Strategies to Improve High Schoolers Writing Skills on the
Performance Based Assessments

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
of Master of Education

Spring 2019

Goucher College
Graduate Degree in Education

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the topic of instructional strategies that can be used to improve writing skills in high school students. The measurement tool used was the 7-point Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) rubric used for grades 6-12 in the English Curriculum. The instructional strategy used was the Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) strategy which includes explicit, interactive learning of writing strategies for self-regulation through the writing process (e.g., goal setting, self-assessment, self-instructions, and self-reinforcement). This study utilized a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design. Using the SRSD strategy did statistically impact writing skills. The SRSD strategy should continue to be implemented in various level English classes in order to assist students in setting writing goals, creating effective and well-developed paragraphs, and revising their writing.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Overview

Writing is a real-life skill that all students need to use and develop throughout their lifetime. Whether it is knowing how to write an effective argument, knowing how to write a formal business letter, or writing a college essay to gain acceptance in to a university, writing skill are important. In all fields of work writing is used every day. When a police officer came in to explain to an elementary school class what his job entails, he said, "In 20 years, I have shot my gun twice. I use my pen every day. If you want to be a cop, you have to learn to write" (Harris, Graham, Friedlander, & Laud, 2013 p.538). A student's writing ability is often assessed through their performance on large writing assessments, whether it is on their unit assessments, the annual PARCC assessment, and even the SATs. A student will struggle to be successful in writing if they are unable to successfully and accurately develop their ideas.

As an English Department Chair, this researcher become interested in this problem because of the number of students having to take the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) mandated Bridge Project because they are unable to pass the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) exam. Since students are required to write three essays on the PARCC exam, which tests standards in the English 10 curriculum, the researcher started to look for strategies that would assist students with the writing process. On each PARCC exam students are required to write a literary task, a research task, and a narrative task. Each of those writing tasks are a requirement in the English 10 curriculum. The researcher decided to implement a writing strategy that would assist students in setting writing goals for themselves, unpacking the Performance Based Assessment (PBA) task, practicing all the stages

of the writing process, and finally evaluating the feedback and revising an essay. This researcher wanted to see if spending more time on the writing process within the classroom would improve the writing skills necessary to improve student scores on the PBA required writing assignments and therefore, improve student scores on the PARCC test.

Statement of Problem

Do instructional strategies improve writing skills in high school students?

Hypothesis

Instructional strategies will have no effect on improving high school students writing skills.

Operational Definitions

The independent variable in this study is the implementation of the Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) writing strategy. The SRSD strategy was implemented as a whole class. Students used their diagnostic essay to set writing goals which assisted the researching in having meaningful discussions with students when providing feedback to assist with the revision process. The dependent variable in this study is improving writing skills on Performance Based Assessments (PBA) that appear as a summative assessment in the English curriculum per unit. Student achievement on the PBA will be determined using the 7-point PARCC rubric created by the English Office of Baltimore County Public Schools (Baltimore County Public School English 10 Curriculum, 2018).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review seeks to explore the topic of instructional strategies that can be used to improve writing skills in high school students. High School students in Maryland are required to pass the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) exam that requires writing. Further, the local school system in which the researcher works requires Performance Based Assessments (PBA) writing assessments at the end of each quarter. Thus, writing is a critical skill needed by high school students.

This literature review is organized into sections. Section one provides an overview of why writing skills have declined. Section two discusses the importance of diagnostic testing before introducing writing strategies. Section three introduces strategies to improve writing. Section four explains why improving writing skills in high school will benefit students in college.

Writing Skills on the Decline

The decline in writing ability has been a growing concern for people involved in secondary and higher education (Carter & Harper, 2013). There have been many studies conducted over the last 30 years that have provided ample evidence that supports that student writing skills have been poor for some time, at least since 1970, and are continuing to get worse. One particular study used the SAT Writing Test which supported the downward trend and concluded that graduate students do not write more skillfully than the average high school senior. There are many factors that contribute to the decline in student writing, starting with the changes within academia. Secondary education has been affected by budget cuts as well as an increased emphasis on national standards. Some believe that these changes have positively impacted

instruction and learning, but others argue that it is more than a coincidence that a substantial decline in student writing ability has accompanied these shifts and developments. Testing has been a means for assessment for centuries, but because of the increase in class sizes, essay and open-ended question style tests have become rare and educators rely more heavily on multiple choice testing which requires more memorization instead of a thorough, detailed response. As a result, students are evaluated less and less for their ability to answer questions in written form. As the number of students taught by one teacher grows, there will continue to be a decrease in individualized instruction and elaborate open ended responses which will have a direct impact on writing ability.

Another factor that has contributed to the decline of student writing is the decline in standards. According to a study conducted by Arum and Roska "reading and writing standards have decreased significantly" (as cited by Carter & Harper, 2013 p. 285). Arun and Roska report that a third of students sampled for the study were required to read less than forty pages per week in any class the previous semester; half were required to write less than twenty pages for any course. The significant reduction in required reading has likely contributed to the mediocre writing among undergraduate students. Research has shown that reading well written prose increases vocabulary and enables the reader to assimilate principles of writing style and rhetorical structures.

In addition to changes in academia, there are also societal changes that have led to the decrease in writing skills. The use of a computer makes fixing errors in spelling, grammar, diction, and punctuation easier, but why then is student writing so poor when the majority of students type their essays for class? As a result of programs like Microsoft Word, students concentrate less on punctuation, spelling, and grammar than in the past, but students need to

understand that these programs are far from perfect. The technology that is supposed to make the writing process easier, may actually cost students their skillfulness (Carter & Harper, 2013).

The increase in other interactive media such as television, video games, and social media is another culprit in the declining writing ability and classroom performance. A 2010 study of student leisure time usage revealed that students spend 42% less time per week on academic work than students of the previous generation. The extra time is spent on technology and entertainment instead of reading for pleasure, which could advance academic ability (Carter & Harper, 2013). The use of text messaging and tweeting has also lead to students no longer using formal communication because of the character limit or time constraints to type out a grammatically correct sentence. As a result, many students are beginning to use type abbreviations when writing their formal papers for school. There are many factors that have contributed to the gradual decline of student writing ability, but if the goal of high school and college is to prepare students for higher education or various employment sectors, the development of proficient writing should be top priority.

<div align="center">**Diagnostic Testing to Drive Instruction**</div>

Since writing of any kind is a creative process and not the same for every student, it is important to diagnose students' abilities and understandings prior to instructing. Without providing students with a diagnostic, it would be difficult to provide students with the individualized instruction and experiences that writing instruction deserves and demands (Goggin, 1980). After determining the results of the diagnostic, teachers should use that data as the basis for formulating objectives and selecting and organizing instructional strategies and activities that directly relate to the evaluation of the learning outcome. After the instructional outcomes have been determined, teachers can use diagnostic data as a means of grouping

students to receive the writing instruction that is most needed. For example: while some students are capable spellers, others are effective organizers. Where some students are good proofreaders, others are strong at identifying appropriate words or phrases. Grouping students with three or four of their classmates who possess different kinds of strengths encourages students to help each other solve prewriting, proofreading, and editorial problems. Providing students with a purpose for writing as well as a model for the assignment could benefit students and assist with increasing writing skills. It is important for teachers to show students the various stages or drafts of their own work, so they understand the great opportunity teachers are offering them and become eager to revise their own work. Teachers being knowledgeable about and utilizing testing and purposeful instruction strategies prepare teachers to carefully plan and sequence lessons that will assist students in developing their writing skills (Goggin, 1980).

Instructional Strategies Used to Improve Writing

The importance of writing has been recognized by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and as a result the standards have focused on writing for multiple purposes (narrative, persuasive, and informational); producing and publishing well organized tasks that involve planning, revising, editing, and collaborating with others; using writing to build knowledge about specific topics or materials read, and lastly to extend and facilitate learning in a range of discipline specific subjects as well as across purposes and audiences (Harris, et al., 2013). Despite the change in standards and the emphasis CCSS places on foundational writing skills, writing is still a challenge across K-12 and into postsecondary education; because of that challenge, the National Commission on Writing reported that "writing has become the most neglected in classrooms; reading and math have received priority over writing in both research and funding" (p. 539). Additionally, research indicates that teachers report inadequate

professional development in writing. Writing is the primary means by which students demonstrate their knowledge and if teachers are not comfortable teaching writing skills, then students are not being taught the writing process or strategies for writing; which therefore restricts students' abilities to become strong writers and hinders potential opportunities for both postsecondary education and employment. In the journal article the author references a police officer who was discussing with students at an elementary school why writing is important. The police officer said, "In 20 years, I have shot my gun twice. I use my pen every day. If you want to be a cop, you have to learn to write" (p. 538). The police officer's viewpoint on writing is supported by the National Commission on Writing for America's Families, Schools, and Colleges which states that the majority of large United States companies consider writing ability when making hiring and promotional decisions (Zumbrunn & Krause, 2012).

Many teachers struggle with finding the appropriate strategies to meet the diverse needs of their students and understanding how to effectively provide feedback to assist students in improving their writing ability (Zumbrunn & Krause, 2012). As a result, a national survey of primary grade writing instruction found that there is a considerable variability in teachers' instructional practices. The amount of time students spend on writing in the classrooms ranges from 0 to 380 minutes per week. Supporting teachers and giving them the strategies and skills so they can effectively teach writing is essential. The National Writing Project (NWP) offers a professional development network that serves teachers of writing at all levels and engages them in institutes and workshops that guide their examination of pedagogical writing practices (Kaplan, 2008). The mission of the NWP is to provide teachers with the knowledge they need to teach writing to young people. Teachers who are more prepared to teach writing tend to spend more time teaching writing, providing more opportunities for their students to practice writing,

and make more adaptations to help struggling writers (Zumbrunn & Krause, 2012). Several strategies for improving writing skills are described in the section below.

<center>**Suggested Strategies**</center>

Writer's Workshop

The current Charlotte Danielson Framework supports a transition from teacher-centered to student-centered instruction, which has been motivational to young students. Teachers are now looking for the most effective and efficient methods of teaching and a writer's workshop allows everything writers do to be meaningful (Karsbaek, 2011). Writer's Workshop has helped students to master the principles of the writing process by exposing students to a variety of writing styles (Calhoun, 2003). Writer's Workshop begins with a mini-lesson which is then followed by a timed writing and ends with a share time. During the mini lessons, students are actively engaged and encouraged to discuss with their teacher and writing partners about the new strategy being taught. The teacher models the strategy before the students are released to work on their own. The bulk of the time is spent with students writing. During the writing time, students could be at different stages of the writing process (pre-writing, drafting, revising, or publishing). Simultaneously, while students are writing, the teacher is conferencing and meeting with individual students or small groups to conference and help move students along with their writing. Every workshop concludes with a sharing session where the students may choose a piece of writing they are proud of or the teacher may choose to highlight a particular piece of writing that is done well (Karsbaek, 2011). Writer's Workshop is successful because teachers have the opportunity to teach the process as well as intervene during any of the steps of the writing process to help students produce a higher quality piece of writing. Writing should be fun, and teachers need to develop a supportive environment where students are not afraid to take

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risks. The Writer's Workshop allows for strategies to be taught through explicit modeling and gradual release to the students when they are ready. Students are permitted and encouraged to talk before, during, and after writing. Peer interactions are encouraged, which is teaching students how to plan with each other, confer over a piece of writing, and share the end product which will help develop students as writers.

Setting Writing Goals

Goal setting to improve writing skills is a way to meet the needs of a diverse group of learners because it allows students to choose goals based on their own writing weaknesses. McBride started the Goal Setting Project by giving each student a goal sheet that listed several different options for possible writing goals (McBride, 2000). Students chose one or two goals based on their understanding of areas they needed to improve in their own writing. Student then collected data from their own writing that demonstrated their particular weaknesses. In the next few weeks McBride focused on a variety of different activities in which students were asked to practice their writing and work toward improving their selected area. Students were then asked to reflect on themselves as writers and assess the success or failure of the goal setting process thus far. To support their conclusions, students were asked to include recent writing samples that show improvement in comparison to their baseline data. As teachers, we struggle to understand how to make the feedback we provide to students meaningful and how to teach students to use the feedback to make their writing better. Often, teachers are frustrated by this process because they mark a student's errors with diligence, they write comments all over student's paper, and then watch him/her continue to make the same mistakes repeatedly. Or sometimes the feedback teachers provide is too overwhelming. If a student sees a great amount of negative feedback, it is not easy to deal with all those issues, causing students to get discouraged (Zumbrunn & Krause,

2012). The goal setting approach makes it harder for students to ignore the feedback given by a teacher and move on to the next assignment. Types of mistakes that students tended to make were now identified as areas of improvement and students were forced to reflect and identify information from their past works, highlight problems, make notes in the margins of their drafts and create a plan to assist in improving their skills (McBride, 2000). After students set goals, identify data from past works, and conference with the teacher, they are given a goal chart to explain the progress the student has made towards their goal. The chart is to be turned in with the writing assignments. Students first self-evaluate and then the teacher evaluates the writing to determine if the student has mastered the goal, partially mastered, or has shown no growth or non-mastery. When writing is guided by a teacher and appropriately scaffolded, students will begin to improve their writing proficiency (Zumbrunn & Krause, 2012). When students are given responsibility for their own areas of improvement, they can take full credit for the improvements that they make.

Evidence Based Approach- Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD)

Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) is an evidence-based approach that increases the time and attention given to writing development (Harris et al., 2013). Self-Regulated Strategy Development instruction includes explicit, interactive learning of writing strategies for self-regulation through the writing process (e.g., goal setting, self-assessment, self-instructions, and self-reinforcement). More than 80 studies of SRSD writing instruction have been conducted across grades 1-12 which have provided significant evidence that SRSD is an effective method for teaching writing strategies to students who represent the full range of writing ability in a typical classroom. The SRSD stages of instruction begins with students unpacking the writing assignment and setting goals. The first step allows students to discuss and

explore the writing and self-regulation strategies that need to be learned and begin creating goals, self-regulate abilities, and discuss their attitudes and beliefs about their writing. The second step requires the teacher to conference with the students, establish a collaborative partner, and establish the strategy being used to help become a better writer. The third step requires the teacher to model a strategy by using a self-created model writing assignment. The teacher should model the self-assessment and self-recoding of the model composition. In the fourth and fifth stages students work through the prewriting, writing, editing, writing, and revising stages of the writing process. Additionally, students work through graphic organizers, strategy charts, and prompts to develop plans or outlines to begin an independent performance. The last stage is where students begin to write independently with a teacher monitoring and supporting as necessary. The SRSD research has resulted in the development of writing strategies for a variety of genres such as personal narratives, persuasive essays, expository essays, story writing, and state testing writing tests.

Summary and Connection to College

Improving writing skills is critically important for the advancement of students into postsecondary education and careers. An analysis of test results indicated that high school seniors and first-year college students scored the same at the beginning of their writing course. This indicates that first-year college students are no better off than they were at the beginning of their senior year in high school (Simmons, 2005). Through analyzing data and collaboration involving composition development it is evident that students struggle to develop thesis statements, compose paragraphs that support the thesis, and write effective introductions and conclusions (Forrest & Moquett, 2016). As the data was analyzed, it was concluded that students need to be able to develop effective thesis statements, compose cohesive paragraphs and support

those paragraphs with evidence to be successful in college. Until schools find the resources for smaller class sizes and lighter loads, to address the growing need of writing skills there needs to be a shift to limit curricular demands in the writing classroom and expand the extended thinking and writing as an indicator of academic success, not simply standardized tests (Simmons, 2005).

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of instructional strategies that can be used to improve writing skills in high school students. Students were given diagnostic performance-based assessment (PBA) in October and their performance was measured on a 7-point PARCC rubric. After the diagnostic writing was scored by the researcher, students set writing goals for themselves based on their strengths and weaknesses and the researcher began delivering writing instruction daily.

Design

This study was based on a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest using a convenience sample. A pre-test was administered in October using the Unit One PBA from the English 10 Curriculum provided by Baltimore County Public Schools. The diagnostic was used to determine a student's ability in reading comprehension, written expression, and knowledge of language and conventions before each student received the treatment. Students were administered treatment through daily instruction in their English 10 Honors class. After the treatment period, all students were reassessed to see if their reading comprehension, written expression, and knowledge of language and conventions improved using the Unit Three PBA from the English 10 Curriculum. Each PBA is graded on the same 7-point PARCC rubric. This study will help determine whether providing writing instruction using the Evidence-Based Approach- Self- Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) is effective in improving students' reading comprehension, written expression, and knowledge of language and conventions from October 2018 to February 2019.

Participants

The participants in the study included a convenience sample of 18 tenth grade students at a public school in Baltimore County, Maryland. The selected high school's population has students from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Nineteen hundred students are currently enrolled at the school and enrollment increases every year. The school is a magnet school for science and technology, as well at the central location for English Language Learners (ELL) and the Functional Academic Learning Support (FALS) and Communication and Learning Support (CALS) program for Baltimore County. Currently 50% of our population receives free and reduced lunch. The sample groups consisted of six females and twelve males ages 14 or 15. Of the students, one is a part of the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program, and one has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The sample consisted of eleven African American students, four Caucasian students, and three Asian students.

In this sample, eight students were writing below grade level at the start of the study. All students received the same writing instruction which consisted of: unpacking the assessment and setting goals for the writing assignment, learning how to annotate the articles provided, gathering evidence and completing a graphic organizer and/or outline, analyzing a model essay to identify essential parts of an essay, writing an essay individually, and lastly, editing and revising the essay based on feedback provided from peers and teacher.

Instruments

The instrument being used for the assessment are three PBA's that are developed by the English Curriculum Office of Baltimore County Public Schools.

Procedure

The PBA pretest was given to all students at the conclusion of their unit in which they read *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare and *Oedipus the King* by Sophocles. All PBA's are formatted in a similar way and are all graded on a 7-point scale. Students were given an article that relates to a topic covered within the English 10 Curriculum and students write an essay addressing the topic. Unit One's topic was the idea of tragic hero and students were given an article about Richard Nixon and Marie Antionette. Each student had to choose which historical figure they wanted to read about and identify characteristics of a tragic hero from the article provided. First step was to unpack the assessment prompt and have students reword the task, so they understood what they were to annotate for throughout the article. Next students wrote a writing goal for themselves which varied from providing textual evidence to support their claim, to creating a thesis statement that guides the direction of the paper. Students wrote the goal on the Reflection Chart in their writing folder. The chart is a reference that students are able to refer back to at the conclusion of the writing process to reflect on whether their goal was met and create another goal for the next writing assignment.

After students created goals, the researcher provided them with annotating strategies and symbols to use while reading the historical articles about Nixon or Antionette. While students annotated, they were given a graphic organizer that included each of the five characteristics of Aristotle's Tragic Hero. Students used the graphic organizer to write quotes from the article that supported the tragic hero characteristic and explain how the piece of evidence they identified was an example of that characteristic. This allowed students to extract evidence from the text to support their claim before they wrote their essay. Each PBA includes a model essay of the PBA but uses a different example. The model essay for the Unit One PBA used evidence from

Oedipus the King to characterize Oedipus as a tragic hero. On the Elmo, the researcher read each

paragraph of the PBA to the students and together the students and researcher identified the

essential elements of an essay: hook, thesis statement, topic sentence, evidence, explanation of

evidence, and rewording of the thesis within the conclusion. Students were then given 50

minutes to write their own PBA. Students were able to use all of the resources provided for them

while they were writing. At the conclusion of their writing, students were provided with a 7-

point PARCC rubric that measured students Reading Comprehension, Written Expression, and

Knowledge of Language and Conventions. The researcher provided students with a grade on the

7-point PARCC rubric and gave the essays back with written feedback to help guide the revision

process. During the revision process, students were able to choose a section of their PBA to

revise and hand in for a completely new grade. The SRSD writing process was repeated for the

Unit Two and Unit Three PBA. Each PBA was graded on a 7-point PARCC rubric.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This study examines instructional strategies that can be used to improve writing skills in high school students. Data gathered included a unit one PBA in which students analyzed and supported an argument for whether Richard Nixon or Marie Antionette was a tragic hero and a unit two PBA in which students had to analyze two artistic representations of the Holocaust and support an argument for which piece supported the theme of Elie Wiesel's Nobel Peace Prize Speech "Keep Memory Alive."

Data were scored on a 7-point rubric and were converted to and the percentage for each student score on the diagnostic test, mid-term test, and the final test were computed. For purposes of computation the percentages were changed to decimals and analyzed in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Additionally, to facilitate the use of the dependent t or paired t test the first diagnostic measure was compared to the final measure with the middle measure not included. Such an inclusion would have required a Repeated Measure Analysis of Variance and if no significance was found for the dependent t test then the more complicated analysis would have been considered.

Table 1 presents the measures of central tendency. Table 2 presents the statistical test – paired sample or dependent t test – that was run on the Diagnostic versus the February End of Unit test.

Table 1: Measures of Central Tendency

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Diagnostic Essay- October	.6544	16	.20225	.05056
	February PBA	.7900	16	.20813	.05203

Table 2: Dependent t Test or Paired t Test Results

Diagnostic compared to February	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	-.13563	.11396	-4.761	15	.000

P<.05 and thus the null hypothesis is rejected and the February PBA scored higher than the October diagnostic test.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study examined instructional strategies that can be used to improve writing skills in high school students. Results of the statistical analysis reported in Chapter IV indicated that the null hypothesis should be retained.

Threats to Validity

All research studies suffer from threats to validity. In educational research, validity threats are divided into threats to external and internal threats. In this study, external validity threats specifically involved was the small sample size. The study included 19 honors students. A larger group of students that varied in age or ability level may produce different results when being taught the SRSD Writing Strategy. Additionally, the pretest PBA focuses on students needing to understand the characteristics of an Aristotelian Tragic Hero. These characteristics needed to be previously taught to the students in order for them to be successful in writing the PBA. In the posttest students needed to understand the term theme and be able to identify the theme of a speech. If students were not taught these skills prior to the PBA it would directly impact their ability to successfully write the PBA.

Threats to internal validity involve those threats originating in the design of the study. In particular, the design of the PBA used for the pre and posttest. The PBA used for the pre and posttest were about two different topics. The pre-test topic was identifying characteristics of a tragic hero and making an argument for which historical figure was more of a tragic hero. Students had to compare Maria Antionette and Richard Nixon's biographies to identify which historical figure was more of a tragic hero and support their argument with textual evidence. Although the posttest was still argument based, the PBA required students to choose a theme

from Elie Wiesel's Nobel Peace Prize speech and identify which representation, the Survivor's Podcast or a Holocaust Memorial Flame Statue supported the theme of the speech better. Since the PBA's are about two different topics and students are required to look at different materials to write their responses they may have done better on one PBA versus the other based on interest level or understanding of the prompt.

Comparison of the Findings

This study focused on increasing the time and attention given to writing throughout the school year and increasing students' knowledge about the writing process. According to the article that appeared in *International Literacy Association*, there have been over 80 studies of schools implementing the SRSD method across grades 1-12. These studies show convincing evidence that the SRSD method is an effective method for teaching writing strategies to students varying in writing ability (Harris et al., 2013). The findings from the study indicate that when students are given the time and opportunity to write goals, unpack the writing prompt, annotate a model, draft, finalize, and edit an essay their writing skills improve. During the study it was evident that students wanted a quick result. They wanted to get the assignment, write the paper and get it over with to receive a grade. The writing process is challenging, and it must be developed in order for students to achieve success in postsecondary employment and education. As stated in the *International Literacy Association* article, "skilled writing is complex, requiring extensive self-regulation of a flexible, goal-directed, problem-solving activity. In addition to basic skills, students must develop knowledge about the writing process, genre knowledge, and strategies for writing and self-regulating the writing process" (p. 539). The current study guided students through the writing process by having them set realistic writing goals for themselves based on their pre-test results. Many students commented that they never look at the feedback

provided by their teachers, so having students look closely at the comments made on their essay to set goals for themselves was a welcomed challenge. Another challenge of the study was mapping out time in the unit to allow for all the stages of the writing process. Following the SRSD method requires prewriting, writing, editing, writing, and revising the same piece of writing. As students got used to the writing process there was a gradual release of responsibility from the teacher to the student, which proved they were learning the process, gaining writing skills, and ultimately becoming better writers.

Conclusions

Based on the results of the study, the SRSD writing strategy is effective and should be implemented in English classes. A collaborative data analysis took place among English professors to identify areas of growth in their students writing. The result indicated that students struggled to develop effective thesis statements, compose cohesive paragraphs that supported the thesis, and write effective introductions and conclusions. Based on the data from the college, the SRSD writing strategy aligns with the weakness's professors are seeing in the writing skills of their students. Professors are reflecting on the way they deliver feedback to students and teaching them how to become self-evaluative independent learners and encourage students to reflect and evaluate their own writing (Forrest & Moquett, 2016).

Moving forward, the SRSD writing strategy should be introduced in elementary school so by the time students are in high school, setting writing goals, planning, writing, and revising is second nature for all students. The SRSD writing strategy can be used for a variety of genres including personal narrative, persuasive essays, report writing, expository essays, and story writing (Harris et al., 2013). The SRSD writing strategy may have to be modified for a standard inclusion class or an ELL class but having goals to work towards and giving students the

opportunity to reflect on their writing and revise based on the feedback provided has proven to

be a beneficial task in improving writing ability.

Appendix

Students	Pre-Assessment Score Diagnostic Essay- October	Mid-Interval Assessment (not required) December PBA	Post-Assessment February PBA	ESOL	Special Education
Student 1	2/7= 28%	3/7= 43%	2/7= 28%	X	
Student 2	6/7= 86%	7/7= 100%	7/7= 100%		
Student 3	5/7= 71%	7/7= 100%	6.5/7= 93%		
Student 4	3.5/7= 50%	5/7= 71%	5/7=71%		
Student 5	5/7= 71%	7/7=100%	6/7=86%		
Student 6	4/7= 57%	4/7=57%	4.5/7= 64%		X
Student 7	5.5= 79%	6/7= 85%	6.5/7= 93%		
Student 8	6/7= 86%	7/7= 100%	6.6/7= 93%		
Student 9	3/7= 43%	3/7= 43%	4/7= 57%		
Student 10	5.5= 79%	6/7= 86%	6/7= 86%		
Student 11	3/7= 43%	5/7= 72%	6.5/7= 93%		
Student 12	3/7= 43%	4/7= 57%	5/7= 57%		
Student 13	6/7= 86%	7/7= 100%	6.5/7= 93%		
Student 14	6/7= 86%	6.5/7= 93%	7/7= 100%		
Student 15	3.5/7=50%	4/7= 57%	4/7= 57%		
Student 16	4/7= 57%	6/7= 85%	7/7= 100%		
Student 17	3/7= 43%	5/7= 71%	6/7= 86%		
Student 18	6/7= 89%	7/7= 100%	6.5/7= 93%		

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