

**Through the Lens of the Family Writing Project:
The Southern Nevada Writing Project's Impact
on Student Writing and Teacher Practices**

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Executive Summary

This study documents the effects of participation in the Family Writing Project (FWP), a family literacy program offered by the Southern Nevada Writing Project (SNWP). The FWP provides opportunities for students, parents, and teachers from the highly diverse and mobile Las Vegas community to come together outside of the school day to write about matters important to their lives. FWP teacher-facilitators engage family members in writing and art activities, discussions, publishing, and community projects. Through these activities, the FWP aims to influence student writing (and attitudes toward writing), as well as the FWP teacher-facilitators' own classroom practices.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of participation in the Family Writing Project on: 1) students' achievement in writing and their attitudes about writing; and 2) teachers' practices, including their approaches to teaching writing and their relationships with students and families.

The study employed a pre/post quasi-experimental design, matching individual students to examine differences between two groups: 21 middle school students who participated in the FWP and were also students in FWP teacher-consultants' classrooms, and a comparison group of carefully matched students from a school of similar size and demographics with no FWP involvement or other instruction from SNWP teacher-consultants. The data comprised student writing samples collected at three points in time; pre and post student surveys; and interviews of FWP teachers, students, and parents.

When compared to the matched sample on a repeated measures ANOVA, FWP students demonstrated greater growth in each of six writing traits (ideas, organization, voice, sentence fluency, word choice, and conventions) as well as on a holistic assessment. This difference was statistically significant for the program group in the area of word choice. Comparison of survey responses further indicated that FWP students liked writing more than comparison students (and used it to understand their feelings), and that their positive attitudes were sustained over time at the FWP sites. Interviews with the FWP teacher-consultants documented changes in their classroom practices as well as in their understanding of the need to establish and value relationships with students and parents.

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INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The Family Writing Project (FWP) is a family literacy program offered by the Southern Nevada Writing Project (SNWP) since 2001. The FWP provides opportunities for students, parents, and teachers from the highly diverse and mobile Las Vegas community to come together outside of the school day to write about matters important to their lives. A primary goal of the project is to help participants—students, parents, and teachers—develop relationships built on mutual understanding and respect, and experience the power of written communication. The FWP thereby aims to affect attitudes toward writing as well as classroom writing performance. In addition, by making the writing process more visible, the FWP aims to help parents and family members more effectively support their children's writing at home. The trained teacher-facilitators who lead FWP groups engage family members in various writing and art activities, discussions, publishing, and community projects. Prior to this study, FWP teacher-facilitators had commonly reported that leading FWPs influenced their classroom practice; however, because this evidence was largely anecdotal, it was unclear how those influences occurred and whether there was any measurable impact on students' writing performance and attitude toward writing. This project thus aimed to investigate the impact of participation in the FWP on student achievement in writing, student attitudes toward writing, and teacher practices (including teachers' approaches to teaching writing and their relationships with students and families). The FWP's aims align with a growing body of research that supports the efficacy of family literacy programs. Many successful family literacy programs have demonstrated the power of designing programs that draw on parents' funds of knowledge about their community, home, culture, and workplaces (Hammond 2001; Olmedo 1997; Spielman 2001; Moll 1990; Paratore, Melzi, and Krol-Sinclair 1999; Shanahan, Mulhern, and Rodriguez-Brown 1995). Such programs value all members of the family for what they can contribute, and as a result they may challenge schools' typical assumptions that parents and family members lack the ability or interest to help their children with academic assignments.

Writing, in particular, can be a means for students to be heard in a setting (school) that has traditionally marginalized the importance of their voice (Spielman 2001; Moll 1990). Research suggests that as students come to identify themselves as writers in a community, they may become more interested in the importance of education in general and writing in particular—hence both their attitudes and their performance are enhanced (e.g., Hurtig 2004). As parents become more aware of the importance of writing, they are better able to support students. These claims are consistent with findings that point to the importance of building parent-student-school relationships (e.g., Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Valdes, 1996; Wells, 1986).

While most family literacy programs focus on reading, the Chicago-based Parents Write Their Worlds (Hurtig, 2004) is one of the few examples of a family literacy program involving writing. Parents were invited into their children's school to participate in personal-narrative writing workshops during which they wrote and shared stories that drew on their life experience and knowledge, worked in small groups to edit, and published their work in a magazine that was circulated to the school and community, and beyond. Parents were viewed as equal partners in their children's education, and in the process expressed themselves through their stories. Findings from a study of the Parents Write Their Worlds program suggested that parents developed confidence and became more involved in the school and larger community; and the children developed a greater interest in reading and writing, were motivated to write their own stories, and developed interest and pride in family histories and cultural heritage. The current research study was designed to draw upon and to add to the growing body of knowledge about family literacy programs, with a specific focus on writing.

Program Context

Located at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas since its inception in 1983, the Southern Nevada Writing Project has approximately 300 teacher-consultants (TCs) who are involved in an increasing number of programs offered by the site. Teachers initially become involved through participation in an invitational institute. During this intensive experience, teachers engage in their own writing projects, study research related to the teaching of writing, and prepare for leadership roles by demonstrating effective writing practices. Following the institute, these teachers have opportunities to become involved as teacher-consultants in a variety of site-sponsored programs ranging from professional development programs for teachers to programs geared toward students and families, including the Family Writing Project.

SNWP serves the Clark County School District, the fifth-largest school district in the nation. A major challenge for the district (and thus for SNWP) is the large number of residents (approximately 5,000 individuals) moving into the city of Las Vegas each month. On average, Las Vegas builds a new school every thirty days. Furthermore, high mobility within the district results in instability and attrition in the student bodies of many schools. The school district, mirroring the area as a whole, is characterized by increasing ethnic and linguistic diversity, and by a growing disparity between low-income communities and more affluent areas. Many residents, both old-timers and newcomers, feel disconnected from the community in a city that is constantly reinventing itself.

Within this context of high growth, mobility, and diversity, SNWP has sought to develop programs that can make a difference in student writing and/or teacher practices, while contributing to the needs of the local community. One of these programs, the FWP, was conceived by an SNWP teacher-consultant, Arthur Kelly (2004), in an effort to help families and students offset some of their disparate and isolated feelings, and to help families and teachers build meaningful relationships revolving around writing. In addition, the FWP offers possibilities of partnerships (between the SNWP and parents, community organizations, teachers, and other NWP sites); the potential for teachers to

develop expertise in the teaching of writing; and opportunities for teachers to develop their leadership skills.

Program Description

By providing opportunities for families to write together about what is important in their lives, FWPs nurture and strengthen communication among parents, students, and teachers. In the process, students gain confidence in expressing themselves and in working on the craft of writing. As parents and other family members become involved in the writing process, they gain confidence and are better able to support students at home, thus contributing to the improvement of student achievement.

FWP structure

Although by design no two family writing projects are identical, certain basic activities and structures occur across all sites and form the essence of the program. Located primarily in schools, FWP groups meet outside regular school hours at times that work best for participating family members and students. Students are required to bring an adult, who commits to participating for five weeks. (In 2004–05, one FWP school in this study relaxed that requirement to accommodate students who were interested but did not have an adult who could commit to full attendance.)

FWP activities

FWPs are led by trained teacher-facilitators who engage families in various writing and art activities, discussions, and publishing an anthology of their writings. As family members write about and share their childhoods, communities, cultures, hopes, and dreams, they develop understandings and bonds that help teachers and families get to know each other outside of classrooms. Because FWPs were also conceived as a vehicle for developing connections between the school and local community, many FWPs organize a community project such as establishing a garden, developing tiles for a mural, or painting benches for the school courtyard that bear the marks of family identity.

FWP leadership and training

Teacher-consultants facilitate FWPs, and other interested teachers often participate—many of whom then attend an invitational institute and become teacher-consultants themselves. Facilitators bring with them knowledge, expertise, and flexibility in the teaching of writing, including an ability to create an environment that is uniquely responsive to each group’s particular needs. Although facilitators typically start with a blueprint, literally a blue book of suggestions and plans entitled, *Writing with Families* (Kelly, in press), over time they customize activities in an ongoing process of development that they then share with other facilitators when the community of teacher-consultants comes together to plan, debrief, exchange ideas, and develop other joint projects such as a citywide Family Writing Fair. Recently SNWP began to offer an FWP seminar, which includes hands-on experiences designed to help new facilitators set up projects at their sites.

Aim of the Research Project

The following research questions guided the study:

1. In what ways does participation in the FWP affect student writing?
2. In what ways does participation in the FWP affect student attitudes toward themselves as writers and toward writing?
3. In what ways does the FWP affect teaching practices of FWP facilitators?

Influence on students

As a result of participation in FWPs, we expected to see growth in student writing and increased positive attitudes toward writing. We hypothesized that these changes would be due to increased confidence as a result of writing both in the classrooms of FWP facilitators and with families in the FWP. Changes in attitude and student performance could also be attributed to increased opportunities to write about relevant and important topics, and to revise and develop ideas into pieces of writing for published anthologies. We expected that students' growth in writing, especially in the traits of voice and ideas, would result from increased opportunities for expression in several genres about topics that were important to them as writers. We expected that teachers' involvement in an FWP would stimulate enthusiasm for teaching writing, and thus affect students' disposition toward writing.

Influence on teacher practices

Based on family-literacy research and our own program evaluations, we expected that teacher-consultants would develop improved relationships with students as a result of knowing them outside the classroom. We further expected that these changed relationships would improve teachers' ability to implement classroom strategies that support students as learners and writers. In addition, we expected teacher-consultants would develop relationships with family members in the FWPs, and that by supporting the learning of family members, they would ultimately be supporting learning opportunities and outcomes for students.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Overall Design

A pre/post quasi-experimental design with matching at the individual student level was used to examine differences between middle school students who participated in an FWP and also were in the school classroom of an FWP facilitator, and a comparison group of students from a school of similar size and demographic makeup with no FWP involvement or other instruction from SNWP teacher-consultants. Mixed methods were used to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data. Data included prompted writing samples collected at three points in time; pre and post student surveys; interviews of FWP teachers, students, and parents; and debriefing interviews of FWP teachers.

Research Sample

Ten Family Writing Projects were offered in the Las Vegas area in 2004–2005: four at elementary schools, four at middle schools, one at a high school, and one at a church. In all, approximately 100 families from a variety of regions in the district were served during the year of the study. Because the middle school FWP were the most long-standing and developed, we believed the middle school sites provided the best setting in which to investigate our research questions. We used the following criteria to establish eligibility for this study: an established FWP (2 years or more), experienced teacher-consultant facilitators; and teacher-consultant facilitators who were currently teaching four or more regular English classes. In addition, participating schools' demographic makeup was required to be representative of the diversity in the school district overall. Three middle schools (referred to as schools A, B, and C), situated in different areas of the Vegas Valley (East, Northwest, and Northeast regions), met these criteria (see table 1).

The FWP project at school A, located in central Las Vegas (the East Region of the school district) and comprising multigenerational, multiethnic and multilingual families, was the most long-standing; it was the original FWP site. As of spring 2005, school A had supported six separate Family Writing Projects over five years, involving more than 70 families and approximately 250 individuals. School B, located in Northwest Las Vegas, had offered five FWPs over the course of three years, and school C (Northeast region) had supported two groups over two years.

Selection of Program and Comparison Group

We chose to match on the individual student level for several reasons. We knew our sample size would be small and cross a variety of FWP environments. Furthermore, individual Family Writing Projects draw from across grade levels, and while each includes families, the program is focused on individuals rather than schools or grade levels. Thus there was no appropriate match at the group level. Because participation in FWPs tends to vary each year depending on family work schedules, extracurricular activities, and the high mobility in Las Vegas, it was impossible to know in advance of the program year who would be participating; it was also impossible to know in advance when each school would offer FWPs (fall, spring, or both). Therefore, we adopted individual-matching procedures to allow us to be maximally efficient in identifying comparison students.

In order to have a large enough pool of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students from which to draw matched pairs at the comparison school, we worked with the school's learning strategist to administer the pre and post assessments in two classes at each grade level of the teachers who volunteered. To ensure that we would be able to find matches for our FWP students, we chose a school with demographics similar to those of our FWP schools. Table 1 provides an overview of the demographic information for the three FWP schools and the comparison school used in this study.

Table 1
School Demographics and Transiency (2004–2005 School Year)

	FWP School A	FWP School B	FWP School C	FWP Average	Comparison School
# Students in School	1405	1247	1442	1364	1473
# Students in Study	11	7	3	21	21
% Hispanic	67.9	36.1	19.2	41.1	44.9
% African Amer.	10.1	26.9	25.2	20.7	35.2
% Caucasian	13.9	30.1	45.7	29.9	13.7
% IEP	12.1	14.0	12.3	12.8	12.5
% LEP	46.3	19.8	5.5	23.8	27.6
% FRL	81.5	67.2	31.4	60.0	71.0
% Transiency	39.8	41.6	27.6	36.3	33.8

Matching at the student level proved to be very challenging owing to the high transiency rate as well as the limited number of test scores that were available to us. Clark County School District administers criterion-referenced tests (broken into a separate writing and reading portion and used to determine proficiency levels at eleventh grade) at the fourth, eighth, and eleventh grade levels. For this reason we were able to use the writing CRT scores for eighth grade matches only. For sixth and seventh grade matches, we used the reading and language total scores taken from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, a norm-referenced test administered yearly at each grade level.

Our sample comprised two groups of students: twenty-one sixth, seventh, and eighth grade FWP students and a comparison group of twenty-one students matched on the following attributes: grade, reading and language scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (the only consistent standardized test administered to middle grade students each year, thus allowing a basis for comparison), IEP designation, LEP designation, free/reduced-price lunch designation, gender, and ethnicity. In order to be eligible for the sample, FWP students had to have attended at least two FWP sessions. Table 2 provides an overview of the average scores of the FWP and comparison students by grade and test.

Table 2
Average Student Scores on 2004–2005 Standardized Tests

		FWP	Non-FWP
ITBS Reading total	6 th grade	195.33	200.3
	7 th grade	243.5	232
ITBS Language total	6 th grade	194.67	193.83
	7 th grade	241.75	239.75
CRT Writing total	8 th grade only	12.5	11.25

In addition to the students, participants included four FWP facilitators who were also teachers at the FWP middle schools in the study: Sam and Kari at school A; Martha at

school B; and Meagan at school C.¹ Table 3 provides an overview of each teacher’s background: years teaching, subject areas, degrees, and the year they originally attended the SNWP invitational institute.

Table 3
FWP Teacher Participants’ Experiences

	FWP School	Years teaching	Subjects	Degrees	Year of Institute
Kari	A	10 years 8 in Las Vegas	6 th grade English	BA Eng MEd Literacy + 32 hours	2003
Sam	A	10 years 9 at school A 1 in South America 2 as a TA	6 th grade Spanish	BS Ed MEd English	1997
Martha	B	22 years 11 at school B 11 in California	English Read 180 English /Social Studies GED	BA English & Multiple subject MAT (Master of Arts in Teaching) Working on M.Ed. in Reading	1996
Meagan	C	3 years all at school C	8 th grade English	BA English	2003

Data Collection and Analytic Procedures

Table 4 provides an overview of the data sources in relation to the research questions, the participants who were involved, and timeline for data collection. An explanation of the data sources, as well as procedures for development, collection and analysis, follows.

¹ All names used for participants are pseudonyms.

Table 4
An Overview of Research Questions, Data Sources, and Timelines

Research Question	Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data
In what ways does participation in FWP affect student writing?	<i>On-demand writing prompts, three time points</i> n = 21 FWP students n= 21 comparison students	<i>Interview – perception of impact on writing</i> n = 8 FWP students n = 10 FWP adult family members n = 4 FWP TCs
In what ways does participation in the FWP affect student attitudes toward themselves as writers and toward writing?	<i>20-Item pre/post writing attitude surveys</i> n = 21 FWP students n= 21 comparison students	<i>Interviews – perception of impact on attitudes</i> n = 8 FWP students n = 10 FWP adult family members n = 4 FWP TCs
In what ways does participation in FWP affect teaching practices of FWP TC Facilitators?	Student perceptions in <i>pre/post writing attitude surveys (Part II)</i> n = 21 FWP students n= 21 comparison students	<i>Interviews</i> n = 4 FWP TCs <i>Debriefing video (Summer 2004, 2005)</i>

On-demand prompted writing

To address the first research question regarding the effect of the FWP on student writing, we collected writing samples (a traditional and accepted form of assessment to measure changes in writing over time) from all FWP students and the non-FWP students who formed the comparison group. All prompts were selected from the NWP’s national archive of writing assessment tasks and mirrored the type of assessment used by the state for testing writing proficiency. Procedures for developing the three writing topics and for administering the assessment followed state proficiency guidelines as closely as possible: each of the prompt topics represented the types of writing required by the state (personal narrative, persuasive, and expository). To lessen any potential prompt effect, we employed a counterbalanced design: each student was assigned a different essay topic for each testing (A, B, or C prompt); the booklet and writing instructions resembled the format used by the state; and assessments were administered during 40-minute segments of regularly scheduled class periods.

In order to obtain pre and post writing samples from as many FWP students as possible, we administered the assessment at three times (fall, winter, and spring). Therefore, the pre/post comparison may include any of the following: fall/winter; fall/spring; winter/spring. To ensure technical rigor and credibility, scoring and data processing were conducted nationally and independently of the local site.

Evaluative framework. The scoring used a modified version of the Six+1 Trait Writing Model (Bellamy 2005). This evaluative framework includes a rubric that attends to six attributes of the student’s writing:

- Ideas / Content Development—establishing purpose, selecting and integrating ideas, including details to support, develop, or illustrate ideas
- Organization—creating an opening and closing, maintaining focus, ordering and relating events, ideas, details to provide coherence and unity in the writing
- Voice—communicating in an engaging and expressive manner, revealing the writer’s stance toward the subject
- Sentence Fluency—constructing sentences to convey meaning, controlling syntax, creating variety in sentence length and type
- Word Choice—choosing words and expressions for appropriateness, precision, and variety
- Conventions—controlling grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and paragraphing.

The researchers determined that the Six+1 Trait Writing Model, while sufficiently comprehensive, required certain modifications to make it more appropriate for use in research studies. The following modifications were made in the rubric prior to scoring:

- The scale of the rubric was extended from four to six points in order to ensure sufficient discrimination and therefore to allow increased sensitivity to any changes in student performance.
- The language defining the traits was clarified to enhance the reliability of evaluative judgments.
- The evaluative judgments were modified to focus exclusively upon the student writing (where, on occasion, the rubric previously included references to the reader’s reactions or to the writer’s personality as the basis for judgment).

The student writing samples were among those from all five LSRI sites scored at a national conference held in June 2005. Student writing was coded with identifying information removed, so that scorers could not know any specifics of the writing sample being evaluated (e.g., site of origin, program or comparison group, or time of administration [pretest or posttest]). SNWP’s papers were scored in the middle school group, of which 52% were scored twice so that reliability could be calculated.

The scorers participated in six hours of training at the beginning of the conference. The scoring was calibrated to a criterion level of performance at that time, and was then recalibrated following every major break in the scoring (meals and overnight). Overall, reliabilities (measured as interrater agreement, defining agreement as two scores being identical or within one single score point of each other) ranged from 90% to 95%, with an aggregate across all scores of 92%. At the middle school level, where SNWP papers were scored, reliabilities ranged from 91% to 96%, with an aggregate across all scores of 93% (see table 7 in appendix A for a complete analysis of the reliability of the scoring of student writing). All scores were double-entered independently and the files compared. The resolution of all discrepancies produced a highly accurate data file, which we used in our analysis.

The writing-sample data were analyzed using repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA). In the analysis, the independent variables were time (i.e., pretest or posttest)

and group membership (FWP or matched comparison group). The outcome variable was writing performance, with particular attention to scores on voice and ideas; the essential question examined in this analysis was whether FWP students grew more over time than students in the comparison group. This is referred to as a time by group interaction, because if FWP had an effect on the outcomes, the changes over time should depend on what group a student is in.

Surveys on student attitudes and writing practices

To assess change in student attitudes toward writing—both personal and school related—we asked students to complete a two-part survey, developed by the research team and administered as a pre and post measure. The first section, focusing on student attitude, was based on an existing survey on writers’ self-perception (Bottomley, Henk, and Melnick. 1997/1998); the second section, focused on writing practices, was developed by examining existing surveys that related to writing practices and selecting items that were congruent with research on effective writing practices. Responses were used to inform interpretations about student performance and teacher practices.

The survey consisted of 20 items. Part one, items 1–12, addressed students’ beliefs and attitudes about writing. The response options were *Strongly Agree*, *Agree*, *Disagree*, and *Strongly Disagree*. Part two, items 13–20, related to writing practices. Response options were *Daily*, *Weekly*, *Monthly*, and *Never*. We conducted two factor analyses, one for part 1 and one for part 2, to determine how the various items clustered together. The analyses used in this report were conducted on the post survey items (that is, the survey conducted at the end of the program), but an analysis of the pre survey items yielded similar results.

Exploratory factor analysis was used (based on a principal-components analysis with Promax rotation). We identified five factors, three associated with beliefs and attitudes about writing (part 1 of survey) and two with writing practices (part 2). The basic results, along with other technical information, are presented in table 8 in appendix B. The table displays the factor loadings, which indicate the degree that each factor contributed to an individual’s response. Items that loaded highly on a factor were used to interpret the meaning of each factor (the table shows those loadings in bold). Our interpretation of the factors was as follows:

- ***Self-Image***. The student, as well as those around her or him, thinks of the student as a “good writer.”
- ***Communication/Understanding***. The student believes writing is a good way to communicate and understand his or her thoughts or emotions.
- ***Writing Emphasis***. Writing is discussed, emphasized, and practiced at the school frequently.
- ***Planning/Revising***. The student frequently engages in prewriting and revision activities.

Each student received a score for each of these subscales based on an average of the items identified with each of the factors (shown in bold in table 8).

The survey data were analyzed using repeated measures ANOVA. In the analysis, the independent variables were time (i.e., pretest or posttest) and group membership (FWP or

matched comparison group). The outcome variables were factors measured by the writing survey, which we describe in more detail in the results section.

Interviews

A team of three SNWP researchers conducted semistructured interviews with students, parents, and FWP facilitators, which were audiotaped and transcribed. The student and parent interviews occurred at breaks during the FWP meetings or at the FWP Fair, a citywide event presented jointly by the SNWP Family Writing Projects in May. The teacher interviews, conducted in teacher-consultants' classrooms after school in May, were designed to provide insight into teacher practices, addressing our third research question. All interviews were seen as potential sources of insight into teacher, parent, and student perceptions of FWP's impact on student writing and attitudes.

Analysis of interviews. Analysis followed grounded theory procedures (Strauss and Corbin 1990). Using open coding, two of the researchers independently examined the interviews for salient categories of information related to the three research questions: student growth in writing, student change in attitude toward writing, and change in teacher practices. Following initial coding of transcripts to identify evidence related to each of those areas, we discussed our coding and resolved any differences. Using a constant comparative approach, we then further examined interview responses in each area for subcategories; we did this independently after working through several pages of one interview together. We followed this procedure one theme at a time, meeting to discuss each theme before going on to the next one.

FWP debriefing interview sessions

Debriefing meetings for FWP facilitators were held in the summer of 2004 and again in the fall of 2005. In these sessions, we specifically posed questions about

- what effects of the FWP the facilitators saw on participating students' attitudes, grades, school participation, and attendance
- how they saw the FWP affecting participating students' relationship with other students inside and outside of school
- what experiences in FWP were motivational to themselves as facilitators
- why they continued being involved
- what they gained from their participation personally, as teachers, and as teacher-consultants.

In addition, during the fall 2005 debrief, we specifically targeted some of the categories and themes that had emerged from preliminary analysis of the interview data. FWP facilitator debriefing sessions were videotaped (the second was audiotaped as well). For purposes of this study, these interviews were used primarily in the analysis to confirm or provide further insight regarding the research questions.

RESULTS

This section looks first at growth in student writing, then at changes in student attitudes, and finally at changes in teacher practices.

Student Writing

On all six measured traits as well as the holistic writing assessment, FWP students' writing improved more than comparison students' writing. The results are shown in table 5, which displays mean pre- and posttest scores for each trait by group; the change between pretest and posttest; and the ANOVA *F*-values. In brief, the table shows that FWP students consistently demonstrated greater improvement than comparison students on all measured aspects of writing, as reflected by the six-trait writing model and the holistic score. In addition, the FWP had a statistically significant effect on some aspects of students' writing, specifically students' expressiveness as measured by word choice.

Table 5
Writing Score Mean Pre- and Posttest Scores by Condition

Score	Group	Mean Pretest	Mean Posttest	Change	<i>F</i> *
Holistic	FWP	3.05	3.33	0.28	0.70
	Comparison	2.67	2.76	0.09	
Ideas	FWP	3.17	3.38	0.21	0.12
	Comparison	2.69	2.81	0.12	
Organization	FWP	2.91	3.29	0.38	0.81
	Comparison	2.52	2.67	0.15	
Voice	FWP	3.06	3.56	0.50	1.75
	Comparison	2.86	2.93	0.07	
Sentence Fluency	FWP	3.12	3.36	0.24	0.07
	Comparison	2.67	2.83	0.16	
Word Choice	FWP	3.00	3.50	0.50	4.57**
	Comparison	2.69	2.69	0.00	
Conventions	FWP	3.14	3.55	0.41	1.93
	Comparison	2.76	2.79	0.03	

* *F* values correspond to the test of significance of the interaction between group and time.

** $p < .05$.

Table 5 shows the statistically significant effect on word choice ($F(1, 40) = 4.57, p < .05, \eta^2 = 0.1$), using $p < .05$ as the criterion for statistical significance. The table shows that comparison group scores did not increase at all, whereas FWP group scores increased by 0.5 points on average, or one-half level. This is a large effect; η^2 is a measure of the size of the effect, and anything over 0.06 is considered a medium effect (Olejnic and Algina 2000). This effect could be due either to the influence of the writing project in general (that is, teacher-consultants positively influencing the quality of writing instruction at

participating schools), or it could be due to some specific feature of the Family Writing Project (for example, improved vocabulary due to greater interaction with parents or other members of the writing community).

While there were no statistically significant effects for the other writing traits or the holistic score, one likely explanation for the lack of statistical significance is the small size of the sample. This explanation is supported by the fact that, as shown in table 5, for every trait, as well as the holistic score, the FWP group grew more than the comparison group. Although only suggestive, the largest difference next to word choice was on voice, another area in which we expected to see significant growth given the nature of the Family Writing Project. The third largest difference, conventions, was somewhat surprising. However, informal observations of classrooms at both the FWP schools and the comparison school offer one possible explanation. Because of the types of writing that occurred in the FWP sessions and in the FWP teacher-consultants' classrooms, it is likely that FWP students learned about conventions in the process of revising and editing writing that was important to them; furthermore, because they reported writing more often (see discussion under "Writing Attitudes"), they had more opportunities to practice conventions. Our field notes indicated that students at the comparison school, in contrast, spent much of their writing time practicing writing-convention skills on worksheets rather than in connected text.

The teacher interviews offered some insights into why the improvements might have occurred. Because of the extensive opportunities to write in the FWP and in the classrooms of teacher-consultants, Kari noted, students discover their voice "without even realizing it, because they are telling their personal stories." Several teacher-consultants mentioned that FWP students were not only more eager to write but were more able to develop ideas than other students. Kari said,

Their ideas are a lot stronger . . . we make them think. And it's not with 30 other kids and sitting in a class, or 35 other kids. It's on a Saturday where it's laid back and the family is there. And a lot of times they have to become the teacher and help their families.

This is a potential explanation for the lower-than-expected performance by FWP students on the on-demand writing. FWP students are used to extended time to develop ideas—time that was not afforded them on the writing-assessment task. Furthermore, in spite of efforts to engage students in the writing-prompt assessment for this study, by suggesting it was similar to—and therefore good practice for—the state eighth grade proficiency assessment, the teachers felt that by the third administration many students decided "that they just weren't going to put a lot into it and slacked off."

Writing Attitudes

The second research question asked whether the Family Writing Project had a positive impact on students' attitudes about themselves as writers and about writing. The survey provided primary data to answer this question; interviews with students, parents, and teachers provided additional insights. Based on a repeated measures ANOVA using the subscale factors (self-image, communication/understanding, writing emphasis, and planning/revising) as the outcome measure, all the differences were very small, and none

were even close to being statistically significant (see table 6). This was surprising, because if the program improved writing skills (which the previous section showed was probably the case), we would also expect some effect on writing attitudes and dispositions.

However, principal component analysis did indicate significant differences for several individual items in favor of the FWP group. FWP students' attitudes about liking to write held steady or increased while those of comparison students declined. Specifically, item 12 on the self-image factor (see table 9 in appendix C) directly tapped students' feelings about writing. This item stated: "This is how I feel about writing: (a) I really like it, (b) I like it, (c) I don't like it, and (d) I can't stand it." The results on this item were close to being statistically significant ($p=.1$). The analysis showed that the attitudes of the comparison group declined over time (from an average of 3.2 to 2.8), whereas the attitudes of the FWP group held steady at 3.5 (between "I like it" and "I really like it"). There was a comparable finding, though not significant, for item 2 ("Other kids in my class think I'm a good writer."), with the FWP group slightly increasing (from 2.9 to 3.10) and the comparison group declining (from 2.7 to 2.4). The community nature of the FWP may have contributed to these trends.

Table 6
Mean Pre and Post Survey Scores by Condition

Score	Group	Mean Pre Survey	Mean Post Survey	Change	F^1
Self-image	FWP	3.19	3.17	-0.02	1.70
	Comparison	2.79	2.67	-0.12	
Communication/Understanding	FWP	3.16	3.15	-0.01	0.49
	Comparison	2.89	2.87	-0.02	
Writing Emphasis	FWP	10.69	10.40	-0.29	0.41
	Comparison	6.41	6.95	0.54	
Planning/Revising	FWP	10.24	10.97	0.73	0.22
	Comparison	6.89	7.79	0.90	

¹ * F values correspond to the test of significance of the interaction between group and time.

* $p < .05$.

The results also indicated some differences between the two groups on individual items pertaining to the last two factors, writing emphasis and planning/revising, suggesting that the FWP group engaged in writing activities more frequently than the comparison group. These differences could be explained by the FWP schools' participation in the writing project and/or by the commitment of the teachers at these schools to emphasize writing instruction and to use practices emphasized by the writing project. Analysis of individual survey items indicated some significant differences in other areas as well, again favoring the FWP group (see ANOVA table 9 in the appendix). These items were item 4 ("My teacher thinks I am a good writer"); item 1 ("I think I am a good writer"); and item 8 ("Writing is a way to understand my feelings").

In summary, the survey data indicated that writing was emphasized more at the FWP sites, and students liked writing more (and used it to understand their feelings). The interview data with students and parents showed that some students reported a change in their attitude toward writing as a result of being involved with the FWP. Several students admitted that they found writing less scary and that as a result of their experience they wrote more. For example, one student explained, “Before I started the FWP, I didn’t know I could write so good and so now that I’ve joined the FWP, I want to grow up to be an author.” This same student’s mother reported that he seemed to enjoy writing more, “and that he’s not doing it alone now. It’s like there’s other people that enjoy doing it and they’re doing it together, too.” She expressed the notion that a community of writers helps to sustain the individual as a writer. Another student confessed that he had “hated writing” before being a part of the FWP but felt more comfortable after participating. Although many of the students we interviewed admitted that they had liked writing before coming to the FWP, they still agreed that the program had given them more confidence to share their writing in groups and that it helped them develop their ideas.

Change in Teacher Practice

The teacher interview data, especially related to changes in classroom practice, was rich and complex. The analysis helped to explicate the complementarity between facilitating an FWP and classroom experience. Three major themes concerning teaching practices emerged from the analysis: 1) establishing and valuing relationships; 2) understanding how writers write; and 3) evolving as a teacher / developing as a leader.

Establishing and valuing relationships

The teachers we interviewed consistently talked about ways their teaching practices had changed as a result of relationships formed between and with students and parents as a result of facilitating an FWP. Because of the powerful connections that were forged during the FWP activities, teachers were reminded of the necessity of taking time to create personal connections with *all students* in the regular classroom. The interviews revealed four major ways that relationship-building affected teaching practices:

1. Understanding students’ lives. During interactions at FWP sessions, teachers learned about the lives and experiences of their students; often they learned about personal factors that might affect academic performance; this awareness then carried over into the classroom with both FWP students and non-FWP students. Sometimes these interactions dispelled assumptions about why students were not performing. Kari told us about a student she assumed was being “lazy”: “So I take the time to ask a couple questions and all of a sudden you find out he and mom are living in the shelter now because dad smacked him around or whatever.” FWP teachers suggested that such knowledge helped them to be more flexible with students, and to look for opportunities to work with families or find ways to be helpful to these adolescent learners in the face of such challenges.

2. Helping students draw on personal experience. The teachers were often able to help students draw on rich cultural and family experiences in their writing, which in turn led to more powerful writing instruction. Knowing students personally helped teachers make

suggestions to students about details that might add interest to their writing. Because they were writing about topics they knew and cared about, students were better able to develop ideas. Once students work on a piece of writing long enough to develop it, they are more likely to care about it, and hence to want to revise and edit it. In the process, they will further develop their expertise in such areas as using conventions and developing organizational frameworks.

3. Understanding parents as resources. Another benefit of forging personal connections was that teachers came to better understand the assets that parents brought to the educational setting, assets that often go unrecognized by schools. For example, Martha told us,

I sometimes look at a kid . . . and I think he leaves here and he just gets on his skateboard and never thinks another education-type thought, but that's just not true. They have their time sharing at home and whether they're putting it on paper or not, they're certainly forming thoughts that could later become a paper.

Likewise, teachers worked with parents and students during FWP as they revised their own papers, enabling parents to see the writing process in action. Some also involved parents in their classroom teaching, seeing them as partners in their children's education. Martha, for example, encouraged (even "required") her students to read their writing to parents at home, and talked with parents about the importance of "listening to content" rather than "misspelled words." And she established a time for parents to come in to talk about writing. In addition to these new ways of thinking about how parents help children at home, teachers also commented that the family relationships that were revealed through the FWP experiences reminded them that parents *do* care about schooling and their children: "I have seen such compassion for their kids. I need to remember that all families are that way. And I need to show the same compassion."

4. Relating more respectfully to all students. Finally, as Meagan noted, "you just create a stronger bond" through the writing, and that attitude of mutual respect carried over into the classroom. In the FWP settings, teachers slow down; they wait for parents and students to gather the courage to respond, to write, to share their writing. The mutual respect that develops affects relationships with students—not just the FWP students, but all students. The teachers reported that because the FWP fostered respect for students as individuals, they came to believe more strongly that *all* students are capable. Teachers talked about not allowing students to fail, of ways they push until students achieve the very best of what they *can* do, never giving up on them, giving them time to reach their full potential, starting where they are, and giving them time to grow developmentally. Thus, according to FWP facilitators, FWP principles were regularly incorporated into their classrooms.

Understanding how writers write

In part because of involvement with SNWP, Family Writing Project facilitators came to understand how they themselves work as writers, and thus they were better able to implement strategies that affect student performance and attitudes. Two such powerful strategies involved providing opportunities for students to choose their own topics (as well as the pieces they want to take through the writing process) and creating ways for

students to share their writing with others. Meagan explained that choice makes writing “relevant to them” and Kari told us, “every year they love to write a little bit more. And I think it’s because I’m giving them more freedom.” Likewise, the FWP teacher-consultants found that students were more willing to stay engaged as writers and to work on their writing for extended periods of time: “I know that if they say they want to work on this for another day, it’s not because they’re trying to waste time; it’s because they’re really into whatever we’re doing.” As for providing opportunities to share and receive response, several teachers indicated that they were more comfortable doing so in their classrooms as a result of their FWP experience. Although parents and families were typically reluctant to share at first, eventually, “everyone wants to share.” Therefore as facilitators they had to be “very patient and nonthreatening.” Peer response can improve the quality of writing in the classroom in several ways. Writing more, but taking fewer pieces through the entire process, allows time for concentrated focus on the mechanics and craft of writing. In more traditional classrooms at the middle and high school levels, teachers are overwhelmed with the thought of trying to grade large quantities of writing; as a result they cut back on the amount of writing they assign. FWP teachers understood—and communicated to students—that trial and error, revising, and refining are part of the writing process; incorporating peer response teaches everyone that everything doesn’t have to be perfect at every stage, that writing is a continually developing process.

Additionally, Kari and Meagan commented that they had begun to journal and write with their students, and they participated during class sharing, creating a “more democratic classroom” that encourages students to enjoy writing and see themselves and their teachers as writers. Kari explained, “It’s not I’m the teacher and you’re the student, whereas before it was. And now it’s kind of like . . . this is *our* classroom.”

Evolving as a teacher / Developing leadership

As noted previously, the FWP teachers discussed specific practices that directly resulted from trying out and/or learning something in the FWP session and then having more confidence to explore it in their own classrooms. They expressed, each in his or her own way, a sense of efficacy as a teacher and as a leader as a result of having facilitated the FWP. Meagan described the fear she had felt at having to start her FWP on her own this year after working side by side with an experienced teacher-consultant the previous year, but felt that the year on her own had better prepared her to understand her students and to relate with their parents. She felt more confident as a result of her experience and relished the idea of starting another FWP when she moves out of state to a new school. Like Meagan, Kari started facilitating the FWP in the shadow of a veteran teacher (Sam), but as time passed she increasingly took on leadership responsibility.

I just wanted to be in the background . . . I wanted to go every Saturday and just write. And he let me get away with that the first year, but then . . . he would surprise me and say Ms. S. is going to lead this next part And now yes, and now it’s just second nature.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Situated in one of the nation's fastest-growing, increasingly diverse, and highly mobile cities, the Family Writing Project provides an opportunity for families and teachers to build relationships and to learn about writing and the teaching of writing through the process of writing together. While these projects occur outside of the school day, they clearly affect student writing performance and student attitudes about writing within classroom contexts. Furthermore, they offer SNWP teacher-consultants opportunities for professional development that directly affects their teaching practices. This study has suggested important implications both for the FWP and for future research on the impact of the program.

We are encouraged by the positive results related to student performance and attitude. Because of the design of the study and the nature of the FWP, it is impossible to disentangle the direct effects of FWP from the effects of being a student in an FWP teacher-consultant's classroom. In fact, this connection is part of the power of the FWP, and it attests to the efficacy of the National Writing Project model of professional development. As Sam very eloquently said about connections between the FWP and his classroom teaching,

You know, I think that my teaching practices in the classroom and the FWP are reflections of each other. It's a dual reflection. It's not that one reflects the other; they reflect each other; they bounce back and forth. It's like an echo that pings back and forth.

Sam's comment was echoed in the debriefing sessions with other teacher-consultants, who talked about the importance of changing the culture of schooling through nurturing reciprocal relationships with families and also through dialogue among teachers who continue to improve their practice and support each other. Indeed, the teachers in our study and other FWP facilitators in the debriefing sessions told us that their involvement in the Family Writing Project and the SNWP helped to keep them in the profession.

In terms of affect on student writing, on all traits and the holistic score, FWP student writing improved more than did the writing of comparison students. However, the fact that only one of the traits, word choice, was statistically significant bears further consideration. One reason for the lack of significance in the other areas may be the small sample size. In spite of efforts to include as many students as possible, a number of factors interfered with this: fewer-than-usual numbers of families participated in the FWPs at the three middle school sites; not all students met the attendance requirements; and not all students participated in at least two of the prompted writing sessions.

The challenges of finding a large enough program group for our sample were augmented by the challenges of locating an exactly matched comparison group. It is important to note that although we made every effort to create comparable groups with the measures available to us, the pretest scores of the FWP students were higher than those of the students in the comparison school. While it would have been preferable to have equal pretest scores at the outset, we were able to control for the potential effect of higher scores using statistical procedures. But the difficulty of creating exactly matched pairs of students at the individual level can have multiple sources that are harder to discern, and

harder for analysis to control. For example, FWP teacher-consultants may recruit students who like to write, even if they are not always the best students. Thus it is possible that more FWP students liked to write more, and were better writers to start with; these students may therefore have been more likely to improve than the comparison students. Also, some FWP students had been in classrooms of the FWP facilitators for extended periods of time prior to the initial writing test, thus affecting their performance in a positive way. As researchers continue to contribute to the growing body of research on the power of family literacy programs, it will be important to take into consideration such challenges to study-design.

Finally, because of the demographic context in which SNWP's Family Writing Projects exist, issues of attrition and mobility are likely to challenge future program and research endeavors, and this situation could raise further questions about the efficacy of supporting the FWP in the future. However, we are encouraged by the increasing popularity of the FWP for teachers who are now attending our FWP training seminars, as well as by the strong attendance of families at the FWP citywide fair in May. Based on this strong response on the part of teachers and parents, the SNWP will explore ways to meet the challenges of high attrition and mobility in order to effectively serve our school district through expanded support of FWP sites.

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APPENDICES

- A Table 7 NWP Reliability Scoring Table**
- B Table 8 Item Factor Loadings for Writing Survey**
- C Table 9 ANOVA Table for Survey Response Items**
- D Writing Prompts**
- E Survey**
- F Interview Questions**

Appendix A

Table 7
Interrater Reliabilities by Trait and by Level

Level	Total N of Papers	Number of papers Double-scored	Double Score Rate	Number of contrasts	Total # adj.	Total % agree	Holistic # adj.	Holistic % agree	Ideas # adj.
Elementary	1188	136	11%	952	101	89%	7	95%	14
Middle School	2379	1231	52%	8617	614	93%	54	96%	95
High School	3938	381	10%	2667	289	89%	23	94%	39
Total - all levels	7505	1748	23%	12236	1004	92%	84	95%	148

Level	Organization # adj.	Organization % agree	Voice # adj.	Voice % agree	Sentence Fluency # adj.	Sentence Fluency % agree	Word Choice # adj.	Word Choice % agree	Conventions # adj.
Elementary	13	90%	16	88%	18	87%	16	88%	17
Middle School	94	92%	107	91%	99	92%	68	94%	97
High School	42	89%	54	86%	48	87%	31	92%	52
Total - all levels	149	91%	177	90%	165	91%	115	93%	166

Appendix B

Table 8
Item Factor Loadings (N = 42)

Item	Part 1 ^a		
	I Self-Image	II Communicate/ Understand	III Neg. Worried
2 Other kids in my class think I'm a good writer.	.91	-.07	-.13
4 My teacher thinks I'm a good writer.	.78	-.02	.19
1 I think I'm a good writer.	.78	.21	-.02
12 This is how I feel about writing	.73	.25	-.11
3 There are people in my family that think I'm a good writer.	.72	.17	.11
5 Writing is a way to express myself.	.08	.88	-.00
8 Writing is a way to understand my feelings.	.02	.86	.08
9 Writing is a way to help me understand my thinking.	.19	.74	-.12
10 Writing is a way to share my ideas.	.30	.53	.20
7 Writing is sometimes frustrating.	-.32	.34	.88
6 Writing is something I do for a grade.	.42	-.42	.67

Item	Part 2 ^b	
	IV Writing Emphasis	V Planning/ Revising
20 I use writing in other subject areas.	.83	-.22
16 I discuss my writing with my teacher.	.79	-.06
18 My teachers share their own writing with students.	.63	.11
14 I discuss my writing with my classmates.	.62	.24
13 I write about topics I choose.	.41	.32
15 I revise and edit my writing.	-.11	.90
17 I use prewriting skills like brainstorming, listing, mapping or outlining.	-.08	.82
19 I save my writing.	.15	.63

Notes. Numbers indicate order in survey. Bold indicates highest loading .40 and above, based on principal components analysis with Promax rotation. Factors accounted for 73.8% of variance (Part 1) and 55.3% of variance (Part 2). Factor correlations were, for Part 1: I. & II. .55, I. & III. .12, II. & III. .09; Part 2: I. & II. .47. Internal consistency reliabilities were: I .91; II .88; III. .46; IV. .76; V. .70.

^aLikert scale response options for Items 1–11 were (a) Strongly Agree, (b) Agree, (c) Disagree, and (d) Strongly Disagree. For Item 12: (a) I really like it, (b) I like it, (c) I don't like it, and (d) I can't stand it.

^bLikert scale response options for Items 13–20 were (a) Daily (coded as 20), (b) Weekly (coded as 4), (c) Monthly (coded as 1), and (d) Never (coded as 0).

Appendix C

Table 9
Analysis of Variance for Survey Response Items

		<i>F</i> by Item																			
Source	<i>df</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Between subjects																					
Group (G)	1	12.0**	3.9	5.1	9.7**	3.8	1.0	0.2	5.0*	2.1	1.3	1.8	6.5	0.9	2.5	3.0	6.4*	0.7	5.6*	8.7**	7.7**
MS Error	34	0.4	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.7	0.6	1.4	0.8	89.9	70.3	96.3	106.9	118.4	97.3	80.4	98.4
Within subjects																					
Time (T)	1		0.6	0.8	0.1	0.0	0.4	0.4	8.4**	0.9	0.0	0.0	2.9	4.1*	0.5	0.1	4.9*				
	0.2	0.0	1.1	0.2	0.8																
T x G	1	0.6	3.6	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.6	0.7	1.8	2.9	0.3	0.7	1.4	0.4				
	0.7	0.3	0.0	0.0																	
MS Error	34	0.3	.02	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.2	61.9	31.9	50.9	37.2	29.7	63.9	74.5	46.7

Note. See factor analysis table for the text of various items.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Appendix D

Writing Prompts

General Instructions:

You have 40 minutes to respond to the prompt printed below. Your response should be written on the lined spaces **ONLY**. You may use the blank paper for your planning. Be sure to include specific and vivid details that support your topic and check for spelling and grammar.

Prompt A: Your local TV broadcasting station is having a contest to determine which TV shows to leave on the air for the new season. Write a well-organized, multi-paragraph essay to persuade the broadcaster to keep your favorite show on the air. Be sure to include specific and relevant details to support your opinion.

Prompt B: The school counselor has asked your class to write a letter to a student who will soon begin middle school. What advice would you give a new middle school student? In your letter, be sure to use specific and relevant details.

Prompt C: We have all done things that, when we look back, we would have done differently. Recall a time when you did or said something you wished you could erase and do over. In a well-organized, multi-paragraph essay, explain what you did and tell what you'd do differently. In your essay, be sure to include specific and relevant details.

Appendix E

Writing Survey

For each of the following items please circle the response that best describes your feelings or experiences.

1. I think I'm a good writer.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2. Other kids in my class think I'm a good writer.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3. There are people in my family who think I'm a good writer.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4. My teacher thinks I'm a good writer.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. Writing is a way to express myself.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6. Writing is something I do for a grade.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7. Writing is sometimes frustrating.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8. Writing is a way to understand my feelings.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9. Writing is a way to help me understand my thinking.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10. Writing is a way to share my ideas.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11. Writing is something I often do outside of school	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12. This is how I feel about writing:	I really like it	I like it	I don't like it	I can't stand it

Comments:

This is how often I experience different aspects of writing at school:

13. I write about topics I choose.	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
14. I discuss my writing with my classmates.	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
15. I revise and edit my writing.	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
16. I discuss my writing with my teacher.	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
17. I use prewriting skills like brainstorming, listing, mapping or outlining.	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never

- | | | | | |
|--|-------|--------|---------|-------|
| 18. My teachers share their own writing with students. | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Never |
| 19. I save my writing. | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Never |
| 20. I use writing in other subject areas. | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Never |

Comments:

Appendix F

Interview Questions

Teacher Interview

Background Information:

Name

Years teaching/years at that school

Degrees/subject area

When did you attend the Institute?

Have you ever been a facilitator?

What other SNWP activities have you participated in?

1. Describe the process you use to teach writing (examples/student samples)
 - a. Organization
 - b. Types of writing assignments (writing to learn/inform)
 - c. Writing topic selection
 - d. Response
 - e. Sharing
 - f. Assessment
2. Has being an FWP facilitator impacted this process? If so, how?
 - a. Teaching methods (see #1)
 - b. Relationship with students
 - c. Relationship with parents
 - d. Relationship with school and colleagues
 - e. Development of leadership skills/perception of self as leader
3. Has participation in the LSRI had any impact on your classroom practice?
 - a. Proficiency preparation
4. Describe your experiences as an FWP facilitator and how it has evolved over time.
 - a. What experiences within FWP have motivated you?
 - b. What did you gain from these experiences (as a person, teacher, member of your community)?
 - c. Has it impacted you as a writer?
5. Have you seen any change in students who have participated in the FWP? If so, what?
 - a. Attitude
 - b. Growth (personal/academic)
 - c. Participation (attendance, tardies, questions, being prepared)
 - d. Changes in writing skills/attitude toward writing

Interview questions: FWP Students [2/4/05]

1. How would you describe the FWP to a friend you wanted to persuade to come with you?

2. What are some of the most important things you have done in your FWP?

3. Why did you come to FWP the first time? What did you expect to happen at the FWP? How has it been similar or different from your expectations?

4. Has being part of the FWP changed the way you write? How? Why?

5. Has being part of FWP changed how you feel about writing? How? Why?

6. Has being part of FWP changed your relationship with your family? How? Why?

7. Has being part of FWP influenced the way you feel about your school [we want to get at things like pride in school, ways they get along with teachers and students, administrators, school in the community]

8. Has being part of the FWP changed how you feel about yourself and your future? How? Why?

Interview questions: FWP Parents

1. For how long have you been coming to the FWP?
2. What are some of the most important things you have done in your FWP?
3. Why did you come to FWP the first time? What did you expect to happen at the FWP? How has it been similar or different from your expectations?
4. Do you think that FWP has impacted or changed your child's writing? How? Why?
5. Do you think that FWP has impacted or changed the way your child feels about writing? How? Why?
6. Has participating in the FWP affected your relationship with your child/children? How? Why?
7. Has participation in FWP changed your feelings or your child's feelings about this school (teachers, principles, dean, being involved in the school, building community, etc.)? How? Why?