

CALIFORNIA WRITING PROJECT



MODELS OF SUCCESSFUL
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GOALS OF THE CALIFORNIA WRITING PROJECT

At the center of every program are the goals of the California Writing Project. These goals are to:

- improve the learning and achievement of students across the state by improving the teaching of writing
- serve California teachers, students, schools, and districts through a model of university/school collaboration
- concentrate efforts where literacy is most in jeopardy
- honor the diversity of teachers and students
- emphasize approaches to writing and reading for English language learners
- support teachers as they prepare students to meet state standards
- recognize that teachers are the key to educational reform and that experienced teachers are the best teachers of other teachers
- identify and continually offer a range of teaching and learning strategies so that no child will be excluded.



CALIFORNIA WRITING PROJECT

Models of Successful Professional Development

PATHWAY PROJECT 5

[Preparing English Language Learners for Academic Success](#)
Pathway students outscored their control group peers in writing, and 90 percent continued on to post-secondary institutions.

UCLA WRITING PROJECT 6

[Improving Writing and Reading Across Disciplines](#)
API scores increased by 52 points in Venice/Westchester elementary schools in Los Angeles Unified School District.

BAY AREA WRITING PROJECT 7

[Supporting Early Literacy](#)
API scores increased by 46 points in eight elementary schools in San Francisco Unified School District.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA WRITING PROJECT 10

[Improving Writing and Reading at Montague School](#)
The number of students, grades two through four, who scored above the fiftieth percentile in language arts increased by 118 percent in a two-year period.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY WRITING PROJECT 11

[Preparing for Quarterly Writing Assessments](#)
The number of Aynesworth Elementary School students scoring at grade level on the Fresno Unified School District writing assessment increased by 49 percent from the pre-test to the fourth-quarter test.

CWP STUDY OF STUDENT GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT 12

[Improving Students' Academic Writing](#)
Students from 24 high schools across California improved dramatically on the University of California Systemwide Subject A Exam.

NAEP DATA ILLUSTRATE THE VALUE OF CERTAIN TEACHING AND WRITING PRACTICES

Students who discuss their writing with teachers, plan ahead, write more than one draft, and keep portfolios of their writing scored higher than their peers on the latest national writing assessment. Results of the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Report Card also demonstrated the importance of the writing-reading connection. Students who write long answers to questions on tests or assignments that involve reading scored higher than those who reported they never or hardly ever do. These teaching and writing practices are among the practices writing project teachers use to promote student achievement.

CALIFORNIA WRITING PROJECT

A Statewide Professional Development Network

The twenty-seven-year-old California Writing Project (CWP) is a network of eighteen sites, nine housed on University of California campuses and nine on California State University campuses. Every year, over 30,000 teachers participate in CWP campus, school, and district programs. These teachers, representing all grade levels from kindergarten through university, often teach in disciplines other than English. The project also serves administrators, students, and parents.

The California Writing Project has a central mission: to improve student writing and learning by improving the teaching of writing. By having successful teachers of writing teach their colleagues, CWP is able to conduct significant numbers of programs each year, as many as 724 programs in 1999-2000.

While over 70 percent of CWP programs take place in schools and districts, teachers are always welcome to join the project as individuals. One of the hallmarks of the California Writing Project is ensuring access for every interested teacher.

CWP has had a positive, long-term influence on teachers and their students, as this booklet illustrates through sample studies, data, and excerpts of student writing. The California Writing Project welcomes responses to this document, visitors to its sites, and questions about its principles and programs.

TEACHERS TEACHING TEACHERS ACROSS CALIFORNIA

Every site of the California Writing Project conducts an annual invitational institute where experienced teachers of writing demonstrate exemplary classroom practices, study research, and write extensively. These teachers make up the cadre that conducts other summer and school-year programs throughout the state, such as:

- ~ Summer institutes
- ~ Inservice workshops
- ~ Classroom coaching and mentoring
- ~ Partnerships and leadership development with schools and districts
- ~ Teacher research programs
- ~ Youth writing camps
- ~ California Professional Development Institutes
- ~ Programs for teachers of English language learners
- ~ Writing assessment preparation
- ~ Workshops focusing on standards
- ~ Sessions connecting writing and reading
- ~ Preservice and beginning teacher programs
- ~ Curriculum development programs

FAST FACTS ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA WRITING PROJECT

Number of sites:	18
Number of participants:	33,140
Average number of participants per site:	2,071
Number of programs:	724
Average number of programs per site:	45
Number of contact hours:	773,840
Number of teacher-leaders:	2,442
Average number of teacher-leaders per site:	153

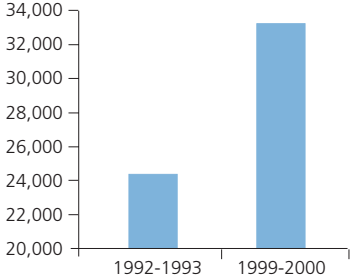
Source: *Inverness Research Associates, 1999-2000.*
Eighteenth site added 2001

“AS TEACHERS, WE NEED TO CONSTANTLY
ASK, ‘WHY AM I TEACHING THIS? HOW
DOES THIS HELP MY STUDENTS?’”

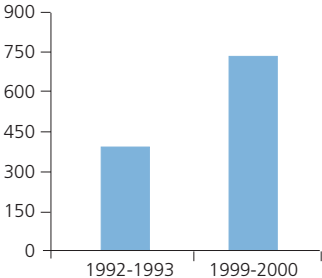
~ Rosemary Cabe, Co-director
South Coast Writing Project
University of California, Santa Barbara

AN ILLUSTRATION OF CWP GROWTH

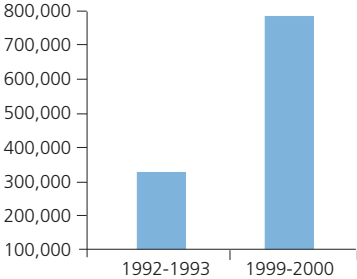
TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS



TOTAL NUMBER OF PROGRAMS



TOTAL NUMBER OF CONTACT HOURS



Source: *Inverness Research Associates*

PATHWAY PROJECT

Preparing English Language Learners for Academic Success

The Pathway Project, now in its fifth year, is conducted by the UC Irvine Writing Project in collaboration with Santa Ana College. Its purpose is to improve writing and reading achievement of English language learners in traditionally low-performing middle and high schools in Santa Ana Unified School District in Southern California. The district's students are 68.6 percent limited English proficient and 98.5 percent ethnic minority, with 74.4 percent qualifying for free or reduced lunch.

Pathway provides ongoing writing project professional development to forty-five sixth through twelfth grade teachers in five middle schools and four high schools as well as to school counselors and assistant principals. Pathway students progress as a cadre from one grade level to the next, remaining in Pathway teachers' classrooms.

To date, all Pathway seniors have graduated from high school, and more than 90 percent have continued on to post-secondary education. Pathway students also have had fewer absences and higher grade point averages than their peers who did not participate in Pathway.

All Pathway Project teachers are matched with control group teachers and both groups administer literature-based writing assessments in October and May. Essays are coded and scored by experienced, trained readers. In the last five years, Pathway students have made statistically significant gains in writing from fall to spring (the equivalent of one-half letter grade or more), and every year Pathway students have gained significantly more than students in matched, comparable non-Pathway classrooms.

COMPARISON OF WRITING ASSESSMENT GAIN
BETWEEN PATHWAY STUDENTS AND CONTROL GROUP



UCLA WRITING PROJECT

Improving Writing and Reading Across Disciplines

The UCLA Writing Project worked in partnership with a cluster of twenty-three elementary and middle schools in Venice/Westchester, Los Angeles Unified School District. The purpose of the partnership was to improve student performance in reading, writing, and critical thinking across the disciplines. Twenty percent of the students were English language learners, and 54 percent qualified for free or reduced lunch.

The major strategy for strengthening the practice of the 825 participating teachers was regular interaction with a writing project coach over 180 school days. Other interventions provided by the writing project included summer institutes, inservice workshops, family writing programs, and professional book clubs. The increase in Academic Performance Index (API) scores from 1999 to 2000 is noteworthy at the elementary level because the interventions focused on helping students use reading and writing to comprehend and learn in all content areas.

GROWTH IN API SCORES FOR VENICE/WESTCHESTER COLLABORATIVE

SCHOOLS	AVG. YEARS TEACHER EXPERIENCE	% OF ELL STUDENTS	% OF FREE/REDUCED LUNCH	AVERAGE 1999 SCORE	AVERAGE 2000 SCORE	GROWTH ACHIEVED
ELEMENTARY	12.5	32.6	64.6	597	649	52 pts
MIDDLE	13.5	16.1	68.0	555	583	28 pts

“I WANTED TO CALL AND SHARE MY JOY AS SOON AS I RECEIVED OUR STANFORD 9 RESULTS. THE KIDS DID GREAT.”

~ Sophia Kuzia, Teacher and writing project participant
Stoner Avenue School
Los Angeles Unified School District

BAY AREA WRITING PROJECT

Supporting Early Literacy

In 1999-2000, the Bay Area Writing Project (BAWP) conducted a kindergarten through third grade California Professional Development Institute (CPDI) for sixty-nine teachers serving 1,500 students in eight elementary schools in San Francisco. Over 53 percent of the students were English language learners, and 68.3 percent qualified for free or reduced lunch. The goal was to improve student reading and writing through a program of professional development for teachers.

Professional development included a one-week summer institute, school-year workshops, and on-site coaching in teachers' classrooms. The 46-point increase in Academic Performance Index scores from 1999 to 2000 is significant because the interventions focused on helping students use reading and writing to comprehend and learn in all content areas.

GROWTH IN API SCORES AT EIGHT SAN FRANCISCO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

AVG. YEARS TEACHER EXPERIENCE	% OF ELL STUDENTS	% OF FREE/REDUCED LUNCH	AVERAGE 1999 SCORE	AVERAGE 2000 SCORE	GROWTH ACHIEVED
9.5	53.6	68.3	615	661	46 pts

“THIS PROJECT HELPED OUR STAFF
FOCUS ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT. AS
FAR AS MY OWN TEACHING, I HAVE SO
MUCH INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT MY
KIDS KNOW AND WHAT I NEED TO
TEACH NEXT.”

~ Julia Roath, Teacher and writing project participant
Robert Louis Stevenson Elementary School
San Francisco Unified School District

LOOKING AT STUDENT PROGRESS

Writing in the First Grade

My cat.

By collin



My cat is named vesta. She
Sleeps with me. I like her.
She is nice. I like her. She
is warm. She plays in
the field. Her eyes
glow in the dark. She
is gray. She catches
moles.

Written by Collin in September

Collin Govan is a first-grader at Hooker Oak Elementary School in Chico Unified School District. His teacher, Kathy Wainwright, is a leader in the Northern California Writing Project.

My Christmas

By collin



On Christmas day when my family and I drove up to Paradise, we walked all around the place. Then I ran over to one tree. I asked my dad, my mom and my brother and they said yes. Then my dad cut it down. We said "timber." the tree fell on the ground. My mom and my dad carried the tree down to the car. We paid for the tree and my brother and I got an apple and carmel lollipop. We fed the animals. we tied the tree on to the car. we got back in the car and drove back to our house. Then we started making ginger bread houses. When it was dark, we drove around the culde sacs looking at lights. After looking at lights we went home. I said something that my mom liked. it was I don't care if I don't get any presents The Present that I like most is Being with my family.

Written by Collin in January

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA WRITING PROJECT

Improving Writing and Reading at Montague School

At Montague School in rural Siskiyou County, sixteen teachers, grades kindergarten through eight, were provided sixty hours of inservice workshops, demonstration lessons, and debriefing from fall 1998 to spring 2000. A major component of the writing project professional development was studying student work in order to make sound teaching decisions. The purpose of the program was to improve student achievement by improving the teaching of writing and reading. Sixty percent of the students at Montague qualify for free or reduced lunch.

The percentage of second through fourth grade students at Montague who scored above the fiftieth percentile on the SAT 9 in reading, language arts, and spelling rose significantly from 1998 to 2000.

SAT 9 SUMMARY — MONTAGUE SCHOOL GRADES TWO TO FOUR

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS SCORING ABOVE 50TH PERCENTILE

GRADE LEVEL	SUBJECT AREA	SPRING 1998	SPRING 2000	PERCENT INCREASE
2 - 4	READING	28.0	37.6	34%
	LANGUAGE ARTS	18.0	39.3	118%
	SPELLING	16.3	31.0	90%

“I DON'T WANT MY STUDENTS TO MERELY BE ABLE TO WRITE. I WANT THEM TO BE GREAT WRITERS. I WANT THEM TO HAVE FLUENCY, FORM, CORRECTNESS, AND PIZZAZZ!”

~ Suzanne Linebarger
 Teacher, Pines Elementary School, Paradise Unified School District
 Inservice Director, Northern California Writing Project, CSU Chico

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY WRITING PROJECT

Preparing for Quarterly Writing Assessments

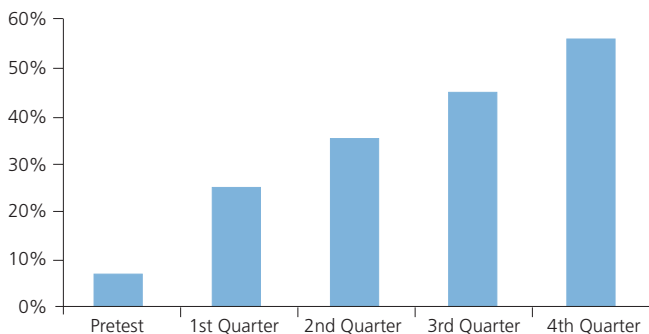
The San Joaquin Valley Writing Project formed a partnership with Aynesworth Elementary School in Fresno Unified School District to help the forty-two faculty members prepare their kindergarten through sixth grade students for the district-mandated quarterly writing assessments. The goal was for 51 percent of students to score at grade level (four points or higher) on the district's six-point rubric by the end of the school year.

A year-round school, Aynesworth serves approximately 900 students: 64 percent Hispanic, 16 percent Asian, 16 percent African American, and 4 percent Caucasian. Thirty-seven percent are English language learners, and all students qualify for free lunch.

Writing project teacher-consultants developed materials on the writing domains (expressive, narrative, expository, and persuasive), taught teachers to use the materials, and modeled lessons in classrooms. Teacher-consultants also taught students how to use the rubric. Each quarter, teachers administered writing prompts and met in grade-level groups to score each paper twice.

Teachers and students met their goal. While only 7 percent of students scored at grade level on the pre-test, 56 percent scored at grade level on the fourth-quarter assessment. Students' growth each quarter is shown in the graph below.

PERCENTAGE OF AYNESWORTH ELEMENTARY STUDENTS SCORING AT GRADE LEVEL ON 2000-2001 QUARTERLY WRITING ASSESSMENTS



CWP STUDY OF STUDENT GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT

Improving Students' Academic Writing

Improving Students' Academic Writing (ISAW), a CWP statewide initiative, evaluated the performance of 2,010 students of fifty-three writing project teachers from twenty-four high schools on a recognized assessment of academic reading and writing, the University of California Systemwide Subject A Examination. This examination, used by UC for placement, requires students to write an analysis of a published nonfiction essay. The goal of this project was to improve student achievement through teacher professional development (five full days of workshops) and evaluation of pre-/post-test results. An outside group of experienced, certified Subject A readers evaluated students' improvement from fall 2000 to spring 2001 across five dimensions.

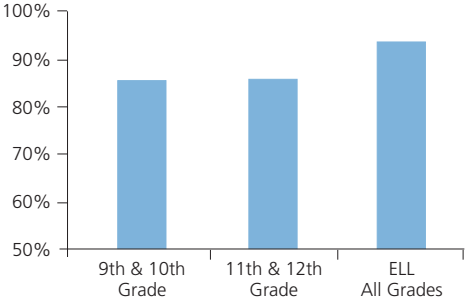
More than 80 percent of students in all grades improved their scores from pre- to post-test, and over 90 percent of all ELL students earned higher post-test scores. In nearly all the writing dimensions measured, more than two-thirds of eleventh and twelfth grade students earned a post-test score of three or four on a four-point scale.

ISAW STUDENT 2001 POST-TEST PERFORMANCE — 11TH & 12TH GRADES

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS
SCORING 3 OR 4 ON A
4-POINT SCALE

WRITING DIMENSIONS	3 Pts	4 Pts
RESPONSE TO WRITING TOPIC	60%	17%
UNDERSTANDING AND USE OF READING PASSAGE	55%	21%
ORGANIZATION	59%	13%
DEVELOPMENT	54%	13%
WRITTEN CONVENTIONS	41%	6%

PERCENTAGE OF ISAW STUDENTS WHOSE SCORES IMPROVED FROM PRE- TO POST-TESTING (FALL 2000 TO SPRING 2001)



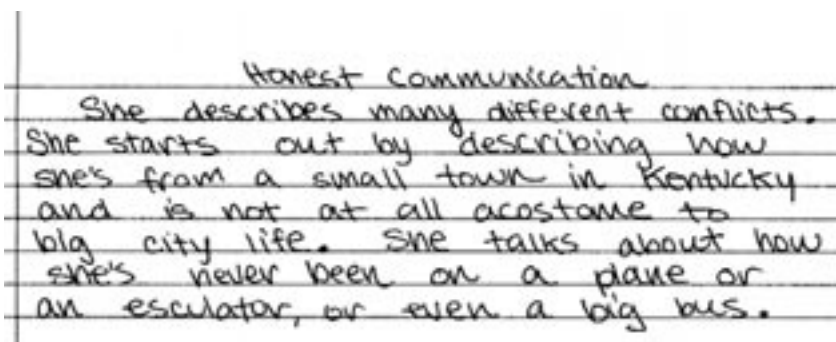
“ABOUT 70 PERCENT OF THE STUDENTS WHOSE PAPERS I READ WOULD BE READY TO TAKE A FIRST-YEAR COMPOSITION COURSE AT MY UNIVERSITY.”

~ Douglas Tedards
Associate Professor, University of the Pacific
Evaluator, CWP Improving Students' Academic Writing

LOOKING AT STUDENT PROGRESS

Writing in the Twelfth Grade

These side-by-side opening paragraphs portray how twelfth-grader Reid Lamson grows in his ability to understand and respond to an author's position—the reading and writing task posed by the Subject A Examination. The paragraphs also demonstrate growth in sentence structure, mechanics, and awareness of audience. This student's teacher, Rochelle Ramay, has participated for two years in the CWP initiative, Improving Students' Academic Writing.



On the October pre-test, Reid's introductory paragraph illustrates his inability to address the topic. His short, simple sentences convey his confusion with the task. He also ignores his reader's need for orientation.

Trust Your First Instinct

How would you react in an emergency?

That is a complicated question for most people because most people haven't been in an emergency situation and don't know exactly how they would react. Most people would like to think that they would act quickly, and help who ever is in need. But according to two professors named Darley and Latané acting quickly or even acting is usually not what happens. In their essay, "Why People Don't Help in a Crisis," Darley and Latané give examples, based on their research, of what people usually do in an emergency. Darley and Latané say, "The bystander's reactions are shaped by the actions of others and all too frequently by their inaction, meaning people don't react on their first instinct and help. They usually sit back and wait for someone else to make a move."

On the mid-May post-test, Reid demonstrates in his opening paragraph that he understands and can identify the author's purpose. His sentences illustrate his confidence, control, and ability to weave in a quotation from the text. He engages his reader from the outset.

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CREDITS

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“SHELDON HIGH SCHOOL SCORED
78 PERCENT IN ENGLISH ON THE
CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAM,
WAY ABOVE THE STATE AVERAGE OF 65
PERCENT. I CREDIT THE TEACHERS WHO
WORKED SO HARD AND THE WRITING
PROJECT FOR HELPING THEM TEACH
MORE EFFECTIVELY.”

~ Paula Duncan, Principal
Sheldon High School
Elk Grove Unified School District, Sacramento

CW
CP