

WRITE SOURCE[®] **STUDY**
STOCKTON, CA
2006



A Division of Houghton Mifflin Company

WRITE SOURCE® GRADES 1-7: STOCKTON, CA EFFECTIVENESS STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Great Source®, a division of Houghton Mifflin Company, conducted a pilot study on *Write Source*® for grades 1-7 at Tyler Elementary School in Stockton, CA during the 2006-2007 school year to answer the following research question:

- Does *Write Source*® produce significant differences in the writing achievement of elementary and middle school students, including English language learners?

RESEARCH DESIGN

Write Source® was piloted from November 2, 2006–December 22, 2006 at Tyler Elementary School in Stockton, CA. The entire school participated in the pilot study with half the school using *Write Source*® and the other half serving as the control group.

The writing proficiency of *Write Source*® and control students was assessed before and after the *Write Source*® group completed a unit on expository writing. All participating students were evaluated based on their written responses to expository prompts.

Test scores were collected from 465 students: 265 in the *Write Source*® group and 200 in the control group.

Results for English learners were also analyzed to evaluate the effectiveness of *Write Source*® with ELL students.

Variables	<i>Write Source</i> Students	Control Students
Number	265	200
English Learners	7%	13%

GOALS AND CHALLENGES

Teachers participating in the pilot reported various goals for the *Write Source*® materials including:

- Improving students' writing proficiency;
- Teaching students traits of good writing—not just reviewing the writing process;
- Developing students' grammar and skills;
- Delivering formal writing instruction;
- Addressing specific skills such as revising and editing strategies and the formats for different forms of writing.

Challenges included:

- Meeting the needs of mixed ability students, English learners, and struggling writers;
- Limited time;
- Teaching without a Teacher's Edition.

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

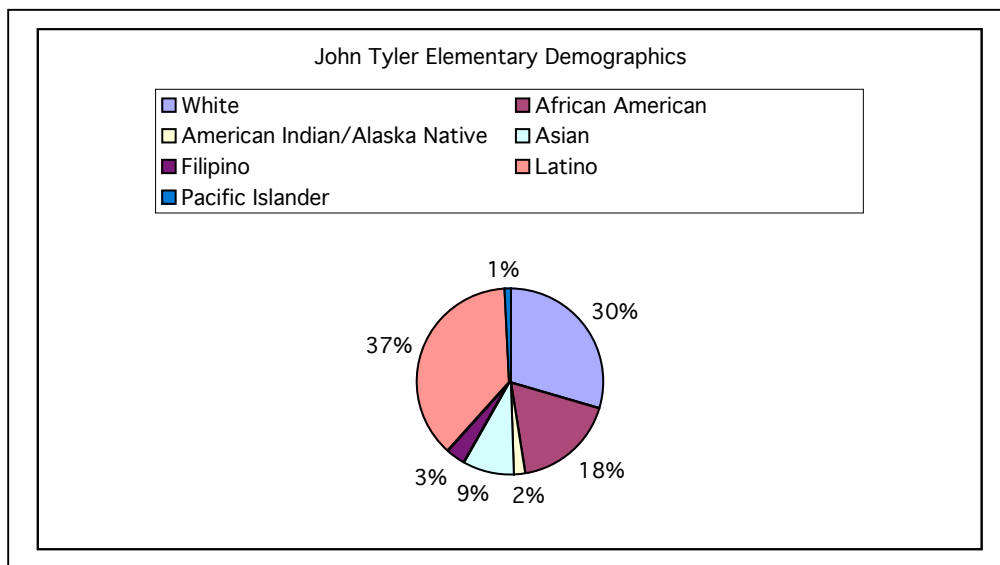
The six traits of effective writing rubrics were used to assess students' essays. See below for a breakdown of which traits were taught and assessed by grade level.

SIX TRAITS TAUGHT / ASSESSED BY GRADE LEVEL

Gr.	Ideas	Organization	Voice	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Conventions
1	X	X				X
2	X	X		X		X
3	X	X	X	X	X	X
4	X	X	X	X	X	X
5	X	X	X	X	X	X
6	X	X	X	X	X	X
7	X	X	X	X	X	X

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

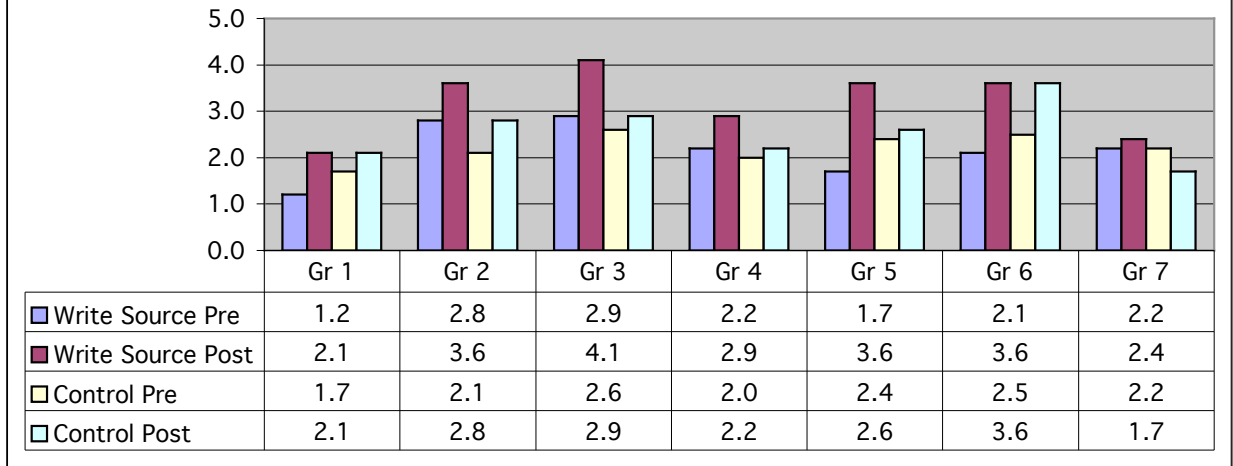
Tyler Elementary School is a public elementary school located in urban Stockton, CA with approximately 750 students, 65% of which are eligible for free or reduced price lunch (MDR. (2006). California: Vol. 1 School Directory. Shelton, CA: Market Data Retrieval.).



ASSESSMENT RESULTS

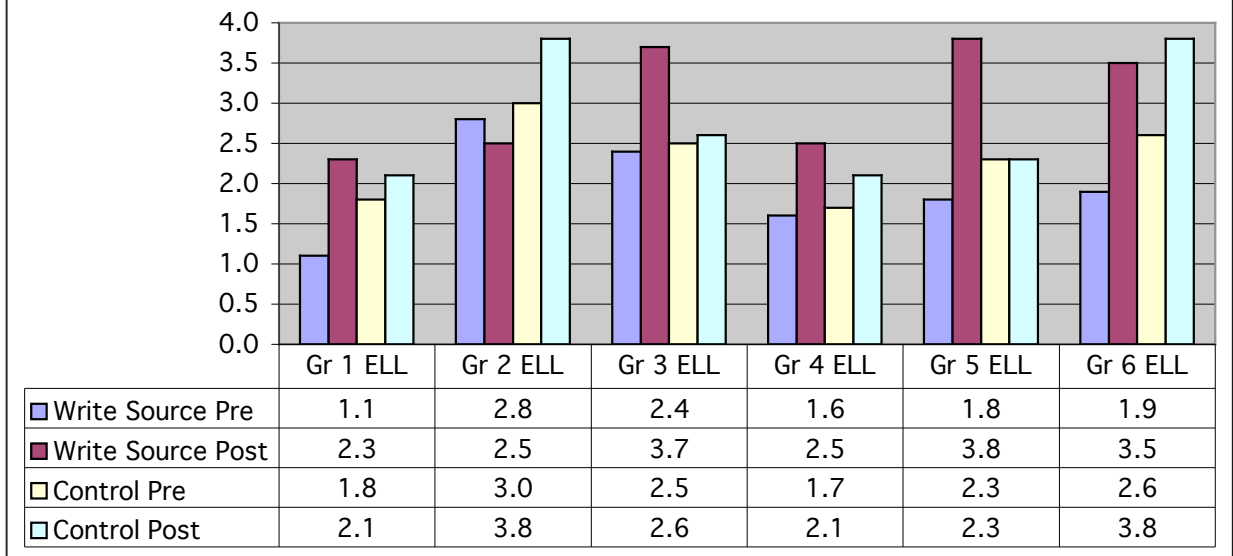
Expository writing prompts were administered at the beginning and end of the seven week pilot in both the *Write Source*[®] and control classrooms. Each essay was scored by two scorers using a six traits of effective writing assessment rubric. See page 4.

Write Source vs. Control Expository Writing Scores



Results show that *Write Source*[®] students made considerable progress in their proficiency with expository writing after receiving instruction with *Write Source*[®]. Scores for the control group increased more moderately during the same period and in the case of seventh graders, the scores actually declined.

English Learners' Expository Writing Scores



Scores not available for grade 7 English language learners.

Scores for English language learners also increased during the study. Growth for fifth grade English learners was especially remarkable as the *Write Source*[®] group increased their average score by 2 points while the control group stayed the same.

TEACHER COMMENTS

Teachers from Tyler Elementary reported on the successes of the *Write Source*[®] pilot:

“Students were given very organized, specific strategies to focus on while writing and during revising...Everything that I need is at my fingertips. If I want to focus on word choice, for example, all the resources I need are readily at my disposal.”

—*Andrea Soria Pino, Literacy Resource Teacher*

“With the traits of writing, the students have done a much better job of revising. Revising usually meant just making minor corrections and writing the paper in a neater manner.

Get involved—Use the program. It helps.”

—*Dave Pinasco, Teacher*

“The writing process was very well organized in the program. For the first time my students were the ones doing the revising and editing—not me!”

—*Mandy Ponte, 2nd Grade Teacher*

“My expectations were higher after participating in the program. It made me challenge my children more.”

—*Rosanna Tristan, Kindergarten Teacher*

CONCLUSIONS

Results indicate that *Write Source*[®] is an effective writing program for students in grades 1-7 at increasing students’ proficiency in expository writing and with the six traits of effective writing:

1. Ideas
2. Organization
3. Voice
4. Word Choice
5. Sentence Fluency
6. Conventions.

This study also supports *Write Source*[®] as an effective tool for increasing the writing proficiency of English language learners.