chi-Square in collapsing those four categories into two (1-5 years; 6+ years) to compensate for cell sizes with less than five respondents.

Citations at the end of sentences containing data ("see Appendix E, Table 58") refer to the appendices section where the overall response frequencies are to be found. Citations such as "see Appendix F, Table 168" refer to the breakouts of response frequencies by the four independent variables of years of experience.

Respondents did not answer all questions, and so the researcher has given the number of respondents who did provide information on the particular instrument item being dealt with. When the researcher writes

"35.2% (of 83)," it means 35.2% of the 83 teachers who responded to that particular item.

The total number of respondents in the breakouts are not the same as the total number in the overall frequency counts; the reason for this discrepancy is that not all respondents revealed of how many years they had been teaching (only those who did report the experience levels are counted in the breakouts).

Not all questions from the instrument are included in this section, particularly those focused on the teaching of writing. Much of the information in the section provides supplementary explanations surrounding the twelve null hypotheses. The instrument's first item provided the data for the independent variable; thus, it does not have breakouts.

Last, the writing style for reporting the numerical data in this section now will shift from cardinal numbers (e.g., ten, three hundred eighty-five) to Arabic numbers (e.g., 1, 308, 35%) for reasons of space. The abbreviated percent sign also will be used. The exception on both numbers and percentages will be when such factors start a sentence.

Demographics and Assignment Data

The independent variable of the study--number of teaching years--reflects the general experience spread of the nation's high school English faculties if Berg's (personal communication, 1989) conclusion is considered. Berg was quoted in Chapter One of this study as saying that where theme assessment is concerned, the results of this Oregon research probably hold true for the United States.

Table 10 shows a breakdown of the number of teachers per years of teaching, as is found in the first question of the instrument (see Appendix E, Table 20). Such a breakdown is important for the reader to keep in mind, for all of the other questions in the instrument-- the dependent variables--were sorted out by this independent variable of years of experience.

Table 10. Demographics of the Survey's Independent Variables.

Value Label	Frequency	Percent
1-2 YEARS	10	3.6
3-5 YEARS	31	11.1
6-10 YEARS	55	19.7
11-20 YEARS	170	60.9
OVER 20	13	4.7
	4	MISSING*
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   279

*Missing means no response. "Missings" are not factored into the percentages of response.

The largest number of respondents (41.3% of 117 teachers) has from twenty-one to twenty-five students per class. Some 37.1% (105 teachers) had twenty-six to thirty-six students while the rest (21.6%) reported an enrollment of fifteen to twenty students (see Appendix E, Table 21).

Behavior Factors

Number of Themes Assigned

The item concerning the number of themes assigned per month revealed that the highest number of respondents (32.5% of 88) reported assigning two themes per month. The second highest portion (23.2%) assigned

four themes per month. Two groups of teachers (15.1%
each) assigned a respective one and three per month.
Eight or more themes per month were assigned by 7.4% of
this sample (see Appendix E, Table 22).

In a breakout of the total population, who assigned
the most themes per month per student, the least
experienced teacher or the one with the most years in
the classroom? The breakout data showed that those with
fewer than two years assigned the most themes (5 or more
per month), measured on a per-capita basis. Twenty-two
percent (of 9) assigned 5 or more. Of the other
groupings, those with 11 or more years of experience
reported only 12% (of 177) assigned 5 per month; of
those with 6-10 years, 16% (of 55) and those with 3-5
years, 13% (of 30) reported assigning that load (see
Appendix E, Table 122).

Which experience level, per capita, assigned the
fewest themes per month? Those (177) with 11 or more
years had the highest percentage (49%) among the four
groupings of assigning fewer than two themes per month
per student. Next were those with 6-10 years (49%),
followed by teachers with 3-5 years (40%) and those with
fewer than two years (44%) (see Appendix E, Table 122).

Themes Assessed Per Month

Assignment of themes generally does not necessarily correlate with assessment of themes; the literature revealed that one assessment practice was for some teachers to assess only one or two themes out of several that might have been assigned per term.

Table 11 depicts the number of themes corrected per month by an overall frequency count of Oregon teachers (see Appendix E, Table 24).

Table 11. Number of Themes Assessed Per Month by Oregon High School Teachers.

Value Label	Frequency	Percent
LESS THAN 25	7	2.5
25-50	10	3.5
51-75	27	9.5
76-100	37	13.1
101-150	62	21.9
OVER 150	140	49.5
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   283

A breakout of the above data by the independent variables of years of experience provided evidence on which of the four groups involved (1-2 years, 3-5, 6-10,

11+) actually corrected the most and the least themes per month.

The highest percentage (54% of 130) of those who corrected 150 or more themes per month were those with six or more years of experience (see Appendix F, Table 124). When all four groupings were examined, again, the highest percentage (57% of 187) of teachers correcting more than 150 themes per month were those who had 11 or more years of experience. In second place with 42% (of 55) were those with 6-10 years, followed by 29% (10% of 31) of those with 3-5, and 10% (1) of those with fewer than two years experience (see Appendix F, Table 124).

The highest percentage of those who corrected the least number of themes (fewer than 50 per month) were those with 3-5 years (10% of 31). Both the 6-10 and 11 or more experience levels had only 6% (of 55 and 187, respectively) of their members correcting fewer than fifty themes per month; not one of the teachers with fewer than two years experience reported they corrected fewer than fifty themes per month (see Appendix F, Table 124).

The difference in number of theme assignments and assessments might explain the rejection of the first null hypothesis in section one of this chapter, something the Chi-Square test of significance revealed.

Theme Lengths

How long were the themes, assuredly a vital aspect of assessment? Forty-seven percent (of 281) reported the average was two pages per theme. The second highest number of pages (three) was reported by 33.8%. But 12.4% reported an average of four or more pages per theme while 6.8% indicated an average of one-page themes (see Appendix E, Table 26).

Of two hundred eighty-three respondents, 40.8% reported themes were done in class while 43.2% said themes were done as homework; 16% used both methods (see Appendix E, Table 28).

Evaluation Time

Table 12 provides data on the hours spent per month on correcting themes by the study's sample (see Appendix E, Table 25).

Table 12. Hours Spent Per Month on Theme Assessment.

Value Label	Frequency	Percent
LESS THAN 10 HOURS	12	4.2
10-15 HOURS	34	12.1
16-25 HOURS	75	27.0
26-35 HOURS	53	18.9
36-50 HOURS	53	18.9
MORE THAN 50 HOURS	53	18.9
	3	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0
Valid Cases 280		

A data breakout indicated that those with 6-10 years spent the most hours (36 or more per month) in a comparison among the four independent variables. Thirty-six percent (of 55) of those in this variable reported spending 36 or more hours per month; next, were those with 1-2 years (33% of 10), followed by those with 3-5 (29% of 31) and 11 or more (23% of 184) (see Appendix F, Table 125).

Which experience level spent the least amount of hours (0-15) in correcting themes? The highest percentage (29%) was by the 3-5 group, followed by those with 6-10 years (22%), 11 or more (13%) and 1-2 (10%) (see Appendix F, Table 125).

Of the overall study population, the highest percentage (26.3% of 278) said they spent from 9-10 minutes per theme. One to 5 minutes was reported by

22.7%, six to eight minutes by 13.7%; the longest amount of time (16 or more minutes) was reported by 15.7% of respondents (see Appendix E, Table 27).

Of the four independent variables, which experience level spent the least amount of time assessing each theme? The highest percentage of teachers who spent from one to eight minutes per theme was 37% of the 182 respondents who had 11 or more years. Which group had the highest percentage of spending from 16 or more minutes per theme? The highest percentage was the group with 1-2 years (20% of 10) (see Appendix F, Table 127).

Turnaround Time

In the behavioral issue of turnaround time between a teacher's collecting themes and returning them to students, Table 13 reveals the variance in the overall picture from the total number of the study's respondents (see Appendix E, Table 29).

Table 13. The Average Turnaround Time Between Collecting and Returning Themes.

Value Label	Frequency	Percent
1 DAY	17	6.0
2 DAYS	37	13.3
3 DAYS	41	14.7
4 DAYS	33	11.8
5 DAYS	48	17.2
6 DAYS	2	.7
7 DAYS	59	21.1
8-11 DAYS	28	10.1
12-14 DAYS	8	2.9
15+ DAYS	6	2.2
	4	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   279

The third null hypotheses on the collapsed data, rejected in the first section of this chapter, had to do with there being no significant difference between years of experience and the amount of turnaround time expended between collecting and returning themes (see Appendix F, Table 129). Here, the rejection resulted with the application of Chi-Square measurements on the groups.

The researcher explored that rejection by using descriptive analysis on the data. A breakout on the four variables indicated characteristics of the various experience levels with regard to turnaround time.

Of those with fewer than two years of experience, for example, 40% (of 10) reported 4-6 days and another 40% reported seven to ten days while 10% took 11 or more days and another 10% took less than three days. Of those with 3-5 years experience, 38% (of 31) reported three to five days turnaround, followed by 39% for four to six days, 29% for seven to ten days, and 4% with 11 or more days. For teachers with 6-10 years, the highest percentage (41% of 54) had turnaround time of one to three days; 39% had four to six days; 15% had seven to ten days, and 5% had 11 or more days. Of teachers with 11 or more years, the highest percentage (35% of 184) said their turnaround time was seven to ten days; 33% reported one to three days, 27% had four to six days, and 6% took 11 or more days to return assessed themes (see Appendix F, Table 129).

In short, the teachers with 6-10 years had the most rapid (1-3 days) turnaround time; those who took the longest (11 days or more) were those with fewer than two years of experience.

Grading Criteria

What went on in the assessment process varied widely. Most teachers (90.3% of 269) reported that they graded down for misspellings, usage errors (95.5% of 269), punctuation errors (92.5% of 266) and disorganization (98.6% of 276) (see Appendix E , Tables 38-41). The data on such items for each experience level is in the breakouts in Appendix F, Tables 138-141.

Then there was the degree of emphasis teachers gave to 15 of the classic elements of assessment: substance and spelling to legibility (see Appendix E, Tables 42-56; Appendix F, Tables 142-156). The instrument's semantic differential scale revealed the following respondent percentages for the "greatest emphasis" categories:

```
Substance, 64.6% of 274
Clarity, 54.6% of 275
Organization, 50.4% of 276
Thinking ability, 45% of 269
Reasoning, 43.2% of 271
Accuracy, 33.2% of 268
Readability, 30.4% of 270
Creativity, 26.4% of 272
Conciseness, 20.2% of 272
Usage, 18.4% of 272
Style, 13.5% of 275
Spelling, 11.6% of 275
Punctuation, 11.5% of 272
Legibility, 9.0% of 269
Humor, 7.9% of 267
```

Another semantic differential scale was used to examine the aspects of a theme that consumed most of the

nine to fifteen minutes respondents had said they averaged on assessment (see Appendix E, Tables 57-67,; Appendix F, Tables 157-167). The greatest amount of time allotted for each was reported by the percentage of respondents as the following ranks:

    Substance, 40.3% of 268
    Organization, 40.1% of 267
    Reasoning, 39% of 269
    Clarity, 36.84% of 266
    Conciseness, 16.60% of 265
    Readability, 14.3% of 259
    Usage, 13.5% of 266
    Punctuation, 13.5% of 266
    Style, 12.9% of 263
    Spelling, 12.3% of 268
    Legibility, 10.4% of 260

Focus on Minor Problems

Did respondents report they were spending too much time and energy in correcting minor problems rather than dealing with a theme's major thrust? The overall frequency count for all teachers answering this item (274) was that 57.7% said they felt they _were_ spending too much time and energy on minor problems (see Appendix E, Table 73).

In the breakouts, those with fewer than 2 years experience had the highest percentage (60% of 10) of frequency counts on spending too much time and energy on minor problems; the second highest percentage (59% of 54) was from those with 6-10 years, followed by the

third highest (58% of 180) who had 11 or more years of experience. Of those who reported they were not spending too much time and energy, the highest percentage (47% of 30) was the frequency count from those with 3-5 years; the second highest percentage (42% of 180) was the count from those with more than 11 years (see Appendix F, Table 173).

Commentary

The literature indicated that most assessment time is spent in the private tutoring done through commentary: marginalia and endnotes. The respondents' behavior is detailed in Table 14.

Table 14. Amount of Commentary Expended in Theme Assessment.

Value Label	Frequency	Percent
A LOT	197	70.9
A WORD OR 2	49	17.6
NONE	4	1.4
MORE THAN 1 WORD	28	10.1
	5	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0
Valid Cases	278	

The fourth null hypotheses, rejected by the Chi-Square procedure, indicated there was a significant

difference between years of experience and the amount of commentary applied during assessment. The item that generated this response was not rejected when the four age groups were collapsed into two, however (see Table 5). The reason for the rejection was that the responses were centered mostly (70.9%) on the item choice of "a lot" with many respondents (17.6% of 278) limiting themselves to two words, 10.1% to one word; 1.4% believed in no commentary (see Appendix E, Table 34).

Who wrote the most commentary? In breakouts measuring the frequency counts in the "a lot" portion of the item, the highest percentage (80% of 10) was reported by those with fewer than two years of teaching experience; the second highest (77% of 54) in this category was from those with 6-10 years; the third highest percentage (68.8% of 183) was from those with more than 11 years, followed by 6% (of 31) from those with 3-5 years.

Of those reporting they wrote "a word or two," the highest percentage (32%) was reported by those with 3-5 years, followed by the second highest percentage (18%) of those with more than 11 years. Who wrote none? The highest percentage (10%) was from those with fewer than two years of experience, followed by those with 6-10 years (7%) (see Appendix F, Table 134).

Commentary Curtailment

Would trimming commentary help students to improve writing skills? The overall frequency response of the study's subjects indicated that 94.1% (of 269) said it would not improve writing skills (see Appendix E, Table 35). A breakout of the four experience levels provided further indicators. Those with 1-2 years experience in the classroom had the highest percentage (100% of 10) of all levels in reporting that trimming commentary would not help students to improve writing skills. The second highest percentage to hold this view was the 3-5 year group (97% of 31) (see Appendix F, Table 135).

Would trimming commentary cut time and energy spent on themes? The total sample in the study had a frequency count of 88.8% (of 250) who felt time and energy would be cut (see Appendix E, Table 36).

A breakout of the four experience levels indicated that the highest percentage (94% of 49) who said that cutting commentary would save time and energy was reported by those with 6-10 years of experience. By contrast, the highest percentage (13% of 161) who said no time and energy would be cut were those with more than 11 years (see Appendix F, Table 136).

To ascertain the strength of what teachers said about curtailing commentary, part of the summative block

of questions included the item that asked whether less commentary would have practical application toward increasing the theme load. Nearly 55% (of 232) said it would not, but a notable number (45.3%) said it would (see Appendix E, Table 109).

Order of Assessment

Are themes evaluated in alphabetical order, in numerical order, by assigned numbers, by best-to-worst or vice versa, by the order in which they are turned in, or by random selections?

The largest number of the pool (57.9% of 209) said their correction system was done at random ("from the top of the pile to the bottom," as several put it) (see Appendix E, Table 70). The second largest group (28.2% of 209) stated they corrected by the order in which students turned them in. The 13.9% who were in the "other method" category submitted several systems, however: best-to-worst, worst-to-best, alternating the best and the worst, alphabetical listing, the "typed ones go first," "the worst legibility last," and assigned numbers.

Overall, the majority (81.8% of 275) said they did not start correcting with the work of their best students (see Appendix E, Table 69); 42% (of 192) added

that evaluation in the order of writing ability might
take more time (see Appendix E, Table 72); further,
56.8% (of 220) said their particular systems took less
time than correcting in alphabetical order (see Appendix
E, Table 71).

Commentary Methods

Sixty percent of the research sample (of 278)
provided detailed explanations about commentary methods
(see Appendix G, Q16a). Many practices were
replications of those included in the literature.
Eighty-three percent, for example, said they provided
positive commentary before moving into the constructive
criticism ("for every negative comment, I try to also
put a positive comment about something in the paper.
That way, the student isn't overwhelmed by my
criticism"). Rigor on conventions, particularly
spelling, is still in place and double (and even triple)
grades still exist, as this explanation indicates:

> I issue two grades--one for content
> and one for composition--for a total score.
> Things covered under content are paper length,
> intro, transitional paragraphs, paraphrasing,
> development of thesis, and conclusion.
> Composition includes spelling(all),structure,
> typing, documentation, capitalization,
> punctuation, and standard usage.

One taped the commentary ("students liked this, but it was too time consuming"); some used codes; many have peer editing; several remarked that although conferencing was time consuming for a large census, they still were as enthusiastic about it as this journalist-turned-teacher:

> I've invented the five-minute oral critique...The oral critique is patterned after the conferencing I did with editors. There's not enough time to mark papers, and you lose the opportunity to help make a difference when the student "completes" a rough draft. I work with each individually until the writing is as good as it can be. I give verbal comments on all aspects and we discuss ways to improve it.

At least one was cognizant of the criticism of red ink "bleeding" all over a composition although that teacher added there was equal amount of criticism about commentary that is too terse. The effect of the assessment industry was indicated, several imparting that they used an analytic trait scale; six used the Diederich system, one describing it thusly:

> For AP [advanced placement] English, I usually use a one-to-nine rubric describing a high, medium, and low-quality paper. Students occasionally evaluate others' papers with names removed--they use rubrics--and add comments.

Two used the computer ("I keep a separate log of comments so I can refer back to previous notes--check

improvement"). Four used a printed form; and revision-until-they-get-it-right still is used as a requirement for enscribing a grade on some books. The marginalia classics of "frag," "cap." still exist as does this system:

> I make margin comments on content as I read the paper for the first time (ex: "well said" "I understand" "wow" "I'm sorry"). After I have marked the essay, I then write at least a five-sentence paragraph on the last page of the essay which includes a) praise, b) focus for improvement, and c) a personal note (perhaps unrelated to the paper). I see this as painfully time consuming, but a valuable method of communicating with my students.

Physical and Emotional Factors

Burnout

What are the physical and emotional factors of theme assessment?

A sizable proportion (88.1% of 278) said they thought correcting themes was related to burnout of high school English teachers, though some (11.9%) disagreed (see Appendix E , Table 94). Table 15 provides the total frequency count on the burnout item.

Table 15. Respondent Perception About Correcting Themes and Burnout
Relationship.

Value Label	Frequency	Percent
IS RELATED	33	88.1
IS NOT RELATED	245	11.9
	5	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   278

Which experience level reported the highest
percentage of frequency counts on whether correcting
themes is related to burnout? Breakouts indicated it
was the teachers with less than two years of experience
(90% of 10). Of the most experienced teachers (11 or
more years) 88% (of 184) said they thought correcting
themes was related to burnout. A count of those who did
not think correcting themes and burnout were related
showed that the highest percentage (13% of 30) had 3-5
years; they were followed by those with 6-10 and 11
years or more, each having an 11% tally (of 54 and 184,
respectively) of teachers who did not think burnout was
related to correcting themes (see Appendix F, Table
194).

Burnout Comments

Burnout causes have been implied in the literature, but this study now substantiates a significant frequency (75% of 283) with open-end responses about the relationship between this psychological element and assessment (see Appendix M, Q44). Few respondents agreed with the remark of one instructor: "Many teachers cannot accept that teaching English involves at least ten hours a week grading papers (in addition to time spent planning lessons)." Fairly representative remarks were:

> [Assessment is] an activity which requires use of the [intellectual] faculties; if done "correctly," at an extremely high level,, and coupled with disruptions and the "grind" of it over long periods, it is exhausting.

> It takes so much time to do it right--we don't get a break in the evenings; we don't get a break on the weekends--and we don't get compensated for our extra time. On top of that, progress seems so slow--[lack of] improvement.

> My colleagues are spending comparable amounts of time--all feel the same. We are unable to disengage from our work because of the sheer volume of student writing generated by 130 students a day; weekends, evenings, holidays are largely given over to grading and planning.

> There is no "recuperation" time from the job when you teach 40 hours a week and correct another 30 hours each week.

> Every night--papers, papers, papers!

Fifty percent (of 283) attributed burnout to the time commitment involved in assessment. Twenty percent reported the constant frustration by lack of student retention about _what_ either was taught in class or in assessment commentary; twenty-one teachers cited the tedious and repetitive aspects of imparting such instruction. Among the remarks were:

It is very discouraging to find out that one's students, who...talk reasonably intelligently, write like morons.

Students' improvement is difficult to measure, and is not in proportion to energy spent by teacher's correcting.

Teachers are accustomed to reading first-class literature during their training, and then are bombarded with "garbage."

Much effort for minimal/immediate return.

It's so discouraging, sometimes I wonder, "Why bother?"

Twenty-three teachers cited the physical investments of energy, emotions, and eyesight. Others said they perceived impossible expectations from administrators, outside critics, and parents; some listed lack of appreciation/recognition, unending assessments, poorly prepared students, large censuses, other heavy teaching obligations, and both deadlines and guilt at not realizing the attainments that they perceive external audiences are demanding.

Seven respondents were outspoken in expressing

resentments about a work load heavier in English than

any other high school discipline:

> Too many evening hours [spent in
> assessment] when P.E. teachers are out
> exercising, S.S. teachers are attending
> lectures, math teachers are playing cards,
> and administrators are watching TV.

One respondent said that assessment deals "with the

negative aspect of writing--correction," while five

others said they felt unable to obtain professional

enrichment. Moreover, 18% noted they were lacking one

major protective device that is emphasized by most

stress-management experts: a personal life outside the

job. A sampling of their comments is:

> I become resentful seeing my family
> involved in activities while I'm correcting
> the last 40 essays.

> Teachers have less time for themselves--
> I know I'm grading papers while my friends are
> hiking or going to the movies. I get tired,
> depressed, resentful.

> [Assessment] takes away from our time at
> home; it's a constant burden.

> Use of one's evenings and weekends. I
> have very little time for myself or family.

The religious dedication cited earlier was

indicated by such comments as:

>   I won't cut corners and cheat my
>   students--it's all or nothing and the <u>all</u>
>   kills me.
>
>   It is so time consuming and unappreciated,
>   yet you know [it] is necessary.

Students' Writing Skills

Among the items asked was a question that received an 80.1% (of 277) response rate; it had to do with whether a teacher had students who were adept at writing. Nearly 50 percent of two hundred seventy-seven respondents had students they perceived as not adept at writing. Eighty percent felt that theme writing would be easier to teach if classes were set up according to students' writing abilities (see Appendix E, Table 31).

Time Constraints

Another emotional factor was the time spent on teaching theme writing compared to other course requirements. Sixty-four percent (of 275) reported that other requirements in the course left them insufficient time for teaching theme writing (see Appendix E , Table 33). Were these respondents new to teaching or used to time-management practices for the classroom? The breakout of the independent variables on years of experience indicated that those with fewer than 2 years had the highest percentage (80% of 10) of the frequency

count of insufficient time; the second highest

percentage (74% of 31) was indicated by those with 3-5

years. The highest percentage (42% of 55) of teachers

who said that other requirements in the English course

left sufficient time for teaching theme writing was for

those with 6-10 years; the second highest percentage

(36% of 179) was reported by those with 11 years or more

(see Appendix F, Table 133).

Student Application of Assessment Suggestions

Fifty-eight percent (of 266) said students seemed

to apply assessment suggestions (see Appendix E, Table

68).

In the breakouts of the four independent variables

of experience levels, the highest percentage of teachers

who said most students seemed not to apply correction

suggestions for improvement from one theme to subsequent

new themes was reported by those with fewer than two

years (80% of 10); the highest percentage who said

students do apply correction suggestions for improvement

was the group with 11 or more years (61% of 175) (see

Appendix F, Table 168).

Yet 77.1% (of 275) also said they felt despair in

correcting themes when they saw students making the same

errors pointed out to them in previous themes (see Appendix E , Table 104).

Breakouts of the four experience levels indicated that those with 3-5 years had the highest percentage (84% of 31) of feelings of despair concerning students' making the same errors; those with 6-10 years had the second highest percentage (82% of 51) while the lowest percentage (70% of 10) was reported by teachers with fewer than 2 years (see Appendix F, Table 204).

Resentments Toward Other Faculty Disciplines

Add to these emotional factors the resentment a large number of respondents (75.5% of 278) who reported feeling over the work load of English teachers compared to those in other high school disciplines (see Appendix E, Table 105).

Did years of experience make a difference on those resentments? Breakouts indicated that the highest proportion of resentments felt by English teachers about the work loads of colleagues in other disciplines were reported by both newcomers and those with the most experience. The highest percentage (80% of 184) was reported by those with more than 11 years, closely followed by the second highest percentage (80% of 10) of those with fewer than two years. Those who had the

highest percentage (45% of 29) of feeling no resentment toward colleagues were those with 3-5 years; the second highest percentage (31% of 55) was from those with 6-10 years (see Appendix F, Table 205).

Fatigue Factors

As for the other physical factors, 88.5% (of 278) said that fatigue affected their evaluative judgment in correcting themes (see Appendix E, Table 95).

Were the years of experience a factor in whether fatigue affected judgment in correcting themes? A breakout of the four independent variables indicated that teachers with 6-10 years reported the highest percentage (91% of 54) of responses that said fatigue affects judgment. The second highest percentage (90% of 31) to agree were from those with 3-5 years, followed by 88% (of 183) from those with more than 11 years and 70% (of 10) with fewer than 2 years of assessment experience (see Appendix F, Table 195).

Table 16 reveals the amount of hours respondents put in at a single assessment session before fatigue began to set in (see Appendix E, Table 96).

Table 16. Assessment Periods Prior to the Onset of Fatigue.

Value Label	Frequency	Percent
1 HOUR	64	23.7
2 HOURS	145	53.7
3 HOURS	47	17.4
4 HOURS	10	3.7
5 HOURS	4	1.5
	13	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   270

Did years of experience play a role in fatigue? The breakouts to this instrument item were categorized at four levels: one hour, two hours, three hours, and four to five hours. The highest percentage (6% of 178) of those who could correct themes for four to five hours before fatigue set in were those with 11 or more years; no respondents in the 1-2 experience levels reported being able to continue beyond three hours (See Appendix F, Table 196).

Breakouts for experience levels were categorized at four time levels: one hour, two hours, three hours, and four to five hours. Which experience levels had the highest percentage of fatigue after an hour of

correcting themes? The teachers with 3-5 years had that rank (29% of 28), followed by those with 11 or more years (25% of 178).

The highest percentage reporting fatigue after two hours was reported by those with fewer than 2 years (60% of 10), with the second highest percentage reported by those with 3-5 years (57%). The highest percentage for fatigue after three hours was reported by those with 6-10 years (22% of 54), followed by those with 1-2 (20%). Of the 14 total respondents who reported fatigue arrived after five hours, the highest percentage was reported by those with 11 or more years (6% of 178); the second highest percentages (4%) each were reported by those with 3-5 and 6-10 years; no respondent with 1-2 years reported anything after three hours of correcting themes (see Appendix F, Table 196).

In short, data reveal that for teachers with 11 or more years of experience, 25% of them report fatigue after an hour of correcting themes, 52% after two hours, but 6% still have the highest percentage of being able to last up to five hours. Those with fewer than 2 years report that 20% of their ranks find fatigue setting in after one hour, 60% after two hours, and none continued correcting themes after three hours (see Appendix F, Table 196).

Coping Solutions Suggested

Sixty-nine percent of the total respondents suggested solutions for the fatigue problem (see Appendix N, Q45a). An open-end item invited their solutions, yet many suggestions were clearly out of their control: enforced extracurricular duties, large enrollments, no extra preparation periods, or, as one said: "Give me two less classes, fewer students, or a reader."

A remedy suggested by a half-dozen was "making fewer assignments; however, I wouldn't be doing my job, would I?" as one put it. Others had resorted to lengthy turnarounds ("I've trained my students to not expect their essays back immediately"), peer evaluations, spot assessments ("don't correct everything"). Four were advocates of holistic assessment, two staggered assignments so they could spread out grading. No-Doze, colas, coffee, and pseudepinepine [sic] were noted, but many approached fatigue solutions with the attitudes of today's health-conscious individuals:

> Take a break from school before correcting. Go for a walk, hike, dance—do something physical. Then sit down to correct.

> Stop grading when you get tired... Exercise so you don't get tired.

> Exercise, eat right, find another job.

> Get more sleep.

> I take a break when I start to feel tired (it is usually preceded by "I don't want to do this anymore").

Thirteen teachers said they took breaks between batches of themes. Also recommended were the methods of stopping anywhere after 3-10 and 15 themes and doing assessments between class periods. Another teacher introduced the early-morning assessment concept used by many: "I sleep for three hours--say, from 11 p.m. till 2 a.m.--and then continue." Nine found that the early-morning hours were ideal, quiet, free from distraction, and that they had fresh outlooks and good analytical judgment at that time. As one teacher suggested about confronting fatigue:

> Do a little at a time. Take frequent breaks. Don't stress over it. The job will never be done. Realize you will always have to grade a few papers daily; it's part of the job. Try to enjoy it. Good background music, something non-alcoholic to drink, good lighting, a comfortable desk or chair, and a pleasant view (if possible) are helps. Try not to be obsessed.

Lighting, Eyesight Factors

Lighting was considered a factor in theme assessment by 84.7% (of 281) (see Appendix E, Table 97).

Eighty percent (of 270) thought correcting themes could affect their eyesight (see Appendix E, Table 98).

A breakout of the four independent variables indicated that those with the least years in assessment (less than two) had the highest percentage (90% of 10) who felt that too much theme assessment eventually could affect eyesight. The second highest percentage were those with 11 or more years of which 80% (of 178) believed eyesight could be affected. The variable that reported the highest percentage (24% of 29) that assessment would have no effect was the group with 3-5 years experience (see Appendix F, Table 198).

Neck, Back Pains and Noise Factors

Nearly 71% (of 278) reported they experienced neck or back pains because of correcting themes (see Appendix E, Table 99).

Both noise and temperatures also affected the physical comfort of respondents when they were marking themes (80.4% of 280 and 86.4% of 279, respectively) (see Appendix E, Tables 101, 100).

A breakout on whether noise affected concentration when teachers were marking themes indicated that of the four groups of experience levels, the highest percentage (82% of 184) of those whose concentration was affected by noise was reported by those with more than 11 years of experience. It was not the newcomers to the

profession who reported that noise did not affect their concentration on marking of themes. The highest percentage (77% of 31) had 3-5 years of experience; the second highest percentage (76% of 55) had 6-10 years (see Appendix F, Table 201).

Remedies for concentration on marking of themes despite noise were solicited in an open-end item (see Appendix O, Q51a), one mentioning the need of being "cloistered." There were 3 who had "developed the ability to screen out" noise and distraction, even at a Burger King ("the noise doesn't involve me").

Assessment Settings

Basements, attics, bedrooms with barred doors, out-of-the-way offices, school libraries, empty classrooms, and storerooms were just a few of the quiet refuges used by respondents. Several were constantly changing quarters to control noise and concentration. One could concentrate on marking themes despite a video used in class, but five wore earplugs, and three employed headphones. Respondents reported asking "students to leave the classroom during a prep period" at school or telling "the kids to shut up and turn down the TV" at home. Eleven forbade television or radio at home during assessments, but sixteen favored music (generally

classical or meditatively calm); one said: "I'm always sure there is noise--TV, radio. Silence is unnatural."

One teacher said she "screamed at anyone interrupting concentration." A few said the most quiet time was either after the rest of a household had gone to bed or the dawn hours. A half-dozen respondents assessed at school after hours, on Saturdays or Sundays ("I work in the quiet of my classroom--9 p.m. to 3 a.m."). Thirty-two respondents, however, found school too full of noise and interruptions; ten could assess in either place. One joked that "child abuse and divorce" might be the result of assessments done at home. "My wife and kids get tired of me locking myself away," said another respondent.

Nearly 79% (of 283) said the demands of home and outside life affected the quality of their theme correcting (see Appendix E, Table 102).

What experiential level reported the demands of home and outside life did not affect the quality of their theme correcting? The highest percentage (30% of 10) were those who had 1-2 years of experience. The second highest percentage (24% of 55) were those with 6-10 years. The experience level that had the highest percentage (87% of 31) of other demands that did affect

the quality of theme correcting had 3-5 years (see

Appendix F, Table 202).

When subjects were provided with an open-end item

that asked for their suggestions to beginning teachers

on the physical or atmospheric elements affecting

correcting a lot of themes (see Appendix P, Q53), 64 (of

282) shared a mixture of comedic and common sense

("don't get married--live like a monk," "apply the same

principles you did when doing effective studying in

college"). Obviously, there were views` built on

personal tastes such as the advice to try to do most

correction at school ("you'll hate and resent too much

work that's brought home") or to correct most themes at

home ("Do not try to read them in your classroom"); but

one said: "find what working environment works best for

you and use it."

Respondents listed quiet, a good chair, adequate

lighting ("no fluorescent lights"), and a table adequate

to spread out compositions and assessment materials.

Soft music was recommended along with suggestions of

isolation, particularly from the distractions of family,

television, telephone, or the refrigerator. Two

mentioned having a regular assessment time and regimen,

including a reward after a certain numbers of

compositions had been completed. One said: "Don't try

to correct papers when [you are] physically sick or mentally upset."

Teachers' Feelings About Theme Writing

Nearly 59% (of 266) found theme writing to be an irksome part of teaching English; 29% found it enjoyable while 12.4% said their view was a mixture of both sentiments (see Appendix E, Table 103).

In checking to determine whether years of experience played a role in such views, the researcher looked at the breakout of the four independent variables. The highest percentage (70% of 10) who said that theme writing was an irksome part of teaching English came from those with fewer than 2 years teaching experience. The second highest percentage (60% of 174) was reported by those with more than 11 years. The group that had the highest percentage (39% of 31) of frequency counts for regarding theme writing to be an enjoyable part of teaching were from the group with 3-5 years of teaching (see Appendix F, Table 203).

Attitudes concerning theme assessment would seem to be an outgrowth of the foregoing factors of demographics, behavior, and the physical and emotional impact of this procedure. The subjects were forthright

in presenting their attitudes about the teaching of composition as a whole.

Attitude Factors

Writing Rigor

One attitude held by 92.4% (of 275) of the respondents was that a rigorous theme-writing program in high school would improve a student's regular writing skills after graduation (see Appendix E, Table 32).

In the breakouts by levels of experience, teachers with 3-5 years had the highest percentage (97% of 31) of the frequency counts on writing rigor would improve skills; the second highest (93% of 179) came from those with more than 11 years experience, followed by 90% (of 10) from those with fewer than 2 years and, last, the 89% (of 55) with 6-10 years (see Appendix F, Table 132).

What Should the Theme Contain?

Fifty-seven percent (of 277) said they were "very certain" about what a theme should contain, and 39% reported they were "fairly certain" (see Appendix E, Table 75); but 2% (of 181) who had been teaching 11 or more years said they were somewhat uncertain about what a theme should contain (see Appendix F, Table 175). Also, 49.42% (of 259) thought that themes should have

less emphasis on the creative kind of writing and more on the practical kind of writing, but 40.55% wanted more emphasis on creativity (see Appendix E, Table 74).

Need of Training

One item in the attitudinal area involved the respondents' thoughts about English teachers' needing some training in teaching theme writing. The researcher's intent was to ascertain if respondents thought their colleagues in the discipline needed any degree of training. Nearly 88.93% of the overall respondents said some training was necessary (see Appendix E, Table 76). In the breakouts, 90% (of 10) who had under two years of experience thought some training was necessary; 92% of those with 3 to 5 years said some training was needed, 93.7% of those with 6 to 10 years agreed as did 86.8% of those with more than 11 years of experience (see Appendix F, Table 176). Table 17 provides the frequency counts concerning respondents' thoughts about some training needs in teaching theme writing.

Table 17. Respondents' Views on Whether Teachers Need Some Training in
Teaching Theme Writing.

Value Label	Frequency	Percent
NEED TRAINING	217	88.93
DON'T NEED TRAINING	27	11.07
	39	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0
Valid Cases	244	

When the question was raised about the degree of
emphasis given the element of creativity in a theme,
26.4% (of 272) rated it as one of the "greatest" areas
of emphasis in a theme (see Appendix E, Table 54); but
when all of those emphases areas were counted,
creativity was in the bottom third of the list.

Standardized Theme Writing

More than 66.5% (of 260) agreed that a national
standardized structure system prescribed for themes
would be easier for students to master than the present
composition situation "that rests on the views of a
succession of teachers;" 33.5% did not agree (see
Appendix E, Table 87). Asked near the end of

the instrument if such a nationalized structure would have practical application in their school to increasing the theme load, 73.5% (of 230) said it would not have application (see Appendix E , Table 110).

In related questions, 72.1% (of 190) said that such a standardized structure would require less time for correcting themes (see Appendix E, Table 88).

What role did years of teaching experience play in the response to this instrument item? A breakout of those who felt a standardized structure would take less time for correcting themes indicated that those with 3-5 years had the highest percentage (80% of 20) in the frequency counts about less time for correcting; the second highest percentage (71.5% of 130) was reported by those with more than 11 years of teaching experience. Of those who said such a structure would not require less time, the group with 1-2 years had the highest percentage of the experience levels (33% of 6) reflecting this view (see Appendix F, Table 188).

In the overall frequencies, 49.7% (of 193) further agreed that a national standardized structure prescribed for themes would not be much different from the standardized structures for real-world writing such as

memos, reports, proposals, etc. (see Appendix E, Table 89); it was a standoff, for 50.3% disagreed.

The open-end item asking what objections respondents thought would be raised by high school English teachers about such standardized structures brought replies from 179 respondents, 42% objecting to such a proposition on the grounds that it would stifle creativity (see Appendix L, Q39c). The idea was termed "dumb," "deadly dull," "stifling," "rigid," the respondents pointing out that teacher objections were likely to reflect some of these views:

> [It would bring about] the production of clone essays.

> Writing is of ideas, not math--where would Whitman be?

> [It would] eliminate creativity, voice, critical/abstract thinking.

> [It promotes] lack of thinking.

> The plastic quality of the procedure would make checking like opening a can of beans.

> This [structure] does not teach critical thinking skills. "Cooking" a recipe theme is a completely different skill.

> College teachers already tell us we are killing voice.

> Infringement on academic freedom.

> Memos get ignored; why not papers?

> Above-average students would suffer.

On the other hand, some respondents indicated:

> Established teachers may be inflexible.

> [Teachers have] fear of losing "freedom."
> That they really may have to have a solid
> knowledge base. Fear of having [their] own
> ignorance revealed.

> Expository writing follows nearly
> universal norms.

> Who would establish the standard? Would
> it be those who write the textbooks?

> Have you ever known three English teachers
> in total agreement about anything?

One concerned teacher said:

> Let the "real world" turn them (students)
> into drudges. I want to teach kids to think
> critically--to choose their own style of
> communication, to write out of love, not duty.
> To turn them into storytellers. I'm sure William
> Bennett [a former U.S. Secretary of Education]
> would be troubled by this (so don't tell him
> I said it!), but education is a _subversive_
> activity.

Improvement of Assessment Skills

Many instrument items were designed to get insight
about attitudes concerning both improvement of
assessment skills and/or solutions to inhibitory factors
blocking expeditious procedures so that most of the
negative aspects of this teaching responsibility might
be alleviated. Several issues involving assistance were
included in two places of the instrument, as has been
explained; one was formative and one was summative.

Training Needs, Helps

Augmenting the question about training needs was a summative item about undergraduate training in assessment. Would a class when they were undergraduates that was devoted to how to correct themes have practical application in the respondent's school to increasing the theme load? Respondents split, 50.7% (of 225) saying an undergraduate class would have application; 49.3% (of 225) would not (see Appendix E, Table 119).

Teachers were asked whether they would like to increase speed in reading themes. Seventy-four percent (of 279) said they would (see Appendix E, Table 81). Yet asked if a speed-reading course would lessen the time spent in correcting themes, 82.7% (of 271) said it would be unlikely (see Appendix E, Table 82).

Views did not change on this subject when respondents arrived at that set of summative questions. Would a speed-reading have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load? The overall tally was 81.9% (of 232) saying it would not have practical application (see Appendix E, Table 111).

Journalism Methods

What about a pair of journalism courses, then, especially copyediting and editorial writing, in increasing the theme load?

Sixty-two percent (of 262) said a copyediting course would be unlikely to lessen the time spent correcting themes (see Appendix E, Table 83). Asked if copyediting would have practical application to increasing the theme load, 60.5% of 223 said such a course would not have practical application (see Appendix E, Table 112). Table 18 shows the total frequency rate for this question.

Table 18. Views On Whether Copyediting Courses Would Lessen Assessment Time.

Value Label	Frequency	Percent
LIKELY	99	37.8
UNLIKELY	163	62.2
	21	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   262

The breakouts on the dependent variables of experience revealed that the highest percentage (53% of 30) who said a journalism copyediting course would be likely to lessen the time spent correcting themes were

teachers with 3-5 years; they were followed in percentage rank (43% of 53) by those with 6-10 years. The highest percentage of respondents who said copyediting courses would not be likely to lessen time spent correcting themes were those with less than two years (78% of 9), followed by those with more than 11 years (66% of 170) (see Appendix F, Table 183).

As to the question at the instrument's end on whether a copyediting course for teachers would have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load, there were forty-one fewer respondents who dealt with this item than the initial question that asked whether a copyediting course would lessen assessment time; the highest proportion of the forty-seven were the respondents with more than 11 years of experience (170 to 145). The highest percentage of teachers who said that a copyediting course would have practical application toward increasing the theme load came from those with 3-5 years (52% of 27); the lowest percentage (34% of 145) came from the ranks of those with 11 or more years. The second highest percentage of teachers who said the course would not have practical application to increasing the theme load came from those with fewer than 2 years (57% of 7) (see Appendix F, Table 212).

Then how about an editorial-writing course? Here,
51.7% (of 259) felt such a class would improve your
teaching of theme structure and/or substance (see
Appendix E, Table 84).

In the breakouts among the years of experience, the
respondents with 3-5 years had the highest percentage
(68% of 31) of the frequency that reported an editorial
course would be likely to improve your teaching of theme
structure; the second highest percentage came from those
with 1-2 years (60% of 10). Those with 11 or more years
had the highest percentage (51% of 167) of teachers
reporting such a course would be unlikely to improve
their teaching of theme structure (see Appendix F, Table
184).

One question asked whether an editorial-writing
course for English teachers would have practical
application in your school to increasing the theme load.
In the overall frequency counts, the highest percentage
overall of teachers (60.1% of 223) said that such a
course would not have practical application (see
Appendix E, Table 113).

In the breakouts to that instrument item, the
highest percentage (68% of 32) came from those with 3-5
years who said an editorial-writing course would have
practical application in increasing the load; the second

highest percentage (60% of 10) came from those with

fewer than 2 years of experience. The highest

percentage (64% of 146) of those who said it would have

no application was reported by those with more than 11

years (see Appendix F, Table 213).

Textbooks, Journals

Another outside remedy for some of the inhibitions

of theme assessment, used in instrument items, had

to do with either current available composition

textbooks and professional journals.

Were the available textbooks adequate in teaching

students how to write themes (so that evaluation is not

irksome)? Fifty percent (of 268) declared the books

were inadequate although the other half of the

respondents said they were adequate (see Appendix E,

Table 85).

In the breakout by experience levels, the largest

percentage of teachers who felt textbooks on theme

writing were inadequate was 70% (of 10) of those with

fewer than 2 years. The second highest percentage (54%

of 28) was reported by those with 3-5 years.

The highest percentage of the respondents who said

available textbooks were adequate was reported by those

with 6-10 years (59% of 53). The second highest

percentage (49% of 177) was from the ranks of those with

11 or more years (see Appendix F, Table 185). When

respondents were asked whether a book on theme

correcting would have practical application in your

school to increasing the theme load, 51.8% (of 226) said

it would have application; 48.2% (of 226) said it would

not have application (see Appendix E, Table 117).

As to whether the available professional journals

were adequate in offering articles on how to correct

themes, 61.1% (of 262) said such publications were

adequate (see Appendix E, Table 86); this

percentage was retained in a question about whether

articles on theme correcting in the professional

journals would have practical application in your school

to increasing the theme load (see Appendix E, Table

116).

An open-ended item asked what kind of help journal

editors could provide in correcting themes (see Appendix

K, Q38a). Fifty-nine teachers responded, of which six

echoed one request: "When they teach a lesson, provide a

model." _Practical_ was a word used most often whether

the respondents were urging editors to include sample

papers and teacher response or "more practical advice

and less theory." Some wanted workshop schedules
concerning assessment, and one said: "Stop the publish-
or-perish articles. I rarely read them because of above
problem." Another teacher suggested:

> [Provide] one article each issue on
> correcting papers! Written by English teachers
> and not a bunch of Ph.Ds/Ed.Ds who are out of
> touch with the high school classroom.

Short Courses, Workshops

A summative question asked whether teachers felt a
short course on theme correcting would have practical
application in your school to increasing the theme load.
Seventy-five percent (of 232) said they felt such a
session would have application (see Appendix E, Table
114).

The breakouts by experience levels revealed that
the highest percentage of teachers indicating such a
short course would have application were those with
fewer than 2 years; 100% (of 7) felt this way. The
second highest percentage (80% of 46) were those with
6-10 years. The level that had the highest percentage
(29% of 152) indicating such a course would have no
application came from the ranks of those with more than
11 years teaching experience (see Appendix F, Table
214).

The researcher moved the line of questioning to specifics, asking whether respondents' schools would be likely to pay your attendance at workshops or courses that teach how to improve the correcting of themes. Seventy-three percent (of 234) said their districts would be likely to pay (see Appendix E, Table 77).

If the teachers had the time, would they attend a free nearby workshop or course that teaches how to improve the correcting of themes? The answer was yes by an appreciable number (81.7% of 273) (see Appendix E, Table 78).

What if your department set up a session for English faculty to share ideas on correcting themes? Would respondents attend? Most respondents (94.2% of 275) said they would attend (see Appendix E, Table 80).

Had any of them attended a short course or workshop on how to correct themes? Fifty-eight percent (of 282) said yes (see Appendix E, Table 79). Despite the high proportion who said they were willing to attend sessions at home or away (or the 74.6% of 232 who said that a short course had practical application in their school to increasing the theme load) (see Appendix E, Table 114), a sizable portion (41.8% of 282) said they never had attended workshops or short courses on how to improve the correcting of themes (see Appendix E, Table 79).

Why not? An open-end item provided some explanations about why teachers might not attend a free, nearby workshop or course that teaches how to improve the correcting of themes (see Appendix H, Q29a). Out of the sixty-one who responded, 13% said they were too busy, but 31% had attended such workshops. Three had attended Oregon Writers Projects sessions, one went to the National Assessment Workshop and a few said that whether these meetings were local or areawide, "they were helpful." However, the thread that seemed to run through these open-ended responses was summed up by one teacher:

> I'm workshopped to death--most are
> superficial nonsense with little or no
> hands-on practical material--taught by
> teachers who have bailed out of the
> profession!

Hiring Theme Readers

Hiring theme readers (also called 'lay assessors") to release teachers from assessment duties was one of the instrument's lines of inquiry. The researcher asked four questions to determine both the status of readers and teacher attitudes about utilizing theme readers.

For one thing, 71% (of 238) said their districts would be unwilling to hire theme readers for their departments (see Appendix E, Table 90).

Still, would readers enable teachers to assign more theme writing? A majority of respondents (72.9% of 269) said it would (see Appendix E, Table 91); but in an item, at the end of the instrument, only 52.8% (of 233) stated readers would have practical application in their schools to increasing the theme load (see Appendix E, Table 115).

Considering that a teacher would have to monitor the correcting work of a reader, the researcher asked that if they had readers, would it involve as much time checking the reader's correcting as it does for them to do the correcting. Sixty-eight percent (of 263) did not think it would involve as much time (see Appendix E, Table 92).

Would retaining a reader be easy or difficult? Sixty-seven percent (of 255) said it would be difficult (see Appendix E, Table 93).

Seventy percent (of 243) said smaller classes would have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load (see Appendix E, Table 106).

Increasing the Theme Load

The researcher also was interested in exploring the attitudes of teachers in two other realms: (1) more classroom time for correcting themes, and (2) making composition a separate class.

Forty-four percent (of 232) thought that more classroom time for correcting themes might have practical application in their school to increasing the theme load, but 56% (of 232) said it would not have practical application (see Appendix E, Table 108).

Thirty-seven percent (of 236) said a separate composition class would not have practical application in their schools to increasing the theme load; but 62.7% thought it would have practical application. Table 19 indicates the total responses about a separate class for composition.

Table 19. Views on Whether a Separate Composition Class Would Increase Themes.

Value Label	Frequency	Percent
WOULD	148	62.7
WOULD NOT	88	37.3
	47	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   236

Strengths and Weaknesses of Teachers

An open-ended pair of questions asked respondents about their perception of their strengths and weaknesses in correcting themes. More than 82 percent of total respondents provided data.

When respondents answered the open-end item about perception of weaknesses (see Appendix J, Q36b) only one said: "[I] overlook too many elements, not aware enough of some details. I don't really know how to teach <u>writing</u>, per se." Most said they were unable to meet the standards of what one person has called "the rubber yardstick of perfection that no mere human can meet" (George Evans, personal communication, 1977). One respondent had trouble assessing papers at school because of several problems: "Five preps per day, shortage of textbooks and dictionaries (no funds!) and I teach next to welding where hammers are hammering, drills drilling, etc."

Forty-nine respondents felt their greatest weakness lay in time constraints, making nineteen of this group fear they were too slow at assessment, particularly if they had perfectionistic standards, as several others said. One teacher spoke for many:

> I read slowly and too thoroughly. I'm
> too much of a perfectionist and may invest
> more energy than the student occasionally.

That respondent was paired with one who said:

> I spend too much time on too many
> papers written by students who don't care
> about getting feedback on improving their
> writing. (But maybe the comments on the
> next papers will hook their interest.)

Two felt they were too easy, nine said they were too "nitpicky"; two expressed guilt for not assigning enough themes and three suffered guilt for assigning too many. Several said they lacked knowledge of style, creative aspects of writing, logic, organization as well as thorough grounding in conventions; and five wrote about their own legibility. There also was fatigue and burnout revealed by nearly a dozen and frustrated admissions such as these:

> I hate it--after all the time and effort
> I make to teach them how to do it correctly, I
> get angry over the poor quality and effort in
> their work. Many don't even submit.

> Sorting BULLSHIT.

> I must teach basic skills so often that I
> sometimes lose sight of the purpose of grammar
> and spelling lessons: proficiency in
> communications.

> Sometimes lack patience with unmotivated
> student.

> Remaining objective is difficult. Stressed
> out by paper load.

Get tired after about fifteen essays and my mind wanders as I read.

I take too much time correcting themes; have less time for myself. I get depressed easily after grading too many papers.

Spend so much time that it cuts into my personal and family life.

At least three admitted agonizing over a grade; two said their people-pleasing proclivities either made it difficult to be honest about students' real writing abilities or that they were "too easy." Boredom was cited, as were admissions about rapidity that resulted in missing necessary corrections. Four were aware they had to do something about a preponderance of negative commentary and their unwillingness to provide praise except for perfection.

One major fault that was reported repeatedly was the lengthy turnaround time between collection and return of themes. Closely allied to this was the reporting of procrastination by eight teachers. One fairly common comment was:

I tend to put off correcting themes because I know how long it will take, so I hate to get started. I dislike interruptions, so I look for large blocks of time to correct themes.

Then, there were the open-end responses by respondents on strengths (see Appendix I, Q36a).

Seventeen perceived their greatest strength as thoroughness in assessment, this trait aligned with one comment in the literature that evaluation requires a kind of religious dedication; forty-seven felt their strengths rested upon thorough knowledge of everything from organization and what constitutes substance, to style, usage and conventions. There also was the point of experience, listed by ten respondents, one of whom remarked: "After having read thousands of themes, I have a good idea of what I am looking for."

Three felt their journalism background was their greatest strength, saying that writing and editing gave them excellent grounding for correcting themes; at least nine teachers said they were free-lance writers, that particular relevancy helping with the evaluative process. Another strength listed by twenty-three teachers was their assessment speed, and six cited their rapid turnarounds. Seventeen listed their positivism; nine claimed excellent analytic skills. Fairness, honesty, consistency, being organized, clarity of theme assignments all were mentioned as were objectivity, reasonable expectations, and holistic-analytical capabilities.

Some felt focus was their strong point, and at least four noted their compassion for students'

difficulties with composition. In this vein, two respondents commented:

>I give positive comments and react as a human, not a teacher with a red pen lying in wait for errors.

>[My strengths are] insights to content and organization. I am able to communicate to students my respect for their ideas and opinions--this, it seems to me, is what encourages students to see writing as an important form of communication worth their time.

Advice for Prospective Teachers

The greatest proportion of responses on this commentary addressed the survey item: "If you had an opportunity to offer advice in a textbook aimed at preparing English teachers for correcting of themes, what would you say?" Out of the two hundred eighty-three Oregon instructors who reached this 119th item, 71% provided suggestions (see Appendix Q, Q58).

Many suggestions involved the admonition to prospective teachers that English teaching requires dedication, loneliness, stamina, and many other characteristics, all of which should be explored prior to entering the profession:

>Don't teach English if you are not prepared to devote a great deal of time to correcting papers.

    If you don't want the pain of a Marine,
don't sign up.

    You will earn as much as a monk, be
respected as much as a policeman, and will
get little help or sympathy from (non-English)
teachers, parents, administrators.

    Interview many high school English
teachers and sit in on their composition classes.

    If you have ever had any doubts as to
whether or not you want to teach, then the
first 150 themes will answer these doubts and
on a weekly basis.

    Plan to work a 60-hour week!

    Don't try to be a "Wonder Teacher."

    Teach math instead.

    This is the part of teaching English that
requires special dedication.

    Try not to agonize and take things so
personally. Set a time limit and stick to it.
Do what you can--don't become a martyr.
English teachers have a right to a normal life,
too.

Several said that any textbook containing advice

for the neophyte English teacher should include a

variety of assessment ideas along with models: holistic,

Writing-As-A-Process, Free Writing, traditional

prescriptionist, or examples from the Bay Area Writing

Project and the Oregon Writing Project.

Suggestions tended to fall into philosophies and

specific techniques. Among the overall philosophies

offered were:

>   Tell them [prospective English teachers]
> to enjoy the students' thoughts, get plenty
> of sleep, good exercise and don't grade themes
> when tired.
>
>   Allow time for yourself. It's OK to
> leave without papers every night.
>
>   Teach writing by making students write,
> not by studying grammar. Teach students to
> organize ideas and develop adequately, using
> all types of methods of development. Mark all
> errors in student themes. They cannot change
> unless they recognize the error. Make students
> correct their own errors. This does not mean
> rewrite the paper--only change the errors.
>
>   Have a semester-long program of writing,
> with each assignment focusing on a specific
> area and skill. Put much more of the burden
> of editing/revising, after careful modeling,
> on the student. Relating is #1; teach yourself
> to evaluate for one content issue and one skill
> per paper--avoid at all costs buying into the
> idea of correcting the whole paper each time--a
> futile pursuit leading to unhappiness, divorce,
> and gray hairs.

This line of inquiry was inundated with generous

counsel about assignment frequency (and less frequency),

making assignments interesting to assess, having a

system, keeping things simple, thoroughness v. "don't

try to correct it all." Prospects were encouraged to be

patient, fair, honest, organized, current, positive,

clear, consistent, and to be a writer. Turnaround

suggestions ranged from being swift to being

"reasonable;" and ideas were provided about suitable

ambience, and combatting procrastination.

Also included were instructions concerning administrators:

It's crucial to work with your school department to develop a philosophy of writing and language arts. Spend a lot of time discussing standards and processes so that at least you have consistency and reinforcement within the school.

Do be an activist for the reduction of English/L.A. [language-arts] class sizes.

Establish separate composition classes-- by ability level--holistically or analytically.

Demand time for conferencing (a "study hall" at most).

Some proferred fall-to-spring suggestions such as these two teachers:

The first and uttermost when starting a new year is to concentrate on content and throw spelling, punctuation, usage, etc. away For A While! If all they see at first is a bleeding page, they will become discouraged and then writing becomes a major chore instead of fun. Once they have the ability to put their basic ideas on paper, then you may start working on mechanics. Never sit at your desk while they're writing: circulate throughout the rows--this shows interest and will definitely generate questions and be wanting of your extra help.

Do not try to correct everything at the first of the year. I concentrate only on spelling and sentence faults. I gradually add things as the year goes on. I also find myself--for better or worse--ignoring more errors than I used to just so kids don't receive battle- scarred papers so often..With average and poor students, I'm not convinced that extensive marking of errors has any benefit when you are going to make them recopy the whole thing and

even then I'm not sure. In a low-level class,
we sat down with kids in small groups and
corrected everything and they fixed their papers
on the computer. We saw some reduction of errors.

A profusion of techniques for such a beginning-

teacher's textbook included peer editing (23 respondents

endorsed this method), staggering the deadlines, reading

every third or fourth theme, and assessing in batches of

10-15 themes before breaks. Other suggestions involved

oral conferences, shorter assignments, devising symbol

and editing codes, grade sheets, revisions, prewriting

exercises, and a computerized correctional program.

Some suggested writing along with the students, or using

different pens, or reading such books as The Reader Over

Your Shoulder or using the Stack in the Deck series.

Several respondents were concerned either that

nothing had changed in the profession or that things

were changing too rapidly so that valuable practices

were being discarded. Some did not like the trend

toward holistic or trait analysis (a "bankrupt"

strategy): "At least half of all class time in

composition classes should be spent in oral or silent

reading. The patterns of good usage do rub off," said

one respondent.

One teacher summed up why he stayed in the

profession for a dozen or more years:

I get acquainted with my students by reading
what they write, and if I were deprived of that,
I don't think I'd like teaching very much.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The study's goal was to provide empirical evidence ascertaining whether certain behaviors, attitudes, and physical and emotional aspects of high school English teachers' professional tasks (aspects long reported in the literature) were inhibitory factors in composition assessment. The intention also was to provide data from a large, randomized population--a third of a state's high school teachers.

This chapter is divided into three sections: conclusions, discussion, and recommendations for further research.

Conclusions From the Results

The main objective of this study was to substantiate the researcher's overall assumption that inhibitory factors are present and do negatively affect the theme assessments done by Oregon high school English teachers.

Results both from the twelve null hypotheses and from the analyses of descriptive research support that, for the most part, there are no significant differences between

English teachers' in three areas as they assess themes:
behaviorial, attitudinal, and physical and emotional.

Tests of Significance

Where statistical analysis rejected the null hypothesis
that there was no significant difference between teachers'
years of experience and the number of themes assessed per
month, descriptive analyses indicated the work load was
immense no matter how many years were involved; the highest
percentage of all the study's respondents (49.5% of 283)
still assessed over one-hundred and fifty themes per month.
With 22.7% (of 278) reporting that they spent at least one
to five minutes per theme (15.7% spent from sixteen to
twenty minutes) it is not surprising to learn that 38% (of
280) spent more than twenty-six hours per month on
assessment. The overall conclusion seems inescapable that
English teachers have an overwhelming work load inside as
well as outside of the classroom.

Among the other conclusions of the study's null
hypotheses, on the combined four levels of teaching
experience, are that there is no significant difference
between an English teacher's years of experience and:

1) how many outside hours are spent per month on
assessment of themes.

2) the amount of turnaround time spent between collecting themes and returning them to students.

3) their perceptions that most students do not seem to apply assessment suggestions to subsequent themes.

4) that fatigue may affect judgment in assessing themes.

5) the perception that assessment may adversely affect eyesight.

6) the feelings of despair over students' making the same errors that have been pointed out to them in previous themes.

7) the perception that burnout is related to assessment of themes.

8) the perception that a journalism copyediting course would be unlikely to lessen the time spent assessing themes.

9) the belief that composition should be taught as a separate course.

10) the perception that a teachers' short course on theme assessment would have practical application toward an increased theme load.

Descriptive Analyses

The descriptive analyses of the data on what respondents said include the following conclusions:

1)   That many (78.4%) English teachers may be inhibited in assessments because they reported having more than twenty students per class.

2)   That many teachers give the greatest amount of emphasis to substance (64.6%) and organization (50.4%) of a theme rather than clarity, reasoning, readability, or demonstrating thinking ability.

3)   That many (57.7%) English teachers perceive they are spending "too much time and energy assessing minor problems rather than dealing with a theme's major thrust."

4)   That many (81.8%) teachers do not start assessments of a group of assignments with the work of their best students.

5)   That although many English teachers believe their districts would pay for their attendance at assessment workshops (73%) and would attend one if it were nearby (81.7%), many (41.8%) have failed to attend such a session.

6)   That many English teachers see a journalism copyediting course (62.2%) or speed-reading course (82.7%) as unlikely to lessen time spent in theme assessment.

7)   That whatever English teachers say about a national standardized theme structure's negative effect on students' writing creativity, most (66.5%) believe such a structure would be both easier for students to master than the present system and would take less time for assessments.

8) That although many (72.9%) respondents believe a lay reader would enable teachers to assign more theme writing and would not involve much monitoring time, the respondents also believe districts are unwilling to hire them and that retaining readers would be difficult.

9) That the demands of most (78.8%) teachers' personal lives affect the quality of their theme assessments.

10) That many (58.6%) teachers find theme writing to be an irksome rather than an enjoyable part of teaching English.

11) That most (75.5%) English teachers feel resentments over the work loads of other high school disciplines.

12) That many (50.7%) English teachers are convinced that an undergraduate class devoted to theme assessment would have practical application in increasing the theme load.

Discussion

The twelve null hypotheses tested by statistical analysis and the descriptive analysis would seem to have provided a view of the English teacher and the theme-evaluation process previously left to conjecture in the

English profession and in the literature by those who have presumed to speak for English teachers.

Information came from data collected from two hundred eighty-three Oregon high school teachers selected in September 1987 from a randomized pool of the state's total English faculty population of 1509. They responded to an instrument of one hundred nineteen items

Although the researcher found ample evidence to support previous information in the literature and from the rostrum, areas not before explored now have a quantitative foundation on which other studies can be constructed. Several related studies have been proposed at the end of this chapter.

Physical and Emotional Inhibitors

The physical and emotional side of theme assessment seems to be a province rich in contributory and, ultimately, significant information that could help arrest the one element that 88% of the respondents perceived as causing burnout in English departments: theme assessments. Unless a person has done assessments, she or he cannot understand the situation of the English teacher, especially one who believes in writing proficiency through writing frequency.

The statistical and descriptive analyses applied to the data strongly indicate that English faculties have performed far beyond their basic responsibilities under appalling work

conditions, all which cannot help negatively affecting assessment and, ultimately, student grasp of writing.

What is true for Oregon's teachers apparently could be concluded for those elsewhere in the United States, as has been said by Berg (personal communication, 1989). It appears remarkable that individuals have withstood the intellectual, emotional and physical demands of assessment, given the experiences reported by these respondents. It also seems remarkable that students have mastered as much as they have, despite those constant critics who appear almost annually to chide the school systems about the writing proficiency of the young.

The data have substantively supported other century-old complaints concerning assessment. That English teachers have continued to endure situations depicted in this study and the literature, would seem to be perhaps the greatest demonstration of dedication, concern, interest, and stamina in the teaching profession as a whole.

That nearly 65% of the subjects have remained in the situations described far beyond six years is a testament to those qualities. Management of assessment appears to be the test of survival considering the burnout rate respondents tied to that aspect of teaching. Indeed, assessment always has been recognized as a frustrating, lonely, tedious, unrewarding, repetitive and physically draining part of the

job description; the data continue to support this conclusion.

The effect assessment manifests on a teacher's physical, emotional, and intellectual capacities, shown with the results of four of the null hypotheses (Ho6, Ho7, Ho8, Ho9) is documented, especially by responses to open-end items. Such evidence _should_ concern anyone who assails students' writing, for it indicates whatever proficiency the young do have has been exacted at a terrible price.

Risk Factors

Examples from the data and literature provide almost all of the well-known risk factors leading to emotional breakdowns: critical external audiences, an obdurate and outsized constituency, a difficult subject that yields few successes or much enthusiasm, long hours in the evenings and weekends, all spent in sedentary isolation. There is also the exacting corrective (and, thus, negative) work itself, as well as salaries not commensurate with assessment duties, the inability of many to stay current, self-doubt by some, image maintenance, and constant turnaround deadlines. Too, for many there are a lack of exercise and sleep, the use of stimulants and both excessive fatigue and procrastination. The absenteeism and turnover rates cited in Chapter One (pp.

10-12) in this required core course should offer fertile soil for future studies about the English profession.

Coaches may have the same situation as English teachers (faculty in physical education, speech and social studies are among those who drew the most resentments from respondents), but they usually have a few victories and an emotional support system of family, friends, sympathetic colleagues, mentors, newspaper columnists, students, and the camaraderie of other coaches to provide sustenance. Most English teachers had few of these things, according to both literature and study data. Judging from the evidence here, the nature of assessment too often involves shutting out family, friends, and colleagues; there would seem to be little support available. How could there be if so many teachers finish an assessment session late in the evenings or on weekends? Such sacrifices made in a personal life are documented in the data (see Appendix E, Table 102).

Where physical and emotional impacts of assessment were the issue, it was expected by the researcher that whatever the years of experience, respondents would hold a common view about evaluation's linkage to burnout, damage to eyesight and both despair and frustration about students' inability to apply assessment suggestions to subsequent themes.

Suspected stress among English teachers now is quantified in the data. The Oregonians surveyed provided information on burnout perceptions as well as the suspected adverse affects of assessment on eyesight, backs and necks. Other information concerned fatigue, with most respondents able to assess themes for two straight hours before fatigue's onset; this is helpful information for those entering the profession. Noise also may negatively (or positively) affect concentration as may the work atmosphere in which assessment is done, data showed.

Rates of despair and frustration concerning assessment also were revealed as was the discovery that only 29% (of 266) felt composition to be enjoyable; these are inhibitory factors that cannot help affecting assessment and classroom presentations on composition. The data shows that 75 percent of the respondents feel resentment over their work loads compared to those teachers in other disciplines. Another piece of information with considerable import to the discipline is that assessments are considered an irksome, rather than enjoyable, labor by 58.6% of 266 respondents, an attitude that may be reflected in how they assess themes.

Turnover

If English teachers have been frustrated before, worse is ahead. Judging from the turnover data included in this

study for 1986-89, teachers seem to be avoiding such

consequences by resigning or transferring. One of the

outstanding English teachers at a Corvallis high school

recently took action to move into another discipline from

the one she had always loved. Said she:

> It's the assessments and the paperwork. I
> just can't stand it anymore (Anonymous, personal
> communication, 1989).

Assessment Load

Descriptive information from this study now has

quantified many areas of interest and the previously unknown

factors concerning assessment. The data obtained includes

substantitive information on how many themes are assigned

and assessed per month as well as the hours teachers spend

in evaluation, and turnaround time. When the responses of

283 teachers were tallied, it is now evident that seven days

is the average turnaround time for the highest percentage

(21.1%) of the Oregon respondents. Data furnish proof that

most (70.9%) still write copious commentary to students,

despite the reported despair-causing sense of futility. The

data found that 62.7 percent of the 278 teachers spend up to

ten minutes, for the most part, in assessing each theme.

Statistical tests for the hypotheses showed, for

example, that no matter how many years respondents had been

assessing themes, most tended to spend nearly the same

amount of time on evaluation. Most (88.8%) respondents made collective admissions that although they recognized assessment time could be shortened if they curtailed commentary, 74.2% thought more than one sentence would help students to improve writing skills.

The only null hypothesis that was rejected for both the overall population and that divided into levels of experience when analyzed by the Chi-Square test of significance, was that most teachers assessed the same number of themes per month. The highest percentage of those who corrected the most themes per month (150+) had more than six years of teaching experience.

The breakout data that stems from the overall frequencies provides a revealing glimpse of what those in the various levels of teaching experience seem to be doing. The researcher realized that an accurate portrait of teacher responses throughout the instrument would need to be based on measuring the four levels of experience on a per capita basis because those with under two years involved only ten respondents, those with more than eleven involved one hundred eighty-three; if only eight respondents out of the most experienced group's total (183) assessed under seventy-five themes per month were weighed against the four respondents out of the least experienced group's total (10), obviously the veteran teachers would have the edge. However,

in measuring the response to an instrument item on a per capita basis _within_ the experience level, the percentages of those with the most and the least respondents will provide a more accurate portrait of English teachers as they assess themes.

Thus, it was determined by the data that when measured on a per capita basis, teachers with more than eleven years of experience assessed the most themes. The researcher's long-held, unsubstantiated belief--prior to this study--was that only new teachers believed in assigning a lot of themes and that the seasoned ones had found ways to avoid this practice. The researcher now must adjust to the view that the veteran English teacher may be part of the survival-of-the-fittest theory in that she or he has learned how to dispense energy with assignment/assessment loads and employ an assessment system that is efficient and efficacious.

Assessment Frequency

Other items provided sufficient evidence to support the literature's revelations about how assessment frequency has been avoided through certain practices: peer editing, evaluation of only one theme out of several, shorter and less frequent compositions, evaluation for only one or two factors, oral conferences are a few of the strategies listed.

What students also think of instructors who deliberately overlook "minor errors" or do other things to keep them from being discouraged by seas of red ink has not been studied; but students must wonder about these practices, particularly when confronted with teachers in other disciplines who believe that firm foundations on essentials lead to mastery of a subject; few students seem to regard writing as easy, fun or something into which they can be lured; they know it is difficult work.

The fact is plain. To learn to write means frequent writing and, thus, assessment facility.

The "gimmicks," as at least one respondent labels them, do not seem to have produced greater writing proficiency, judging from continued public dissatisfaction about the job the schools are doing in teaching writing.

Again, it is instructive to understand what is involved when a Conant (1959) or A Nation-At-Risk committee (1983) insists that the route to proficiency means writing frequency, and, thus, frequent assessments. If Conant's theme-a-week objective were to be realized for the twenty-five students now known to populate the average Oregon classroom, at year's end a teacher would have assessed

nearly four thousand themes, mostly two pages each of
longhand.

It seems inescapable also that despite the many well-
argued rationales for such strategies as peer evaluation,
endless revisions of the same composition, oral conferences,
and many other modalities cited in the literature, these
methods could be considered assessment avoidance procedures
eventually negatively affecting writing mastery. The wish
for the expensive panacea of lay readers by the Oregon
respondents would seem to support this view. What teacher
of writing can have credibility with students who know that
the instructor has not assessed the compositions?

To those opposed to theme frequency, there is now data
revealing that 92.4% of Oregon's teachers believe that a
rigorous theme-writing program in high school would improve
a student's regular writing skills after graduation, but
that it would take far smaller classes, and possibly require
a tracking system to achieve writing mastery. The apparent
reason: assessment. A class separate from other language
arts material was heavily favored as a means to attain this
goal.

Attitudes

One of the attitudinal issues addressed in the
literature was that assigment frequency (and subsequent

assessment frequency) was related to writing proficiency. Respondents have provided data on fifteen solutions toward achieving frequency: 75% said one solution was a short course on assessment, 73% said another solution was a special English faculty session on correcting themes, and 62% said a solution was in teaching composition as a course separate from literature.

Separate Composition Classes

It seems that the present state of assessment cannot continue if writing proficiency really is what teachers, schools, and the public say they want. If writing truly is a priority, school districts might consider diverting taxpayer funding now spent on outside assessment vendors and, instead, investing it in financing separate composition classes. Such focus, undiminished by needs to teach other language arts, certainly could have sufficient class and assessment time in which to accomplish mastery of writing.

Those teachers who genuinely relish assessments and teaching composition, finally could involve themselves in it totally without the duties of other requisites of the English course. This data's open-end items demonstrated there are many such individuals who never have minded the expenditure in midnight oil or the seeming loneliness of assessments. When Hopkins (1912) wrote about some teachers

who had given their emotional and physical lives to these ends, he was speaking about this kind of joy.

Some four-year institutions already have split the English curriculum, although composition faculty still are under the aegis of the English departments. The recent statement of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, quoted in Chapter Two, reveals that departments still appear loathe to offer adequate salaries, promotion opportunities, or prestige to those teaching composition despite the high amount of full-time-equivalent (FTE) money it generates. This curious situation appears to perpetuate the vicious cycle that results in that lack of assessment preparation for prospective high school English teachers.

Such initial steps could offer a welcome escape for the high school teacher who loves literature far more than composition (who also notes how little composition is valued in undergraduate English departments), and whose energies and enthusiasm for great literature have been sapped for generations by composition and assessment duties, a discipline best left to those with a talent for writing and editing.

Training Needed

It was not remarkable to discover that 88.93% of the sample group felt that most English teachers needed training in theme writing. The extraordinary question arises of how composition can be assessed if most of those doing it are not trained in composition essentials? The data show that although most Oregon instructors seem firmly convinced they know what theme content should contain (vital in assessment), there were significant differences expressed about whether it should be creative or reflect real-world material.

Add to this the variety of responses in the study on areas emphasized in themes and in assessment values. Such variations would seem to cast doubt on an essential element of content and on what is to be assessed. Confusion cannot help being the result, especially considering that each year students have different instructors supporting those variant systems; such inconsistency in this required course could be partly responsible for students' recalcitrant attitudes about composition and the seeming inability of many of them to master the subject.

Workshops

Other evidence of uncertainty would seem to be demonstrated in the high number of teachers (81.7%) who said

they would attend an assessment workshop. However, of those who have attended, many made disparaging remarks in open-end items about the perceived thinness of the programs and/or the leaders' qualifications. One respondent said, "professors who don't know what a high school English class is like;" another noted being "workshopped out." Such comments and others in the literature indicate some English teachers have little confidence in the assessment capabilities of peers, even those from their own schools.

Oregon teachers would rather go to assessment workshops at their high schools than go out of town. Most (94.2%) would like sessions (although 41.8% admitted they had never attended such a session). It was found that most respondents felt their districts would underwrite attendance at an assessment short course. The data show that the highest percentage (71%) of the teachers' perceptions was that administrators would not pay for a lay reader.

Although most subjects were outspokenly against a national theme structure form on the grounds that it would harm creativity, the majority agreed that such a formula probably would improve students' writing abilities and curtail assessment time. Creativity also was shunted aside by many respondents when the choice was between students' self-expression and writing resembling real-world work of, say, reports and memos.

Textbooks Inadequate

The study also indicated that 50% of Oregon's teachers feel that textbooks are inadequate in support of teaching students how to write. Although data now support the point that professional journals are adequate in assessment-instruction articles, 12.9% of the respondents felt they didn't need such publications.

Drastic Changes Needed

This study has led the researcher to conclude, too, that if writing proficiency is the real aim of the public high school, drastic changes then must be explored in these quarters and implemented. Significant difficulties lie ahead whether changes are implemented without English department input or with consent from within. Such shifts may be draconian. Such changes may be temporarily disconcerting to the teachers, but of permanent benefit ultimately to both them and students.

Shift to College of Education

A major change suggested in the literature (Lindsey, 1969) is that of shifting the composition training of high school English teachers from undergraduate English departments to a literacy or education department. That so

little writing proficiency apparently has been achieved by English departments would suggest that the concern is not extensive for what the beginning teacher faces. This researcher would recommend that a faculty for such an education course be drawn from the ranks of copyeditors, journalism and business faculty, business executives and technical writers as well as some of the education faculty who can impart efficacious methods for conveying course content.

One of the tasks for preservice teachers assuredly ought to be the requirement to assess one hundred high school themes, each to be graded within forty-eight hours with the kind of thoroughness mandated by several respondents in the open-end items. What English teacher ever was given that realistic opportunity before being thrust into the challenge of assessment? Yet such treatment would show what lies ahead; it should provide impetus for learning assessment skills.

Journalism Copyediting Training

The suggestions for further study indicate that other methods by which to strengthen assessment and composition teaching are directed toward gaining a requirement of journalism copyediting credits for prospective teachers to

attain an English endorsement for high schools. Other
related journalism elements suggested are the inclusion of
professional copyeditors as faculty in a college of
education course on assessment, and a district's decision to
pay composition teachers in the suggested separate
composition course the same salaries enjoyed by copyeditors
of a nearby major metropolitan newspaper. That combination
of ideas should provide a significant improvement in
preparation to teach mastery of written English.

Teaching a high school student to develop writing
skills takes the same kind of assessment skills demanded of
a copyeditor. If the copyeditor can function without most
of the damaging inhibitory factors reported in this study
concerning behaviors, attitudes and the physical and
emotional impacts of assessments, perhaps English teachers
can do the same. Then, the nation might have the kind of
writing proficiency that teachers, students, administrators,
parents, commissions, and the general public all seem to
want from them.

One of the null hypotheses and its supportive
descriptive data implied teachers still were not likely to
take a journalism copyediting class, nor could they see its
value in increasing theme frequency. After all, if a
teacher is confronting a foot-high stack of compositions for

assessment, it is unlikely that a fresh batch will be assigned within the week. It may take several studies to substantiate the researcher's long-held view that the English profession holds the journalism profession in low regard even though the latter is totally devoted to the communication process and has employed many whose works now are studied as great literature (e.g., Mark Twain, Edgar Allan Poe, Willa Cather, Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Hemingway).

Virtually every component contained on one of the study's semantic differential scales of emphasis is dealt with daily by newspaper reporters and copyeditors (organization to conventions and style, along with the constant threat of libel) thus forcing the journalism profession to exercise perhaps far greater care in assessment than the stereotypic English teacher who with rectitude and red pen rarely seems to find much about student work that is satisfactory.

It has been a source of amazement to many journalism professors how poorly trained in composition (after twelve years spent at it) most students are. Yet all of the writing skills listed for the English discipline are mastered by journalism students who suddenly seem enthusiastic about writing, despite the familiar goads of

frequency, tight deadlines, formula structures, stringent grading and, often, scathing oral and written commentary (Scott, 1912). Newspaper stories involve the need of finding information, a challenge required in high school English compositions. Future research might show the positive relationship between professors trained in copyediting and those who generally love writing. Those who are familiar with writing only though love of great literature seem to lack the teaching skills (and enthusiasm) for composition to be found with many journalism professors.

To the question concerning what carryover there is between copyediting on one theme and improved writing on the next, the researcher concludes that it has been significant in most journalism courses perhaps because of intimidation by professors and/or by the effective means of a drastic lowering of grades for continual violations, a common teaching technique in that discipline. In professional circumstances on a publication, carryover of copyediting assessment to writing application generally comes as a result of verbal abuse and terminations.

Survey research indicates that most teachers do not see carryover improvement despite their present assessment systems. The advantage of copyediting experience then seems to rest on its effectiveness in retention as well as its efficacy and efficiency (particularly in time) over the

assessment systems now used by most high school English teachers.

The only seemingly heartening elements of the data devoted to assessment solutions was that 37.8% of the respondents were willing at least to entertain the idea of copyediting class lessening assessment time, and, secondly, that 39.5% felt that a copyediting course ultimately might increase theme frequency. But 62.2% felt copyediting would not cut time, particularly teachers with 11 or more years of teaching experience (66% of 170).

Student Screening

One approach that would bring smaller and fewer English classes in high school is to do student screening for proficiency; those who pass would be exempt from composition assignments or such a separate composition class.

Pre-freshman or pre-sophomore screenings initially may seem to add further burdens on high school teachers or to invite the assessment industry to meddle further in the teaching and assessment of composition. Consider, however, that many students may demostrate sufficient proficiency in composition in such a screening; the English teacher would then have to assess their work once only as opposed to doing it from nine to thirty-six times during the academic year if no screening-exemption program existed.

It is possible that if a district hires an assessment vendor to implement a pre-freshman or pre-sophomore composition screening, it will find that vendor setting the standards for English proficiency. However, the encroachments of that industry on composition curriculum are such that their standards seem to be applied wherever a teacher annually assesses students' writing. Moreover, districts have tacitly approved such standards whenever outside assessments have been mandated. Obviously, vendors also offer the advantage of experience and efficiency, plus the credibility of the Educational Testing Service in that the standards used in such assessments have stemmed from procedures perfected by that powerful, metastatic national organization.

Assessment Industry

Further, the assessment industry, now standing inside school doorways, appears to be unofficially taking charge of composition programs. The outspoken anti-formula-writing response reported in this survey does not seem to be reflected in how outside assessment vendors are affecting the composition curriculum. Many of the open-end responses were indicative of that effect when terms such as primary trait and holistic were used; if a school district insists upon using four class days for outside assessment of

writing, it would seem peculiar if teachers did not spend a good share of other class days teaching to those tests. As more and more districts seize upon the use of outside writing assessments as a means of demonstrating to the public the students' mastery of composition, many teachers soon will find fresh sources of career frustration; thus, another inhibitory factor may affect assessment.

Teacher Militance

That few, if any, extensive and intensive quantitative studies concerning these three areas of assessment effects have been done until now seem strange, particularly in view of the unchanged situation since the turn of the century. Given years of sporadic and unquantified complaints about the negative physical and emotional consequences of assessment, it seems odd that those in the English profession have not once seized upon the avenues so successful in labor negotiations to gain some of the goals so vigorously championed at English conferences and in the professional journals.

Some long-overdue assistance is needed for English teachers. Some of that relief, however, requires members of the English profession to take militant measures on their own behalf. Militancy, thus far, seems to have been restricted to "paper protests."

If past overt activism on the part of the teaching profession as a whole has resulted in significant wage and benefit gains (as well as permitting teachers in at least one city to eject disruptive students from school), surely those teaching English could have applied some of those union tactics long ago to ease the perceived overworked, underpaid, and unappreciated career situation. If they were to stage, say, a strike for smaller classes or any of the other necessary demands listed in the literature and from the lectern, a school district undoubtedly would bring substitutes or volunteers across the picket lines. But not for long. Assessment duties are such that it probably would be no more than a month before a settlement favorable to teachers would be sought.

Precedent was set in late August for smaller classes when the Oregon Employment Relations Board ruled for the Tigard chapter of the Oregon Education Association, saying that future negotiations must include class size in consideration of a teacher's workload; size, in short, now would seem to be a mandatory bargaining issue between teachers and school districts.

There have been no strikes by English teachers reported in the literature; generally, a district's bargaining unit represents all faculty. Nor does it appear from the data that this kind of militancy ever will be mounted, not if

over forty percent of the Oregon respondents would not even make the effort to attend workshops that could provide assessment information. Through such intraprofessional contacts, teachers could develop an organization capable of getting response from those who set school policies and design curricula. "Have you known three English teachers in total agreement about anything?" asked one respondent.

The conclusion seems inescapable that activism apparently is viewed as unseemly, despite being a demonstrably worthy cause. Interestingly, most newspaper copyeditors never have had such compunctions about joining American Newspaper Guild picket lines or in engaging in spirited negotiation meetings when working conditions became hazardous to emotional and physical health and the ability to fulfill editing obligations.

Summary

Those who grasp all of the vicissitudes reported by Oregon teachers and their effects on assessment might conclude it is no wonder writing mastery seems rare and that instruction has been so despised by students and too many English teachers for generations. One respondent pointed out it was only when he began assessing themes that he understood his professors' negative remarks on his compositions.

If Oregon students are receiving writings assessed by a populace that largely feels despair, frustration, resentment, or is just irked (as 58.6% said they were) by the evaluative process, it is no wonder that composition is far from a favorite subject. The evidence of teachers' seeking ways to curtail the assessment load also would seem to indicate that the student is being shortchanged.

The evidence down the years does demonstrate that although the American public and appointed committees or commissions may complain about the inability of the young to have formal writing proficiency, it is just so much lip service. If writing proficiency is as important as they insist it is, it is odd that money and helpful effort is not forthcoming. It is odd that although millions may sense that English teachers literally give their lives and emotions and love to help students master formal writing, almost nothing is done to change this most enervating discipline. Nobody outside of the English field wants such a thankless job. Strikebreakers would not remain for long should the nation's high school English teachers finally go to the barricades for relief of what is already an expensive, arduous, seemingly unproductive situation.

The only change that will be made on this intolerable teaching situation is through the English teachers themselves. The literature provides ample proof that no

one, no agency, no administration, no national council or
commission is going to do this for them. When a NCTE
spokesperson told this researcher that, in essence, English
teachers were chiefly women and of modest economic means
and, therefore, unlikely to get involved in something so
unseemly as a strike, that is a good indicator that
martyrdom is a cloak proudly worn. When another NCTE
spokesperson told this researcher that the school districts
in urban areas would only replace strikers, that is yet
another good indicator that nothing is going to change.

The fact is, however, that although a district might be
able to secure strikebreakers to take over classrooms for a
few weeks, few individuals could withstand what the data in
this study now shows goes on in the English classroom,
particularly in assessment of themes. A stratagem would be
to wait it out on the picket lines.

Even if a strike fails, it still would be the first
indication that the American high school English teachers
finally have "gone public" about their working conditions.
If the profession's members continue to do nothing beyond
drawing up white papers about their needs, it must be
concluded that there is something about their situation that
says they enjoy being victims. Sadly, the real victim in
this case is not only the teacher, but the student and,
ultimately, communication in this nation.

Recommendations for Further Study

Many subjects for further study suggest themselves as the result of issues explored in this study. Topics listed involve contributions to positive change not only in assessment, but in the area of composition as a whole.

The recommendations for further study have been divided into sections of the three factors of assessment used in this study: (1) behavior, (2) attitudes, and (3) the physical and emotional effects.

Proposed Behavioral Research

1. A self-report study of student views on theme commentary, using a large sample focused on a particular grouping of students (remedial, average, or superior).

2. A self-report study of student views on peer evaluation (or oral conferences) using the same samples as contained in the previous recommendation.

3. A large-scale descriptive study of samples at three types of high schools (urban, suburban, rural) to investigate which of the double grades given on themes gets the least of students' attention and why.

Proposed Attitudinal Research

1. An historical study (1880 to 1989) of the reluctance of high school English teachers to take militant action about issues they seem to have regarded as paramount (smaller classes, fewer classes, more preparation time, separate composition classes, greater remuneration for composition assessments).

2. A large-scale self-report study investigating the number of high school English teachers who would prefer to teach only composition.

3. A self-report study of student views on being exempted from all composition efforts if pre-freshman or pre-sophomore screening determines they are proficient at written communication. (The aim here would be to explore the idea of achieving smaller classes as well as to provide impetus toward greater interest in mastery of composition skills.)

4. A self-report study of a large sample of English teachers in one state to explore the possibility of instituting a department of composition in the high schools.

5. A self-report study of school superintendents in at least thirty percent of the districts in a state

to determine whether they would pay English
teachers who assess more than two hundred themes
per month salaries commensurate with those of
copyeditors on the state's metropolitan newspapers.
6. A self-report study involving a large sample of
urban, suburban, and rural English teachers to
determine their views on the feasibility of
reimbursement for taking a journalism copyediting
class.
7. A self-report study of a large sample of English
teachers with up to five years experience to
propose a curriculum for undergraduate course work
for preservice teachers on assessment.
8. An observational study of three colleges or
universities to determine the feasibility of
assessment work on high school students' themes in
courses training high school English teachers.
9. A self-report study asking views of the
chairpersons or deans of education at one hundred
four-year colleges about the feasibility of
instituting a theme-assessment course within the
secondary-education curriculum and recommendations
that it be required for an English endorsement.

10. A self-report study to examine the possibility requiring a journalism copyediting course for an English endorsement.

11. A content-analysis study of composition textbooks used in course work designed to prepare high school English teachers.

12. An historical study (1970 to 1988) that examines what states have been doing with the results of outside assessment testing of high school students.

13. A study of the assessment industry's training sessions of evaluators in school districts and a follow-up on the evaluators' assessment sessions.

14. An historical study (1970 to 1988) of the changes, and the rationale for them, in the format of composition evaluations for the high school level as designed by the assessment industry.

Proposed Physical and Emotional Research

1. An historical study (1975 to 1985) on the absenteeism rates over a five-year period of high school English faculty in selected school districts.

2. An historical study (1970 to 1985) of urban, rural, and suburban high schools' absenteeism and turnover rates among the English faculty.

3. A self-report study of English teachers in a selected number of high schools (half rural) of one state to determine whether they are planning to remain in the English discipline, and if not, why not.

4. An historical study (1980 to 1985) to determine the salary ranges of composition faculty at selected major state universities and small liberal arts colleges.

5. An historical study (1960 to 1985) in selected Eastern, Western, Midwestern, and Southern states each to determine the promotion-and-tenure situation for those teaching composition courses at major state universities and small liberal arts colleges.

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APPENDICES

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How many years have you been correcting themes? (Circle one number.)

    1 1-2 YEARS
    2 3-5 YEARS
    3 6-10 YEARS
    4 11-20 YEARS

2. What is your average number of students per English class?

    _____ AVERAGE NUMBER STUDENTS PER CLASS

3. How many themes per month do you assign?

    _____ THEMES PER MONTH

4. Do you emphasize a specific writing skill in each theme? (Circle one number.)

    1 YES
    2 NO

5. How many themes do you correct per month? (Circle one number.)

    1 LESS THAN 25
    2 25-50
    3 51-75
    4 76-100
    5 101-150
    6 OVER 150

6. About how many hours per month do you spend correcting themes? (Circle one number.)

    1 LESS THAN 10
    2 10-15
    3 16-25
    4 26-35
    5 36-50
    6 MORE THAN 50

7. What is the average number of pages written per theme?

    _____ AVERAGE NUMBER PAGES

8. How many minutes--on the average--do you spend per theme?

    _____ AVERAGE MINUTES PER THEME

9. Are themes done mostly in class or as homework? (Circle one number.)

    1 IN CLASS
    2 AS HOMEWORK

10. What is your average turnaround-time--in days--between collecting themes and returning them to students?

    _____ DAYS TURNAROUND

11. How many of the following types of students do you think most English teachers can manage effectively in a class that includes theme assignments?

                                              Number of
                                              Students

        a. Average writing skill........   _____
        b. Above-average writing skill..   _____
        c. Below-average writing skill..   _____

12. Do you agree or disagree that theme writing would be easier to teach if classes were set up according to students' writing abilities? (Circle one number.)

        1 AGREE
        2 DISAGREE

13. Are most of your students adept or not adept at writing? (Circle one number.)

        1 ADEPT
        2 NOT ADEPT

14. Do you feel that a rigorous theme-writing program in high school would improve or would not improve a student's regular writing skills after graduation? (Circle one number.)

        1 WILL IMPROVE
        2 WILL NOT IMPROVE

15. Do other requirements in the course leave sufficient or insufficient time for teaching theme writing? (Circle one number.)

        1 SUFFICIENT TIME
        2 INSUFFICIENT TIME

16. How much commentary, if any, do you write on themes? (Circle one number.)

        1 A LOT
        2 A WORD OR 2
        3 NONE

        16a. Describe what you do if you like.

17. Do you think trimming your commentary on themes would or would not help students to improve writing skills? (Circle one number.)

    1 WOULD IMPROVE WRITING SKILLS
    2 WOULD NOT IMPROVE WRITING SKILLS

        17a. Would or would not trimming commentary cut time/energy spent on themes? (Circle one number.)

            1 WOULD CUT TIME/ENERGY
            2 WOULD NOT CUT TIME/ENERGY

18. Do you think commentary of more than one sentence would or would not help students to improve writing skills? (Circle one number.)

    1 WOULD IMPROVE WRITING SKILLS
    2 WOULD NOT IMPROVE WRITING SKILLS

19. Do you grade down for the following (circle numbers):

		YES	NO
a.	Misspellings	1	2
b.	Usage	1	2
c.	Punctuation errors	1	2
d.	Disorganization	1	2

20. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme. (Circle one number for each.)

		Least				Greatest
a.	Spelling	1	2	3	4	5
b.	Punctuation	1	2	3	4	5
c.	Usage	1	2	3	4	5
d.	Organization	1	2	3	4	5
e.	Substance	1	2	3	4	5
f.	Accuracy	1	2	3	4	5
g.	Clarity	1	2	3	4	5
h.	Conciseness	1	2	3	4	5
i.	Readability	1	2	3	4	5
j.	Style	1	2	3	4	5
k.	Reasoning	1	2	3	4	5
l.	Thinking Ability	1	2	3	4	5
m.	Creativity	1	2	3	4	5
n.	Humor	1	2	3	4	5
o.	Legibility	1	2	3	4	5

21. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least)
    which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction
    time. (Circle one number for each.)

		Least				Greatest
a.	Spelling..........	1	2	3	4	5
b.	Punctuation.......	1	2	3	4	5
c.	Usage.............	1	2	3	4	5
d.	Organization......	1	2	3	4	5
e.	Substance.........	1	2	3	4	5
f.	Clarity...........	1	2	3	4	5
g.	Conciseness.......	1	2	3	4	5
h.	Readability.......	1	2	3	4	5
i.	Style.............	1	2	3	4	5
j.	Reasoning.........	1	2	3	4	5
l.	Legibility........	1	2	3	4	5

22. Do most students seem to apply or not apply your correction
    suggestions for improvement from one theme to subsequent
    new themes?
    (Circle one number.)

    1   APPLY
    2   DO NOT APPLY

23. On your correcting system, do you usually start with
    the work of your best writing students? (Circle one number.)

    1   YES
    2   NO

        23a.   Briefly, what order, if any, do you use?

        23b.   Do you feel the order you use takes
               less or more time for correcting than
               doing them alphabetically?
               (Circle one number.)

               1   LESS TIME
               2   MORE TIME

        23c.   Do you feel if you correct themes in
               in the order of students' writing skills
               (e.g.,doing the "best" writers first
               and saving those of the less skilled
               writers for last ?) takes less or more
               time for correcting? (Circle one number.)

               1   LESS TIME
               2   MORE TIME

24. Do you sometimes feel you are spending too much time/energy in correcting minor problems rather than dealing with the theme's major thrust? (Circle one number.)

     1 SPENDING TOO MUCH TIME/ENERGY
     2 NOT SPENDING TOO MUCH TIME ENERGY

25. Do you think that themes should have less--or more-- emphasis on the creative kind of writing rather than the practical kind of writing? (Circle one number.)

     1 LESS EMPHASIS ON THE CREATIVE
     2 MORE EMPHASIS ON THE CREATIVE

26. How certain are you about what a theme should contain? (Circle one number.)

     1 VERY CERTAIN
     2 FAIRLY CERTAIN
     3 SOMEWHAT CERTAIN
     4 UNCERTAIN

27. Do you think that most English teachers need or do not need some training in teaching theme writing? (Circle one number.)

     1 NEED TRAINING
     2 DO NOT NEED TRAINING
     3 I DON'T KNOW

28. Would your school be likely or unlikely to pay for your attendance at workshops or courses that teach how to improve the correcting of themes? (Circle one number.)

     1 LIKELY TO PAY
     2 UNLIKELY TO PAY
     3 I DON'T KNOW

29. If you had the time, would you or would you not attend a free nearby workshop or course that teaches how to improve the correcting of themes? (Circle one number.)

     1 WOULD ATTEND
     2 WOULD NOT ATTEND

                  29a. Why not?

30. Have you attended a short course or workshop on how to correct themes? (Circle one number.)

     1 YES
     2 NO

31. If your department set up a session for English faculty
    to share ideas on correcting themes, would you or would
    you not attend? (Circle one number.)

        1 WOULD ATTEND
        2 WOULD NOT ATTEND

32. Would you like to increase your speed in reading themes?
    (Circle one number.)

        1 WOULD LIKE TO INCREASE SPEED
        2 PRESENT SPEED IS SUFFICIENT

33. Would a speed-reading course be likely or unlikely to
    to lessen the time you spend correcting themes?
    (Circle one number.)

        1 LIKELY TO LESSEN THE TIME
        2 UNLIKELY TO LESSEN THE TIME

34. Would a journalism copyediting course be likely or unlikely
    to lessen the time you spend correcting themes?
    (Circle one number.)

        1 LIKELY TO LESSEN THE TIME
        2 UNLIKELY TO LESSEN THE TIME

35. Would a course in editorial writing be likely or unlikely
    to improve your teaching of theme structure and/or substance?
    (Circle one number.)

        1 LIKELY TO IMPROVE TEACHING
        2 UNLIKELY TO IMPROVE TEACHING

36. What is your perception of your strengths and weaknesses
    in correcting themes?

        36a. Strengths.

        36b. Weaknesses

37. Are the available textbooks adequate or inadequate in
    teaching students how to write themes? (Circle one number.)

        1 TEXTBOOKS ARE ADEQUATE
        2 TEXTBOOKS ARE INADEQUATE

38. Are the available professional journals adequate or inadequate in offering articles on how to correct themes? (Circle one number.)

    1 JOURNALS ARE ADEQUATE
    2 JOURNALS ARE INADEQUATE

             38a. What kind of help should their editors provide?

39. If there were a national standardized structure prescribed for themes ("this goes in Paragraph No. 1, that goes in Paragraph No. 2"), do you think it would be easier or not be easier for students to master this kind of composition than the present system that rests on the views of a succession of teachers? (Circle one number.)

    1 WOULD BE EASIER TO MASTER
    2 WOULD NOT BE EASIER TO MASTER

        39a. Do you think such a system would take less time for correcting themes? (Circle one number.)

            1 YES
            2 NO

        39b. Would such a system be much different from standardized structures for "real-world" writing such as memos, reports, proposals, etc.? (Circle one number.)

            1 YES
            2 NO

        39c. What objections do you think would be raised by high school English teachers about such standardized structures?

40. Would your school district be willing or unwilling to hire theme readers for your department? (Circle one number.)

    1 WILLING
    2 UNWILLING
    3 I DON'T KNOW

41. Do you think a reader would or would not enable you to assign more theme writing? (Circle one number.)

    1 WOULD ENABLE
    2 WOULD NOT ENABLE

42. If you had a reader, do you think it would or would not involve as much time checking the reader's correcting as it does for you to do the correcting? (Circle one number.)

    1 WOULD INVOLVE AS MUCH TIME
    2 WOULD NOT INVOLVE AS MUCH TIME

43. Do you think retaining a reader would be easy or difficult? (Circle one number.)

    1 EASY TO RETAIN
    2 DIFFICULT TO RETAIN

44. Do you think that correcting themes is or is not related to burnout of high school English teachers? (Circle one number.)

    1 IS NOT RELATED TO BURNOUT
  —2 IS RELATED TO BURNOUT

               ▶44a. Briefly, why do you think correcting themes is related to burnout?

45. The last questions have to do with the physical and atmospheric conditions under which theme correcting is done. Does fatigue affect or not affect your evaluative judgment in correcting themes? (Circle one number.)

    1 DOES NOT AFFECT JUDGMENT
  —2 DOES AFFECT JUDGMENT

               ▶45a. What solution(s) would you suggest for the fatigue problem?

46. How many hours do you put in at a single sitting of correcting themes before fatigue begins to set in?

        _____ NUMBER OF HOURS

47. Lighting is or is not a factor in correcting themes? (Circle one number.)

            1   IS A FACTOR
            2   IS NOT A FACTOR

48. Do you think too much theme correcting eventually could affect or could not affect your eyesight? (Circle one number.)

            1   COULD AFFECT EYESIGHT
            2   COULD NOT AFFECT EYESIGHT

49. Do you experience neck or back pains because of correcting themes? (Circle one number.)

            1   YES
            2   NO

50. Do you find that temperature affects or does not affect your physical comfort when you are marking themes? (Circle one number.)

            1   AFFECTS PHYSICAL COMFORT
            2   DOES NOT AFFECT PHYSICAL COMFORT

51. Do you find that noise affects or does not affect your concentration when you are marking themes? (Circle one number.)

            1   DOES NOT AFFECT CONCENTRATION
            2   AFFECTS CONCENTRATION

                    ➤ 51a. What remedy, if any, do you use?

52. Do the demands of home/outside life affect the quality of your theme correcting? (Circle one number.)

            1   YES
            2   NO

53. What suggestions would you like to make for the beginning English teacher on the physical or atmospheric elements affecting correcting a lot of themes?

54. Do you think most teachers find theme writing to be an enjoyable or irksome part of teaching English? (Circle one number.)

      1 ENJOYABLE PART OF TEACHING
      2 IRKSOME PART OF TEACHING

55. Do you sometimes feel or do not feel despair in correcting themes when you see students making the same errors you have pointed out to them in previous themes? (Circle one number.)

      1 FEEL DESPAIR
      2 DO NOT FEEL DESPAIR
      3 NON-APPLICABLE

56. Do you sometimes feel resentment or do not feel resentment over the workload of English teachers compared to those in other high school disciplines? (Circle one number.)

      1 FEEL RESENTMENT AT WORKLOAD
      2 DO NOT FEEL RESENTMENT AT WORKLOAD

57. Please indicate which solutions listed below have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load.

		HAVE	HAVE NOT
a.	Smaller classes...........................	1	2
b.	Make composition a separate class........	1	2
c.	More classroom time for correcting themes.....................	1	2
d.	Less commentary on themes................	1	2
e.	National standardized theme structure....	1	2
f.	A speed-reading course for teachers......	1	2
g.	A copyediting course for teachers........	1	2
h.	An editorial-writing course for teachers.	1	2
i.	Short courses on theme correcting........	1	2
j.	Hiring theme readers.....................	1	2
k.	Articles on theme correcting in the professional journals...............	1	2
l.	A book on theme correcting..............	1	2
m.	Special English faculty session on correcting themes....................	1	2
n.	A class when I was an undergraduate that was devoted to how to correct themes.	1	2
o.	Other (specify)...........................	1	2

58. If you had an opportunity to offer advice in a textbook
    aimed at preparing English teachers for correcting themes,
    what would you say?

Thank you for your participation in this lengthy survey. Your
response may well contribute suggestions for the profession
in how to handle increased demands for writing now being
heard at both the national and local levels. If you are
interested in the results, please write your name and address
on the back of this page of the questionnaire.

Left Blank Intentionally

Dear Colleague:

Correcting themes--one task suspected of contributing more to English-teacher burnout than anything else--is the topic of my doctoral dissertation at Oregon State University's/Western Oregon State College's College of Education.

Some highly vocal critics--including current U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett--continue to insist that students lack formal writing skills; many in our profession insist that we're doing as much as is humanly possible toward achieving such results.

As a veteran English teacher and, now, a journalism professor at OSU, I noted that nobody asks us--in any appreciable numbers--what we think about or go through in correcting themes. Accordingly, I decided to do just that for my dissertation; I felt such a study would make a major contribution to this issue. I thought, too, that if I queried a third of Oregon's high school English teachers at random, it would have national impact and credibility; you are among the 503 out of the 1509 I'm contacting for your views on correcting themes. There was also the thought that perhaps sharing ideas anonymously on methods of correcting themes could help us all.

Moreover, I knew that a definitive study had to involve more than a two-page query. The enclosed questionnaire was drafted as a result of my own experience in correcting thousands of themes and, now, thousands of stories; I also have listened for several years to our colleagues, to editors and read the mail on the theme textbook I did for Barron's (How to Write Themes and Term Papers, 1970) which is still one of their standard texts. I tried out the initial drafts of this questionnaire on some English teachers in the Corvallis/Philomath area; it took them about 20 minutes or so to fill out the questionnaire. Would you take 20 minutes or so to answer the enclosed questionnaire (I'd love to hear any commentary from you, of course). If you'd like a copy of the tabulations, write your name and address on the bottom of the last page.

Many thanks for your consideration and I hope to hear from you as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Redacted for privacy

Barbara G. Ellis
Strand 232
Journalism Dept.
Oregon State University
Corvallis OR 97331
(1-754-3109)

APPENDIX C

PROMPT POSTCARD

Dear Colleague:

Last week I sent you a questionnaire about
correcting themes. You're part of a key sampling
.(500 out of 1509 Oregon high school English
teachers) on this subject.

If you haven't returned the questionnaire, would
you take a few minutes to do so and send it off to
me. Your views and suggestions are a vital part
of this first in-depth study on correction
practices in our profession. I want to know what
you think. Many thanks for your consideration.

Barbara Ellis
Strand 232
OSU/Corvallis OR 97331

APPENDIX D

PROMPT LETTER

April 18, 1980

Dear Colleague:

Three weeks ago, I sent you a questionnaire on theme correcting methods. I'm not sure if you returned one yet--we're still counting--but wanted to make sure you got a copy. You're a vital part of the 503 Oregon high school English teachers--a third of 1509 in the state--I'm contacting on this subject. It's intended to be perhaps the most definitive study on the subject ever undertaken. I need your input.

It should take only 20 minutes or so to fill out. I would appreciate your participation and, as I said, would be happy to share some of the methods used by our colleagues in correcting themes. If you'd like a copy of the tabulations, write your name and address on the bottom of the last page.

Many thanks for your consideration and I hope to hear from you as soon as possible.

<div align="right">

Sincerely,

Barbara G. Ellis
Strand 232
Journalism Dept.
Oregon State University
Corvallis OR 97331
(1-754-3109)

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APPENDIX E:
TABLES ON RAW DATA FROM RESPONSE FREQUENCIES

Table 20. Q1. How many years have you been correcting themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
1-2 YEARS	10	3.6
3-5 YEARS	31	11.1
6-10 YEARS	55	19.7
11-20 YEARS	170	60.9
OVER 20	13	4.7
	4	MISSING*
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   279   Missing Cases   4

Table 21. Q2. What is your average number of students per English class?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
15-20 STUDENTS	61	21.6
21-25 STUDENTS	117	41.3
26-36 STUDENTS	105	37.1
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   283

Table 22. Q3. How many themes per month do you assign?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
1 PER MONTH	41	15.1
2 PER MONTH	88	32.5
3 PER MONTH	41	15.1
4 PER MONTH	63	23.2
5 PER MONTH	13	4.8
6 PER MONTH	4	1.5
7 PER MONTH	1	.4
8+ PER MONTH	20	7.4
	12	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   271   Missing Cases   12

*Missing means no response.. "Missings" are not factored into the percentages of responses.

Table 23. Q4. Do you emphasize a specific writing skill in each theme?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
YES	180	64.1
NO	78	27.7
SOMETIMES, DEPENDS	23	8.2
	2	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   281   Missing Cases   2

Table 24. Q5. How many themes do you correct per month?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LESS THAN 25	7	2.5
25-50	10	3.5
51-75	27	9.5
76-100	37	13.1
101-150	62	21.9
OVER 150	140	49.5
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   283   Missing Cases   0

Table 25. Q6. About how many hours per month do you spend correcting themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LESS THAN 10	12	4.2
10-15	34	12.1
16-25	75	27.0
26-35	53	18.9
36-50	53	18.9
MORE THAN 50	53	18.9
	3	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   280   Missing Cases   3

Table 26. Q7. What is the average number of pages written per theme?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
1 PAGE	19	6.8
2 PAGES	132	47.0
3 PAGES	95	33.8
4+PAGES	35	12.4
	2	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   281   Missing Cases   2

Table 27. Q8. How many minutes—on the average—do you spend per theme?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
1-5 MINUTES	63	22.7
6-8 MINUTES	38	13.7
9-10 MINUTES	73	26.3
11-15 MINUTES	60	21.6
16-20+ MINUTES	44	15.7
	5	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   278   Missing Cases   5

Table 28. Q9. Are themes done mostly in class or as homework?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
IN CLASS	115	40.8
AS HOMEWORK	122	43.2
BOTH	45	16.0
	1	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   282   Missing Cases   1

Table 29. Q10. What is your average turnaround time--in days--between collecting themes and returning them to students?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
1 DAY	17	6.0
2 DAYS	37	13.3
3 DAYS	41	14.7
4 DAYS	33	11.8
5 DAYS	48	17.2
6 DAYS	2	.7
7 DAYS	59	21.1
8-11 DAYS	28	10.1
12-14 DAYS	8	2.9
15+ DAYS	6	2.2
	4	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   279   Missing Cases   4

Table 30. Q12. Do you agree or disagree that theme writing would be easier to teach if classes were set up according to students' writing abilities?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
AGREE	218	80.1
DISAGREE	54	19.9
	11	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   272   Missing Cases   11

Table 31. Q13. Are most of your students adept or not adept at writing?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
ADEPT	125	45.1
NOT ADEPT	137	49.5
VARIES	15	5.4
	6	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   277   Missing Cases   6

Table 32. Q14. Do you feel that a rigorous theme-writing program in high school would improve or would not improve a student's regular writing skills after graduation?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
WILL IMPROVE	254	92.4
WILL NOT IMPROVE	21	7.6
	8	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   275   Missing Cases   8

Table 33. Q15. Do other requirements in the course leave sufficient or insufficient time for teaching theme writing?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
SUFFICIENT TIME	99	36.0
INSUFFICIENT TIME	176	64.0
	8	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   275   Missing Cases   8

Table 34. Q16. How much commentary, if any, do you write on themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
A LOT	197	70.9
A WORD OR 2	49	17.6
NONE	4	1.4
MORE THAN 1 WORD	28	10.1
	5	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   278   Missing Cases   5

Table 35. Q17. Do you think trimming your commentary on themes would or would not help students to improve writing skills?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
WOULD IMPROVE	16	5.9
WOULD NOT IMPROVE	253	94.1
	14	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   269   Missing Cases   14

Table 36. Q17a. Would or would not trimming commentary cut time/energy spent on themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
WOULD CUT	222	88.8
WOULD NOT CUT	28	11.2
	33	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   250   Missing Cases   33

Table 37. Q18. Do you think commentary of more than one sentence would or would not help students to improve writing skills?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
WOULD IMPROVE	196	74.2
WOULD NOT IMPROVE	68	25.8
	19	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   264   Missing Cases   19

Table 38. Q19a. Do you grade down for the following: misspellings?

Value Label		Frequency	Valid Percent
YES		243	90.3
NO		26	9.7
		14	MISSING
	TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   269   Missing Cases   14

Table 39. Q19b. Do you grade down for the following: usage?

Value Label		Frequency	Valid Percent
YES		257	95.5
NO		12	4.5
		14	MISSING
	TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   269   Missing Cases   14

Table 40. Q19c. Do you grade down for the following: punctuation errors?

Value Label		Frequency	Valid Percent
YES		246	92.5
NO		20	7.5
		17	MISSING
	TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   266   Missing Cases   17

Table 41. Q19d. Do you grade down for the following: disorganization?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
YES	272	98.6
NO	4	1.4
	7	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   276   Missing Cases   7

Table 42. Q20a. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: spelling.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	32	11.6
NEXT TO LEAST	64	23.3
SOME	109	39.6
GREATER	38	13.9
GREATEST	32	11.6
	8	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   275   Missing Cases   8

Table 43. Q20b. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: punctuation.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	14	5.2
NEXT TO LEAST	65	23.5
SOME	107	39.5
GREATER	55	20.3
GREATEST	31	11.5
	11	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   272   Missing Cases   11

Table 44. Q20c. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: usage.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	9	3.3
NEXT TO LEAST	36	13.2
SOME	106	39.0
GREATER	71	26.1
GREATEST	50	18.4
	11	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   272   Missing Cases   11

Table 45. Q20d. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: organization.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
SOME	28	10.1
GREATER	109	39.5
GREATEST	139	50.4
	7	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   276   Missing Cases   7

Table 46. Q20e. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: substance.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
NEXT TO LEAST	2	.7
SOME	14	5.1
GREATER	81	29.6
GREATEST	177	64.6
	9	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   274   Missing Cases   9

Table 47. Q20f. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: accuracy.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	1	.4
NEXT TO LEAST	11	4.1
SOME	43	16.0
GREATER	124	46.3
GREATEST	89	33.2
	15	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   268   Missing Cases   15

Table 48. Q20g. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: clarity.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
NEXT TO LEAST	2	.7
SOME	18	6.6
GREATER	105	38.1
GREATEST	150	54.6
	8	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   275   Missing Cases   8

Table 49. Q20h. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: conciseness.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	2	.7
NEXT TO LEAST	12	4.4
SOME	85	31.3
GREATER	118	43.4
GREATEST	55	20.2
	11	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   272   Missing Cases   11

Table 50. Q20l. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: readability.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	4	1.5
NEXT TO LEAST	9	3.3
SOME	60	22.2
GREATER	115	42.6
GREATEST	82	30.4
	13	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   270   Missing Cases   13

Table 51. Q20j. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: style.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	12	4.4
NEXT TO LEAST	27	9.8
SOME	104	37.8
GREATER	95	34.5
GREATEST	37	13.5
	8	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   275   Missing Cases   8

Table 52. Q20k. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: reasoning .

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	5	1.8
NEXT TO LEAST	7	2.6
SOME	38	14.0
GREATER	104	38.4
GREATEST	117	43.2
	12	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   271   Missing Cases   12

Table 53. Q20L Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: thinking ability .

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	4	1.5
NEXT TO LEAST	8	3.0
SOME	38	14.1
GREATER	98	36.4
GREATEST	121	45.0
	14	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   269   Missing Cases   14

Table 54. Q20m. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: creativity.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	3	1.1
NEXT TO LEAST	19	6.7
SOME	75	28.0
GREATER	103	37.8
GREATEST	72	26.4
	11	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   272   Missing Cases   11

Table 55. Q20n. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: humor.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	35	13.1
NEXT TO LEAST	57	21.3
SOME	104	39.0
GREATER	50	18.7
GREATEST	21	7.9
	16	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   267   Missing Cases   16

Table 56. Q20o. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: legibility.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	35	13.0
NEXT TO LEAST	66	24.5
SOME	96	35.7
GREATER	48	17.8
GREATEST	24	9.0
	14	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   269   Missing Cases   14

Table 57. Q21a. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: spelling?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	71	26.5
NEXT TO LEAST	70	26.1
SOME	65	24.3
GREATER	29	10.8
GREATEST	33	12.3
	15	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   268   Missing Cases   15

Table 58. Q21b. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: punctuation?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	56	21.1
NEXT TO LEAST	63	23.7
SOME	62	23.3
GREATER	49	18.4
GREATEST	36	13.5
	17	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   266   Missing Cases   17

Table 59. Q21c. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: usage?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	33	12.4
NEXT TO LEAST	60	22.6
SOME	82	30.8
GREATER	55	20.7
GREATEST	36	13.5
	17	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   266   Missing Cases   17

Table 60. Q21d. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: organization?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	1	.4
NEXT TO LEAST	20	7.5
SOME	51	19.1
GREATER	88	32.9
GREATEST	107	40.1
	16	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   267   Missing Cases   16

Table 61. Q21e. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: substance?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	2	.7
NEXT TO LEAST	16	6.0
SOME	50	18.7
GREATER	92	34.3
GREATEST	108	40.3
	15	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   268   Missing Cases   15

Table 62. Q21f. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: clarity?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	4	1.50
NEXT TO LEAST	12	4.51
SOME	45	16.92
GREATER	107	40.23
GREATEST	98	36.84
	17	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.00

Valid Cases   266   Missing Cases   17

Table 63. Q21g. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: conciseness?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	13	4.91
NEXT TO LEAST	42	15.85
SOME	87	32.83
GREATER	79	29.81
GREATEST	44	16.60
	18	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.00

Valid Cases   -265   Missing Cases   18

Table 64. Q21h. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: readability?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	15	5.8
NEXT TO LEAST	41	15.8
SOME	95	36.7
GREATER	71	27.4
GREATEST	37	14.3
	24	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   259   Missing Cases   24

Table 65. Q21i. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: style?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	25	9.5
NEXT TO LEAST	56	21.3
SOME	83	31.6
GREATER	65	24.7
GREATEST	34	12.9
	20	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   263   Missing Cases   20

Table 66. Q21j. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: reasoning?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	9	3.3
NEXT TO LEAST	25	9.3
SOME	33	12.3
GREATER	97	36.1
GREATEST	105	39.0
	14	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   269   Missing Cases   14

Table 67. Q21k. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: legibility?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LEAST	60	23.1
NEXT TO LEAST	59	22.7
SOME	78	30.0
GREATER	36	13.8
GREATEST	27	10.4
	23	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   260   Missing Cases   23

Table 68. Q22. Do most students seem to apply or not apply your correction suggestions for improvement from one theme to subsequent new themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
APPLY	155	58.3
DO NOT APPLY	111	41.7
	17	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   266   Missing Cases   17

Table 69. Q23. On your correcting system, do you usually start with the work of your best writing students?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
YES	50	18.2
NO	225	81.8
	8	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   275   Missing Cases   8

Table 70. Q23a. Briefly, what order, if any, do you use?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
RANDOM	121	57.9
AS THEY ARE TURNED IN	59	28.2
OTHER (find range, typed first, alphabetical, legibility, average writer first, alternate worst with best, etc.)	29	13.9
	74	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   209   Missing Cases   74

Table 71. Q23b. Do you feel the order you use takes less or more time for correcting than doing them alphabetically?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LESS TIME	125	56.8
MORE TIME	21	9.5
OTHER*	74	33.7
	63	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   220   Missing Cases   63

Table 72. Q23c. Do you feel if you correct themes in the order of students' writing skills (e.g., doing the "best" writers first and saving those of the less skilled writers for last?) takes less or more time for correcting?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LESS TIME	53	27.60
MORE TIME	80	41.66
OTHER*	59	30.74
	91	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   192   Missing Cases   91

Table 73. Q24. Do you sometimes feel you are spending too much time/energy in correcting minor problems rather than dealing with the theme's major thrust?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
TOO MUCH TIME	158	57.7
NOT TOO MUCH TIME	116	42.3
	9	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   274   Missing Cases   9

*This response includes answers of "neither," "same," "non-applicable," and "don't know."

Table 74. Q25. Do you think that themes should have less—or more—emphasis on the creative kind of writing rather than the practical kind of writing?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LESS EMPHASIS	128	49.42
MORE EMPHASIS	105	40.55
BOTH EQUALLY	26	10.03
	24	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   259   Missing Cases   24

Table 75. Q26. How certain are you about what a theme should contain?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
VERY CERTAIN	158	57.0
FAIRLY CERTAIN	108	39.0
SOMEWHAT CERTAIN	11	4.0
	6	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   277   Missing Cases   6

Table 76. Q27. Do you think that most English teachers need or do not need some training in teaching theme writing?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
NEED TRAINING	217	88.93
DON'T NEED TRAINING	27	11.07
	39	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   244   Missing Cases   39

Table 77. Q28. Would your school be likely or unlikely to pay for your attendance at workshops or courses that teach how to improve the correcting of themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LIKELY TO PAY	171	73
UNLIKELY TO PAY	63	27
	49	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   234   Missing Cases   49

Table 78. Q29. If you had the time, would you or would you not attend a free nearby workshop or course that teaches how to improve the correcting of themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
WOULD ATTEND	223	81.7
WOULD NOT ATTEND	50	18.3
	10	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   273   Missing Cases   10

Table 79. Q30. Have you attended a short course or workshop on how to correct themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
YES	164	58.2
NO	118	41.8
	1	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   282   Missing Cases   1

Table 80. Q31. If your department set up a session for English faculty to share ideas on correcting themes, would you or would you not attend?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
WOULD ATTEND	259	94.2
WOULD NOT ATTEND	16	5.8
	8	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   275   Missing Cases   8

Table 81. Q32. Would you like to increase your speed in reading themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
YES	207	74.2
NO	72	25.8
	4	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   279   Missing Cases   4

Table 82. Q33. Would a speed-reading course be likely or unlikely to lessen the time you spend correcting themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LIKELY	47	17.3
UNLIKELY	224	82.7
	12	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   271   Missing Cases   12

Table 83. Q34. Would a journalism copyediting course be likely or unlikely to lessen the time you spend correcting themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LIKELY	99	37.8
UNLIKELY	163	62.2
	21	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   262   Missing Cases   21

Table 84. Q35. Would a course in editorial writing be likely or unlikely to improve your teaching of theme structure and/or substance?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
LIKELY	134	51.7
UNLIKELY	125	48.3
	24	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   259   Missing Cases   24

Table 85. Q37. Are the available textbooks adequate or inadequate in teaching students how to write themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
ADEQUATE	134	50.0
INADEQUATE	134	50.0
	15	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   268   Missing Cases   15

Table 86. Q38. Are the available professional journals adequate or inadequate in offering articles on how to correct themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
ADEQUATE	161	61.1
INADEQUATE	68	26.0
DON'T NEED JOURNALS*	33	12.9
	21	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   262   Missing Cases   21

Table 87. Q39. If there were a national standardized structure prescribed for themes ("this goes in paragraph No. 1, that goes in paragraph No. 2,") do you think it would be easier or not be easier for students to master this kind of composition than the present system that rests on the views of a succession of teachers ?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
WOULD BE EASIER	173	66.5
WOULD NOT BE EASIER	87	33.5
	23	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   260   Missing Cases   23

Table 88. Q39a. Do you think such a system would take less time for correcting themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
YES	137	72.1
NO	53	27.9
	93	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   190   Missing Cases   93

*Although this response was not in the item, 33 respondents stipulated this response.

Table 89. Q39b. Would such a system be much different from standardized structures for "real-world" writing such as memos, reports, proposals, etc.?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
YES	97	50.3
NO	96	49.7
	90	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   193   Missing Cases   90

Table 90. Q40. Would your school district be willing or unwilling to hire theme readers for your department?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
WILLING	69	29.0
UNWILLING	169	71.0
	45	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   238   Missing Cases   45

Table 91. Q41. Do you think a theme reader would or would not enable you to assign more theme writing?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
WOULD ENABLE	196	72.9
WOULD NOT ENABLE	73	27.1
	14	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   269   Missing Cases   14

Table 92. Q42. If you had a reader, do you think it would or would not involve as much time checking the reader's correcting as it does for you to do the correcting?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
WOULD INVOLVE	83	31.6
WOULD NOT INVOLVE	180	68.4
	20	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   263   Missing Cases   20

Table 93. Q43. Do you think retaining a reader would be easy or difficult?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
EASY TO RETAIN	82	32.2
DIFFICULT TO RETAIN	173	67.8
	28	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   255   Missing Cases   28

Table 94. Q44. Do you think that correcting themes is or is not related to burnout of high school English teachers?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
IS NOT RELATED	33	11.9
IS RELATED	245	88.1
	5	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   278   Missing Cases   5

Table 95. Q45. Does fatigue affect or not affect your evaluative judgment in correcting themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
DOES NOT AFFECT	32	11.5
DOES AFFECT	246	88.5
	5	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   278   Missing Cases   5

Table 96. Q46. How many hours do you put in at a single sitting of correcting themes before fatigue begins to set in?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
1 HOUR	64	23.7
2 HOURS	145	53.7
3 HOURS	47	17.4
4 HOURS	10	3.7
5 HOURS	4	1.5
	13	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   270   Missing Cases   13

Table 97. Q47. Lighting is or is not a factor in correcting themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
IS A FACTOR	238	84.7
IS NOT A FACTOR	43	15.3
	2	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   281   Missing Cases   2

Table 98. Q48. Do you think too much theme correcting eventually could affect or could not affect your eyesight?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
COULD AFFECT	216	80.0
COULD NOT AFFECT	54	20.0
	13	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   270   Missing Cases   13

Table 99. Q49. Do you experience neck or back pains because of correcting themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
YES	197	70.9
NO	81	29.1
	5	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   278   Missing Cases   5

Table 100. Q50. Do you find that temperature affects or does not affect your physical comfort when you are marking themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
DOES AFFECT	241	86.4
DOES NOT AFFECT	38	13.6
	4	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   279   Missing Cases   4

Table 101. Q51. Do you find that noise affects or does not affect your concentration when you are marking themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
DOES NOT AFFECT	55	19.6
DOES AFFECT	225	80.4
	3	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   280   Missing Cases   3

Table 102. Q52. Do the demands of home/outside life affect the quality of your theme correcting?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
YES	223	78.8
NO	60	21.2
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   283   Missing Cases   0

Table 103. Q54. Do you think most teachers find theme writing to be an enjoyable or irksome part of teaching English?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
ENJOYABLE	77	29.0
IRKSOME	156	58.6
BOTH	33	12.4
	17	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   266   Missing Cases   17

Table 104. Q55. Do you sometimes feel or do not feel despair in correcting themes when you see students making the same errors you have pointed out to them in previous themes?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
FEEL DESPAIR	212	77.1
DON'T FEEL DESPAIR	43	15.6
NON-APPLICABLE	20	7.3
	8	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   275   Missing Cases   8

Table 105. Q56. Do you sometimes feel resentment or do not feel resentment over the work load of English teachers compared to those in other high school disciplines?

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
FEEL RESENTMENT	210	75.5
DON'T FEEL RESENTMENT	68	24.5
	5	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   278   Missing Cases   5

Table 106. Q57a. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: smaller classes.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE	171	70.4
HAVE NOT	72	29.6
	40	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   243   Missing Cases   40

Table 107. Q57b. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: make composition a separate class

Value Label		Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE		148	62.7
HAVE NOT		88	37.3
		47	MISSING
	TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   236   Missing Cases   47

Table 108. Q57c. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: more classroom time for correcting themes.

Value Label		Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE		102	44.0
HAVE NOT		130	56.0
		51	MISSING
	TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   232   Missing Cases   51

Table 109. Q57d. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: less commentary on themes.

Value Label		Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE		105	45.3
HAVE NOT		127	54.7
		51	MISSING
	TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   232   Missing Cases   51

Table 110. Q57e. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: national standardized theme structure.

Value Label		Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE		61	26.5
HAVE NOT		169	73.5
		53	MISSING
	TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   230   Missing Cases   53

Table 111. Q57f. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: a speed-reading course for teachers.

Value Label		Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE		42	18.1
HAVE NOT		190	81.9
		51	MISSING
	TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   232   Missing Cases   51

Table 112. Q57g. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: a copyediting course for teachers.

Value Label		Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE		88	39.5
HAVE NOT		135	60.5
		60	MISSING
	TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   223   Missing Cases   60

Table 113. Q57h. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: an editorial-writing course for teachers.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE	89	39.9
HAVE NOT	134	60.1
	60	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   223   Missing Cases   60

Table 114. Q57i. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: short courses on theme correcting.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE	173	74.6
HAVE NOT	59	25.4
	51	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   232   Missing Cases   51

Table 115. Q57j. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: hiring theme readers.

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE	123	52.8
HAVE NOT	110	47.2
	50	MISSING
TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   233   Missing Cases   50

Table 116. Q57k. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: articles on theme correcting in the professional journals.

Value Label		Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE		139	61.5
HAVE NOT		87	38.5
		57	MISSING
	TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   226   Missing Cases   57

Table 117. Q57l. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: a book on theme correcting.

Value Label		Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE		117	51.8
HAVE NOT		109	48.2
		57	MISSING
	TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   226   Missing Cases   57

Table 118. Q57m. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: special English faculty session on correcting themes.

Value Label		Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE		170	73.0
HAVE NOT		63	27.0
		50	MISSING
	TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   233   Missing Cases   50

Table 119. Q57n. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: a class when I was an undergraduate that was devoted to how to correct themes.

Value Label		Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE		114	50.7
HAVE NOT		111	49.3
		58	MISSING
	TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   225   Missing Cases   58

Table 120. Q57o. Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: other.

Value Label		Frequency	Valid Percent
HAVE		19	100.0
		264	MISSING
	TOTAL	283	100.0

Valid Cases   19   Missing Cases   264

APPENDIX F:

**BREAKOUTS OF RESPONSE FREQUENCIES BY
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES,
INCLUDING THE COLLAPSED DATA**

Table 121. Q2: <u>What is your average number of students per English class?</u>

Teaching years	15-20	21-25	26+	Total respondents
1-2	6	1	3	10
3-5	10	10	11	31
6-10	14	21	20	55
11+	31	85	71	187

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	15-20	21-25	26+	Total respondents
1-5	16	11	14	41
6+	45	106	91	242

Table 122. Q3: How many themes per month do you assign?

Teaching years	1-2	3-4	5+	Total respondents
1-2	4	3	2	9
3-5	12	14	4	30
6-10	27	19	9	55
11+	86	68	23	177

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	1-2	3-4	5+	Total respondents
1-5	16	17	6	39
6+	113	87	32	232

Table 123. Q4: Do you emphasize a specific writing skill in each theme?

Teaching years	Yes	No	Sometimes	Total respondents
1-2	4	4	2	10
3-5	19	11	1	31
6-10	38	15	2	55
11+	119	48	18	185

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Yes	No	Sometimes	Total respondents
1-5	23	15	3	41
6+	157	63	20	240

Table 124. Q5: How many themes do you correct per month ?

Teaching years	0-50	51-75	76-100	101-150	150+	Total respondents
1-2	0	4	1	4	1	10
3-5	3	7	8	4	9	31
6-10	3	8	9	12	23	55
11+	11	8	19	42	107	187

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	0-50	51-75	76-100	101-150	150+	Total respondents
1-5	3	11	9	8	10	41
6+	14	16	28	54	130	242

Table 125. Q6: **About how many hours per month do you spend correcting themes?**

Teaching years	0-15 hours	16-35 hours	36+ hours	Total respondents
1-2	2	5	3	10
3-5	9	13	9	31
6-10	12	23	20	55
11+	23	87	74	184

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	0-15 hours	16-35 hours	36+ hours	Total respondents
1-5	11	18	12	41
6+	35	110	94	239

Table 126. Q7: <u>What is the average number of pages written per theme?</u>

Teaching years	1-2 pages	3+ pages	Total respondents
1-2	5	5	10
3-5	20	10	30
6-10	24	31	55
11+	102	84	186

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	1-2 pages	3+ pages	Total respondents
1-5	25	15	40
6+	126	115	241

Table 127. Q8: How many minutes--on the average--do you spend per theme?

Teaching years	1-5 minutes	6-8 minutes	9-10 minutes	11-15 minutes	16-20+ minutes	Total respondents
1-2	0	3	2	3	2	10
3-5	8	3	9	6	6	32
6-10	14	5	16	10	9	54
11+	41	27	46	41	27	182

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	1-5 minutes	6-8 minutes	9-10 minutes	11-15 minutes	16-20+ minutes	Total respondents
1-5	8	6	11	9	8	42
6+	55	32	62	51	36	236

Table 128. Q9: Are themes done mostly in class or as homework?

Teaching years	Written in class	Written as homework	Written both ways	Total respondents
1-2	6	3	1	10
3-5	16	12	3	31
6-10	25	17	13	55
11+	68	90	28	186

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Written in class	Written as homework	Written both ways	Total respondents
1-5	22	15	4	41
6+	93	107	41	241

Table 129. Q10: What is your average turnaround time--in days--between collecting and returning themes to students?

Teaching years	1-3 days	4-6 days	7-10 days	11+ days	Total respondents
1-2	1	4	4	1	10
3-5	12	9	9	1	31
6-10	22	21	8	3	54
11+	60	49	64	11	184

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	1-3 days	4-6 days	7-10 days	11+ days	Total respondents
1-5	13	13	13	2	41
6+	82	70	72	14	238

Table 130. Q12: Do you agree or disagree that theme writing would be easier to teach if classes were set up according to students' writing abilities?

Teaching years	Agree	Disagree	Total respondents
1-2	8	2	10
3-5	25	5	30
6-10	41	13	54
11+	144	34	178

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Agree	Disagree	Total respondents
1-5	33	7	40
6+	185	47	232

Table 131. Q13: <u>Are most of your students adept or not adept at writing?</u>

Teaching years	Adept	Not adept	Varies	Total respondents
1-2	2	7	1	10
3-5	9	20	2	31
6-10	28	26	1	55
11+	86	84	11	181

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Adept	Not adept	Varies	Total respondents
1-5	11	27	3	41
6+	114	110	12	236

Table 132. Q14: <u>**Do you feel that a rigorous theme-writing program in high school would improve or would not improve a student's regular writing skills after graduation?**</u>

Teaching years	Will improve	Will Not improve	Total respondents
1-2	9	1	10
3-5	30	1	31
6-10	49	6	55
11+	166	13	179

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Will improve	Will Not improve	Total respondents
1-5	39	2	41
6+	215	19	234

Table 133. Q15: Do other requirements in the course leave sufficient or insufficient time for teaching theme writing?

Teaching years	Sufficient time	Insufficient time	Total respondents
1-2	2	8	10
3-5	8	23	31
6-10	23	32	55
11+	66	113	179

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Sufficient time	Insufficient time	Total respondents
1-5	10	31	41
6+	89	145	234

Table 134. Q16: <u>How much commentary, if any, do you write on themes</u>?

Teaching years	A lot	A word or two	None	More Than 1 Word	Total respondents
1-2	8	1	1	0	10
3-5	20	10	0	1	31
6-10	43	5	2	4	54
11+	126	33	1	23	183

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	A lot	A word or two	None	More Than 1 Word	Total respondents
1-5	28	11	1	1	41
6+	169	38	3	27	237

Table 135. Q17: <u>Do you think trimming commentary on themes would or would not help students to improve writing skills?</u>

Teaching years	Would improve	Would Not improve	Total respondents
1-2	0	10	10
3-5	1	30	31
6-10	4	49	53
11+	11	164	175

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Would improve	Would Not improve	Total respondents
1-5	1	40	41
6+	15	213	228

Table 136. Q17a: **Would or would not trimming commentary cut time/energy spent on themes?**

Teaching years	Would Cut time,energy	Would Not Cut time,energy	Total respondents
1-2	9	1	10
3-5	27	3	30
6-10	46	3	49
11+	140	21	161

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Would Cut time,energy	Would Not Cut time,energy	Total respondents
1-5	36	4	40
6+	186	24	210

Table 137. Q18: <u>Do you think commentary of more than one sentence would or would not help students to improve writing skills?</u>

Teaching years	Would improve	Would Not improve	Total respondents
1-2	6	2	8
3-5	25	5	30
6-10	44	11	55
11+	121	50	171

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Would improve	Would Not improve	Total respondents
1-5	31	7	38
6+	165	61	226

Table 138. Q19a: Do you grade down for misspellings?

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-2	8	2	10
3-5	27	4	31
6-10	48	5	53
11+	160	15	175

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-5	35	6	41
6+	208	20	228

Table 139. Q19b: <u>Do you grade down for usage</u>?

Teaching years	Yes	No		Total respondents
1-2	9	1		10
3-5	29	2		31
6-10	50	3		53
11+	169	6		175

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Yes	No		Total respondents
1-5	38	3		41
6+	219	9		228

Table 140. Q19c: <u>Do you grade down for punctuation errors</u>?

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-2	8	2	10
3-5	27	3	30
6-10	47	5	52
11+	164	10	174

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-5	35	5	40
6+	211	15	226

Table 141. Q.19d: <u>Do you grade down for disorganization</u>?

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-2	9	1	10
3-5	30	1	31
6-10	53	1	54
11+	180	1	181

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-5	39	2	41
6+	233	2	235

Table 142. Q20a: <u>Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: spelling.</u>

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	3	1	1	3	2	10
3-5	6	6	9	6	4	31
6-10	9	13	19	8	6	55
11+	14	44	80	21	20	179

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	9	7	10	9	6	41
6+	25	57	95	32	25	230

Table 143. Q20b: **Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: punctuation.**

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	2	2	2	1	3	10
3-5	2	4	15	7	3	31
6-10	3	12	22	12	5	54
11+	7	47	68	35	20	177

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	4	6	17	8	6	41
6+	10	59	90	47	25	231

Table 144. Q20c: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: usage.

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	1	3	2	4	0	10
3-5	2	4	13	8	4	31
6-10	2	5	20	14	12	53
11+	4	24	71	45	34	178

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	3	7	15	12	4	41
6+	6	29	91	59	46	231

Table 145. Q20d: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: organization.

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	0	0	2	3	5	10
3-5	0	0	7	12	11	30
6-10	0	0	6	21	27	54
11+	0	0	13	73	96	182

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	0	0	9	15	16	40
6+	0	0	19	94	123	236

Table 146. Q20e: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: substance.

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	0	0	2	4	4	10
3-5	0	2	1	10	18	31
6-10	0	0	4	19	31	54
11+	0	0	7	48	124	179

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	0	2	3	14	22	41
6+	0	0	11	67	155	233

Table 147. Q20f: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: accuracy.

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	0	0	3	7	0	10
3-5	0	5	7	11	6	29
6-10	0	3	14	21	15	53
11+	1	3	19	85	68	176

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	0	5	10	18	6	39
6+	1	6	33	106	83	229

Table 148. Q20g: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: clarity.

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	0	0	1	5	4	10
3-5	0	1	2	14	14	31
6-10	0	1	5	19	29	54
11+	0	0	10	67	103	180

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	0	1	3	19	18	41
6+	0	1	15	86	132	234

Table 149. Q20h: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: conciseness.

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	1	0	5	4	0	10
3-5	0	3	11	13	4	31
6-10	0	1	16	27	9	53
11+	1	8	53	74	42	178

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	1	3	16	17	4	41
6+	1	9	69	101	51	231

Table 150. Q201: **Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: readability.**

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	0	0	3	6	1	10
3-5	0	3	10	11	7	31
6-10	1	2	16	18	16	53
11+	3	4	31	80	58	176

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	0	3	13	17	8	41
6+	4	6	47	98	74	229

Table 151. Q20j: **Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: style.**

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	2	2	3	2	1	10
3-5	4	6	10	9	2	31
6-10	2	4	21	22	5	54
11+	4	15	70	62	29	180

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	6	8	13	11	3	41
6+	6	19	91	84	34	234

Table 152. Q20k: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: reasoning.

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	1	2	1	4	2	10
3-5	2	2	7	9	10	30
6-10	0	2	12	23	17	54
11+	2	1	18	68	88	177

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	3	4	8	13	12	40
6+	2	3	30	91	105	231

Table 153. Q201: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: thinking ability.

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	0	1	4	3	2	10
3-5	2	3	5	10	11	31
6-10	0	3	8	18	25	54
11+	2	1	21	67	83	174

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	2	4	9	13	13	41
6+	2	4	29	85	108	228

Table 154. Q20m: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: creativity.

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	0	1	4	3	2	10
3-5	0	2	7	10	12	31
6-10	1	3	20	15	15	54
11+	2	13	44	75	43	177

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	0	3	11	13	14	41
6+	3	16	64	90	58	231

Table 155. Q20n: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: humor.

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	1	4	5	0	0	10
3-5	2	8	10	6	5	31
6-10	5	14	24	8	3	54
11+	27	31	65	36	13	172

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	3	12	15	6	5	41
6+	32	45	89	44	16	226

Table 156. Q20o: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the greatest) the degree of emphasis you give the following elements in a theme: legibility.

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-2	2	4	3	0	1	10
3-5	6	10	11	4	0	31
6-10	9	11	21	11	2	54
11+	18	41	61	33	21	174

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least emphasis	Next To Least emphasis	Some emphasis	Greater emphasis	Greatest emphasis	Total respondents
1-5	8	14	13	4	1	41
6+	27	52	82	44	23	228

Table 157. Q21a: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: spelling?

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-2	1	4	1	2	2	10
3-5	8	9	5	8	1	31
6-10	17	11	14	7	3	52
11+	45	46	45	12	27	175

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-5	9	13	6	10	3	41
6+	62	57	59	19	30	227

Table 158. Q21b: **Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: punctuation?**

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-2	3	0	1	2	4	10
3-5	6	6	7	11	1	31
6-10	10	15	8	11	7	51
11+	37	42	46	25	24	174

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-5	9	6	8	13	5	41
6+	47	57	54	36	31	225

Table 159. Q21c: **Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: usage?**

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-2	1	2	0	4	3	10
3-5	4	5	9	10	2	30
6-10	4	13	18	11	6	52
11+	24	40	55	30	25	174

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-5	5	7	9	14	5	40
6+	28	53	73	41	31	226

Table 160. Q21d: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: organization?

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-2	0	1	1	3	5	10
3-5	0	3	7	14	7	31
6-10	0	2	10	14	26	52
11+	1	14	33	57	69	174

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-5	0	4	8	17	12	41
6+	1	16	43	71	95	226

Table 161. Q21e: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: substance?

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-2	0	0	4	1	5	10
3-5	0	0	9	8	14	31
6-10	2	4	10	21	15	52
11+	0	12	27	62	74	175

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-5	0	0	13	9	19	41
6+	2	16	37	83	89	227

Table 162. Q21f: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: clarity?

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-2	0	1	2	2	5	10
3-5	0	0	10	9	12	31
6-10	1	1	8	23	19	52
11+	3	10	25	73	62	173

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-5	0	1	12	11	17	41
6+	4	11	33	96	81	225

Table 163. Q21g: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: conciseness?

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-2	0	2	3	4	1	10
3-5	3	6	10	8	3	30
6-10	4	7	12	19	10	52
11+	6	27	62	48	30	173

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-5	3	8	13	12	4	40
6+	10	34	74	67	40	225

Table 164. Q21h: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: readability?

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-2	1	1	4	3	1	10
3-5	1	5	17	7	1	31
6-10	2	12	18	11	8	51
11+	11	23	56	50	27	167

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-5	2	6	21	10	2	41
6+	13	35	74	61	35	218

Table 165. Q21i: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: style?

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-2	2	3	2	2	1	10
3-5	2	5	14	6	4	31
6-10	8	10	11	13	9	51
11+	13	38	56	44	20	171

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-5	4	8	16	8	5	41
6+	21	48	67	57	29	222

Table 166. Q21j: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: reasoning?

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-2	1	3	3	2	1	10
3-5	1	3	8	11	8	31
6-10	3	5	5	15	23	51
11+	4	14	17	69	73	177

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-5	2	6	11	13	9	41
6+	7	19	22	84	96	228

Table 167. Q21k: Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is the least) which aspect of a theme seems to take most of your correction time: legibility?

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-2	1	3	4	1	1	10
3-5	6	11	5	5	3	30
6-10	13	10	21	3	3	50
11+	40	35	48	27	20	170

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Least amount of time	Next to least amount of time	Some amount of time	Greater amount of time	Greatest amount of time	Total respondents
1-5	7	14	9	6	4	40
6+	53	45	69	30	23	220

Table 168. Q22: <u>Do most students seem to apply or not apply your correction suggestions for improvement from one theme to subsequent new themes?</u>

Teaching years	Apply	Do not apply	Total respondents
1-2	2	8	10
3-5	15	14	29
6-10	30	22	52
11+	108	67	175

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Apply	Do not apply	Total respondents
1-5	17	22	39
6+	138	89	227

Table 169. Q23: <u>On your correction system, do you usually start assessment with the work of your best writing students?</u>

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-2	2	8	10
3-5	4	27	31
6-10	6	48	54
11+	38	142	180

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-5	6	35	41
6+	44	190	234

Table 170. Q23a: <u>Briefly, what order, if any, do you use?</u>

Teaching years	Random	As They Are turned in	Other	Total respondents
1-2	4	1	3	8
3-5	18	6	2	26
6-10	28	13	5	46
11+	71	39	19	129

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Random	As They Are turned in	Other	Total respondents
1-5	22	7	5	34
6+	99	52	24	175

Table 171. Q23b: <u>Do you feel the order you use takes less or more time for correcting than doing them alphabetically?</u>

Teaching years	Less time	More time	Other	Total respondents
1-2	6	2	1	9
3-5	13	4	9	26
6-10	20	6	17	43
11+	86	9	47	142

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Less time	More time	Other	Total respondents
1-5	19	6	10	35
6+	106	15	64	185

Table 172. Q23c: Do you feel if you correct themes in the order of students' writing skills (e.g., doing the "best" writers first and saving those of the less skilled writers for last?) takes less or more time for correcting?

Teaching years	Less time	More time	Other	Total respondents
1-2	4	2	1	7
3-5	3	11	3	15
6-10	8	17	8	35
11+	38	50	18	106

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Less time	More time	Other	Total respondents
1-5	7	13	4	22
6+	46	67	26	139

Table 173. Q24: Do you sometimes feel you are spending too much time/energy in correcting minor problems rather than dealing with the theme's major thrust?

Teaching years	Spending too much time/energy	Not Spending too much time/energy	Total respondents
1-2	6	4	10
3-5	16	14	30
6-10	32	22	54
11+	104	76	180

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Spending too much time/energy	Not Spending too much time/energy	Total respondents
1-5	22	18	40
6+	136	98	234

Table 174. Q25: **Do you think that themes should have less--or more--emphasis on the creative kind of writing rather than the practical kind or writing?**

Teaching years	Less emphasis	More emphasis	Both	Total respondents
1-2	3	4	3	10
3-5	15	14	2	31
6-10	15	33	3	51
11+	95	54	18	167

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Less emphasis	More emphasis	Both	Total respondents
1-5	18	18	5	41
6+	110	87	21	218

Table 175. Q26: How certain are you about what a theme should contain?

Teaching years	Very certain	Fairly certain	Somewhat certain	Total respondents
1-2	4	4	2	10
3-5	16	12	3	31
6-10	31	23	1	55
11+	107	69	5	181

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Very certain	Fairly certain	Somewhat certain	Total respondents
1-5	20	16	5	41
6+	138	92	6	236

Table 176. Q27: <u>Do you think that most English teachers need or do not need some training in teaching theme writing?</u>

Teaching years	Need training	Do Not Need training	Total respondents
1-2	9	1	10
3-5	24	2	26
6-10	45	3	48
11+	139	21	160

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Need training	Do Not Need training	Total respondents
1-5	33	3	36
6+	184	24	208

Table 177. Q28: **Would your school be likely or unlikely to pay for your attending workshops or courses that teach how to improve the correcting of themes?**

Teaching years	Likely to pay	Unlikely to pay		Total respondents
1-2	7	2		9
3-5	14	11		25
6-10	32	10		42
11+	118	40		158

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Likely to pay	Unlikely to pay		Total respondents
1-5	21	13		34
6+	150	50		200

Table 178. Q29: If you had the time, would you or would you not attend a free nearby workshop or course that teaches the improvement of the correcting of themes?

Teaching years	Would attend	Would Not attend	Total respondents
1-2	10	0	10
3-5	28	2	30
6-10	41	13	54
11+	144	35	179

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Would attend	Would Not attend	Total respondents
1-5	38	2	40
6+	185	48	233

Table 179. Q30: <u>Have you attended a short course or workshop on how to correct themes?</u>

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-2	2	8	10
3-5	10	21	31
6-10	32	23	55
11+	120	66	186

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-5	12	29	41
6+	152	89	241

Table 180. Q31: If your department set up a session for English faculty to share ideas on correcting themes, would you or would you not attend?

Teaching years	Would attend	Would Not attend	Total respondents
1-2	10	0	10
3-5	27	4	31
6-10	48	5	53
11+	174	7	181

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Would attend	Would Not attend	Total respondents
1-5	37	4	41
6+	222	12	234

Table 181. Q32: <u>Would you like to increase your speed in reading themes?</u>

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-2	8	2	10
3-5	26	5	31
6-10	39	16	55
11+	134	49	183

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-5	34	7	41
6+	173	65	238

Table 182. Q33: <u>Would a speed-reading course be likely or unlikely to lessen the</u> <u>time you spend correcting themes</u>?

Teaching years	Likely to lessen time	Unlikely to lessen time	Total respondents
1-2	2	8	10
3-5	5	25	30
6-10	11	41	52
11+	29	147	176

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Likely to lessen time	Unlikely to lessen time	Total respondents
1-5	7	33	40
6+	40	188	228

Table 183. Q34: Would a journalism copyediting course be likely or unlikely to lessen the time you spend correcting themes?

Teaching years	Likely to lessen time	Unlikely to lessen time	Total respondents
1-2	2	7	9
3-5	16	14	30
6-10	23	30	53
11+	58	112	170

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Likely to lessen time	Unlikely to lessen time	Total respondents
1-5	18	21	39
6+	81	142	223

Table 184. Q35: **Would a course in editorial writing be likely or unlikely to improve your teaching of theme structure and/or substance?**

Teaching years	Likely to improve	Unlikely to improve	Total respondents
1-2	6	4	10
3-5	21	10	31
6-10	26	25	51
11+	81	86	167

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Likely to improve	Unlikely to improve	Total respondents
1-5	27	14	41
6+	107	111	218

Table 185. Q37: Are the available textbooks adequate or inadequate in teaching students how to write themes?

Teaching years	Adequate	Inadequate	Total respondents
1-2	3	7	10
3-5	13	15	28
6-10	31	22	53
11+	87	90	177

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Adequate	Inadequate	Total respondents
1-5	16	22	38
6+	118	112	230

Table 186. Q38: Are the available professional journals adequate or inadequate in offering articles on how to correct themes?

Teaching years	Adequate	Inadequate	Don't Need Journals	Total respondents
1-2	5	4	1	10
3-5	16	6	6	28
6-10	31	15	6	52
11+	109	43	20	172

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Adequate	Inadequate	Don't Need Journals	Total respondents
1-5	21	10	7	38
6+	140	58	26	224

Table 187. Q39: If there were a national standardized structure prescribed for themes ("this goes in paragraph No. 1, that goes in paragraph No. 2..."), do you think it would be easier or not be easier for students to master this kind of composition than the present system that rests on the views of a succession of teachers?

Teaching years	Easier to master	Not Easier to master	Total respondents
1-2	6	3	9
3-5	21	9	30
6-10	29	23	52
11+	117	52	169

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Easier to master	Not Easier to master	Total respondents
1-5	27	12	39
6+	146	75	221

Table 188. Q39a: <u>Do you think such a system would take less time for correcting themes?</u>

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-2	4	2	6
3-5	16	4	20
6-10	24	10	34
11+	93	37	130

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-5	20	6	26
6+	117	47	164

Table 189. Q39b: <u>Would such a system be much different from standardized</u>
<u>structures for real-world writing such as memos, reports, proposals, etc.</u>?

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-2	3	5	8
3-5	10	15	25
6-10	25	16	41
11+	59	60	119

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-5	13	20	33
6+	84	76	160

Table 190. Q40: <u>Would your district be willing or unwilling to hire theme readers for your department</u>?

Teaching years	Willing	Unwilling	Total respondents
1-2	3	6	9
3-5	8	22	30
6-10	11	34	45
11+	47	107	154

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Willing	Unwilling	Total respondents
1-5	11	28	39
6+	58	141	199

Table 191. Q41: <u>Do you think a theme reader would or would not enable you to assign more theme writing?</u>

Teaching years	Would	Would Not	Total respondents
1-2	5	4	9
3-5	21	10	31
6-10	39	14	53
11+	131	45	176

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Would	Would Not	Total respondents
1-5	26	14	40
6+	170	59	229

Table 192. Q42: If you had a reader, do you think it would or would not involve as much time checking the reader's correcting as it does for you to do the correcting?

Teaching years	Would involve as much time	Would Not involve as much time	Total respondents
1-2	4	6	10
3-5	11	20	31
6-10	19	34	53
11+	49	120	169

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Would involve as much time	Would Not involve as much time	Total respondents
1-5	15	26	41
6+	68	154	222

Table 193. Q43: <u>Do you think retaining a reader would be easy or difficult?</u>

Teaching years	Easy to retain	Difficult to retain	Total respondents
1-2	4	5	9
3-5	10	18	28
6-10	14	37	51
11+	54	113	167

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Easy to retain	Difficult to retain	Total respondents
1-5	14	23	37
6+	68	150	218

Table 194. Q44: <u>Do you think that correcting themes is or is not related to burnout of high school English teachers</u>?

Teaching years	Is Not related	Is related	Total respondents
1-2	1	9	10
3-5	4	26	30
6-10	6	48	54
11+	22	162	184

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Is Not related	Is related	Total respondents
1-5	5	35	40
6+	28	210	238

Table 195. Q45: <u>Does fatigue affect or not affect your evaluative judgment in correcting themes?</u>

Teaching years	Does Not affect	Does affect	Total respondents
1-2	3	7	10
3-5	3	28	31
6-10	5	49	54
11+	21	162	183

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Does Not affect	Does affect	Total respondents
1-5	6	35	41
6+	26	211	237

Table 196. Q46: **How many hours do you put in at a single sitting of correcting themes before fatigue begins to set in?**

Teaching years	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours	4-5 hours	Total respondents
1-2	2	6	2	0	10
3-5	8	16	3	1	28
6-10	10	30	12	2	54
11+	44	93	30	11	178

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours	4-5 hours	Total respondents
1-5	10	22	5	1	38
6+	54	123	42	13	232

Table 197. Q47: <u>Lighting is or is not a factor in correcting themes</u>?

Teaching years	Is a factor	Is Not a factor	Total respondents
1-2	8	2	10
3-5	25	6	31
6-10	46	9	55
11+	159	26	185

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Is a factor	Is Not a factor	Total respondents
1-5	33	8	41
6+	203	35	240

Table 198. Q48: <u>Do you think too much theme correcting eventually could affect or could not affect your eyesight?</u>

Teaching years	Could affect eyesight	Could Not affect eyesight	Total respondents
1-2	9	1	10
3-5	22	7	29
6-10	42	11	53
11+	143	35	178

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Could affect eyesight	Could Not affect eyesight	Total respondents
1-5	31	8	39
6+	185	46	231

Table 199. Q49: Do you experience neck or back pains because of correcting themes?

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-2	8	2	10
3-5	23	7	30
6-10	40	14	54
11+	126	58	184

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-5	31	9	40
6+	166	72	238

Table 200. Q50: <u>Do you find that temperature affects or does not affect your physical comfort when you are marking themes?</u>

Teaching years	Affects comfort	Does Not Affect comfort	Total respondents
1-2	10	0	10
3-5	24	6	30
6-10	51	4	55
11+	156	28	184

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Affects comfort	Does Not Affect comfort	Total respondents
1-5	34	6	40
6+	207	32	239

Table 201. Q51: <u>Do you find that noise affects or does not affect your concentration when you are marking themes?</u>

Teaching years	Does Not affect concentration	Does Affect concentration	Total respondents
1-2	3	7	10
3-5	7	24	31
6-10	13	42	55
11+	32	152	184

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Does Not affect concentration	Does Affect concentration	Total respondents
1-5	10	31	41
6+	45	194	239

Table 202. Q52: <u>Do the demands of home/outside life affect the quality of your theme correcting?</u>

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-2	7	3	10
3-5	27	4	31
6-10	42	13	55
11+	147	40	187

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Yes	No	Total respondents
1-5	34	7	41
6+	189	53	242

Table 203. Q54: <u>Do you think most teachers find theme writing to be an enjoyable or irksome part of teaching English</u>?

Teaching years	Enjoyable part of teaching	Irksome part of teaching	Both	Total respondents
1-2	2	7	0	9
3-5	12	16	3	31
6-10	19	29	4	52
11+	44	104	26	174

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Enjoyable part of teaching	Irksome part of teaching	Both	Total respondents
1-5	14	23	3	40
6+	63	133	30	226

Table 204. Q55: <u>Do you sometimes feel or do not feel despair in correcting themes when you find students making the same errors you have pointed out to them on previous themes?</u>

Teaching years	Feel despair	Do Not feel despair	Non-applicable	Total respondents
1-2	7	2	1	10
3-5	26	4	1	31
6-10	42	6	3	51
11+	137	31	15	183

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Feel despair	Do Not feel despair	Non-applicable	Total respondents
1-5	33	6	2	41
6+	179	37	18	234

Table 205. Q56: <u>Do you sometimes feel resentment or do not feel resentment over the workload of English teachers compared to those in other high school disciplines?</u>

Teaching years	Feel resentment	Do Not Feel resentment	Total respondents
1-2	8	2	10
3-5	16	13	29
6-10	38	17	55
11+	145	36	184

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Feel resentment	Do Not Feel resentment	Total respondents
1-5	24	15	39
6+	186	53	239

Table 206. Q57a: <u>Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: smaller classes</u>.

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-2	8	1	9
3-5	18	8	26
6-10	30	16	46
11+	115	47	162

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-5	26	9	35
6+	145	62	208

Table 207. Q57b: <u>Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: making composition a separate class</u>.

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-2	6	2	8
3-5	14	12	26
6-10	16	29	45
11+	112	45	157

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-5	20	14	34
6+	128	74	202

Table 208. Q57c: <u>Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: more classroom time for correcting themes</u>.

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-2	6	1	7
3-5	18	9	27
6-10	29	17	46
11+	49	103	152

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-5	24	10	34
6+	78	120	198

Table 209. Q57d: Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: less commentary on themes.

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-2	1	6	7
3-5	11	16	27
6-10	22	24	46
11+	71	81	152

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-5	12	22	34
6+	93	105	198

Table 210. Q57e: <u>Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: a national standardized theme structure.</u>

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-2	2	5	7
3-5	8	19	27
6-10	12	34	46
11+	39	111	150

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-5	10	24	34
6+	51	145	196

Table 211. Q57f: <u>Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: a speed-reading course for teachers</u>.

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-2	2	4	6
3-5	3	24	27
6-10	12	34	46
11+	25	128	153

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-5	5	28	33
6+	37	162	199

Table 212. Q57g: Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: a copyediting course for teachers.

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-2	3	4	7
3-5	14	13	27
6-10	22	22	44
11+	49	96	145

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-5	17	17	34
6+	71	118	189

Table 213. Q57h: <u>Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: an editorial-writing course for teachers</u>.

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-2	4	3	7
3-5	12	15	27
6-10	21	22	43
11+	52	94	146

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-5	16	18	34
6+	73	116	189

Table 214. Q57i: Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: short courses on theme correcting.

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-2	7	0	7
3-5	21	6	27
6-10	37	9	46
11+	108	44	152

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-5	28	6	34
6+	145	53	198

Table 215. Q57j: Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: hiring theme readers.

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-2	3	5	8
3-5	14	13	27
6-10	19	27	46
11+	87	65	152

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-5	17	18	35
6+	106	92	198

Table 216. Q57k: <u>Please indicate which solutions have practical application in</u> <u>your school to increasing the theme load: articles on theme correcting in the</u> <u>professional journals</u>.

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-2	5	2	7
3-5	12	13	25
6-10	31	13	44
11+	91	59	150

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-5	17	15	32
6+	122	72	194

Table 217. Q571: Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: a book on theme correcting.

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-2	3	4	7
3-5	11	15	26
6-10	26	18	44
11+	77	72	149

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-5	14	19	33
6+	103	90	193

Table 218. Q57m: <u>Please indicate which solutions have practical application in</u> <u>your school to increasing the theme load: special English faculty session on</u> <u>correcting themes.</u>

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-2	5	3	8
3-5	17	10	27
6-10	36	11	47
11+	112	39	151

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-5	22	13	35
6+	148	50	198

Table 219. Q57n: <u>Please indicate which solutions have practical application in your school to increasing the theme load: a class when I was an undergraduate that was devoted to how to correct themes</u>.

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-2	6	1	7
3-5	15	12	27
6-10	22	24	46
11+	71	74	145

Collapsed Data

Teaching years	Have application	Have No application	Total respondents
1-5	21	13	34
6+	93	98	191

APPENDIX G

Q16a. Open Ended Responses: *How much commentary, if any, do you write on themes? Describe what you do.*

I sometimes write nearly as much as the students do. I don't have time to talk to them individually, so writing is the only way I can communicate.

For every negative comment, I try to also put a positive comment about something in the paper. That way, the student isn't overwhelmed by my criticism.

Always positive comments, as well as criticism.

I don't write "a lot on all themes. I also try to talk to each student two times in nine weeks about their writing.

Comment on content, structure - a compliment if possible.

I frequently use peer editing practices, etc.

I use codes: * +. Also I make comments in the margins.

Depends entirely on assignment.

I comment on both stylistic elements and on mechanics. Without teacher commentary and evolution an essay is a meaningless, time-consuming exercise for students.

I respond to positive points. I point out major thinking errors.

Depending on the process preceding turning the paper in.

Final draft: scoring rubric (points in different areas). 2 or 3 short comments about content.

Depends on individual's skills and needs.

I always try to include at least 1 positive comment, along with criticisms.

I list 5 areas I grade on for each theme these change with each assignment. Each receives a point value and a sentence or two on why they received the point value in each area.

Point out major punctuation errors or repeated ones. Compliment good structure and points.

Mark errors in mechanics for correction. Comment on form and content, and with advanced students on style.

1. Notes in margins--suggestions, contradictions, grammar, syntax.
2. Reflections/arguments at end.

I read the paper entirely first, then go back and mark errors. Then I give a "holistic" grade based upon organization and effectiveness in getting across the main ideas, feeling or whatever the writer was supposed to do or was trying to do. I then subtract from that point total a certain amount of points according to the type of error made. I then put general comments at the top (I probably have some in margins already).

Try to give positive feedback plus at least one suggestion for improvement.

Give so many points for plain content, rough drafts, mechanics, transition.

Commentary is the key to learning. Correcting mechanics is only a start!

I especially write about direction of assignment. I also criticize organization, thoughts & development as well as grammar.

React both to style & ideas and try to be encouraging & positive.

On the whole, theme, on average, what amounts to 7 or 8 sentences or phrases.

I provide many positive comments about style. I look for thoughts, I show positive mechanics & usage corrections, but concentrate overall on content.

Sometimes response to content--sometimes response to style and usage--it depends.

I write specific word or phrase comments relative to specific sentences or paragraphs. I then write a summary (paragraph length) comment on major strengths & weaknesses of paper as a whole.

A lot of oral feedback from teacher & peers before final revision.

I try to give a positive remark and ask students to clarify ambiguous statements.

I try to give positive comments first on all aspects of the theme. Then some positive suggestions for change.

Correct and comment on grammar and spelling and remark on content of ideas--two grades are given

Mark all errors. Make suggestions and comments.

1. Ask questions. 2. Comment on content. 3. Mention striking words, phrases, etc.

I make minimal internal mechanics corrections and as many comments about style, content, other issues as I have time for or feel like.

State good things about paper, point out areas of improvement needed.

A positive comment regarding organization and/or content.

Usually a half page--keep separate log of comments on word processor so I can refer back to previous notes--check improvement.

Comment specifically on element in work that worked or didn't work and why.

General comment with C for good ideas or fluid sentences, (check) for grammar for error or faulty argument.

I comment/mark as I go along (positive/ & suggestions). I summarize at end. I sometimes use a specific grading sheet for that assignment. Helps me focus & students know what to expect.

I write extensive marginal comments. I then include a paragraph or two about how to improve the paper. I require rewrites on unsatisfactory papers.

Advanced writing class (30)--short paragraphs. Regular writing (30)--2/3 comments. Lower level writing (65)--2/3 comments.

Give students credit for what does work well. Suggest possible ways to strengthen weak points. For AP English, I usually use a 1-9 rubric describing a high, medium, and low quality paper. Students occasionally evaluate others papers with names removed--they use rubrics--and add comments.

Try for positive comments along with negative.

Between line correction, marginalia, & commentary at end.

Lots of notes and suggestions.

Occasionally, my commentary is lengthier than the students copy. 1. Logic. 2. Sentence structure/variety. 3. Transition. 4. Support. 5. All areas of mechanics. Accompanied by a lengthy comment on problems and suggested remedies.

1-3 positive comments (attempt to build student's confidence). Section titled problem areas. Specific concentration on one or two areas that need attention.

G.U.M. (Grammar Usage Mechanics). I address the following: Is there a thesis? Is there support adequate development, organization?

Students are given in-depth comments on rough drafts. If they make suggested corrections or others on their own, they automatically receive an "A" on the final draft.

I correct all punctuation, grammatical problems, content problems, thesis problems, outline/organization problems. I list major recurring problems and explain how to improve. My first comment is always positive.

Areas of strength, weakness, ideas for improvement, etc. are noted in the margins of essays.

I write all kinds of comments papers—suggestions, hints; I ask questions. I give advice and suggest readings.

I always acknowledge what was done well as well as address areas of concern.

I try to identify several strong points in the essay. Then I identify and explain one or two points for the student to improve.

I ask questions—comment on content—circle grammatical errors.

1. Mark mechanics. 2. Comment on organization and support. 3. Comment on content.

I give suggestions for revision (in some cases, actual models for revision) and require that students revise.

Point out inconsistencies in logic, flaws in organization, awkward construction.

I like to give reasons for any commentary I may make, with emphasis on constructive criticism, meaning of course to always find something positive to say, no matter what the student has done.

Ask questions about content.

I write short comments in margins next to very good or very bad examples. Then, I write a sentence about what is best overall, and what should be improved. Sometimes, I use a checklist with specifics.

Since I emphasize specific skills on themes, comment directly on that specific skill, but also make comments regarding the complete rhetorical content.

I spend quite a bit of time writing comments on good and/or effective work and also include comments and suggestions for improvement. Students have asked that I continue this practice as it has been helpful to them.

Try to say at least 1 positive comment, 1 area for improvement.

I mark every mechanical error. I also occasionally make comments on paragraphs of the essay as a whole. Something in between—usually 2-4 sentences and lots of marks for errors.

Identify specific errors—frag, agreement, cap., etc. Then comment on reasoning/logic/organization.

Corrections—advice about sentence structure & clarity.

Comments on paper both grammatical & content & style.

Point out major punctuation errors or repeated one--compliment good structure & points.

Mark errors in mechanics for correction. Comment on form & content, and with advanced students on style.

To paraphrase a line from Caesar, "Tis not meet that every minor offense be noted," but the most successful writing I've taught was in a Jr/Sr elective "Expository Writing" for 1 semester. Keep a file (kid keeps it in the room) so recurring problems can be cited and remediation taken (hopefully!).

I use a cover sheet with a grid. It depends upon the level of student. For advanced students, perhaps I might write a lot of observation--highlight strong & weak parts or summary comments of the overall qualities. I may ask students to rewrite if there are excessive problems.

A sentence or two at the end to point out major pluses & possible improvements for next paper (one or two items) plus margin notes.

Correct grammatical errors--comment on content and grammar.

Have set grade sheet with #'s or letter grades circled for individual identified sheets. Written comment in margins. 1-3 sentences on what was well done. 1-3 sentences on what needs to be improved.

Personal reactions. What's done well, what to work on--areas.

Approach varies according to assignment. Often I pinpoint strengths and weaknesses. I try to read or summarize outstanding work to class.

Code symbols--a quick sentence at the end indicating what to work on next time or some words of encouragement.

By the time I've read their final drafts most of the mechanical problems are taken care of. I focus on organization of ideas and rhetorical devices in the final phase.

I respond to content, favorably to some degree. I comment on the degree to which the identified purpose (s) of the paper were successfully achieved.

Some positive statement first. Follow with some constructive criticism regarding the requirements of assignment.

I focus on a specific skill. We have normally processed papers with peer editing. I write comments on good qualities of papers. I comment on how to improve the paper.

It varies with assignment.

I respond specifically to content and technique.

Indicate mechanical errors. Indicate strengths & weaknesses of content & style.

I use the holistic approach to correcting writing assignments so that each student knows where his/her strengths & weaknesses are. I write comments throughout the paper giving suggestions on ways to improve the paper. I also try to talk with each student and encourage each one to rewrite the paper & improve the score.

I review student's themes from 1st semester at the end of 2nd semester. Together, we find "grammar" errors and discuss effectiveness of expression of ideas.

I point out what makes the theme effective/ineffective. I always find something to praise. I comment on the content--how the information affected me personally. I ask questions to encourage more thinking. I mark the usual errors.

I try to write a sentence or two that responds to the content of the student's writing.

I always try to make a summary comment. Comments in margins vary.

Usually content oriented comments. Mechanics marked or commented on if they block meaning.

I write at least one and comments and respond to the writing--how it makes me feel.

I use a system whereby they learn early in the year what various numbers mean in various categories so I don't have to write much except scores.

Analytical assessment plus comments on overall project.

I always comment on content, on one specific area of form.

About 25% require extensive comments.

I use the Diederich scale of holistic scoring--and then give a lot of written of oral responses. I once used audio tape to record my comments. Students liked this, but it was too time consuming.

I use a criteria sheet such as Diederich's scale. I then write a comment to the writer usually a short paragraph, explaining my reaction to the piece.

Always respond to content & style at end of paper.

It varies. Particularly if the writing (content) is provocative.

Mark spelling and punctuation errors. Discuss any repetitive errors, organizing problems. Make margin notes on good points (brief). Make general positive comments on paper at end.

It depends on the focus of the assignment, but always more than 20 words throughout paper.

Marginal notes. End notes. Content & mechanics, strength and weaknesses.

Comment on ideas. Comment on organization, coherence. Suggest how to improve paper. Indicate mechanical errors (sometimes only those we are focusing on at that time).

Comment on both strength and weaknesses and make suggestions for improvement.

Depends on the quality, more commentary if poor.

I issue two grades—one for content and one for composition—for a total score. Things covered under content are paper length, intro transitional paragraphs, paraphrasing, development of thesis, and conclusion. Composition includes spelling (all), structure, typing, documentation, capitalization, punctuation, and standard usage.

Address specific strength/weakness.

A check list on the objectives and then at least 3 or 4 sentences of commentary.

I make corrections up to a point. There's no sense in marking the same error again and again. I make suggestions for improvement and praise effective, original use of language and comment on structure and organization and their ideas.

Some corrections for spelling/mechanics. Comments such as "good job," "good point," "nice idea," "don't understand how you arrived at this conclusion," "unsupported statement," etc.

I try to focus on at least one positive aspect as well as one area that needs attention.

I make margin comments on content as I read the paper for the first time (ex: "well said" "I understand" "wow" "I'm sorry"). After I have marked the essay, I then write at least a 5 sentence paragraph on the last page of the essay which includes a) praise b) focus for improvement and c) a personal note (perhaps unrelated to the paper). I see this as painfully time consuming but a valuable method of communicating with my students.

I mark errors in the margin only, and write a critique at the end. I do not rewrite for my students, though I occasionally make word choice suggestion in the margins.

Of course this depends upon time, need, purpose, etc. Much research indicates "bleeding" papers. Limited remarks have the same remark.

I explain their greatest strength and their greatest weakness along with any specific problems.

Mark errors—comment on content—organization, diction, etc.

Some computer-assisted commentary on a separate sheet. Most hand written notes throughout and then a note of 6-8 sentences after the body of the paper.

1. Suggest improvement of sentence, word, image choice. 2. Praise good effort, word choice, etc.

I generally comment at the end of the paper--usually positive--and suggest ways of improving overall.

1. Obvious spelling and punctuation problems are noted: Jot down rules or helps. 2. Violations of the specific skill being worked on as noted.

Generally, I comment on organization, content, and style, indicating strengths and suggesting improvements for weaknesses. I usually do not comment on spelling and mechanics (other than marking them) unless significant problems are apparent.

Give at least 1 positive comment but highlight consistent errors.

I write a correspondence to the student on what I like and dislike. The fact that I use editing groups keeps me from having to make papers for grammar and spelling problems.

Suggestions for improvement, clarifications, etc. Encouragement. Reminders to come in for help in specific areas.

Usually a brief paragraph though I sometimes talk to each one personally.

Ask questions, proofreaders marks, note especially good word choice, sentences.

Depending on the student, this will vary. I usually try to offset the negative comments with supportive comments.

Depending on the paper, any of the above response is appropriate.

I've invented the 5-minute oral critique. I was a writer with a bachelor's degree in journalism before I went into teaching. The oral critique is patterned after the conferencing I did with editors. There's not enough time to mark papers, and you lose the opportunity to help make a difference when the student "completes" a rough draft. I work with each individually until the writing is as good as it can be. I give verbal comments on all aspects and we discuss ways to improve it.

I usually write a personal comment at the end. Often write an explanation of the error (s) made if I think student won't understand what he or she did wrong.

With my basic skills students, I conduct numerous conferences throughout the writing process, and this eliminates the need for much post writing commentary. With my other students I use assignment-specific analytic trait rating sheets to minimize commentary.

I always give suggestions, positive remarks along with the negative responses necessary to help the student improve.

I require rewrites so I explain what needs to be done in revision.

Everything for one spelling and punctuation to relationship of ideas.

I write good comments in pencil and pencil in errors abbreviation, plus a general comment on a grading sheet.

Based on personal experience and on professional articles, students don't read teacher comments. I only use them before peer evaluation so that students know where to start to look for corrections.

Depends on type/focus of assignment and my work load.

Evaluation divided: (3 grades): "C" (content)/ "S" (structure)/ "M"(mechanics). With each are an appropriate comment--some praise, also a lot of remarks throughout the theme.

Write comment to student at end of theme. Minimal marks on theme itself.

I generally identify frequency errors. Occasionally, I will offer an alternative method of phrasing what the student has written.

We usually concentrate on certain areas of form, organization and content. I try to comment positively and critically in each area.

Related to student's desire to improve. A lot for advance writers, because they are more motivated to change by reading comments. Not as much for average. I also use a checklist plus personal comments.

I make notes to myself and conference with students over papers.

Good job or organizing. Proofread outloud to catch WF.

Written or conference with each student.

I use holistic scoring guides which speed up correcting and comment writing time.

I want to see thought, invention--basically free of mechanical problems--a few of no spelling errors.

It depends on the theme. Varies.

I have begun using a form that eliminates personal comments and speeds the correction time.

Many things from explanations that might be 3-4 sentences long.

This has varied a great deal over the years: some years I have written a lot; now my comments are much more succinct.

I do in-class "discovery writing" assignments weekly--sometimes twice a week--based on "current events" (national, at school). On these I comment on content. I also assign formal comparison/contrast themes, book reports, etc. On these I require 2 drafts and focus on form.

Provide short comments (1-2 words) throughout the paper and an overall comment on top.

I try to remember to write positive comment as well as corrections.

I write comments in the margins. I write a note of several paragraphs (an overall critique) at the end of the paper.

Use editorial marks for grammar, spelling; comment on thoughtful/interesting ideas.

At least: one positive comment, one criticism, identify major writing problems.

Try to find at least one positive comment per theme.

Personal comments--both positive and critical.

I comment on the positive aspects of the paper first, then I concentrate on areas for improvement.

I write approximately 100 words of comment and instruction on each theme.

I write a personal note on all themes using as much positive-affirming criticisms as I can. I also write notes throughout, commenting on the contrast.

I mark all mechanical errors. I make at least two positive comments on mechanics. I make several "wisecracks" and "signals" that I'm still reading throughout the paper (five or more). I comment on at least one or two aspects of logical argument, vivid examples, etc. With seniors I make many more stylistic notes. I make an overall comment of a sentence or two on all papers.

Sometimes read holistically. Sometimes check only form of development. Sometimes check mechanics and content (mark mechanical errors, structural weaknesses, poor word choice, weak logic).

Mechanics and style.

Positive comments (as much as possible) mingled with structure, tense and sense.

APPENDIX H

<u>Q29. Open Ended Responses</u>:   *If you had the time, would you or would you not attend a free nearby workshop or course that teaches how to improve the correcting of themes?*

I have attended such workshops in the past. The "shortcuts" promised do not seem to reduce time spent on papers nor do they consider student individuality.

I know what I need to know.

I feel I have received good training already in this area.

I've attended several. They were helpful.

It would depend on how this workshop would fit into my schedule as I also coach several activities, dislike giving up classroom time to attend workshops, and have many demands on my "free time." If it was state inservice day–no.

I feel like I've done this already. I've been to the National Assessment workshop twice.

Too busy.

I don't teach theme.

We had a major workshop 3 summers ago here which was excellent on analytical-traits model.

I feel very comfortable with present system.

Many claim themselves expert, but grading themes boils down to individual style and emphasis. There are too many "experts!"

Too busy correcting themes!

I've attended enough.

I know what to do.

I'm workshopped to death–most are superficial nonsense with little or no hands -on practical material–taught by teachers who have bailed out of the profession!

Retire soon.

I have attended workshops for twenty-eight years. I feel comfortable with my process.

I think the methods and training I have put myself through work very effectively for myself and my students.

I don't think there are really any shortcuts to doing this job.

I have done this so many times and none has been helpful.

Have attended similar workshops.

It would depend on conflicts with other responsibilities.

Busy schedule.

I have attended many writing workshops in the past including two Oregon Writing Project extended sessions.

I've been there!

No need.

Time element.

My courses are primarily speech courses.

I've taught 25 years.

I already have.

Many of these workshops are really poorly presented and boring.

I might; depends on when.

I have attended many. I have clever ways galore to grade themes.

Time factor.

I've taken 2 summers with OWP, conducted workshops, have an extensive library, and read _English Journal_-it's not my central interest either...Also--AP workshops train teachers for college board methods of evaluation.

Time. Energy. Also, I already have the necessary skills; the return on my time would be small.

I might. If it's the same old thing--no. If it's new & recommended by someone I trust-yes.

I've already had training as well as was instrumental in developing the Beaverton School Dist. Analytical Assessment Model.

Don't have time--students attitudes toward learning need elevation first.

I've attended at least 5.

I have attended these numerous times and they teach gimmicks to shortcut marking which does not aid learning for students or teachers.

I am too busy correcting papers! Seriously, I simply do not believe anyone has a solution that I could live with.

I have attended such workshops, read much literature on the topic, attend OWP a summer already.

MAYBE--Some are such BULL.

I've already developed a system I like and use.

I've got a new system that works based on OWP workshop.

I would have to know it'd be worthwhile. Too many aren't. I spend too many hours doing school work and taking classes. If it were release time, I would go.

I am not interested in more courses--enough is enough. This is not a major concern for me.

Only if paid.

I am familiar with standard practices and continue to keep up detail through journal.

I am sorry to continue the gullible, but I just don't understand exactly what you are including here--I would and have taught workshops on writing assessment, and I am interested in that. I would not be intrigued by the title "correcting themes" so I wouldn't go.

I have worked in the state assessment team for grading papers, have attended numerous workshops on writing, and correcting papers, and I have learned from them, but I think these are limitations.

I have an M.A. in teaching of writing.

I have been an English teacher for 25 consecutive years--there must be some point where I should be conducting the workshops!

The key is not in the correcting--all English teachers can recognize good writing. The key is in creating good writing assignments, which are quite often content specific.

Have been to many already!

I plan to retire within two years.

Don't need.

Retiring.

No time--already been trained.

I believe I am <u>very</u> good at it; however, I can always learn more.

APPENDIX I

Q36a. Open Ended Responses: What is your perception of your strengths in correcting themes?

The students know I read their papers and that I care about what they write. I try to do more than mark errors--to find something food as well as ways to improve.

Experience, consistency.

Lots of comments. Good themes read aloud--copied and used as models. I know the criteria for grading and so do my students. Quick "turn-over."

Content oriented, speak to substance.

I can concentrate very well and I know what makes a good theme. It must be organized, well developed, and reasonably correct mechanically.

Organization, mechanics.

Teaching organization first.

I can rapidly see mistakes. I have students peer-edit before handing in.

Experience. OWP Analytical model.

Very fair, very thorough.

Experience.

Effort to state errors/mechanics in positive manner so as to encourage self-correction hence learning. Honest concern for student to grow in writing.

Thorough, yet not overly critical.

I know my students. I give careful assignments, watch process in. I use positive comments, relate themes to other class work.

Experience and honesty.

Think quickly on my feet. Master of spelling, punctuation, usage. Excellent analytical skills. Good at working with people.

We do peer editing which takes pressure off me.

I know basics need to have students write so they are understood. I know how to teach them.

Focus on one or two particulars for each assignment.

Enjoy reading, grammatical, usage, punctuation.

Empathy with the person writing and trying to communicate, good sense of clear development and support, some help with clarity of style.

If you want good results, you have to give good assignments and be positive when talking about writing. I think assigning themes on regular basis is deadening.

Focus.

Logic, organization, invention.

Giving the students understandable expectations for the paper, and then grading to that expectation.

Organized and systematic.

I'm thorough. I think of writing as a process and evaluate each step.

Allowing students to learn from mistakes.

Speed (turn over time), logic, evaluation on content and mechanics in equal weight. Pointing out errors. Will explain to the few that desire to know, how to avoid repeating errors.

I think I respond well.

Encouraging creativity. Consistency of requirements.

Structure--logic of presented ideas.

Experience.

Structure, substance, creativity.

Knowing what I'm looking for. Assigning to those goals.

Good judgment.

Thorough.

Rhetorical emphasis.

Clarity.

Good grasp of grammar. Will to give time.

Organization. Reading for thought content. Ability to suggest alternatives for more effectiveness.

Style, organization, substance.

Students develop their ability to judge quality although it can't always be defined.

After thinking carefully about a student's paper, I have an accurate idea of the student's problems.

Good at identifying problems.

I am a writer myself. Analytical. Perceptive about meaning or intended meaning.

I am a writer myself, I know writing.

Patient review of the strengths the students have; gentle reminders of where they need to improve.

[I] Know what makes good writing. I teach and grade on specific writing skills with each essay. I don't feel it's necessary to red pen every paper to death. I give assignment that I will enjoy reading.

I give individual attention to each paper and address my comment accordingly. I am strict. I hold standards (high) for the final copy but only after pre-writing, peer editing, revision and edit groups.

Method (analytical traits model) experience.

Speed--get to the heart of the problem--don't overwhelm the kids.

I can see the whole better than most, being able to catch detail problems without losing the concept of coherence and unity in the theme.

Positive comments on each paper, from idea of content and substance, good group of mechanics.

Emphasis on and knowledge of style development, organization and reasoning and creative.

Knowledge of writing.

Imagination--teaching critical thinking.

Comments, structuring, splitting of grades.

Mechanics, organization, content.

Usage, organization.

Teaching and knowing what I am looking for as I grade.

Read them all. Indicate one positive aspect. Can justify to students why the paper was marked a certain way.

Understanding of what makes effective writing.

Fair grades. Good critical comments.

Teaching students to proofread their own themes, helping students see where they can improve their writing.

A good sense of style. I know usage, mechanics rules.

Matching assignment goals to skill level of individual.

I like to encourage their efforts, yet point out their weaknesses in a positive way.

Organization and expression.

Speed, accuracy, critique, clarity.

Thorough examination and emphasis on pre-writing, rough draft, proofreading.

Strong emphasis on writing.

Speed, accuracy, comments.

My comments.

I have taught Remedial English courses for 14 years. I anticipate the weaknesses in writing skills that students usually have at the Remedial level. I use peer editing groups whenever possible, but the skill level/frustrating level of these students is so low that it is not often possible.

I make good encouraging comments. I have a good eye for organizational problems.

Presenting overall concept of themes. Equal distribution of energy in each student. Connecting thesis of paragraph to supporting elements in relation to overall theme.

Technical aspects.

Helping students clarify: organization, developing thesis statements.

1. Thoroughness. 2. Improvement in student's work.

Explain both positive and negative aspect of the theme.

Helping students want to write. Showing detailed kind concern about student thinking.

Good critical analysis of thought, structure, and style.

Organization, logic, sentence structure.

Maintaining individual standards. High levels of expectation. Strong mechanically.

Sense of clarity, brevity, and organization. Sense of style and flair.

Punctuation, spelling, usage.

Objectivity. Rationale to write sufficiently. Developing peer evaluation techniques.

Concentrate on one area at a time.

Knack for cryptography. Understanding of intent of an essay.

I'm open-minded and fair.

Looking for positives. Correcting instead of marking.

Experience.

Fast reader, sure of what I'm looking for, willing to write lots of comments.

Organization.

Expectations tempered to students' abilities.

Grammar, spelling errors, organization, content.

Organization, thinking skills.

Correcting problems in sentence composing. Correcting spelling and punctuation. Returning papers promptly. Discussing themes with class. Correcting for clarity and completeness.

For the students who bother to read them, my comments. Fast turnaround time.

Structure.

Knowledge of above elements in Question 35 [short courses in journalism copyediting and editorial writing].

I'm a good writer. Member of OWP.

Emphasis on organization.

Experience, speed reader.

Fair, constructive.

Large vocabulary, well organized.

I'm thorough.

Thorough.

Short turnover time. Numerous comments.

Individual attention.

Ability to recognize quality.

Grading on content and support for thesis or main idea.

Speed, basic spelling and punctuation knowledge.

Good eye for organization and rare editing background that helps.

I'm using the "Writing As A Process" method of teaching. Pre-writing, drafting, revision, editing, final drafting and presentation, students put more value on their own writing and editing.

I read carefully for content, look for strengths and weaknesses in thinking, logic, etc. I do not close correct all work. I model on the overhead what I am teaching.

I'm thorough and the students know what I'm expecting from them.

Clear understanding of logical order. Extensive training in literary analysis and explanation.

Overall evaluation of good or not so good.

I use peer evaluation.

Understand structure. Above average writer myself. Good one-to-one teacher.

Accuracy in noting mechanical, spelling, etc. Add errors development of thesis.

Commentary is precise.

I emphasize the positive. My goals are usually clear.

I think I know what I'm doing.

I'm thorough; I'm good at looking for organizational problems and whether support is given for statements.

Reasoning. Style appreciation. Usage.

Once started, I can quickly go through a lot.

Efficient, flexible, set clear criteria which makes it easier and "fairer."

Read fast. Holistic grading. Write myself so have a realistic concept.

I have good writing skills myself. I'm committed to take the time to be thorough.

Fairness, thorough, straightforward correction marks.

Setting up conferences before and after an assignment to help student with writing problems.

Providing positive comments. Speed (relative to some teachers). Helping students with structure.

Read fast. Good at positive comments. Good at looking for substance/organization.

I read them all and have developed some trust with my students. I'm thorough.

Content emphasis. Organizational skills.

Scoping down on a few points.

Consistency in evaluation.

Organization and logic.

I can read holistically.

Clear goals when assigned. Enjoy clearly defined peer editing & clear expectations on student's part. Groups and let kids pick & a higher grade is really earned. Best overall (group) paper & share better paper on B Board, groups, overhead analysis.

Providing student with confidence about what she writes well and encouragement to write again (according to parents' feedback).

Professional writing skills (free-lance reporter, feature writer, editor) in addition to teaching firm grasp of structure, form grammar, hard education.

I give positive comments and react as a human, not a teacher with a red pen lying in wait for errors.

I am able to mark usage and mechanics problems quickly. I can read the themes quickly.

Experience.

Insights to content and organization. I am able to communicate to students my respect for their ideas and opinions--this, it seems to me, is what encourages students to see writing as an important form of communication worth their time.

I read fast. I can decipher very poor penmanship. I read only in relation to the assignment. I don't waste time on aspects that don't pertain to the goals of the assignment.

Speed of reading. Quick return. Grade on concept taught to keep minor details out of grading.

Address the strengths and weaknesses of the paper. Fair–good sense of holistic scoring as well.

Knowing what to look for in support type materials.

Organization, concepts, mechanics.

Fast reader, give praise.

Use of peer-editing. Share central criteria with students. Teach the skills needed for theme. Isolated one or two mechanical problems per student theme.

Understanding of arrangement, logic, reasoning, clarity.

Suggestions to organization directions as for clarity.

Sentence structure--variety in writing organization.

I have been well trained to correct themes. I still spend too much time grading themes, and I assign too many themes.

Go for ideas and style.

The effort I put into it. Clarity I give to students on what is being graded.

I have 25 years experience teaching writing, expository. I am trained and experienced.

Interaction with well written themes.

Grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc.

Ability to read and analyze quickly.

Giving students clear criticisms, state objectives, assistance in pre-writing for each composition.

Knowledge of grammar, structure, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary, etc. Strong belief in importance of self expression. Some ingenuity in dreaming up assignments.

I have a good general idea about what the writer should work on to improve the style and content.

I am a good to excellent teacher in all areas I teach.

Organization, mechanics.

Perception, organization, ability to understand students' point, non-judgmental above opinions.

Direction given students.

Individualized commentary.

Comments tend to be pretty positive.

Positive comments.

High expectations--good background in mechanics--writing ability.

Comparison of student writing style. Improvement of more mature writing style.

I am thorough in grading themes.

Logic/style/total effect of composition.

When grading, I approach the theme holistically.

Thorough.

I can judge what constitutes good writing: creativity, organization, etc.

Establish rapport so I can encourage writers. Criticism of 5-paragraph essay organization.

Have an open mind, a good sense of language, and an ability to analyze student writing quickly.

Organization, punctuation, grammar.

Attention to details of spelling and grammar. Assessing organization of content.

Organization, getting started.

I don't know if I particularly have any [strengths].

Stress creativity and use of positive comments with students.

Knowledge of subject matter, grammar, structure.

I can spot spelling and punctuation errors--easier than not.

Thinking, style and mechanics.

Understand what theme requires.

Experience.

Ability to recognize reasonable expectations of each student.

Focus on one aspect at a time. Comment for improvement.

I affirm students' attempts to write clearly, to write creatively and to respond to my suggestions on their rough drafts.

Structure of formal essays. Accuracy of quotations, etc.

Always welcome fresh styles, insights, conferences are productive.

Knowledge, journalism training.

1. Willingness to do the work. 2. Overall efficiency. 3. Knowledge. 4. Allowing students to revise, resubmit following clean remedying commentary/ conference. 5. Taking extra vitamins.

Working one-on-one with individuals to help with their problems.

I'm able to recognize when a paper is disorganized, unclear and lacks substance.

Usually give clear, concise direction. Focus on one problem or area of unity at a time. (e.g. dialogue, description).

Quick at recognition of mechanics errors. Point out strengths and weaknesses.

Positive feedback, ability to give examples on how to make suggestions. I don't focus on every error, not being able to verbally conference with each student.

I make sure the student knows what is required of them before they begin writing. They know what specific things I am looking for and grading them on. This helps me to zero in on particular skills as I read and correct the paper.

Identifying and correcting problems clearly.

Form and structure, mechanics, organization, clarity.

Speed, focus.

After having read thousands of themes, I have a good idea of what I am looking for.

I read all themes. Make positive comments. Take an interest in all student writing.

Organization.

Organizational skills, style, feedback, mechanical skills. I'm thorough and although my students say they appreciate the feedback, it's very time consuming.

I give students an assignment sheet listing grading criteria for that paper and tailor my responses to that sheet.

Getting papers evaluated--many teachers assign, but do not correct.

Usually willing to spend time--have a basic concept of theme development, knowledge of spelling, usage and grammar.

Accuracy and specifics.

Ability to see problems quickly.

I know what I'm looking for because I've outlined for students beforehand what the major thrust of the theme is. I enjoy reading and commenting on student papers. I'm knowledgeable myself about writing, editing, etc.

I am strong in giving individual attention to students writing noting their strength in writing, appreciating their creativity and being able to pin-point areas which need improvement.

I am able to quickly tell whether or not a student knows what he is discussing.

Speed. Looking for specific strengths--using a system for indicating errors.

I apply the analytical trait method of evaluating. My students understand the significance of each trait. I apply my journalism training when focusing on writing conventions and sentence structure.

Interest in writing. Work individually with students.

Knowledge of subject area.

I usually have a clear picture of what I am looking for in the theme. I try not to ask for too broad a focus in any part. Theme--narrow focus. Concentrate on specific skills.

Isolating a single problem a student has and conferencing on improving.

I can spot and note good skills and weaknesses of content.

I am fairly thorough and I make several comments.

Organization. Technical aspects (mechanics).

Knowledge of writing process, organizational skills, English grammar and usage.

Experience, clarity, individual help.

I do spend the time and make comments.

Speed of reading. Targeting specific areas on each theme.

Scanning abilities. Format understanding. Supporting evidence recognition.

Every aspect-area. 22 years, I think I know what I'm doing.

Content development/thesis support.

APPENDIX J

<u>Q36b. Open-Ended Responses</u>:   *What is your perception of your weaknesses in*
orrecting themes?

Takes me too long.

I'm slow!

Grammar rules and spelling.

Not enough time to comment fully.

Missing errors--proofreading.

Stamina--volume of work to correct.

Not enough discussion of various styles of writing.

Get lost in a paper and forget to watch/manage time.

Don't write enough positive comments.

Too much detailed correction. Sometimes slow in returning papers.

Handwriting.

Too thorough.

Lack of energy/resolve.

I don't think students write enough but time is still the big factor.

Usage.

Time.

Dogmatic structure not followed. Too many other responsibilities to spend time
needed to return papers soon.

I spend too much on form-correcting.

The method I have works.

My handwriting isn't as clear as it might be.

Dislike doing it.

I spend too much time agonizing over a letter grade.

Internal punctuation.

Finding adequate ways to respond in writing about defects I perceive.

It is difficult to help students who are weak writers if they do not have a clear understanding of correct/appropriate usage.

I have a short attention span and cannot stay with it for long.

Mechanical detail correction for younger students.

High expectations.

Turnaround time.

I need to isolate a few areas of emphasis for correction. I need to give better instruction of what I am looking for when correcting.

Not enough time for rewriting.

Punctuation.

Style.

Time!!!

A difficult time with punctuation.

Making suggestion for improving themes that are way "off course," catching all errors of a really bad theme.

Mechanics.

Finding time to explain constructive criticism on basis of individual need.

Not wanting to fail a student who has made an attempt, but written a bad paper.

Procrastination.

Knowledge (lack of) about certain types of themes (character analysis, problems).

I agonize over correcting and assigning grades.

Assign too many.

Do not assign enough theme writing.

Dull, undereducated dept. in English with no one to confer on phone concerns with. Tired eyes/insufficiency of grading past 9:00 p.m. Insufficiently lengthy comments in some instances.

Feel need to do complete workshop for each student.

Miss minor errors.

I need to psych-up to read them.

It takes me longer to do their paper than I would like.

Time/energy.

Impatience, prejudice toward good writers.

The jaded attitudes of age.

Not enough time.

Time necessary to complete each paper.

Hate to do it. Spend too much time on each theme—Don't budget enough time to read everything.

Spend too much time reading.

Interest.

Style, readability.

Let too many minor errors (spelling, etc.) go.

Not quite as good with evaluating style. Too conscientious about grading.

Not enough time. Brief conferences on the best correction format.

Writing comments that convey all the help that my seniors need.

Reasoning/clarity.

Time/desire.

Sometimes lack patience with unmotivated student.

I spend too much time per paper because few marks are on their papers, students need more oral debriefing than they get.

Miss errors through speed sometimes.

Sometimes I am easily distracted.

Take too long returning papers.

Spend so much time that it cuts into my personal and family life.

Not enough time to spend with detailed comments on paper and one on one with student.

Overall organization.

Stretched too thin, try to do too much at once, need a more structured way to teach reasoning and logic.

Not enough time as I would like.

Remaining objective is difficult. Stressed out by paper load.

Too conscientious.

I have problems grading low-level papers—do we grade these students on the progress they've made or do we remind ourselves of where we think they should be as 10th graders and evaluate them accordingly?

Vocabulary.

I'm tired of doing this at times.

Patience.

Tendency to not grade holistically.

Too many themes (time availability).

I take too long. I should get right on it and get it done and back to the student.

Getting corrected themes returned quickly.

Not enough time to sit with individuals long enough. How to describe and teach such things as style, creativity, humor.

Suggestion for improvement, commentary.

I do not allow enough time and overload myself.

I note too much, especially little errors.

Get tired after about 15 essays and my mind wanders as I read.

Procrastination.

Work usage.

Too many comments that students don't read, too much emphasis on conventions.

Correcting paragraph structure.

Spelling.

Slowness, procrastination.

Impatience.

Reasoning.

I take too much time correcting themes; have less time for myself. I get depressed easily after grading too many papers.

Shortness of time, boredom.

Slowness of return.

I'd like to be able to give better, more interesting assignments.

Impatience with lack of skill. Negative comments (correction) outnumber positive observations.

I take too long returning the theme.

Style.

Syntax, grammar and spelling.

Style is difficult to teach. Pure numbers—the paper load drains me.

Spelling, creativity.

Difficulty finding things to praise in many papers.

Fussing, organization over papers--looking at everything at once. Timing batches of papers.

Wanting to correct major mistakes without offending student.

Creative aspects.

Lost desire to help those who do not attempt corrections. Not enough emphasis upon logic.

Because of the time factor, students sometimes cannot decipher my comments.

My problem is: five preps per day; shortage of textbooks and dictionaries (no funds!) and I teach next to welding where hammers are hammering, drills drilling, etc.

I miss mechanical and sentence errors if the theme makes sense.

Too many papers, fatigue on my part therefore not all papers get the same energy. Students are slow to improve because the process is slow to change from corrections or lack of practice.

Use themes as part of a communications class not English per se, so time to teach is not really adequate.

I may overcorrect, I feel papers need to be perfect.

Time spent poring over papers. Students are amazed that I read _every_ word they write!

Lack of interaction with the poor ones.

The volume of papers sometimes forces me to cut corners (also _class size_).

I don't grade all aspects of writing on each theme. No time. Assumptions of grades certain students will earn.

Overlook too many elements, not aware enough of some details. I don't really know how to teach _writing_, per se.

Creativity.

Time spent on themes, paragraphing skills and conciseness of language.

Mechanical.

Not enough comments.

Take too long to get papers back.

Not enough comments, don't write enough.

Going blind from correcting themes.

Long time to get papers back to students.

Too much time on comments. Need to assign more themes.

My eyesight.

Spelling.

Spend too much time so papers not back immediately.

How to get writing to improve from corrections--corrections don't seem time effective, not much happens for all the time spent.

Helping students with sophisticated literary analysis.

Not enough time in day to meet with students. Class time cannot be taken because of course outline.

Recognizing individuality, style, flair.

I need time to conference with kids about their writing so that we can look at continuity. I'd like more time one on one.

I assign too many--I don't read carefully enough for mechanical errors.

Sometimes hurried.

I often put them off because I haven't refined in my own mind the criteria for that specific essay--especially if I find the results disastrous.

Conciseness.

I know I take too much time marking papers, but my strength is also my weakness. Thoroughness is time consuming.

Difficulty in getting the work done.

I procrastinate for the most part. I have come to hate reading student writing and so I put off the task. I'm often stumped for anything substantive to say.

Too much turnaround time. Too much commentary.

Insufficient commentary on positive elements and suggestions for improvement.

Finding time for one-to-one feedback.

Short comments which would assist in improving.

I tend to put off correcting themes because I know how long it will take, so I hate to get started. I dislike interruptions, so I look for large blocks of time to correct themes.

I sometimes feel inadequate as a writer, so am hesitant to model the desired writing. My writing seems to me to be too technical, not creative enough. Creativity is my weakness.

I would like to have more workshops incorporated into my classes.

Spend too much time on spelling, grammar.

Style.

Follow through on mechanical errors.

Impatience with slowness.

Too long for returning.

Too "easy"--not exacting enough.

I spend too much time on too many papers written by students who don't care about getting feedback on improving their writing. (But maybe the comments on the next papers will hook their interest).

Legibility.

Impatience with careless students.

I take too long to write comments.

I wish I could write more and that it would have an impact.

Overconscientiousness in correcting. I'd like to use more "shortcuts" without a feeling of guilt.

Analyzing faulty logic in some complex analyses in formal argumentative essays—I know there's a lack of logic, but I cannot explain the error clearly enough for some students occasionally.

I demand too much.

Hard to ignore problems when they are numerous.

Comments on theme.

I can't seem to ignore mechanics/spelling as an integrated part of the theme's point; hence, holistic reading is at a minimum.

Finding time out of my personal home time.

Expecting the student to understand the general expectation to the extent that the subjective grading of the paper is accepted.

Conveying why a paper gets a certain grade.

Lack of ambition to write more examples to show corrections.

I read slowly and too thoroughly. I'm too much of a perfectionist and may invest more energy than the student occasionally.

Allowing creativity, being objective.

Time spent, length of comments.

Tend to put off grading because of the time and concentration involved. (Lazy?)

Don't make myself clear to some students. Don't put enough positive comments on paper.

Procrastination—most are banal and hence I put them off.

Interruptions. Lack of preparation time.

Insufficient time pre-teaching sometimes/often have to teach concepts on the theme. Tiredness or lack of time causes carelessness in theme responses.

Frustration after years of reading papers.

I hate it--after all the time and effort I make to teach them how to do it correctly, I get angry over the poor quality and effort in their work. Many don't even submit.

Time, energy both for doing the work and for taking refresher classes.

I don't have a quick shorthand system for marking common errors that both I and students can readily identify.

Accepting late work.

Creativity and reasoning.

I opened way too much time working on papers and students don't change as much as I would like.

Not patterned oriented.

Don't correct all errors for fear the paper will "bleed" too much and discourage a writer too much and "hurt" the effort on the next assignment.

Too much focus on mechanics and structure need--yet students appreciate the structure.

I get burned out after awhile, lack of time, could use more ideas for interesting, challenging assignments.

Too nitpicky on "good" writers.

Lack of patience or energy to do consistently good job "over the years"--I get burnt out on it to quite an extent.

Correct too many papers. Emphasize mechanics over content.

Holding my attention with each paper.

Clarity.

Maturation.

Sorting BULLSHIT.

Limited time.

Allow too many repeated problems--after they have been taught individually the first time.

Patience of repetition of redrafting work.

Consistency.

My grading system tends to be too generous.

Time available.

I'm slow, I put it off.

For some reason, parents and students get irate when themes aren't immediately returned with bloody red corrections.

Burnout.

I hate "the system" which tends to kill writing initiative.

Spend too much time pondering, tire from tediousness, procrastinating.

Phrase my suggestions tactfully in order to be both encouraging and instructive.

Not always defining a quality essay in response to a particular question.

Distractions, turnaround time.

Creativity.

Feedback to the kids is not immediate.

Should probably not accept some of the themes with the mistakes that regularly appear.

I tend to rewrite for the student.

"Hitting" all the areas.

Get hung up on minor problems at times, tendency to overmark.

Punctual grading ability to return themes promptly.

I assign too many!

Usage questions.

I must teach basic skills so often that I sometimes lose sight of the purpose of grammar and spelling lessons; proficiency in communications!

My consistency in grading.

APPENDIX K

<u>Q38a. Open Ended Responses</u>: *Are the available professional journals adequate or inadequate in offering articles on how to correct themes? What kind of help should their editors provide?*

Control suggestions, new ideas for assignments.

I don't think this is the kind of thing you can learn from a professional journal. Students can't learn to write by reading about it--why should the learning process be any different for teachers?

Need some new ideas, new concepts and new theories to apply in the classroom.

Specific hands-on materials.

When they teach a lesson, provide a model.

Practical experience--hard to do in an article.

Sample student papers and teacher response.

Realization that <u>most</u> students do not attend college; therefore, writing ideas and forms that reflect that reality.

More ideas on holistic grading. More ideas on self and peer proofreading.

Practical, useful help.

Practical and effective information--most writers/advocators of theory need to spend some time in the classroom. It's not real--the way they perceive the job. Many gave the job up for some easier and more lucrative cause; they were poor at teaching/not motivated enough--now they're trying to tell those of us in the trenches how its done--ha ha.

Articles realistically urging lower class size.

Realistic help that will promote growth in writing skills instead of focusing on time--saving gimmicks. Every piece of writing does not have to be graded, but when it is graded, it should be thorough with in-depth comments/suggestions for ways to improve skills, thinking, style, techniques.

We have perhaps more than most people can read out right now. It reflects diverse styles and approaches so I suppose it is adequate from some perspectives. The Bay Area Writing Project has shown that writing teachers need to be writers themselves so I suppose we really need many more opportunities with encouragement to be involved and read more. OCTE state teacher writing "journal" is an example. I believe we need more help for each other and more leaders to encourage us.

Sorry, there is nothing that can be done. One simply must commit the time.

Practical examples correction sheets/form (check off categories which reduce necessity of sentence commentary IF students read form).

Stop the publish or perish articles. I rarely read them because of above problem.

Explain how to do this quickly and effectively.

Who has time to read them?

More practical advice and less theory.

Workshop schedules, explicit examples of strategies.

I wish I knew.

They should help resolve inconsistencies in instruction and correction that are confusing to students.

I have not seen an article about correcting themes.

Sample themes with effective marking. Comment from writers on what has helped them. Before and after papers that show evidence of what markings helped and how.

The English Journal provides interesting ideas, but I'm unaware of any other journals. I've had enough theory--I want practical application.

Models of alternatives, models of effectively corrected themes.

Not only ideas on how to improve or make paper correcting easier but also some moral support that would let me know I'm not alone out here in the trenches.

The problem lies in scheduling--providing more time in teachers' day to grade papers.

Practical ideas rather than theories! I don't want to read anything else on peer editing. That idea is OK sometimes, but too often it's a matter of the "blind leading the blind," if you'll pardon the cliche. The bottom line is that English teachers have themes to read; they always have; they always will!! Try to enjoy this job, or teach math, instead.

Positive suggestion on the topic.

Practical applications and suggestions would be helpful. Writing and creative ideas for works of literature would be useful.

Effective uses of various teaching and editing strategies.

Creative ways in which students can be used to help correct themes. A way that would be beneficial to them, their peers, and the teacher.

Honest help is needed to do a good job for students that also allows teachers time to prepare lessons for the next day, not just give short cuts that only have frustrated students and guilt-ridden teachers.

I'm not quite sure at this point. I guess I'd like to know how to get students to change some of their poor writing habits after I have commented on their papers. What would have the most impact on students's behavior in writing.

Too complex--too detailed, take weeks to do simple project. Or they tend to ignore large blocks of writing skills, only one aspect. Often do not apply to practical use with my students.

They can't suffice.

More practical "hands-on" approach.

Sample student essays and types of correction could be helpful.

Peer review.

Less "publishable," more realistic hints. Sample theme with 3 ways to correct, etc.

I do not have any brilliant ideas.

Models.

Not good in thinking skills.

More diagrams, more standardized.

Wider variety of samples from different levels of writing ability.

More practical suggestions.

My best ideas have grown from 18 years experience in trying to teach students how to write effectively. Many ideas also developed through discussion with colleagues.

I think the *English Journal* offers good ideas on lessening one's workload, but there are few of the journals which deal specifically with writing.

More actual illustrations of theme corrections.

At too high a level--should be more practical.

Practical--good toward the teachers of poor writers, which most high school students are.

Any help.

I'm not sure they can help. Present philosophy is too varied.

Teaching thinking skills. Examples of good essays--done by peers.

More on research results and practical usage in classroom situations.

<u>One article each issue on correcting papers</u>! Written by English teachers, not a bunch of Ph.Ds/Ed.Ds who are out of touch with the high school classroom.

Too many "journals" want to sell something (a program)! Most are used by college instructors in that they must print--and which English teacher has time to read them if he is doing a decent job in the classroom and spending time with his family! Good grief!

I find that <u>some</u> articles are written by authors/students/teachers who, I believe, have shallow educational backgrounds and recommend approaches causing persons to share their various ignorances, inadequacies. Again, we must have far better prepared teachers of English.

APPENDIX L

Q39c. Open-Ended Responses: *If there were a national standardized structure prescribed for themes, do you think it would be easier or not be easier for students to master this kind of composition than the present system that rests on the views of a succession of teachers? What objections do you think would be raised by high school English teachers about such standardized structures?*

Limits creativity.

We would have "robotized" writing--yuck!

Many.

This standardized system would limit creativity and unique problem-solving techniques.

Organization is subjective.

Lack of individual instruction.

Lack of creativity.

Probably that it lacks creativity and individuality of expression.

Destroys creativity, making a creative process a rote-learning experience.

It's a ridiculous idea!

Cannot adapt to learning styles of students.

Conformity.

Boring, discourages creativity.

Loss of creativity.

Structure prescriptions might be too restrictive, stifling creativity. Standardized criteria for grading might be helpful.

Too rote. I see it good for some kinds of students and too mechanical for others.

My concerns would center around the tendency of students to grasp desperately any "formula" we give them and hold onto it for dear life. It is very difficult then to free them up to try new forms.

Federal control.

Doesn't allow for creativity.

Lack creativity, spontaneity, evidence of persona.

Lack of opportunity for creativity, development of style, development of original ideas.

Boring mechanical writing.

Boring, pointless, uncreative; would remove writing even farther from students' lives and needs.

Students should be taught formats and formulas, but they need to be taught style and voice also.

Established teachers may be inflexible.

Content determines structure, limits creativity, experiencing different views from a succession of teachers is a benefit.

Real, interesting, truthful writing cannot exist within the structures I've seen. Students are bored with their writing--and so am I!

Inflexible, does not allow for individual differences/input.

Possible form types of themes without real content.

Too stilted--not allowing for individual expression.

Stifles creativity.

Most teachers of writing provide somewhat "standardized structures" for theme writing. I don't see need for national standards.

Horrible! Written form in writing is organic--depends on what kind of writing, topic, etc. Learning to write is learning to provide best form for content.

Have you read any of the research on writing?

It might be, but it sounds horrible--regimens.

Standardization stifles creativity and fosters group thought. I am against it.

Deadly dull! Stifles creativity. Locks us in a form.

Lack of creativity, thinking, in terms of structure to meet purpose.

It would lose individuality in both teachers and students.

Rigidity in approach. Unimaginative and non-innovative. Stifling of professional, literate instincts in connections by qualified teachers.

Production of clone essays. Lack of creativity.

Simplistic, too stifling, lack of creativity, robotic.

Just that--they talk about standardization--the creative element is eliminated.

Loss of teacher control and innovation.

The teacher needs the prerogative to establish the purpose of a writing assignment. Ideally, writing assignments should arise from experiences and subject matter spontaneously, in or out of the classroom.

Creativity, thinking patterns.

Less creativity. Memos get ignored, why not papers?

Too rigid, takes away thinking skills, takes away creativity.

Where's the ability of the student to show their creativity?

Sounds like a "formula" for me!

Takes away individuality.

The plastic quality of the procedure would make checking like opening a can of beans.

This is not requiring mastery to the point that the student could generate his/her own.

Bureaucracy correcting essays? What an appalling spectre!

Local teachers would want to develop and be able to expand, modify structures.

This idea squelches creativity in some students.

Creativity would be stifled.

Teaching to a format does not necessarily guarantee that students will learn to write well. Personal philosophy weights area unequally.

Not all writing follows any one structure. Such a structure would stifle creativity.

Lack of creativity, stifling of originality, above-average students would suffer.

The students would not learn that there is more than one way to do something. The papers would lack creativity and originality.

Takes away teaching style. Individuality for the student and teacher alike would be lost.

Unrealistic, not suited to individual writers.

That the writers of such a program are inaccurate, poorly trained teachers.

Limits creativity, restricts teachers' freedom to adapt methods to needs of class.

I think English teachers would not favor proposal. Would restrict teachers' flexibility, students' creativity.

Why would we want such a thing? We still have to deal with some people's conviction that all writing is divisible into units.

People do not think in standardized patterns. Students are turned off by standardized patterns. We would take the voice of personalization out of writing.

No creativity.

Who would establish the standard? Would it be those who write the textbooks?

Limits creativity.

The idea may be logical, but the regimentation involved would be absolutely stifling. I personally would hate to have to teach in this way.

Too wooden and dull.

Too mechanical.

Suppression of academic freedom.

It would eliminate creativity. Students dislike writing and this would make them dislike [it] more.

We'd never be able to agree on the rules. If we did, it would be too cumbersome to me.

Writing is not _ever_ meant to be boxed strictly into a form.

This does _not_ teach critical thinking skills. "Cooking" a recipe theme is a completely different skill.

It smells of automations!

Lacks individualism and curtails creativity.

They do not allow creativity and for differences in style (which changes from time to time).

Some are so set in their ways that they just wouldn't do it.

"Here we go again..." The 5-6 paragraph essay pattern is widely taught–extremely uninteresting year after year.

This is a horrendously shackling idea. Teachers would not do it. Why not use computers instead of teachers?

The fact that they produce terrible, dull, unclear writing that is useful only in schools and kill the interest of students and teachers.

College teachers already tell us we are killing voice.

One has to respond to the needs of each class not to the dictates of some committee somewhere.

Too mechanical.

It doesn't seem to allow for the creative student who goes beyond the scope of the assignment; it straight-jackets creativity. I'd resist such a standard.

Standardization, no style!

Most would object to having to learn a new system.

Students do need to know the conventions, but must also learn to play with themes, violate them purposefully.

Rigid--stifles creativity.

Too restrictive, uncreative.

It doesn't sound like it would have much room for individuality, or creativity.

Who decides what the standard is? Is there some latitude for updating the standard? Are we eliminating creativity?

Writing would become too monotonous. Creativity lessened--everyone writes like a computer program.

Form becomes more important than content. Reduction in creativity. Form for a good writer is part of the creative process.

Writing is a creative process--standardized structure would forbid creativity and be a bore to read.

This could be deadly for creativity in writing and limit the individuality of student assignments (could grade on scan tron?)

Takes away creativity (but that could come later and can be incorporated into pattern).

It doesn't seem like it leaves room for individual creativity, writing styles and approaches (thinking) for the students.

They are a starting point only, a basis. Mastery leads to stylistic development.

Dumb idea--writing is of ideas, not math--where would Whitman be?

It's too arbitrary and not individual enough.

Takes away individual preferences, a problem students will face throughout life.

Creative, individual thinking might be lost.

Not teach thinking skills, differences in student needs.

Lack of variety for individual differences.

Such a method produces mechanical rather than personal writing.

Dulls individual style.

Research shows that is <u>not</u> how people learn to write effectively.

Inhibits creativity, too boring.

Lack of individuality, but that's not an issue in 90% of real-world jobs real-world students will have.

Does not allow for individual differences.

Expository writing follows nearly universal norms...the creative types would object that a formula stifles creativity.

It squelches the development of individual style and destroys motivation. Students lost the impetus to write because they must express themselves as automatons.

Lessen creativity, don't want to change their own way.

Stubbornness.

Boring after 3-4 years. It conveys only one aspect of writing.

Fear of losing "freedom." That they really may have to have a solid knowledge base. Fear of having own ignorance revealed.

Teachers are individuals, so are students. If you want to improve student's writing you work on individual strength and weaknesses.

Stifles creativity.

Too structured--would not allow enough creativity, flexibility. Themes would suffer from "sameness."

Style, creativity, spontaneity.

Stiff formula writing.

Individual teachers have individual excellence.

It would make no allowance for the gifted writer who subverts or totally ignores the structure. Also, it is counter to what current theory says is the way we learn to write.

Students write best when choosing own topics.

Papers would be hopelessly boring to write as well as to read and are basically unrelated to real life and real writing experience.

Who decides? Kids in different areas have different needs. We may get to the same place, but we need to teach as we're comfortable.

It kills creativity, initiative, individuality.

Loss of creativity—even in "practical" papers. Sincere doubt that such a system could or should exist.

Freedom to allow students to create.

It removes the individual from teaching.

I have heard the objection that it stifles creativity. I disagree. Understanding structure is very liberating for students.

They would be very concerned about individual ideas and creativity exiting the scene.

It could possibly hamper creativity.

Doesn't allow for creative elements in student writing.

This sort of standardized system cannot possibly enhance the students' appreciation of their ability to use the language.

Lack of creativity, too much structure.

Your themes would be stagnant and totally unrealistic.

Lack of thinking.

Impairs creativity—makes all writing the same, therefore boring.

Pushing a standardized, less creative approach might be seen as being an infringement upon individuality.

Too limiting, impersonal. Positive comments are the best.

Horrors! Don't do it! We are not computers putting out standardized programs.

Lack of creativity.

Boring and inadequate to stimulate good writing.

It inhibits the development of personal style. It inhibits the right-brain thinkers. No one formula is best for every writer and every occasion. Not everyone agrees on what the standard structure should be.

Stifle all creativity. Students would only do what they had to do to pass a theme of this kind.

It's standardization!

Too much regiment might stifle creativity for some.

Limits student-centered work—disguises student's voice.

Too rigid—there are many acceptable formats.

After 20 years of correcting, a teacher would be slowed down by the standardized techniques.

Too restrictive.

They don't want someone looking over their shoulder.

Infringement on academic freedom.

Too confining. Stifling. Create poorly written, but well-organized work.

Lack of creativity. Not relevant to real work of future grocery clerks, mechanics, hairdressers.

Change in programs and materials.

Themes must be more individual.

Lack of flexibility for variations in writer.

There is no apparent real-world structure that is consistent.

It would lower the quality of writing expected.

Real writers avoid them—form should be designed to fit content—not content to prosaic pseudo-logical forms.

It restricts creativity.

Have you ever known three English teachers in total agreement about anything?

Too tightly structured—not enough individual creativity.

No room for creativity.

"Forcing into a mold."

Too restrictive.

For consideration of voice and purpose (doesn't allow). Makes it a depersonalized process.

Who cares? Sounds too cut/dried—everyone the same!

Too cut and dried, prescriptive, boring.

You must be kidding! We teach intro-body-conclusion from elementary school on. To try to force all writers in a "formal essay" mechanical approach with thesis always in paragraph, one would be robot writing—a travesty of creative thinking.

They are too artificial. I believe research shows the complex task composing is.

Artificially stilted.

Basic structure for guidelines is fine. A set form for all writing—should everyone wear the same style, have the same doctor, live in the same style home? NO!

Why impose an artificial structure that would confuse students by making them think there is only one way to write, and ultimately stifle any true writing ability?

Don't know—I make my own "standardized" procedures and try to get students to follow it.

Since writing and thought are related and we arrive at conclusions differently...learning styles...this would suit sequential people.

Less of "local" control.

They are not based on an accurate view of the writing process nor on what writing process nor on what writing should be about. I believe computers will be able to "write" following a standardized structure.

Would stifle creativity.

A teacher who recognizes good writing doesn't need a prescription approach. Good writing is good writing. Period.

Composition is not a standardized skill. It's totally individual.

Lack of creativity.

Discourages creativity.

It obviously will hinder creativity and stress form over the brevity of language. It may not consider purpose and audience adequately.

Selecting actual student's thinking is inhibited by too much form--content more important.

Eliminates creativity, voice, critical/abstract thinking.

Let the "real world" turn them (students) into drudges. I want to teach kids to think critically--to choose their own style of communication, to write out of love, not duty. To turn them into storytellers. I'm sure William Bennett would be troubled by this (so don't tell him I said it!), but education is a subversive activity.

What happens to individual style/originality?

Too stunted.

APPENDIX M

<u>Q44a. Open-Ended Responses</u>:   *Briefly, why do you think correcting themes is related to burnout?*

It's the time involved outside the school. I become resentful seeing my family involved in activities while I'm correcting the last 40 essays.

Too many students in each class with too many classes--why not pool money for readers and get another teacher so classes can be smaller?

It's an activity which requires use of the [intellectual] faculties; if done "correctly," at an extremely high level, and coupled with disruptions and the "grind" of it over long periods, it is exhausting.

It is the least enjoyable aspect of teaching.

Time spent outside of work day.

Time, frustrations, lack of progress.

It devours weekends and evenings and deprives me of a normal life in off hours.

Time required, reading essentially <u>same</u> responses.

It's incredibly tedious and time consuming. I sometimes think we would be better teachers if we spent the same time and effort improving our own writing.

One loses one's energy and excitement after years and years of <u>not making</u> or <u>seeing progress</u>.

Time involved.

This, added to other obligations is too much stress--always seem to be behind.

Too much out of school time is required for teachers.

Takes so much time (at home--unpaid).

Time!! My eyes are getting weaker and weaker--and who cares?

The same infractions are encountered and often no improvement noted.

<u>Numbers!!</u>

It's such a tedious, time-consuming task.

Amount of time required out of school. Lack of student retention of concepts. Lack of student proofreading.

After a full day of work, we still must put in time to get on top of the paper load.

Time consuming. Repetitive and seemingly non-productive.

At home time is spent away from family involvement. No chance to shift gears once home.

It is very discouraging to find out that one's students, who look and talk reasonably intelligently, write like morons. The sheer numbers find me down.

Time commitment, narrowing of social contacts in school and out.

Too much time--too frustrating to read so much poor writing.

The time involved.

So much of it has to be done during personal time, outside of school. We are trying to plan out and correct at the same time.

Time involved--planning is more "fun."

It requires too much time in contrast to that given to work by teachers of other subjects. A "communications" English teacher spends too much time period on writing to students, too little time on reading.

When class sizes go up, number of essays to read increases. Parents and administrators, etc. are DEMANDING more writing. We cannot give more, teaching six periods of 25-30 kids.

Because it's an every night occurrence; and includes many weekends--My colleagues feel a great responsibility to their students; they believe in immediate feedback.

It takes up too many weekends and every night.

It's so discouraging, sometimes I wonder, "Why bother?"

This is an "after the workday" task. Therefore English teachers put in not only school hours but evening hours.

Use of one's evenings and weekends. I have very little time for myself or family.

Because it takes so much time that there is little time left to read, write, or enjoy personal things.

It's a state of mind. If one convinces himself that he's "burned out," he is.

There is no "recuperation" time from the job when you teach 40 hours a week and correct another 30 hours each week.

If writing to learn across the curriculum were REAL--our task would be easier. Do we get EXTRA DUTY pay for those piles of papers? I can't just toss a ball out; can't just say "right/wrong" (math). I can't always easily demonstrate (science, physics, math) the formula or procedure is on the board. That is why I do get tired.

I have a greater outside-of-class workload than most of my colleagues.

For a teacher to do an adequate job correcting themes, he/she must devote time outside the classroom. No one else can do the work except the teacher. There aren't enough hours in the day!

It's hard work and it takes too many after school hours. Plus, teachers give dull assignments that they hate grading almost as much as students hate writing.

To teach how to write is a joy—to correct every paper, every error, is death. The kids write 1 hour—English teachers spend up to 24 man hours correcting; 1 hour joy vs. 24 death=burnout.

Takes so much time and effort.

Time out of class should be spent in preparation, not correction.

Time involved compared to student reaction. I do not let them throw away corrected themes while they're still in my room. I feel since I've read each at least twice, they can read what I say.

Correcting themes takes time. I could be devoting it to my health and well-being.

Repetitive work. To much time involved.

Time and energy. Repetitiveness of writing quality (or lack of).

Takes too much time away from other interests, activities, and responsibilities.

We weren't taught how to correct themes. Every paper (assignment) is different. Large classes.

The time involved—there is always a stack of papers to do. This means either being worn down doing theme all or the guilt involved by doing nothing with them.

Time consuming—often don't see the incorporation of what you've just taught.

Time.

Repetition, humdrum, non-teaching task, depressing, time consuming and defeating.

Requires too much of a teacher's "outside time."

Because of number of hours spent and constant pressure to get them completed.

A good English teacher probably always has a stack of papers to correct. We correct for more than content, which is often all other teachers look at in their required papers.

Time consuming. Dealing with negative aspect of writing—correction.

The total number of hours spent outside school.

Reading. Beauty of "red" ink.

Students' improvement is difficult to measure, and is not in proportion to energy spent by teacher's correcting.

The time spent in correcting.

Expressive repetition--continued work after school hours.

It is often futile work, ignored by students.

Time element.

It takes so blasted long to do a thorough job--very tedious.

Teachers have less time for themselves--I know, I'm grading papers while my friends are hiking or going to the movies. I get tired, depressed, resentful.

Time factor--lost time at home with family.

C'mon! There's more to life...they do take time from one's reading, thinking, living. One has to chose between preparation and returning papers--often!

It is so time consuming and unappreciated, yet you know it is necessary.

My master's thesis listed paperwork as a variable related to burnout. I think a lot of teachers need to learn how to stagger their paper load.

It takes so much time out of the classroom.

Takes up ponderous amounts of time.

Not enough school time is allowed. Must be time taken out of private life.

Time pressures and stress due to deadlines.

Tremendous out-of-class workload. Some pay for heavy homework load as math, etc. who have no outside prep. Huge energy drain orchestrating listening groups.

Same errors are made over and over.

Time and energy consumption.

Energy spent=BURNOUT.

It increases time spent away from school on paperwork.

Teaching writing requires a great deal of out of school time. To avoid burnout, many teachers assign fewer themes.

Frustration. Time--increases workload. Student reaction of hurt, anger, or insult of "written once is all you get."

The answer is obvious--it's tedious and not necessarily fulfilling or gratifying.

It isn't; handling discipline and attendance problems burns teachers out.

Results (improvements) in writing are so minimal. The input far exceeds the product results.

It is time consuming. Most of us do other things as drama, newspaper, yearbook, etc.

Overload--frustration in attempts to do the best possible job.

It takes away from our time at home; it's a constant burden; poor writers don't respond to comments on their themes; and I get sick of reading theme. I feel frustrated by the time it takes versus the time I have for writing.

The kids don't seem to care about improving their writing, but only about their grades.

Teachers live with comments and corrections that are seldom recognized by the student.

Additional and consistent "do" required of English teachers (unlike many other teachers in other departments).

It is so time consuming, there is no time left to do life-enhancing things.

Time, effort, caring for students.

Too much time, repetition (even with different topics) inability to do the kind of job I would like to do.

Amount of extra time and energy involved for no compensation denegrate the teachers self-warmth over several years in contrast to those who are compensated for their extra time contributions. The old argument that it's "part of the English teacher's job" doesn't hold up against padded athletic budgets involving overtime.

Too many evening hour when P.E. teachers are out exercising, S.S. teachers are attending lectures, math teachers are playing cards, and administrators are watching TV.

We're doing all the work--students are producing--thus, little gratification results from one's efforts.

You have absolutely no free time; you end up working 16 hours a day.

The more writing classes one teaches increases the number of papers. District requirement of a writing assignment per week, per writing class.

Time-consuming and emotionally draining.

This is exhausting, unpaid, unrecognized work.

Excessive time demands when average size of classes are so large.

Most of us try to help students make up "lost" training from past years. If students did not come to us as far behind as they are, we would not need to backtrack as much.

Hardest and most boring part of English teaching--littlest improvement shown over long haul.

Because it is a negative drain of positive energy.

Students often don't appreciate the extra help.

The teacher sees the same mistakes over and over throughout the year. Some students take a whole school year to finally catch on and improve. This is like a garbage collector seeing the same junk over and over. The job becomes boring and futile.

The time commitment is tremendous along with the other responsibilities of an English teacher.

Amount of time required out of school. Lack of student retention of concepts. Lack of student proofreading.

It devours weekends and evenings and deprives the teacher of a normal life in his off hours.

Teachers are accustomed to reading first-class literature during their training, and then are bombarded with "garbage."

Many teachers cannot accept that teaching English involves at least 10 hours a week grading papers (in addition to time spent planning lessons).

We do more hours of work than anyone around for no more pay. Ask a full-time, 2-3 preps, advanced Language Arts teachers how much free time he/she gets.

Finding time! But I enjoy the themes!

Frustration at the quality of writing, boredom from repetition, amount of time needed to do a good job.

Evenings and weekends become devoted to hours of correcting and planning. NO time for recovering from a week. Families neglected. I always spend all day Sunday and sometimes all day Saturdays doing school work.

It takes so much time to do it right--we don't get a break in the evenings; we don't get a break on the weekends--and we don't get compensated for our extra time. On top of that, progress seems so slow--[lack of] improvement.

Everyone (including English teachers) expects so much in this area.

Going home exhausted after 6 classes and 5 preps doesn't leave much time for correcting papers and living.

Time involved in correcting takes you away from other responsibilities.

So much time for so little improvement.

Because to do a good job takes time and we don't have much of that.

The amount of hours (unpaid) spent outside the whole day.

Time--English teachers have little time during the school year for anything resembling a social life.

There are no times of leisure--evenings, weekends, holidays--when we are free from stacks of papers. Life is drudging.

Time factor outside of class. Tedious task. Not appreciated for effort.

Generally, this is homework--so any supplemental reading cannot be prepared and the lessons are less meaningful. By this time--I am tired.

Overtime...lack of sleep...neglected family.

English teachers spend too much private time in correcting papers. We need a break between school time and our private lives.

For proper attention, each student needs a one-to-one overview as well as discussion of his writing. And most pay no heed.

It takes a lot of time and energy and is not emotionally rewarding.

English teacher should have a prep period for each composition class they teach.

Our day drags out immeasurably. We have less time for research and planning.

It's agonizing. It's tiresome to read "awful" writing. It's hard to see any real improvement.

Too much work.

Never ending.

Repetitive.

English teachers work more at home than other teachers, and they resent having the extra work.

Time involved in relation to other demands on a teacher's time.

Correction requires fresh energy. This is a scarce commodity. Classroom teaching produces fatigue. Correction takes time from family and recreation.

Time and energy consuming...it's a commitment majority of other teachers <u>don't</u> have to make.

Because we often spend more time and energy (physical and emotional) correcting themes than students do writing them.

Time involved--emotional pressure stress of "exacting" analysis.

It gets old fast.

No personal life--all devoted to correcting.

Teachers tire from reading essays over and over; they tend to repeat.

My colleagues are spending comparable amounts of time--all feel the same. We are unable to disengage from our work because of the sheer volume of student writing generated by 130 students a day; weekends, evenings, holidays are largely given over to grading and planning.

Primarily because it takes away from the other important aspect of the job; time could be spent preparing new or improving old ideas.

After school hours, taking the job home. In general, English teachers work harder than other teachers because of correcting compositions.

Weekends, evenings, pressure to get them all done well--all adds up to time.

It can be very ominous to face a stack of themes that will take you many hours over and over again.

Teachers have far too many other responsibilities with planning, coordinating and organization to be concerned about correcting all these papers.

Typically, English teachers are some of the most burned-out people I know. We handle the bulk of the paperwork in the average high school, and we tend to compare our "loads" with our peers. Shooting hoops doesn't equal a batch of research reports!

The time and concentration necessary to give beneficial feedback.

Too much homework. Little improvement shown in students' writing.,

Because you cannot keep up the pace of papers every night and ever relax in the evening.

Boredom/volume.

I do not think theme writing alone is the cause.

Much effort for minimal/immediate return.

Because it can be very boring; yet you feel a responsibility to read carefully.

It involves such an extraordinary amount of time.

Monotony.

Because skill levels are so notoriously diverse in each class.

It is very time consuming and exhausting if you have an average of 150 papers a week to correct.

Because the pressure of returning papers in X time and returning the same quality of written material, over the same subject areas, year after year.

On own hours amount of time spent grading.

You spend hours reading papers that are an embarrassing thing to your time and preparation for instruction.

Excessive homework.

All work and no play.

Because of large class loads mainly--I live in a dream world here. However, since I have switched to writing as a process, I find myself assigning fewer themes and spending more time in class on the ones I do assign and we write more short pieces.

Many hours outside of school--unpaid hours too.

It takes time and it's hard to see what good the time does.

Time outside of school spent correcting. Time reading the same themes over and over.

Time consuming; energy draining. Sometimes frustrating when there's little or no improvement.

Guilt.

Time; frustration that students aren't learning or listening.

Too much work to do--not enough time to think of creative things to do.

Time consuming! Stress! Most h.s. writers are weak and grading takes time.

Great deadline pressure.

Teachers "fix" things for students rather than giving students the skills to edit their own writing.

Because I feel guilty when I don't get to papers in good time. I feel overwhelmed by the time I take to teach writing well.

I think a quality English teacher values the teaching of writing and the process involved in writing. Many hours needed for personal time end up giving to the teaching and monitoring of writing assignments.

Always have a stack of papers to correct. No time for normal life at home or socializing with friends.

Working 60 hour weeks is exhausting--mentally and physically.

Too much time out of your personal day for the payoff in kids' writing unless you do it often.

Correcting themes is probably the most consuming aspect of teaching English. With the budget crisis and the corresponding increased class load because of the staff reductions, it has become increasingly more difficult to do an adequate job of teaching this.

It is a never ending job--always there.

It is exhausting, time-consuming work. Enough time is not allowed at school so you are taking late nights on your own time.

Teachers with large classes do not have the time to assign and read numerous papers and for students to improve their writing they must do.

I work an additional 20-30 hours a month outside school time correcting papers, not to mention other preparations.

Writing as a process takes more time and energy. A teacher works more closely with student writing--more variety to self-generated pieces.

I don't know--I want to teach drama and speech! I find teaching 4 sections of the same class mind-numbing--I like the variety drama and speech offer--more direct action.

To do it well it takes for-fucking-ever and grading is not as much fun as reading.

So much of it has to be done during personal time, outside of school. We are trying to plan and correct at the same time.

Too much out of school time is required for teaching.

After 20 years of teaching, it is the only phase of my job that I really hate to do. I still like my classroom activities and preparation, but the paper load gets in the way of all other phases of the job.

This is a difficult task if done correctly.

Takes so much time and energy--always lots of homework.

Time, lack of improvement.

When I taught part time, I put in about an 8 hour day. Now that I teach full time, I often average a 12 hour day. Much of that is spent correcting papers.

I feel like I am being buried in a mountain of paperworks which includes paperwork unrelated to themes as well. I don't feel as though I am accomplishing anything with students and their writing. I see the same poor writing assignment after assignments.

Too many hours involved and I won't cut corners and cheat my students—it's all or nothing and the all kills me.

We spend so much time grading that it interferes with personal life and health.

It is so time consuming and can take up weekends. Also, it can be monotonous.

Hours involved in the job.

The paperwork is never ending. Takes time away from other things such as developing creative lessons, etc.

The same infractions are encountered and often no improvement noted.

Every night—papers, papers, papers!

Grading themes requires hours of intellectual alertness that other kinds of grading do not demand.

Time consuming—often don't see the incorporation of what you've just taught.

APPENDIX N

What solution(s) would you suggest for the fatigue problem?

An extra prep period for English teachers.

According to my superintendent--do more assignments that can be corrected in class. Who knows? Sleep every chance I get.

Grade only specific areas of an essay (only 1st, middle, and last paragraph).

I sleep for three hours--say, from 11 p.m. till 2 a.m.--and then continue.

Fewer students.

Fewer papers.

Lower class loads!

Fewer students, ergo, few themes, ergo, fewer hours.

Plan a good time to correct (for me early morning). Read in pleasant, quiet environment a few at a time.

Smaller class load would decrease the number of themes that might be read in a sitting. Readers could focus on spelling and mechanics, leaving the teacher more time to concentrate on structure, content, style, etc.

Correct when fresh, not fatigued.

More school hours allotted to grading. Nor making it something extra that the teacher must get done on her own time.

Do themes in small bundles.

Allow English teachers to teach 4 periods and use the "free" time for work during work day.

Assign them with other obligations in mind.

Less papers, more turnaround time.

Frequent breaks, daytime and evenings free.

Thoroughly grade fewer papers, more prep. time for English teachers during school day.

Readers. Smaller class loads. More peer groups editing level. Creative grading strategies.

Less papers, less kids, more prep time.

Allow more in school time for teachers to correct themes.

Don't assign themes.

It has affected me and then I decided to read more holistically.

Cut down on the number of themes to grade.

Less students per class therefore less time spent. One extra period for English teachers to correct themes.

Fewer students, fewer classes.

Smaller class size.

Having theme readers (your idea). Workshops to teach to correct (your idea).

Walks/hobbies/assign fewer papers periodically. English teachers brain-storming...trained readers.

Get up, walk around, go pee, whatever.

Correct papers when you're "fresh."

Take No-Doze. Take pseudepinepine. Read at the time of day I'm most awake--mornings. Read papers only over Winter and Spring break.

English teachers need early morning prep periods. All English teacher should be given 2 prep periods--1 for grading--1 for actual preparation.

Grade briefly--put down--go back to it later. Allow peer editing groups to evaluate much of the writing.

Fewer students.

Fewer students per class.

Less papers.

Hiring readers is possible. One less course to teach for writing teachers. Correct for fewer requirements on a given essay.

Less writing to correct.

Fewer themes, smaller classes.

Extra prep time (a.m.).

Try to stay away from the need to correct student work at the end of a day already filled with "stand up" lecture.

Smaller classes. Not having so many extra curricular teaching assignments. I coach drama and do play productions as well as teaching four English classes.

Grade a few then a break--Repeat!

Grade papers in the morning or a time of day when you are fresh.

Not correct every theme closely. Use readers. Shorter themes.

Resign and do something else.

Take a break from school before correcting. Go for a walk, hike, dance, hike--do something physical. Then sit down to correct.

Coffee--frequent breaks.

Making fewer assignments; however, I wouldn't be doing my job, would I?

Extra prep time for theme--assigning fewer themes or readers hired.

I get up early in A.M. when my mind is clear.

Smaller English classes.

Fewer papers to correct; better writers; time during the school day to correct papers.

More school time to grade.

If I'm tired, I put them away. I generally grade in the A.M.--rested, full of coffee.

I grade mornings--early afternoons or weekends. I've learned about my personal skills in this time area.

Work only for a certain amount of time then stop. Don't try to reduce the mountain in one night to (dare I say it?) a molehill. Anthill. Do I dare eat a peach?

Check at the same time of day.

Stop grading when you get tired. Plan so that you only get one batch of essays at a time. Exercise so you don't get tired.

More electives at the high school level--heavy writing and grammar stress in elementary and 7th and 8th grades. Special attention to skills and rote memorization of rules.

Frankly, I fall asleep "on the job"--I mean, at the table where I'm correcting at home! I've trained my students to not expect their essays back immediately.

Fewer compositions--but that only helps me. Students improve only with practice.

Smaller class for English and fewer class (4 per day). Extra prep time.

Don't work when you are too tired (if that is possible).

Schedule smaller groups of papers for grading. Provide more school time for grading papers.

Extra period during work day for correcting themes.

Change places. Check them, try not to do so many at a time. Avoid marathon correcting project when possible.

More hours in the day. More prep time to writing teachers. Smaller classes. Theme readers.

Do correcting short periods each day for a week rather than doing them all in one sitting.

Fewer students. Typing requirement for all freshman. Correcting typewritten papers is 3 times easier.

Be fresh and refreshed. Smaller class loads.

Coffee--readers.

Smaller classes. More prep time. Readers. Holistic course sheets.

Correct early in day.

Less load. More themes assigned by other teachers.

Fewer total students. One more prep period. Stress just one/two items. Grade holistically.

Another prep period. I teach 5 different preparations each day.

Exercise. Rescheduling of correcting time.

Readers.

Time for correcting papers should be provided earlier in the day.

Be aware of it and try to be honest with yourself and try to compensate for the tendency.

Smaller class size. Our school has a writing lab manned by University tutors.

Rest oftener, taking more time to correct. Have help with correcting.

Smaller class size.

Full time readers or release time for English teachers.

Some sleep--a day off. Exercise.

Reading papers in early morning hours. Reading only a few (10-15) at one time.

A limit of 4 classes per day so reading/correcting could be done in the course of the day not at night or weekends.

Assign less themes. Let students do more of their own "correcting." Don't "correct" everything. Exercise, eat right, find another job.

Response time during the teaching day. Readers. Lighter loads.

Let me go home to do this--not "supervision."

Use peer editing as much as possible to lighten the load. Set small goals, take frequent short breaks--drink strong tea. Give the students and teacher a break of a couple days before beginning a new assignment.

Fewer students, fewer themes.

Finding a time when you are fresh. I usually do them early in the morning since I'm an early riser anyway.

Grade papers in the morning.

Free time for theme correcting.

Do a little at a time. Take frequent breaks. Don't stress over it. The job will never be done. Realize you will always have to grade a few papers daily; it's part of the job. Try to enjoy it. Good background music, something non-alcoholic to drink, good lighting, a comfortable desk or chair, and a pleasant view (if possible) are helps. Try not to be obsessed.

I drink more stronger coffee.

Smaller classes, readers, fewer preps, etc.

Do not grade when under stress, very tired or frustrated.

Don't assign themes.

One less teaching period in the day to correct themes.

Grading the assignments over a larger (longer) period of time.

Less papers to grade. Longer time getting papers back.

More time, take breaks.

Take breaks, if possible.

Fewer papers at a time.

Take fewer papers at a time. Stagger assignments in classes so that one never has 130 themes due at one time. Peer editing improves the quality of writing somewhat and cuts down on teacher/editor time.

I do not attempt too many at one sitting.

Fewer students.

Grade in short spurts of 1/2 hour to 95 minutes. Handle only a "few" papers at a time.

Get more sleep.

Rest.

Having more time during the school day for correcting themes.

Hire a reader.

If I'm too tired at night, I get up a t 4:00 a.m. and correct. I try to be "fresh" and alert.

Fewer non-teaching duties.

Sleep--wake up at 4:30 a.m.--it helps.

More time in the day.

Fewer students.

Take more frequent breaks. Move around. Vary the room, surroundings when correcting themes.

Assigning fewer themes; but that contradicts purpose.

An extra free period when teaching two or more writing classes.

More prep time and lots of Coca Cola.

Train students from late elementary age on to use listening/editing groups. Train students better in basic grammar at early elementary age. Improve self concept to learners in remedial classes through positive reinforcement in peer listening groups.

Less workload.

Grade at home in pleasant environment.

Frequent breaks. Not correcting all at once. Taking months to evaluate overall style; oral review with student helping find mistakes.

Get sleep.

Time should be used for reaching one day and correcting on the next day--should be part of contract time. Would be expensive, but if writing skills is a priority, districts should prove it by not relying on "volunteer" time.

Extra prep period for English teachers (or readers) so themes don't have to be corrected at night.

Doing a small number in one sitting.

More prep time.

English writing teachers teach 4 classes with an additional period to evaluate. Students write several essays and turn in their choice of most effective for grading.

Lengthen turnaround time.

Rapid/holistic reading.

Staggering assignments so I do not have too many at once. Taking breaks-- which increases time.

Don't do it all at once.

I try to space correction of themes into groups of five to ten papers.

10 papers at one sitting.

Take breaks from the task--quiet environment; no distractions.

Shoot speed? Be willing to grade--less depth to obtain speed.

Fewer students.

I stop and wait to correct at home.

Extra prep.

Don't assign themes.

Don't grade everything. Be more process oriented.

More prep time to grade themes.

Correct a small number then take a short rest.

Fewer students in class.

Read papers early in the day.

I read the poorest written papers. The papers that require the most comments/questions from me. Usually, I go through all of the papers making corrections. Then I grade them.

Fewer themes.

Grade 15 papers per session and proceed to other duties.

Grade 3 papers and take an hour's break.

Do a few at a time.

Break corrections into groups.

Take breaks.

Stop correcting.

Take breaks. Use various methods to determine quality of papers. I attended a worthwhile workshop given by two women from Boise State at an NCTE conference.

Allow more time to read the papers before correcting at one sitting.

Have fewer students, therefore fewer papers.

Breaking up reading time—half to whole dozen at a sitting.

I stop correcting when I feel my judgment is slipping.

Always correct in morning. Stop when tired. Fewer assignments or classes.

Sleep. Reading in short session 3 or 4 papers at a time. Another prep period for teachers to be left alone to read papers. (It is nearly impossible to do grading at school with the interruptions I get, however).

Correct themes early in the day.

Fewer classes...lighter loads...readers...peer editing.

Stop when you're tired.

Take small groups at a time and take a break between.

Don't do too many at one time. Assign only what you can handle well.

Time of day--correcting in quiet area--not classroom or office.

I take a break when I start to feel tired (it is usually preceded by "I don't want to do this anymore.")

Smaller writing classes. Peer editing groups.

Teach less--we teach 6 classes!

Smaller classes.

More prep periods, fewer classes.

Variety of subjects. Variety of activities interspersed with correcting student editing groups.

Group theme writing. Staggered assignment schedule. Alternative writing.

Correct papers when fresh.

Give me 2 less classes, fewer students, or a reader.

Spread out the time.

Teachers need to be assigned fewer classes so that they can do an adequate job.

Less pressure to be put on by myself for getting themes graded and back in a timely fashion.

Few students papers to read. You can attack about 100 with enthusiasm but 150 seems to be overwhelming.

It doesn't because of a heavy load when I'm tired.

Limit the number corrected at one time.

A period during the day for grading.

Do it in small portions. Fatigue affects anything we do--it affects teachers, lawyers, nurses, etc.

I must stop (and not go back until the next day) after no more than 2 hours. This, in turn, increases return delay; impacts future writing (which may be delayed-- why pile up too much?) Feed back is needed before going on.

Try to do small batches at a time. Try to work in themes from one class at a time.

APPENDIX O

<u>Q51a. Open-End Responses</u>: *Do you find that noise affects or does not affect your concentration when you are marking themes? What remedy, if any, do you use?*

Try to find a quiet place to work. Postpone work until I can find quiet.

Try and remove as many distractions as I can.

Get where it is quiet!

Close door.

Correct very early in A.M. before household or other activity begins.

Quiet place.

Close the door, turn off TV, radio.

Find silent area.

Find a quiet area. Close the door if need be. Turn off radio, etc.

Put off correcting to silent time--usually at home.

Turn off radio, TV, ask students to leave classroom during prep period, find a remote place.

Work when everyone else has gone home.

I go home and do them off by myself.

Find a quiet spot.

Change locations.

Yell "Shut up" a lot.

Has to be done at home--in quiet.

There is less noise late at night and early in the morning.

Work in a quiet place. No TV or radio.

Ear plugs.

Classical music.

Isolation. Eliminate distractions.

Quiet room.

I correct papers in my office at school after school is out or at home in my office.

I stay at school in the evenings to correct themes.

I have a room in the basement where I can work when at home.

I do most of my correcting at home.

Grade at home--no noise.

Go to quiet place.

Only some noises--I can correct papers in a noisy Burger King because the noise doesn't involve me--at home even moderate noise distracts me.

Go somewhere else.

Complete silence.

Wait till the kids are in bed at night.

I will correct themes at home where I more completely control my environment.

Earplugs.

Quiet.

I try to find a very quiet place to grade papers.

I go somewhere where I can be alone and quiet.

Always correct early in the morning.

I quit correcting until noise source desists. As noted earlier, the thin walls, movies, million interruptions make grading at school next to impossible.

Sit in a place apart.

I correct in the library, or in a vacant classroom. I correct at home when my kids are off playing or often they're in bed.

Less noise!

I close my bedroom door.

Move somewhere quiet.

I sit in an empty classroom.

I move to a quiet room.

I don't correct themes at school.

Correct in a quiet place.

If I knew, I would remedy it.

Correct at home.

Isolation.

Choose a quieter place.

Find the right room.

Work at home.

Try to find a quiet place.

I read most papers at home where it is quiet.

Sometimes the environment does not allow a remedy.

Quiet!

Find a quiet time or place.

I grade at home.

Do it late at night or while class is studying quietly.

Quiet "non-disturbance" environment just as students need too!

Isolation.

Do it at home.

Quit reading theme/turn off noise source/or leave area.

I'm always sure there is noise--TV, radio. Silence is unnatural.

I try to find a place with <u>few</u> distractions--I correct many themes at home.

Plan to correct in a quiet area or use headphones.

Work in a quiet environment.

Remove myself from the noise.

Correct in quiet.

I work in the quiet of my classroom. 9 P.M. to 3 a.m.

Seek isolation.

Correct on weekends or correct at night after my own kids go to bed (can't correct at school during classes--too many distractions).

Ear plugs/muffs.

Wait until late at night--can't do in school (too many distractions) or at home when family is around.

Do in quiet of my home.

Isolating myself from the source of the noise.

Give me an office!

Isolation.

Reduce it.

Find quiet place at school or at home.

Remove myself from noise, if possible. Turn on radio for background.

Quiet place. Have developed ability to screen out.

Use of "quiet" area and times. Headphones.

I do not grade around irritating noise.

Just get away from people.

Close doors. Select quiet times.

Do it at home where such things can be controlled--if you live alone as I do.

Working in my classroom on weekends when no one is around.

Keeping everything quiet.

Listen to music, shut door.

Close the door to hallway.

Correct most papers at home in office area.

Find a quiet place.

I go to a quiet place.

My study and shut the door. I scream at anyone who interrupts.

Wear earplugs.

Do it in a quiet place.

Rest for a few minutes. If possible take a break that involves physical exertion. Then I can continue again.

Postpone grading.

Seek a quiet area where I can concentrate.

Isolated room or try to schedule grading where no one is there.

Go to a quiet place.

Quiet music in background.

Peace and quiet.

Wait until I have a quiet area in which to work.

I correct mostly at home. I have no quiet place at a school.

Turn TV off--Don't try to correct papers in class.

Tell the kids to shut up and turn down TV!! At school, close doors of room.

Move!!

I stay after school when the students are gone to do some correcting--I have a room at home closed away from the rest of the house--it is quiet and not too comfortable.

Try to have non-distracting environment.

Close doors. Move to another place. Yell at the person making noise.

Quiet area.

Late-night solitude.

I hide in a quiet place.

Try to remove myself from the situation.

Move myself.

Correct at home. Enforce classroom silence if I need it. Do a half-baked job.

Correct in a quiet area at home.

I must be in a quiet surrounding.

Other than earplugs, none, unfortunately.

Correct after school in empty room at home.

I use classical music or the silence of a school on Saturday afternoon.

I block out with concentration or find a quiet place to work.

No radio, TV, family when correcting.

I work early in morning, before it is light, before there is any noise.

Move to another (quieter) location.

Tell kids to shut up. Move.

Listen to good music while correcting.

Find quiet area--shut the door.

Strive for no noise.

Earplugs. Instrumental music.

No noise--or soft music only.

Because I work in an quiet environment.

Force myself, "tune out" distraction.

Turn off TV or music. Cloister myself.

Work only at home or in library.

The logical--find a quiet place.

Work alone in the quiet or low background music.

Come to school on Sunday and work in my room or wait until family goes to bed and stay up to correct papers.

I use a head set with classical music tapes to cut out noise at home.

Find a quiet SOLO Room.

I have long ago learned to "tune out."

Correct in a quiet atmosphere.

I try to correct themes with a minimum of noise distractions. My wife and kids get tired of me locking myself away.

I have a den at home.

I correct themes at home at quiet times--or in the school library.

Get to somewhere quiet.

Quiet background music.

Quiet, adequately ventilated Language Arts office area--work space.

Sometimes if so, find a quieter place.

Turn off the radio, TV, kids, etc.

Try to find quiet place to correct themes. I go to out book storeroom (the school attic).

Soft music, instrumental instead of vocal.

Only correct essays during quiet times.

Have a quiet place, good lighting, do early in the day--do at work, a lot of time each day.

Play soft music as a background.

No sound or music.

I change places..postpone grading.

I need absolute silence without interruptions.

Pick quiet times--turn on soft music, mental music.

Grade in a quiet place where you will be undisturbed.

Leave area, turn off TV or radio.

Block out as best I can.

Eliminate the noise if it interferes.

I work where it's quiet at home in my study.

Early A.M.--after school in empty classroom.

Child abuse and divorce.

Isolation.

Turn it off, get away from it.

Correct when alone.

Get rid of noise.

Silence or calm music.

Turn off TV or turn down music.

Get rid of the noise--or take a break.

Work in a quiet place.

Go where it's quiet.

I find a room where I can be alone.

Work where it's quiet.

Leave.

Create quiet settings.

Have background noise already.

Move it to another location.

Change rooms.

Move to a quiet area.

Correct themes at home--find a quiet room with soothing music.

Find a quiet place to do correcting.

Isolated from TV; Students, when possible--Prep time..Showing a video in class time so papers can be corrected.

Location--quiet area--free of distractions.

I try to correct themes in the library or in my study at home.

Have a separate room for grading.

Turn off the TV set, go to the library (when at school).

Try and keep noises to tolerate level or go somewhere else when possible.

Correct in a silent environment.

Generally correct papers at home where it is quiet.

Isolation, controlled atmosphere.

Remove myself to diminish noise.

I would like to get some airport style ear muffs.

I do most at home and weekends.

Move to a quieter place.

Find a quiet place.

APPENDIX P

<u>Q53. Open-Ended Responses</u>:   *What suggestions would you like to make for the beginning English teacher on the physical or atmospheric elements of correcting a lot of themes?*

Have a writing process that involves students doing a rough draft, then working in groups, involving parents or whatever to eliminate some of the minor errors. Select one concept to emphasize and look for.

Sit at a big table. Get plenty of sleep.

Whenever possible, correct papers on a sunny day at the beach or park.

Find a comfortable spot that more or less isolates you from others with good lighting.

Have a comfortable situation.

Need: quiet place, time.

Find a quiet place--don't be too comfortable--GET IT OVER WITH!

Can't promise students when themes will be back--take your time, be comfortable.

Must have own room--so many of our teachers share.

Be comfortable. Be refreshed. Don't do too many--quit when getting tired not when you're finished.

Know your own learning work style and apply it--see Dunn and Dunn on Learning Style.

Set aside an area away from school. Don't try to correct papers when physically sick or mentally upset.

Depends on the individual.

Don't assign <u>essays</u> just to assign.

We all have different styles--some can work in a lot of noisy rooms, each person needs to find out for himself.

Reality.

Have a special desk at home in a separate room if possible where you only do your school work. I don't have this, but I think it would be very helpful.

Find a regular comfortable place to sit to correct themes--and set a regular time.

Teach at a school which doesn't require more than five periods per day of instruction. Find a quiet place at home at a good desk or use a piece of furniture with firm support.

Always be as rested as possible. Good lighting--Stop at the first sign of fatigue.

Get a room of your own.

Find a comfortable correcting space and do your correcting there as much as possible.

Don't do it at home.

Cut it down--Incorporate class correction self-editing.

Relax, don't procrastinate, outline objectives ahead of time and stick to 'em!

Don't put it off. Change position frequently. Learn to do muscle relaxing exercises.

Find someplace comfortable that you can claim as yours. Have adequate light.

Establish an effective atmosphere and stay with it.

Plan on doing a set number of papers at set times.

Be aware.

Be in a place that you are able to relax somewhat, but not too comfortable. NO fluorescent lights! Do them in increments; when you've finished one set, get up and take a breather for a few minutes or even 1/2 an hour.

Minimize teacher-corrected themes. Use in-class editing groups. Find a quiet place to read themes. Take a break from class instructional duties first.

Good lighting and a quiet atmosphere are essential elements in correcting a lot of themes.

Find a perfect spot without interruptions.

Be comfortable, not sleepy or hungry or sick.

A quiet, well-lit place.

Spread them out--the assignments and the correcting. If overwhelmed, focus on a couple of aspects that you're currently teaching. Teach and insist on minimum criteria from the start.

Try to find space apart. Devote yourself to correcting, but don't get crazy.

Do as much at school as possible. Make use of every few minutes--wait for a faculty meeting to begin, etc. Tune out some of the noise. Get students to proof others' papers.

Be a P.E. teacher.

Have criteria for each assignment--correct only for those things--use peer editing.

Be fresh, when tired, STOP!

Find comfortable, well-lit spot/positions, but not too comfortable so as to fall asleep.

Each person functions differently so it's hard to give advice--but I need plenty of time to correct the papers so I feel good about the evaluations I have made--don't put too much pressure on yourself to assign and correct large numbers of papers--an average number of assignments done well is better than a large number done hastily.

Do it at school.

Be comfortable though not too warm. Seclude yourself as much as possible.

Do them in a quiet atmosphere. Don't try to do many at a time.

Don't assign them--teach nothing.

Take short breaks.

Schedule grading time.

Do not become an English teacher! The profession is predicated on masochism in unenlightened school districts led by stupid, inexperienced non-academics!

Not assume extra duties the first year, such as, coaching, advising, etc.

If I had the answers, I wouldn't be spending so much time!

Correct for a limited number of specific errors, rather than responding to everything.

Quiet, well lighted place free from noise, constant interruption or interference.

Get comfortable in an area with few distractions.

Do some correcting every day at the same time.

I generally try and do all such work at school because I find I don't function well at home--except on "emergency" occasions. I think a comfortable chair, good light, and organization of time and elements of the process are important. Sometimes I force myself to keep to limits on my comments or the job takes forever. I have thought of requiring less and less of this kind of writing to save my sanity or energy, but I strongly feel it is a (or <u>the</u>) key element of a sound English curriculum.

Allot yourself a certain number of themes per night, do those and then stop. Don't feel as though you must correct every paper in one evening.

Be comfortable--don't try to do all at once.

Don't sit down to a big batch of papers! Correct papers one small group at a time.

Be comfortable--find a quiet, well lighted place.

Don't correct all. Set a goal for time, place, and number to be completed. Set a goal of number a month.

Do what feels good! Stay single.

Use a desk--not a comfortable chair. Don't correct with TV on.

Find a quiet place--where your family will leave you the hell alone.

Do it in a "working place." Go to it when intending to correct, leave when done. Don't clutter up your whole lifestyle by correcting.

Find a quiet spot and go to work.

Work at school as much as possible. You'll hate and resent too much work that's brought home.

Choose the time (morning, night) appropriate for you.

Have quiet place.

Quiet time and place.

Be prepared.

Find a quiet, well-lighted place and <u>go for it</u>.

Change your major--take P.E.

Select the time and setting best for you. Do not let number of papers to be done affect you when you can do it.

Get up and move around after so many themes! Get a number goal of themes set to be evaluated--after reaching it, do something totally different.

For long, complex papers, set a goal of correcting-reading-grading a set number of papers, five, for instance, and take a brief break.

Early morning before school is a good time to work. You are fresh and mind is clear. Themes therefore seem to take less time to grade.

Take breaks.

Be comfortable--take a lot of stretches, relaxation, and food breaks.

Do them at school.

Quiet. Pick a time when you feel ready.

Stagger your assignments so that they don't all come in at once.

Not after a long, hot day.

Be rested before you begin.

Use all available time in class when possible. Otherwise--at home in a quiet room with good lights. Use good posture.

Do it at the desk at school.

Do the oral critique! It's a lifesaver. Students learn more. Personal satisfaction and fulfillment. Free time for your family. Process-oriented instructions.

Take your shoes off--sit comfortably at a desk, go to work.

Get by yourself--get comfortable--stay away from distractions. These are about the same thing I tell my students about developing good study habits.

Correct at home.

Correct themes after school in your classroom (avoid staff room!) Have a pleasant place to work at home--a nice desk--all supplies handy. Try to break up your load--correct a few papers each day rather than all in one night unless assignment is very short. Nice stereo music a great background. Tea/coffee a must!! Use good light.

Don't waste your time at school. Spend every minute you can while there to get you out together. If you end up taking too much of it home, you'll grow to hate it.

Find what works best for you. I have a routine and a favorite pen.. Learn how to stagger your paper load. Don't assign due dates when you have familial responsibilities.

Sit alone in quiet. Sit at desk or table large enough to "spread-out."

A quiet room--soft music--relaxed atmosphere.

Go into another profession. It pays better.

Find an environment in which you can concentrate.

Stagger the assignments so not all papers come in at the same time. I have freshman papers come in on opposite ends of the week from juniors/seniors comps.

Use a recliner and drink a beer.

Work in a quiet room free of distractions and interruptions. Learn to concentrate on specifics.

Teach students to proofread.

Have students work on themes during the month and use peer proofreading. At the end of the month and have students turn in their best final copy for grade. Have students grade other essays--peer teaching--but do not record.

Teach part-time.

Enjoy the thoughts by not grading themes when you're tired or there are physical distractions.

Find a quiet spot with good light and a chair that fits the table you use.

I would suggest that English teachers are not superhuman. Allow plenty of time to comfortably read papers. Do not try to read them in your classroom.

Don't assume total control for corrections.

Sit in a comfortable place and relax with music.

Find a good chair.

Get comfortable; take breaks; good lighting; quiet; get in the mood for the task.

TV, etc. is OK...but get away from people who talk to you.

Get comfortable.

Take lots of breaks. Don't be too picky on corrections.

Quiet, out of the way place.

Wait until you're fresh to correct. Don't assign too many papers at first that require in-depth reading by the teacher (so you don't get tired reading--"train" for reading just like running!)

Don't get married--live like a monk.

Isolation and quiet with "time out" every 20 minutes for 4 or 5 minute breaks.

Live alone--or go to a motel!

Find what working environment works best for you and use it.

Apply the same principles you did when doing effective studying in college.

Find your most productive environment.

Plan breaks and slightly comfortable seating.

Don't try to correct too many at a time and set aside time--so you won't be rushed and you'll be able to set up the correct atmospheric conditions.

Use common sense!

Do what works best for you.

Common sense.

Don't assign or correct too many themes.

Library atmosphere. Frequent movement between papers.

Have a good looking young girl close by for encouragement.

Try morning after a rest...mind not cluttered. Coffee--but not so much that you become restless. PBS radio--jazz or classical--some fresh air.

It's a dirty job, but someone has to do it.

Go some place quiet with something to eat and/or drink and take breaks.

Administrators must give teachers time to correct.

Expect that most situations for correcting are not ideal. Be prepared to use any extra moments you have.

Find one place and use it always.

Do not attempt to do too many during any one week. Use student editors.

Be prepared for stress!

Just common sense--reasonable lighting, quiet needed.

Change profession. If that advice is not taken, find a cool, quiet place. Have something to drink (pop) and a comfortable chair. Don't make any appointments from 3:15 to 6:00--ever.

Find a quiet, comfortable place, remove self from family, take breaks, do not have food.

Be comfortable, rested, relaxed. Make your surroundings work for you.

Get into your car and drive away from teaching. The Bavarian Alps is a great place to correct your erroneous judgment about wanting to be a teacher.

Assume the kids know nothing (as they often do) and don't take your own skills for granted--know your grammar/composition and what you're talking about.

Teach typing or P.E.

Teach the students (and really emphasize) to proofread themselves. Teach one skill at a time. Try not to move on too quickly.

Find a quiet place with a reasonably comfortable chair. Set a number of themes to grade in 1-2 hours and promise yourself a reward when it is finished.

Do as many at school as possible so you don't grow to resent the homework.

I think this is an individual thing. Some people can work in front of the TV.

Get a good desk and lamp. A supply of pens and comfortable clothes are essential also.

Find a quiet place to grade.

Have your own place, a definite set time, add some things that please you (music, coffee, M&M's) and do a little every day.

I would suggest requesting an early hour prep period, along with arriving at school 1/2 to 1 hour earlier. I would suggest not taking work home. You need to put in extra hours; put them in at your job.

Loose clothes/good lighting/grade 4-5 papers then rest awhile..sporadic grading time sequence.

Don't do too many at a time. Be comfortable when you read. Use a holistic scoring grade.

Be disciplined, don't overdo in assigning or getting theme corrected. Take breaks. Do a certain number and say "that is enough."

Correct in a quiet place free of interruptions.

Find your own comfort zone.

Be prepared for it.

Drink a beer, sit on the couch, turn on some instrumental jazz and get it out..don't put it off.

Often these things become factors when the teacher is not enthusiastic about correcting.

Teach peer editing and evaluation.

Try to budget your time so as not to correct too many in a sitting. Don't do it in your most comfortable chair. Have plenty of light and require students to use pen.

Correct when fresh in a quiet place.

Efficient reading requires uninterrupted concentration.

Find the elements that distract and as far as possible remove them. Break up grading time with other activity. Do some everyday, not all on Sunday nights!

Try to pace yourself on writing assignments, don't correct every one and don't worry about the ones you can't get to.

Set up a time and place that you feel comfortable with; create a habit.

Find a place you are comfortable with but not ready to sleep in.

Find an area you use for only correcting papers--your spot. This will help with concentration.

Be aware of own needs--adjust and re-examine.

A positive attitude is essential. As an undergrad, I had a prof who graded papers in traffic jams--no wonder our themes were loaded with terse, negative remarks. I try to budget my time and I've learned an important lesson in the past 15 years--if I grade everything they write, they're not writing enough.

Don't coach. Don't get married. Don't have a family.

Take breaks, never assign all classes themes at the same time, correct them in a calm atmosphere.

Change, control the elements to correspond to their individual requirements.

Comfortable isolation booth, take breaks.

Schedule carefully. Never do too many at once. Change where you check--I move about my house and reward myself.

Consider these factors and determine best place and time, etc. to correct.

Assign themes in a staggered manner so that of 150 students 1/3 would turn in themes; 1/3 would be discussing; 1/3 would be reading about the subject for a theme to develop ideas.

APPENDIX 9

Q58. Open Ended Responses: *If you had an opportunity to offer advice in a textbook aimed at preparing English teachers for correcting themes, what would you say?*

Just because the paper is written does not mean your comments need to be written. You can verbalize your thoughts directly with students.

It really has been all said. The latest is writing-as-a-process with a reality dose of peer editing. I am past book that tells how--now, I need time. I have trimmed the "how" down.

Look closely at what is presented in courses such as the Bay Writers Project or OWP teaching.

Assign themes so due dates are staggered.

We teach other kinds of writing than themes. Several of the teachers in this district have been involved in "Writing as a Process" which seems to give us direction and a basis for correcting. We have increased the amount of writing in our classes, but I feel that other disciplines need to increase writing also, and know how to grade it.

Make the assignments short (at least for 9th and 10th graders) make sure the assignment is clearly understood. Make sure the student takes the time to correct (either self or peer).

Shorter papers can show the same problems long ones show.

Don't teach English if you are not prepared to devote a great deal of time to correcting papers.

I would advise teachers to only assign themes they were serious about reading and making comments. Plan at least 10 minutes per paper, and make written comments. Put the grade at the end of the written comments so the students have to read some of the commentary to find their grades.

Be process oriented--not result oriented.

Correct only one set of papers at a time.

Don't waste your time reading this book. Talk to your peers, and jump right in!

Types of relevant comments to be included on specific themes.

Plan to work a 60-hour week!

Conference with students as well as make comments on the papers.

Text that contains step-by-step process; students' brain process better from such texts; so should teachers.

Learn to concentrate--focus on task at hand. Develop a score sheet for the particular essay you are assigning; use it. Target specific skills for each essay.

Have it written by present English teachers who write in a non-scholarly way.

Attend OWP.

Holistic scoring is the only method that works. <u>Also</u>, a universal set of grading symbols! <u>Also</u>, a peer editing/grading chapter.

To apply what research tells us about writing should be seen as a process, rather than a product.

Make assignments requirements clear before you start. Grade on what you specify, not on everything.

Teach holistic grading methods, and explain that as an English teacher we are going to have a tougher load--it's part of the job!

Where to begin? I'd say it's crucial to work with your school department to develop a philosophy of writing and language arts. Spend a lot of time discussing standards and processes so that at least you have consistency and reinforcements within the school.

Give time-cutting ideas that offer maximum help to students with minimum time output.

If possible, stagger the due dates so that you don't have themes from all your classes coming in at once. Read each theme twice, once for mechanics and the second time for content. You can get into a mind-set for each and speed correction time. Give separate grades for mechanics and content. This gives good incentive for revision and editing on the students' parts as they can see the results in the 2 grades. It also helps the student understand that what he has to say may be very good and should be rewarded, but the mechanics of grammar, punctuation, and spelling can profoundly affect whether or not the message comes across. Use student editing groups. With a little training they can be very helpful, and it will decrease the number of errors in the papers and consequently reduce the amount of teacher correction time.

If you teach composition, realize that much of your time will be spent correcting themes. Utilize peer grading and small group responds on theme rough drafts. Make <u>content</u> the most important aspect of your grading.

Assign shorter themes more frequently. Don't feel that you have to grade everything--Don't feel guilty about not grading every written comp. with the same intensity.

Practical suggestion (grading sheet). Examples of themes that have been corrected. How to use a reader. How to organize assignments so they come in good shape to grade.

Until the overall teaching assignment of writing teacher is reduced, you'll have to use, at least on occasion, bankrupt strategies such as holistic grading. If possible, individual conferences are best.

Let it become a positive part of what you do and with your students. Don't put it off--it only gets worse to pick up old bad papers. Find out lots about how students can evaluate their own papers and others--especially at the rough-draft stage so when you get them, they're good.

Do not try to correct everything at the first of the year. I concentrate only on spelling and sentence faults. I gradually add things as the year goes on. I also find myself--for better or worse--ignoring more errors that I used to just so kids don't receive battle-scarred papers so often. You can afford to be more picky with better students. With average and poor students, I'm not convinced that extensive marking of errors has any benefit when you are going to make them recopy the whole thing and even then I'm not sure. In a low-level class, we sat down with the kids in groups and corrected everything and they fixed their papers on the computer. We saw some reduction of errors.

Keep it simple.

Be patient.

Categorized "helpful hint" comments section usable checklist evaluation criteria.

Perhaps "after all is said and done" it is best to have teachers emphasize quantity of writing and less red ink on quality. Also there is great value in students peer groups doing some of the reading.

Develop a list of marks and distribute to each student prior to writing. Also have list of preferred usage items.

Don't try to be "Wonder Teacher." Essays do not have to be corrected and returned the next day. Take a little extra time to write quality comments, positive as well as negative.

It's overwhelming so staggering due papers helps. Concentration is a necessity. Enjoy it.

Don't lose track of thesis statement development in essays. No matter what else, that's the most important aspect of writing.

If I had good advice, I'd write the textbook myself and retire from teaching.

I don't understand how you are going to learn from a textbook. What's to learn or change? You read paper after paper, mark errors, write suggestions for improvement.

Use a teaching approach which encourage students to correct their own mechanical errors and get feedback from peers before you (the teachers) have to correct the papers.

Literature and exposition should be separate classes. Teaching both disciplines in one course becomes self-devouring. Be honest, direct and forceful in commentary.

Push administrators for smaller classes--and enroll in as many writing workshops as possible. The OWP should be mandatory for teachers of writing.

There are so many different assignments and teaching approaches--I'm not sure a textbook would ever be successful. I have been involved in three different models and none have ever really taken hold. The best advice is to be organized and put in the time because the students rely on the comments the teacher writes.

Correct for limited aspects of a theme, not everything in mechanics, form , content and organization.

Correcting every mistake is a waste of time. Have the student read the writing out loud prior to turning in. Read or have the students read most papers to the class. Encourage thinking and sharing.

Develop criteria for assignments. Develop edit symbols. Face the problems. Discuss the joys.

Accept that you are limited by time and energy and plan to work within those constraints. Don't try to accomplish it all in one class. Help your school set up a progression of skills.

Be sure to allow/teach/demand that students use the writing process in writing papers. This by itself will increase the content and skill quality students will turn in. Now, on the actual grading, be consistent in your grading. Realize what your expectations are before grading. Conference with each student after the papers are returned.

Do it early in the morning when fresh and alert.

Read them fast; don't work much.

Be reasonable. You do have an existence beyond the classroom. Also, I read a book which was helpful called something like How to Handle the Paper Load, a good collection of methods from various people--how to ease the burden.

Use a progressive approach emphasizing specific writing skills on each assignment.

Assign fewer essays.

One must have patience! Correcting themes can become discouraging when the same students keep making the same mistake. Just remember that the next paper may be perfect.

Be prepared to put in a lot of time and effort, be specific in your reaction comments, show interest, have a specific format.

This is the part of teaching English that requires "special" dedication.

Insist on small classes--20 for above average students--less for lower capacity. Establish separate composition classes--by ability level--holistically or analytically.

Do not teach full time; teach three to four classes per day and no more than 100 students. Teaching six classes per day and ten [days] reading papers is exhausting.

The use of theme writing with respect to analyzing literature and defending positions cannot be understated.

Be ready to work hard, be open minded, know your pet peeves and let your students know them too; do not let structure be the ruler, only the guide (pulling vs. pushing the chain); get to know your own students; understand it is all a part of being in this field.

Learn holistic reading. Concentrate on only one or two correctable usage errors at a time. Keep written comments to a minimum, and concentrate on positive comments (students don't "see" the negative ones!)

Correct only for the errors you have been working on. Grade holistically, or not at all when possible. Students gain most by writing, not our marking.

I think the focus should be more on "tricks of the trade" for teaching kids the things we want them to know than on how to correct the papers after they are turned in. If we diligently work with writing process in our classrooms--working with kids in the writing of their papers--we will lesson the need for much corrections in the end. If texts on corrections are in order, I think they ought to consist of numerous sample papers with examples of appropriate commentary. That commentary ought to be positive and specific.

Seek a system from other teachers or the literature that would elevate the time and tedium of this problem/task.

Let students know what you will be looking for in each paper they write. Consider using a scoring guide to save some time. In one of my classes I've created a scoring guide which I'm experimenting with this year. It tells what makes an A paper, a B paper, etc. I understand those areas that apply. Although I still make comments on papers, I make fewer this way; plus the student can see what he needs to have done to achieve a higher grade.

Each needs a system.

Plan out a very clear schedule of when your students will write each month. Work hard to come up with topics that interest and intrigue you (if you are not excited about them, the kids won't be either). Schedule your grading and time.

Don't correct all errors. Use an evaluation sheet of some sort which clarifies what criteria are being used. Share this with students before collecting finished product.

Zero in on a few things about the theme--don't try to correct it all. Don't feel like you have to correct everything students write.

Offer a list of typical problems and remedies. Demand that English Department better educate prospective teachers of English. A list of theme suggestions, length, paragraph length, etc. A rating system for errors. Worthwhile examples of various writings with insightful analysis as to strengthen in the writing.

Attend Bay Area Writing Project several times. Try to see that remedial classes are evenly distributed among dept. members. Correct for content only if the papers is a product of an editing group. Have student correct all marked errors before you record grade.

Use editing circles. Work more on process; less time on final products. Don't read too carefully. Don't mark everything.

Have a clear purpose for each theme. Evaluate each theme on a limited basis-- using your purpose of focus as the main idea for evaluation.

Plan what to emphasize in any particular theme; mark only that.

Think twice about this profession.

Depend on peer responses and peer editing.

Use writing and project techniques to reduce load. Peer editing, computer modeling.

Stack-in-the-Deck series is by far the best.

Discuss process. Discuss different types (holistic, etc.). Discuss approach.

Put out a standardized text for basic theme work--small in size.

Be certain on what you are looking for on each theme. Don't try to correct it all.

Lobby for smaller class sizes.

Discuss options available--for example, have students write 3 themes and then hand in their best for a grade. Discuss student critiquing of rough drafts.

Make yourself available to every time-saving aid that schools can provide.

Focus on one or two elements in each theme so as not to overload the student with information.

Life in the classroom is a world apart from textbook technique and methodology.

Include a wide variety of workable solutions rather than one system.

Look for a specific skill/theme rather than trying to grade everything.

Plan area to be corrected and don't evaluate whole paper on all areas everytime. Don't use themes as often.

There is a need for a series of essays and themes to be corrected followed by commentary from experienced, competent teachers on how they evaluated the papers.

First, learn how to write well and with economy--make every word tell.

Know what purpose of assignment is. Know grading criteria. Let your students know the grading criteria.

To keep the job in perspective. Know what research seems to indicate about extensive correcting. Allow time for yourself. It's OK to leave without papers every night.

Keep themes meaningful and do them piecemeal.

Keep it realistic and straightforward--aim it at real-life students. Make it interesting.

Limit objectives to be checked on each paper.

Prepare a rubric for every assignment. Establish and make "second-nature" for teacher and students an editorial short-hand.

I'd stress a holistic approach, and I'd stress flexibility; I don't believe in formulas in grading papers--I just try to make the grade I give be representative of the impression the paper makes.

Take the time to do it. Require rewrites.

Insist on full sentence outlines of important points. Focus on thesis statement/topic sentences, arrangement of ideas. Do not overlook mechanics for sake of content.

Use the writing process--whenever possible.

If you don't want the pain of a Marine, don't sign up.

Provide adequate pre-writing exercises.

Set aside standard times for correcting. Fight for smaller classes.

Demand time for conferencing (a "study hall" at most).

Don't assign a theme for each section of English on the same day--stagger it.

Do not use red ink--make positive comments first.

Provide a number of techniques so people can choose something that works for them and their students.

Take the time to do it, but not so much it becomes unbearable. Resist marking every mistake on every paper. Try to take time to conference with writers on their writing. Use peer editing where possible.

Learn how to score holistically for an overall impression before hitting specific areas.

Utilize holistic grading--with minimal amount of written comments.

First, concentrate on good thesis sentences and appropriate supporting detail.

Be patient. Make sure you have explained everything associated with writing themes.

Teach teachers how to teach students to correct each other's--peer review.

Be definite and precise in identifying essentials.

Don't assign it if you don't want to read it.

Don't do it--most texts are too stodgy and dated.

Have before and after models of corrected themes--then explanations of why.

Be thorough. Be honest/sincere. Be positive.

Find a district that supports writing and will put money behind it--small classes. Readers, fewer classes for English teachers.

Read every fourth or fifth theme, not every assignment, and never feel guilty. (I have never been able to do this).

More student proofreading. More writing groups with students reading their work and commenting on each others strong and weak points.

Practice is only way. Hands on, as they like to say.

Textbooks don't help--advice and experience does.

Address the task of correcting a disaster--misplaced students.

When I find a solution to the drudgery of theme correcting, I'll offer advice.

Don't correct every composition.

Provide many models of criteria-based scoring sheets for various specific modes of writing.

Don't be too critical.

Make it available to use with students.

Do not coach--you'll need the time to correct papers.

Stated writing demands are good but unrealistic--I am taking a leave of absence next year to build another business mainly because of the paper load. Please do not think my present burn-out influenced my responses--I have felt this way since the beginning of my career (I have taught 16 years).

The first and uttermost when starting a new year is to concentrate on content and throw spelling, punctuation, usage, etc. away For A While. If all they see at first is a bleeding page, they will become discouraged and then writing becomes a major chore instead of fun. Once they have the ability to put their basic ideas on paper, then you may start working on mechanics. Never sit at your desk while they're writing; circulate throughout the rows--this shows interest and will definitely generate questions and be wanting of your extra help.

Improve reading speed--learn about holistic reading--read for different things-- time content, time mechanics, etc. Try students' critique groups--have them read each other's themes.

Emphasize physical aspects of theme correcting. Watch out for "over assigning" too much writing. Always have a goal or objective in mind with each theme and make it clear to the student.

Avoid marking all errors. Teach lessons on problems you notice as you read. Have students share papers so teacher isn't primary audience. Don't feel you need to finish a set of papers at one time.

Correct papers as soon as possible--don't wait until later that night. Correct a few during a class reading time or at a faculty meeting. Stagger assignments so that you don't have five classes turning in papers on the same day.

Determine when making assignments what the goal is--read paper to see: did student attempt goal?

Learn about holistic and trait grade. Expect to correct themes. Set aside with discipline times and a comfortable place to grade. Don't try to correct everything. Emphasize content first, then mechanics and conventions. After suggestions for improvement, require revision, at least sometimes.

Space your themes out so all your classes are not writing themes at the same time. Make you topics such that they will be enjoyable to read.

Encourage them to write again by making a point, no matter how hard you must look, of commenting on what the writer wrote well. Try to limit overall "coaching" (that's the approach I like to take) their two biggest needs, summarized with examples. Also, we use the correctional program to keep track of the student errors on the computer and give them a summary of their errors in a once-per-quarter printout. The summary is like a personal textbook because it tells the students the correct method, with examples, of the rule they are breaking.

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Learn to stagger your paper load. My first year of teaching, I was assigned five composition classes. I would never have survived had I not learned to stagger my paper load. It is also important for students to receive prompt feedback on their papers. I believe if you can't return a paper in 1-2 days, then it should never have been assigned.

Don't reach the point of resentment for the time you devote--stop or reduce your load of theme correction--do a better job on less of a load.

Prepare theme for the specific curriculum; on any of the things we teach [it] would be easier to teach if we studied them in college.

You will earn as much as a monk, be respected as much as a policeman, and will get little help or sympathy from (non-English) teachers, parents, administrators.

Tell them to enjoy the students' thoughts, get plenty of sleep, good exercise and don't grade theme when tired.

Don't ever have students do only one copy of a paper. Teach content and editing as separate skills. Writing is a process!

Try all kinds of approaches and find the best for any given situation. I don't have a formula; I'm sure none exists.

Early in the year teach your correcting symbols. Highlight good words or phrases with yellow marker. Require students to redo themes with errors. Be specific about what you will be looking for in the theme. Use peer editing/computer editing when possible. Try to do some daily correcting rather than saving it all for a weekend or vacation (heaven forbid!). Make comments that are helpful--avoid unnecessary comments and editing. Work in a pleasant environment--take frequent breaks. Use different pens for variety. I would hate having a reader! I get acquainted with my students by reading what they write, and if I were deprived of that, I don't think I'd like teaching very much. It's getting to know the students that makes teaching so rewarding. Furthermore, I don't think students would enjoy having readers grade their papers, either.

A text on reading papers should be just that. The idea that student writing should be "corrected" as if an essay were an exam is counterproductive. Students and teachers need to view writing as an on going process. Teachers need to learn to view the "correcting" part of our jobs as editing-writing that will improve.

Interview many high school English teachers and sit in on their composition classes.

English teachers are entitled to have funds for readers made available. This cuts the time down from about 12 mins. to 2 mins. per paper. In fact, maybe all departments should have readers available. (Then we might be more likely to see "Writing Across the Curriculum.)

Assign a lot of writing--but only take 1-2 themes per month through the entire process, to publication (fully edited and graded for content, organization, style, structure, grammar and usage). See writing as thinking, as a process and not just a product. I know it's not real-world, but it'll create better thinkers.

Take courses in which the specifics of writing are carefully analyzed. A great source book for me has been The Reader Over Your Shoulder. Then, read lots of themes written by great and contemporary theme writers.

Use peer-editing techniques whereby small groups of students are responsible for correcting each other's work before it is handed in. Don't mark down for mistakes, simply don't accept papers with too many. If an individual is having trouble, help individually before he hands in a final draft.

Mark detail-errors in spelling, punctuation, usage quality and don't worry about catching them all. Make marginal comments regarding structure. Make a one-sentence comment at the top dealing with content.

Teach us a variety of methods in effective grading systems--not only for "themes" but for research papers. Creative writing, script writing, etc.

Teach writing by making students write, not by studying grammar. Teach students to organize ideas and develop adequately using all types of methods of development. Mark all errors in student themes. They cannot change unless they recognize the error. Make students correct their own errors. This does not mean rewrite the paper--only change the errors.

Learn and apply the analytical-trait system--check with Oregon Dept. of Ed. The writing process--from pre-writing through publishing is more important than any final correcting by the teacher. Students improve and correct along the way.

I believe that each teacher must find/or develop his/her own style for correcting.

Each student has his or her own writing style; therefore a teacher must teach to the student's needs and not have the student learning to the teacher's needs.

The first rule of teaching is survival. Don't burn-out on correcting themes. Keep abreast of the latest research on writing and what works in writing.

Learn to assign fewer compositions of length and assign shorter, more personal writings for many of the assignments. The longer compositions could involve more intensely covered subjects.

Try not to agonize and take things so personally. Set a time limit and stick to it. Do what you can—don't become a martyr. English teachers have a right to a normal life, too.

An organized presentation with practice exercises on the particular skill area, complete pre-writing exercises and an adequate self-and peer-editing programs, and then the holistic scoring method all contribute to expeditious and objective correcting.

Avoid this approach entirely. We should be moving to reading and responding to student writing and move away from the concept of "correct" which is a flawed concept and a harmful one to helping people communicate. If this approach were used to "help" children learn to speak, we would have a nation of stutterers. Writing reflects a thinking and they both need <u>nuturing</u> rather than <u>correcting</u>.

Sample criteria for specific assignments. Mark line containing error and have student isolate it.

Organize—know what you value. Make expectations clear (In writing). Give students a chance to ask questions about what you want. Correct sample themes with students in class. Be sure you're a competent writer yourself and model.

Have students write about their experience. Avoid abstract subjects. Get them to appreciate their memories and put values on their experience. Make these values the basis for argumentation, opinion.

There is simply not enough time to correct "everything" so don't try, and don't let anyone make you feel guilty for this because if they try, they don't know what they're talking about.

Don't try to correct every error in every paper. Emphasize different areas each time. Set up clear criteria for specific goals. Try to objectify correcting as much as possible. Try to be consistent with other teachers in your department on grading standards. Work with them to set up department guidelines. The errors in paragraph writing are the same as those in essays, so assign more paragraphs and fewer essays at lower levels. Emphasize essay writing with older students (11-12 grade). With high-level students, set up no-excuse lists—such as spelling, grammar, punctuation when papers are written out of class. They can write correctly, if it is demanded of them. Then you can work on idea support, diction, logic, etc. With low-level students, don't expect much lasting progress. It is very frustrating.

If you have ever had any doubts as to whether or not you want to teach, then the first one-hundred fifty themes will answer these doubts and on a weekly basis.

Have samples of students errors and have teacher pick them out. Have sample themes (good ones) to show as examples.

Look at the content before anything else. Give credit to creativity (form language). Provide stimulating discussion for individual topic choices so reading themes doesn't bore you. Make yourself comfortable so you can concentrate. Don't sweat the small stuff. Make the process important enough for the students so they sweat it. Allow non-graded re-write opportunities for every theme. We never let anyone read our first drafts; why should we make them? Review the criticism (student written) reviewing the final.

Make sure it reads easy and is very clear/thorough. Then make sure you hold the junior high teacher responsible/accountable for teaching the content and that they hold the students accountable to learn from it. High school students today often lack an adequate foundation.

Have a semester-long program of writing, with each assignment focusing on a specific area and skill. Put much more of the burden of editing/revising, after careful modeling, on the student. Relating is #1; teach yourself to evaluate for one content issue and one skill per paper—avoid at all costs buying into the idea of correcting the whole paper each time--a futile pursuit leading to unhappiness, divorce, and gray hairs.

Do not try to correct all problem areas at the same time. Work systematically on error problems. Use group-editing techniques. Do not attempt to grade all themes. Select--with students having some choice.

Investigate peer editing. Investigate Bay Area Writing Program. Set up several "check points" students must complete before paper is read. Follow the writing process.

Be prepared to always feel burdened with too much work and too little time to do the work. Accept the inevitability of never getting all the theme read and the correction made on all of them on time. Be prepared (in small high schools, at least) to practice endless correcting of out-of-class writing from other teachers, students, and administration. Occasionally, take a little time for yourself. Learn to say "No, I don't have time today."

Don't expect to be fast on essays. Do read for _communication_ more than correctness of usage, spelling or grammar. Do give your students feedback on the subject under discussion. Do be an activist for the reduction of English/Language Arts class sizes.

Don't assign too many of them. I haven't got time to tell you everything I learned in my masters program, but people should read Peter Elbow, James Britton and others on how to improve students' writing.

I'd say "teach the students the parts of speech and the basal parts of sentences. Teach them to read orally with clarity in pronunciation, expression, characterization and audibility. Writing _will be_ a natural by-product."

Discuss the purpose, the essential skills to be developed or refined in each assignment what a good paper is. Discuss possible affective methods--and pitfalls to be avoided. Let students choose methods that work for them in terms of the assignment purpose.

Teach math instead.

Don't try and correct everything on every theme. Correct one thing this time and something else next time, but don't state which one or ones.

Emphasize target areas of need. Don't tackle everything at once. Be progressive in your expectations--strive for mastery of each skill before progressing to next skill and then demand that skill be continued as mastered.

I am gravely concerned over the direction we seem to be taking (and have taken) in the teaching of English composition. There has been a belief that today's students do not write as well as students wrote twenty years ago. About 15 years ago, we in the profession leaped to the conclusion that the reason for their perceived decline was that students weren't writing enough. What we failed to recognize was there were other variables out there which had a direct influence among students, probably because of television. We hopped onto the "bandwagon" of prescription writing, and techniques sponsored by the BAWP and the OWP. But students can only write drivel when they have nothing to say, and when they have not been in direct contact, through reading, with good writing. How can we expect kids to write well? By memorizing patterns? Hardly. It's done the same way we learn language: imitation. As we read, so do we write. Students do _not_ need to write more: that's like having a student of French practice the language without ever hearing it, having his teacher only correct his errors. That path is folly. At least half of all class-time in comp.classes should be spent in oral or silent reading. The patterns of good usage do "rub off." Students will improve in their own writing. If anything, students should write less, with profound time spent reading.

Themes are more interesting to read and easier to correct if topics relate to and are chosen by students. You do not need to read and/or critique everything a student writes. Have him/her write on a series of topics--choose one for grading.

Be firm, but fair. As a teacher, write yourself. Try out your assignments. Have clear _specific_ expectations. Evaluate the paper on that specific task. But, have continuing GENERAL requirements (organization, adequate proof, spelling, corrections which must also always be met).

Model the writing that your assign. If you model well, your students will make fewer errors in organization, clarity. Have students write daily, but don't correct all their writing. Use a check-off system. Through practice, their writing will improve.

More information on designing assignments, using "free writers," peer-editing, etc. In particular, helping students focus on one or two aspects of writing per theme and structuring activities to fit teaching up to final theme.

If possible, get samples of writing from the previous year. Develop a strategy for dealing with individual problems. Try to communicate with parents about student needs.

Make your expectation and directions very clear to students. Don't assign specific pages (length) of composition. Utilize peer proofreading before you see the paper.

Do not overload yourself with theme correcting. Devise a method of evaluating themes that helps you assess themes more quickly and efficiently. Be sure your classroom instructions are clear and concise.

To me the most important part of correcting themes is that students have shown enthusiasm for their writing assignments. Interesting papers make theme correcting an enjoyable part of teaching.

Concentrate on one skill area at a time. Don't try to correct the "whole" of the theme, only that area targeted by each individual student/teacher conference.

Need help for low-level students who need examples to follow and each step broken down.

Make assignments very specific and have a specific grading plan prepared for major writing assignments.