Effect of hands-on approach to editing and revising process on student self-evaluation of personal skills

Lauren J. Usignol
Rowan University

Follow this and additional works at: https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd

Part of the Elementary Education and Teaching Commons

Let us know how access to this document benefits you - share your thoughts on our feedback form.

Recommended Citation
Usignol, Lauren J., "Effect of hands-on approach to editing and revising process on student self-evaluation of personal skills" (2009). Theses and Dissertations. 674.
https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd/674

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Rowan Digital Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Rowan Digital Works. For more information, please contact LibraryTheses@rowan.edu.
EFFECT OF HANDS-ON APPROACH TO EDITING AND REVISING PROCESS ON STUDENT SELF-EVALUATION OF PERSONAL SKILLS

by
Lauren J. Usignol

An Action Research Thesis
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Science in Teaching Degree of The Graduate School at Rowan University
July, 2009

Approved by
Advisor

Date Approved
July 3, 2009

© July 3, 2009, Lauren Usignol
The writing process is a series of four stages: prewriting, writing, editing and revising, and publishing. This action research project focuses on the editing and revising stage. The purpose of the study was to determine if the inclusion of a hands-on approach to editing and revising positively affects student self-evaluation of their skills. Students were introduced to the hands-on approach through the writer’s workshop format. Through the use of surveys, interview, observations, and student work samples, I measured the confidence levels of students before and after the introduction of the hands-on approach. The analysis of the data revealed that the students were more engaged in their work when given the opportunity for practice and an active role in the editing and revising process.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank all of the people who stood by me throughout my entire action research study. To my loving family: thank you all for love, support, open ears, and open couch. To my fabulous MST elementary education ladies: you are an awesome group that have been a constant source of laughs, encouragement, and friendship. I am lucky to have found such great friends in an unexpected time and place. Lastly, I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Dr. Yvonne Rodriguez, for all of her time, effort, and patience.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story Behind the Research</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Questions</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Action and Purpose</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions and Limitations</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| II. Literature Review | 10 |
| Self-efficacy in the Editing and Revising Process | 10 |
| Teacher Edit Strategy | 10 |
| Peer Editing Strategy | 11 |
| Self Editing Strategy | 12 |
| Literature Review Conclusion | 13 |

| III. Methodology | 15 |
| Context of the Study | 15 |
| Data Sources | 17 |

| IV. Findings, Analysis, and Interpretation | 19 |
Findings 19
Analysis 28
Interpretation 28

V. Conclusions 30
Summary 30
Implications 30
Recommendations 32
New Directions and Questions 33

References 35

Appendices 37

Appendix A: Parent Consent Form 37
Appendix B: Student Information Chart 38
Appendix C: Do You Like to Write? 39
Appendix D: What is Revising and Editing? 40
Appendix E: Your Editing Skills 41
Appendix F: Teacher Edit Survey 42
Appendix G: Observations 43
Appendix H: Final Survey 48
Appendix I: Interviews 49
Appendix J: Student Work Sample Daily Edit 55
## LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1 Do You Like to Write?</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2 Favorite Part of the Writing Process</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3 Least Favorite Part of the Writing Process</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4 Sample Students</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 5 Student Opinion of Own Skills</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 6 Rate Your Editing Skills</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 7 Did You Edit Before the Teacher Did?</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 8 Can You Edit on Your Own?</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I
Introduction

Statement of the Problem

During my student teaching experience, I observed that the large emphasis on writing in the upper elementary grades is essential for the continual academic development of students. It is the teacher’s responsibility to effectively teach students proper writing techniques. At my school, teachers spend an inordinate amount of time refining student writing skills in hopes of eventually bestowing upon students the skills necessary to succeed in writing. However, the teachers said that the time spent developing writing skills was so different from classroom to classroom. Because of this difference, the students did not consistently learn the same strategies to improve their writing skills. Some teachers used teacher edit, some used peer editing, and others had no real writing instruction.

Another problem in my classroom was that students were aware of the writing process; yet, they did not actively engage in all of the stages in the process. The writing process is a series of four major stages: prewriting, writing, revising and editing, and publishing (Poindexter and Oliver, 1998). According to Short (2008), students are accustomed to the “once and done” method of writing. In my classroom, the students wrote the paragraph or essay, and subsequently assumed they were done the assignment. However, what many students failed to grasp is that the initial writing stage includes only one-fourth of the entire process. The revision and editing stage comprised the majority of a writer’s effort.
As many teachers say, a story is not simply written, but instead rewritten over and over again (Willis 1997). My students needed to learn and practice effective revision and editing strategies to maximize their writing. They needed to abandon the once and done method of writing.

My research goal was to introduce a different technique to increase editing and revision skills as well as to increase confidence in self-evaluation of skills. Aside from attempting to have students edit and revise their work on a regular basis, the main focus of the research was to combat the lowered confidence levels of student self-evaluation of their own editing and revising skills. Students did not believe they are proficient at editing and revising; and therefore, did not want to engage in the process.

*Story Behind the Research*

From a professional standpoint, I became interested in the writing process, and in particular, editing and revising, from the first week of my student teaching experience. During my first week, the fourth grade classes in my school were privileged to host a professional author for three days. The school was given a grant to host an author to help improve student writing skills. The author mainly focused on “beefing” up student writing. She wanted students to look at what they wrote and improve upon the original writing. For example, she discussed using “juicy” adjectives and verbs. Instead of using the word good, the students were encouraged to use words such as fantastic or amazing or awesome. My fourth graders enjoyed the visit with the author, and enjoyed working on their writing with her.

Following the grant program, while observing the students for the first two weeks, I noticed a severe aversion to writing, and especially editing. I observed that the main
problem with editing and revision was student self-evaluation of their editing skills, hence the reason behind my research. My students did not believe they are successful editors, and therefore, do not want to perform the task. Instead, our students are so dependent upon teacher opinions and aid that they did not take the time to work or think for themselves.

In the fourth grade, students take the NJ ASK. This is a standardized test for the state of New Jersey. The test highly emphasizes writing skills. Students are required to write several long essays and several short answer response questions. It is my goal through this research to increase my students’ confidence in their own skills in hopes of better written essays on the NJ ASK test. I want my students to have the proper skills and confidence to produce an excellent essay.

From a personal standpoint, as a young student, I never liked to edit my work. Even as a high school, college, and graduate student, I many times did not want to edit. I enjoy editing other people’s writing, but not my own. Only recently, I have witnessed the true benefit of editing and revising my writing. As a student growing up, I was hardly ever really taught the proper skills to edit and revise my work. In grade school and high school, those skills were rarely given much emphasis or importance. As an adult and future teacher, I now see the beauty of teaching proper skills from an early age. I want to give my students the skills needed to properly edit and revise their work. Because I understand my students’ struggle, I became more invested in developing a different and more effective way for my students to edit and revise their work and lead to more confidence in their own skills.
Significance of the Study

The significance and relevance behind the study was to delve deeper into the relationship between self-confidence and schoolwork. In choosing a specific area of study, I am able to distinguish between the relationship that occurred between success in a particular school area and the confidence of the student. As a young student, I performed better in subject or on skills that I felt more confident performing. For example, I was normally very successful in math, and therefore, did not feel anxious or worry about my success in that subject. However, I was slightly less confident in my skills in the subject area of science. I had to study harder and longer for this particular subject. While performing science tasks and taking tests, I was often nervous because I did not have the same confidence as I did in my skills in mathematics. From my own personal experience, and in the future, I want to investigate if students perform editing and revising tasks better if their confidence levels increase.

A second significance behind the study was the future use of a writer’s workshop in my own classroom. During the course of the study, my cooperating teacher and I instituted the writer’s workshop format in our classroom. It was in this context that the study took place. While studying the confidence levels of students, I was able to observe the effectiveness of the writer’s workshop model. This model allowed my students the opportunity to take responsibility and ownership of their work. Students were able to single-handedly increase editing and revising skills, which in turn increased their self-evaluation of their own skills.
Critical Questions

By performing my editing and revising research in my fourth grade classroom, I hoped to answer a few major questions. These questions include: 1) How does a more hands-on approach to editing affect student self-evaluation of their own editing skills? 2) Will their confidence in their editing skills increase with the practice of different editing strategies? 3) Which strategy do the students feel the most comfortable performing? 4) Do students feel more confident in their editing skills after the institution of the hands-on approach?

The first and second questions addressed in my research are of the utmost importance for my future teaching career and for my learners. How does a more hands-on approach to editing affect student self-evaluation of their editing skills? Will their confidence in their editing skills increase with the practice of different editing strategies?

When I first entered the school at the end of January, my students had not experienced any other type of editing strategy except the teacher edit. The teacher edit strategy is a hands-off experience for the students. Students complete the given writing task and the teacher edits their work. Students watch as teachers make changes with little or no input from the student writer. As I watched this process, I wondered if students actually learned anything and if the lack of engagement lowered their confidence in their own skill. It is my own personal experience that the more I practiced a skill, the more experience I gained, and thus, my confidence grew. I began to wonder if a more hands-on approach to editing and revising would increase student self-evaluation of their own skills. Would the students stop thinking editing was so hard and boring if they were more engaged in the process?
After developing my study, I began to ask myself other related questions: Which strategy do the students feel the most comfortable performing? Do students feel more confident in their editing skills after practicing and learning new strategies? From these two questions and further research, I was interested in the end result of the research. I wanted to know if the hands-on approach led to more confidence or were students more comfortable performing other editing strategies. Was there a certain strategy that increased confidence, and later skills, more than the other strategies? Throughout the research, I was continually asking and re-asking these questions in hopes of developing a concrete answer.

*Integrated Action and Purpose*

To conduct my research, I gave my students a series of three writing assignments. For each writing assignment, the students performed a different editing and revising strategy - teacher, peer, and self. Before we began the strategies I gave my students three surveys (Appendix A, B, and C) to determine their writing enjoyment and self-evaluation of their skills. After the pre-evaluation, we began with teacher edit. The students wrote an essay about the similarities and differences between *Matilda* the book and *Matilda* the movie. Students wrote, we edited, and then the students answered another survey (Appendix D). Second, we performed the peer editing strategy. Peer editing consisted of students working together to edit and revise their work through the use of peer conferencing. The students were introduced to the writer’s workshop. My cooperating teacher and I explained the strategy before the students performed the strategy. The students chose between a number of topics in which to write their second essay. I took field notes during the explanation and beginning stages of the peer editing strategy.
(Appendix G). Finally, I introduced the self edit strategy. Students were their only editors for the “My Mother is Beautiful...” essay. The students had to edit their own essays because the Mother’s Day essays were to be judged by other teachers in the school. Students took a final survey to evaluate their skills since the beginning of the study (Appendix E). I interviewed six of my students as a final source. I used each source of data to come to a final conclusion (Appendix H).

Assumptions and Limitations

There were several factors that limited my research of editing and revising strategies. First, I only used my fourth grade class, which consists of 20 students. Of the 20 students, I focused the majority of my research on six of those students. In doing so, I made generalizations based upon a small group of participants with a small group of particular skills. I assumed that the results from this study would mirror the results of a future study with different students and circumstances.

Secondly, my research and analysis were conducted over a short period of time, six weeks, with only a short amount of time, two weeks, to test each strategy and their effect on student self-evaluation of their own skills. In our class, it takes about a week and half to two weeks to complete each writing assignment. Because of the time constraints, I was only able to use each strategy once. The students were not given a chance to truly master the strategies. The students were introduced to the writer’s workshop, a new concept, more than halfway through the course of the school year. Given the short period of time, students may or may not master the skill. However, the limited time still provides insight into the potential for success in the future.
Thirdly, I assumed that increased practice and confidence lead to higher self-evaluation of skills. This assumption was not always true. I must remember this part of my research. The introduction of a new set of concepts of skills, along with repeated practice, does not necessarily lead to mastery of the new skill. As with any other school subject, there will be students that excel or struggle with a particular concept. Nonetheless, the lack of mastery from all students does not mean the study has failed.

Finally, as with any type of research, there was a potential for bias. In my research, one potential for bias was student enthusiasm and effort. If students put more effort into one writing assignment or strategy, then the results could be somewhat skewed. Similarly, if I am more enthusiastic or drawn to a particular editing strategy, then I could influence the responses of my students. Another potential for bias was the type of writing assignment given for each editing strategy. If students enjoy a topic more than another, then they could be more apt to perform better on that assignment.

Definitions

In the elementary classroom, the terms editing and revising are often used interchangeably. Together, the words represent the ongoing process of actively deciding how writing can and should be improved. However, separately, the two words have very different meanings.

**Editing:** refers to the mechanical changes such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

**Revising:** refers to the content and the potential within the writing. The revision stage is more complex than the editing stage. The mechanical rules are clear cut and without question. The revision stage involves many different skills. A student must recognize that
a change is needed, identify what is causing a problem, determine the type of change needed, and execute the revision (Graham & Harris, 2005)

**Action research**: is described as a disciplined inquiry done by a teacher with the intent that the research will inform and change his or her practices in the future (Ferrance, 2000).
CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Self-efficacy in the Editing and Revision Process

As simple as the editing and revising process may sound on paper, many elementary students struggle, or do not take the time, to find and execute revisions. The aversion to writing, and in particular revising and editing, is a common phenomenon in elementary classrooms. Struggling writers make few revisions aside from the minor surface changes or adjustments in handwriting (Hensel & Greenburg, 2007; Graham & Harris, 2005). The struggling students rely heavily upon the help of others, because they erroneously assume their revision skills are subpar. The effort to improve those skills is spoiled with the thinking that they are poor writers.

Street and Stang (2008) found that the issue of self-confidence is crucial in the writing process. Writing self-confidence is a two-fold issue, one involving the student and the teacher. The teacher must have the self-confidence to teach effective strategies, while the student must believe they are capable of performing specific skills. Students struggling or disliking the writing process should become familiarized with differing revision and editing strategies to improve their skills. The improvement of one’s skills frequently leads to the increased likelihood of enjoyment.

Teacher Edit Strategy

In many classrooms across the country, teachers and students engage in the teacher edit strategy. This strategy involves the students writing and the teachers editing.
The students become disengaged in the process. They simply sit back and wait to see the sea of red ink on their papers. According to Wilcox (2007) and Kolling (2002), teachers edit too much for the students. Teachers become too actively involved and forget the purpose of writing instruction, which is student independence and success. Teachers need to guide their students in the process, not perform the act of editing for them. As Kolling (2002) said, “Teachers need to be better at focusing on the writing process, and not the final product,” (pg 5). Students do not learn from being given the final product. There are no major skills taught from the teacher edit strategy. Yes, the writing may turn out better, but the students are not learning in the process.

On the other hand, there are still many teachers that believe the teacher should make all of the corrections (Mullen 2003; Kolling 2002). The red ink on the paper is an indication that students are learning. Students see the corrections and presumably will not make the same mistake again. Many teachers, including Mullen, have fallen victim to the teacher edit strategy. Student editing strategies can be frowned upon by colleagues because it implies a soft approach to grammar instruction (Mullen 2003). It is not always easy for a teacher to let go and allow students to take the reins. However, the research implies that students learn more from doing than seeing.

**Peer Editing Strategy**

The peer editing strategy allows students to become actively engaged in the revision and editing process. Peers read each other’s papers and provide suggestions for improvement (Graham & Harris, 2005). Students are given specific criteria while reading their peer’s paper. Students are challenged to come up with ways to improve the paper, instead of listing what’s wrong with the paper (Maifair, 1999). Teachers will model the
strategy numerous times for the students. Students are then given practice. The strategy will not become perfected right away. However, after much practice, students will hone their peer editing skills.

During peer editing, students are both editing and revising. During the revision process, the editor listens to the story. They listen for any point in the paper in which something is unclear or needs more detail. Secondly, the editor looks for any mechanical errors in the paper (Graham & Harris, 2005). According to Graham and Harris (2005), editing another paper helps a student recognize the faults in one’s own paper. The conference approach of peer editing allows students to learn from each other. “Regular teacher-guided peer editing will give students positive and helpful feedback from their classmates and offer multiple perspectives on their work,” (Maifar, 1999, pg 8). Peer editing provides students with the skills to bridge the gap from guided editing to self editing.

**Self-Editing Strategy**

“Writers bypass their most important readers: themselves. They weren’t internalizing standards for effective writing, because they depended on other people to identify and solve the problems in their writing. Experienced writers spend at least as much time reading and rereading their texts as they do writing them,” (Atwell, 1998, pg 246). As Atwell describes, students often forget the importance of self-editing. Instead of always relying on other’s opinions, students should continue to revise their own work throughout the entire process. They should be using their own thoughts to develop the best possible writing. The student is the best evaluator for his or her writing (Atwell.
1998). They are most aware of the paper’s direction and meaning. The teacher needs to provide a structure in which self editing is a constant.

One example of a self-editing strategy, among many, comes from Graham and Harris (2005) entitled the CDO Strategy, or compare, diagnose, and organize. “Compare involves identifying where a revision is needed, diagnose determines the problem, and operate specifies and executes the intended revision,” (Graham & Harris, 2005, pg 70). This approach students move past the surface changes that struggling writers often perform to more substantial revisions. Students move through their paper sentence by sentence. Each sentence is diagnosed and analyzed. Students choose from a series of evaluation cards to help choose the type of revision needed. These cards include statements such as: This doesn’t sound right or this is not what I intended to say (Graham & Harris, 2005). Graham & Harris (2005) write that teachers should expect students to revise more effectively, skillfully, and quickly.

Students need to have the skills to edit and revise their own work. Nonetheless, teachers should not be wary of providing specific suggestions to improve student work. The teacher needs simply to refrain from rewriting student work (Wilcox, 1997). Depending on the grade level and skill, teacher’s degree of help will vary. Through the practice of self-editing, students gain a sense of responsibility and accountability for their work.

Literature Review Conclusion

Effective teaching of editing and revision strategies will improve the writing process for the teacher and the student. As described above, the teacher should avoid doing all of the work for the student. Teachers should act as a scaffold for the students,
slowly removing themselves from the process to allow the students to stand alone. Students will not learn the skills if they are never given the chance to sharpen their abilities. Students will not learn these skills overnight. Yet, with continual practice and guidance from the teacher, students can and will become effective editors. As Mullen (2003) states, “Teaching students to edit their own work should be the teacher’s ultimate goal.” (pg 8). Letting the reins go may be difficult, but it is to most student’s advantage for the teacher to allow students to become independent writers through the use of peer and self-editing. With heightened editing skills and confidence, the writing process becomes more effective and enjoyable for teachers and students alike.
CHAPTER III

Methodology

Action research is not the typical type of research conducted in a library setting in which the researcher learns more about a particular subject. Instead, action research is done in a school setting for the betterment of the teacher, students, and schools. The research can be done on an individual, group, or school-wide level. The main focus of action research is the continual learning of teachers and the improvement of student learning (Ferrance 2000).

Context of the Study

My action research project was conducted in a small community in southern New Jersey. The town of Pine Lakes is located in Burlington County (all names have been changed for this study). The town is situated within the township of Medford. Pine Lakes is the home of twenty-two lakes and over one hundred and fifty log cabins in a one mile square mile area. It is a part of the New Jersey Pinelands Preservation area. Because of the size and layout, Pine Lakes is a very tight knit and active community. Aside from the normal sports and recreation committees, the town boasts many community-wide events, such as the Canoe Carnival. The borough was established in 1927, and officially became a municipality in 1937.
superintendent. After completing grade eight, students attend Shawnee High School, one
of four schools in the Lenape School District. In the elementary section of Pine, each
grade has three classrooms, one of which is an inclusion classroom. The school consists
of approximately 350 students of little racial and economic diversity. The school and
community population consists of 98.32% Caucasian, .43% African-American, .12%
Native American, and .48% Asian. The fourth grade teachers have been working together
for several years and have a very close work relationship.

My fourth grade class has 20 students, eleven girls and nine boys. The students
are all Caucasian with exception of one Korean girl. The students have varying levels of
academic ability. Four of my students leave the classroom for basic skills instruction in
both language arts and math. Three of my students also leave the classroom for the
Gifted and Talented program. The majority of the students in my class do not enjoy
writing. They feel a particular aversion for the editing and revision stage. The students
feel that once they are done writing, then they are done with each writing piece. My
students do not understand that writing is actually the process of rewriting. Through the
use of surveys, I found out that they are very uncomfortable with their own editing skills,
and therefore do not like to edit.

The action research project involves all of the students in my class with a signed
consent form (Appendix A). We do whole group writing instruction, and therefore, the
whole class participates. Before beginning my study and the collection of data, I sent the
parents and guardians a consent form. The consent was to be signed by both parent and
student. In the classroom, I took time to explain my project to my students. I shared with
the students the reason I chose the project, to determine if a hands-on approach to editing
increases student self-evaluation of their own skills. I explained that I would be observing, conducting surveys and interviews, and collecting work samples. The students were given time to ask questions and clarify information. All students were excited to be a part of the project. They liked the idea of being written about for adults. I have not collected any data from students that did not return a consent form. Of the sixteen students that returned forms, I did a large part of my research on six particular students (Appendix B). I chose these six particular students based on their writing enjoyment, grades, and interests. I wanted students that did well in school, did average in school, and struggled in school. I wanted the students to be a good depiction of the class as a whole. I chose the students after I analyzed my first survey (Appendix C).

Data Sources

Throughout the course of my research, I relied on the triangulation of three major sources: my observations (Appendix G), student self-evaluation through surveys and interviews (Appendix C, D, E, F, and H), and student work samples. These three sources provided the data for analysis of my research.

The first source of data consisted of my personal observations. I was the only person taking notes on the students. These observations include field notes and monitoring conducted during editing and revising times. Revising and editing took place in the afternoon about three days per week. During my observations, I observed reactions to each strategy, specifically teacher and peer edit. I looked for understanding of the strategy, mastery of the strategy, and confidence in performing of the strategy. I listened to the group to see if students like or dislike the strategy, because enjoyment plays a large part in mastery of a concept. In a short period of time, six weeks, it is unlikely that
students will fully master peer and self editing strategies. However, in this time period, I observed whether their confidence level in their own skill increased. The observations were the first source for future analysis.

The surveys and interviews were the second source of data used to gage student confidence of their editing and revising skills. After each writing assignment, students completed surveys (Appendix C, D, E, F, and H) asking about the ease of the strategy, if they liked it, if it improved their skills, etc. These surveys served as a personal account of the students' feelings of their own skills. I was interested in their opinions as well as my own analysis. I interviewed six students at the end of the study to determine confidence levels (Appendix H). The six students are of differing readiness and writing enjoyment levels. These six students represented low, average, and high performance levels. The interviews, along with surveys, provided student self-evaluation of their own skills and confidence levels.

The third source of data, work sample (Appendix J), provided another glimpse into the actual mastery and development of editing and revising skills. The work sample included copies of their daily edits. The daily edits were given at the beginning of the day. The students were given two incorrect sentences. The students must correct punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar. I wanted to show that students edit and revise in the morning, but still did not feel that their skills were very good. After the conclusion of the study, I used these three sources to interpret and analyze my given data to determine if a hands-on approach to editing and revising increases student confidence in their own skills.
CHAPTER IV
Findings, Analysis, and Interpretation

Findings

The findings from research are divided into three major categories: before the study, during the study, and after the study. I conducted surveys before, during, and after to gage student self-evaluation. I administered an interview at the end of the study to further monitor student self-evaluation and confidence levels.

Before beginning the study, I gave my students the ‘Do You Like to Write’ survey (Appendix C). This survey asked three simple questions revolving around the enjoyment level of writing, favorite stage of writing, and least favorite stage of the writing process. Of the sixteen students given permission to participate in the study, I found that 56% of the students enjoyed writing, while 44% of the students did not enjoy writing (figure 1).

![Do You Like To Write (figure 1)](image)

Of the six students I chose to focus the majority of my research upon, half enjoyed to write and half disliked writing. The students were then asked what their favorite part of the writing process- writing, revising and editing, or publishing. The results include: 43% liked writing, 19% liked revising and editing, and 36% liked publishing (figure 2).
On the other hand, 31% of the students disliked writing, 56% disliked revising and editing, and 13% disliked publishing (figure 3).

The results from my six students include: 1 student enjoyed editing and revising, 2 students enjoyed publishing, 3 students enjoyed writing, 3 students disliked writing, and 3 students disliked editing and revising (figure 4)

The second survey ‘What is Editing and Revising?’ (Appendix D) asked students the difference between editing and revising. Before we began the study, I wanted to determine if the students knew the difference between editing and revising and if they
believed they were good editors. After reading through the responses to the differences between editing and revising, I found that 10 of my 16 students knew the difference between editing and revising. All six of my students knew the difference between editing and revising. Some of their answers about editing included: editing is grammar, editing is correcting the sentences, and fixing errors. On the other hand, the students stated that revising is “does that make sense”, “adding details”, and “making your writing better.”

The second part of the survey asked students their opinion on their own editing skills. I asked students if they were good editors. The majority of the students responded that they were not good editors, 13 of the 16 students, while only 3 students said they were good editors at the beginning of the study (figure 5).

None of the three students were my chosen six students. In order to delve deeper, I asked the students if they were better at editing, revising, neither, or both. I found that the answers were largely split between being better at editing (7 students) and neither editing nor revising (6 students).

I gave my students a third survey at the beginning of my research entitled ‘Your Editing Skills’ (Appendix E). This survey asked the students four questions. The first question asked if they liked to edit their work. Thirteen of my students responded no,
while three students responded yes to liking editing. Of my six students, I found that all six students did not like to edit their work. When asked why the students did not like to edit their work, students responded with answers such as: 1) it is really hard, 2) it is confusing in what order you do things, or 3) when you write your own work you always think it is the best. My third question asked the students to rate their editing skills with 1 being bad, 5 being ok, and 10 being awesome (figure 6).

The majority of the students, 11 of 16, believed their skills were in the bad to ok range. I had only five students thinking their skills were in the ok to awesome range. It was interesting to see how my students believed their editing skills were at this point in the study.

After the distribution of the surveys, our class began our first writing assignment of the study. This writing assignment explained the differences between the movie Matilda and the novel Matilda by Roald Dahl. The essay was later edited by my cooperating teacher and me. The students did not engage in much editing on their own. Students wrote their essays and then wrote their names on the board to indicate their readiness for a teacher edit. During the teacher edit, my cooperating teacher and I edited two different student’s writing at a time. While we were editing student work, the rest of the class was finishing writing, reading, or talking. After all of the students had their

The first questioned I asked my students what about whether they edited their work before the teacher edited their work. My students were split down the middle on this question, half did edit their own work, while half did not edit their work. My six subjects also were split on this question (figure 7).

Did You Edit Before the Teacher Did?
(figure 7)

The student responses mirrored my observations. Students admitted that they were not engaged in the writing process at all. They said that while waiting for their papers to be edited they were “reading”, “talking a little bit”, or drawing. At this point in the study, I wanted to see what the students did during their usual editing time. This was the structure set up at the time, and I did not want to alter it in order to get a true reflection of the existing editing and revising process. The next two questions on my survey asked the students about their understanding of the teacher corrections and whether the mistakes will be made again the future. One hundred percent of the students understood the corrections made by the teacher; however, only half students believed that they would not make the same mistakes again on a different essay. Both of these statistics were the same for my six sample of students. The students responded that the reason they liked the teacher edit was because “editing is hard”, “they couldn’t do it on their own”, “the
teacher finds all the mistakes and makes it sound good”, and “the students get the
teachers opinion”. It was my opinion that the students relied too heavily on the opinion of
the teacher. My final question asked the students about their belief if they could edit their
work on their own at this point.

![Can You Edit on Your Own? (figure 8)](image)

The six sample students claimed that half could edit on their own while the other half
could not. As a class, 8 of the 16 students thought they could edit on their own (figure 8).

The next step in my research was the introduction of the peer edit strategy and the
writer’s workshop. During the explanation of the writer’s workshop and early days of
peer editing, I observed student behaviors and reactions in field notes that were coded
and interpreted at a later time (Appendix G). From the field notes, I learned that the
students were excited to learn how to peer edit. They were very excited to be working
together to fix mistakes and make suggestions, which was evident through the cheers and
smiles. One of my sample students was continually making the comments that ‘this
doesn’t seem hard’ or ‘I can do this’ or ‘this is fun’. This student was one of the six that
did not enjoy writing or editing, so I was excited by his response. I personally was
thrilled when the students cheered for writer’s workshop. During the entire peer editing
process, students kept asking when we would get to writer’s workshop, because they
were excited for this new project. As I walked around the class during peer conferences, I
was very impressed by the questions and suggestions students made to each other. Sample suggestions include: “add more details”, “use more adjectives to describe your nouns”, and “more descriptive sentences.” They seemed to be really grasping the concept and running with it.

The last survey collected after the self edit strategy. Students used the same concepts as the peer editing, but without the peer conferencing. Students used their checklists and questions to help edit their own work. After the Mother’s Day essay was finished, I gave the students a final survey (Appendix H). The goal of the survey was to assess whether the students liked and learned from peer and self editing. At the end of the study, I found that 63% of my students liked the peer and self editing strategies. Four out of my six sample students liked the hands-on approaches. The students that did not enjoy the strategies commented that peer and self editing involved too much work, was confusing, or they liked when the teacher did it because it was perfect. I found from my research that 13 of my 16 students believed that the opportunity to practice their editing and revising skills on their own and with a partner increased their skills. Subsequently, 12 of the 16 students believed that the writer’s workshop made them a better editor. My final questions asked the students if they learned more from the teacher edit or the hands-on approaches of self and peer edit. I found that more than half of my students learned more from the hands-on approach because they were given the opportunity to correct mistakes and practice as opposed to being told what was wrong.

Another data source was from the use of interviews with my six chosen subjects (Appendix I). I asked the students a series of nine questions to better determine the effectiveness of the hands-on editing and revising approach. Within the context of the
interviews I was most interested in the answers to questions 4, 5, 6, and 8: 4) How did writer’s workshop help you? 5) Do you like having a more active role in the editing and revising process? Why or Why not? 6) How confident are you in your own editing skills? Do you think you are good, bad, ok at editing and revising? Why? 8) Do you think you are better at editing once we began to do it more on our own or when the teacher edited for you?

The answers to questions 4 allowed the students to give honest input into the effectiveness of writer’s workshop on a personal level. My six students all answered in a very similar fashion. They said that the writer’s workshop and the hands-on approach helped them practice and hone their skills. Before using the hands-on approach the students were unaware of how and what to edit and revise. The interviews revealed that practice was the key to learning the skills.

Question 5 in the interview asked the students their opinion of the hands-on approach to editing. All six students responded that they liked working on the editing and revising. They were able to see the mistakes they made as opposed to being told there was a mistake. A couple students commented that they liked being in control of the process because they could see what they know, do not know, and what they learned.

The answers to question 8 delved deeper into whether the students thought they were better at editing before or after the hands-on approach. All six of the students reported positive reactions from the introduction of a hands-on approach to editing and revising. The students all agreed that learning from your mistakes and correcting your mistakes makes for a better editor. The opportunity to work on the editing and revising lent itself to increased skills. The students all believed that overall their own skills
increased more with the use of the hands-on approach rather than the teacher edit or hands-off approach.

Question 6 directly asked the students if they were more confident in their own skills as a reviser and editor. As a whole, the six students believed their editing and revising skills were better. However, no student said that they were great editors. Instead, the students admitted that they are ok editors and better than before the start of my research. I am happy with this response. As I stated earlier, because of the time limits, six weeks, I did not expect the students have a complete transformation. However, I did want my students to increase their confidence levels of their own editing skills. My sample students mirrored my thoughts in the answer to question.

The final group of data collected was the student work samples (Appendix J). The work sample was copies of the daily edit activities. Each day, since the beginning of the year, the students completed an exercise in which the students edited two incorrect sentences. My cooperating teacher began this practice in the beginning of the year. I did not institute this practice, but simply continued the practice. The sentences included editing and revising mistakes. I used these work samples to demonstrate that the students received ample practice in revising and editing. The daily edits did not simply begin once I started my research. Instead, the students have complete two sentences every day since the beginning of the year. After the completion of my research, I was continually wondering if the students made the connection between the daily edits and the revising and editing during writing time. The class is completely capable of performing well on their daily edits. They should feel confident about the editing and revising process when practicing editing and revising every morning.
Analysis

After I collected all of my data, it was analyzed by searching for common themes. I read through all of the surveys, interviews, and observations to look for common ideas. I wanted to determine if the class, as a majority, felt more confident in their editing and revising skills after the introduction of the hands-on approach. I found several themes over the course of the research project. I analyzed the surveys by gathering statistical data from the responses. The statistics were used as reinforcement for the themes from the surveys. By analyzing this way, I was able to determine if the statistics and themes supported one another.

Interpretation

Prior to my research, the students in my fourth grade class were disengaged in the editing and revising process. The students did not take an active part in the editing their own stories, but instead, waited for editing instructions and directions from the teacher. After the introduction of a new editing and revising strategy by my cooperating teacher and I, the class began to become engaged and active in their own writing. Students were able to practice their editing skills in a manner that supported continual growth and increased confidence. Students were able to use their best resource, themselves, as well as the resources of their fellow peers. When peer editing, students are able to see their own mistakes through the eyes of others. They are able to recognize their own mistakes and work on those errors (Atwell, 1998; Maifair, 1999). When students were able to practice and recognize mistakes, their confidence increases. However, there were some students that did not gain the confidence I hoped. This realization does not make the study less beneficial; instead, it is a reminder that some children need other services and teaching
styles. I, for example, would practice and practice my poor basketball skills in hopes of trying out for a team. However, despite my efforts, I never developed the skills or the confidence to succeed.

Before the institution of the writer’s workshop and hands-on approach to editing, the students were accustomed to the teacher doing all of the work for them. The students were too dependent on the teacher for opinions and direction, as evident by the results to the teacher edit survey. My students said they liked the teacher edit because “editing was too hard”, “the teacher finds all the mistakes and makes it sound good”, and “editing is confusing”. After the introduction of the hands-on approach and much practice, students began to like editing on their own and relied less on the teacher, as shown in the interviews with my sample students.

After the completion of the study, I have found that even though students did not become expert editors, they did gain the confidence to edit and revise their own papers. Students became less nervous and anxious about editing and revising their work. If the students were able to use a hands-on approach on a regular basis, then it is my belief that not only would confidence levels increase, but the skill levels would also increase. The more my students became accustomed to the hands-on approach, the more they learned about editing and began to enjoy the process.
CHAPTER V
Conclusions

Summary

This action research study explored the relationship between the hands-on approach to editing and revising and the confidence levels of students in their self-evaluation of their own skills. I chose to begin the study with the strategy to which the students were accustomed, the teacher edit strategy. I observed student disengagement during this strategy and sought to change the atmosphere usually surrounding editing and revising. My fourth grade class served as sixteen participants for this study. From the findings, I concluded that students engaging in the revising and editing process led to increase confidence levels of their own editing skills.

From this research, I learned much about my students and my own personal teaching style for the future. I learned that student confidence levels of their editing skills increased after the institution of the hands-on approach to editing and revising stories. Students were also more engaged in the process when they enjoyed the activity as I observed in my field notes.

Implications

This study has taught me the many benefits of the writer’s workshop. First, in my future classroom, I will implement the writer’s workshop in any grade level. Students from kindergarten through fifth grade can gain from the implementation of the writer’s workshop. As I have learned, the writer’s workshop and the hands-on approach to editing increases
student confidence levels and provides a safe environment for students to make and learn from their mistakes. Students are given the opportunity to write and practice the skills learned from the teacher. As I have experienced in my own life, the opportunity to learn from mistakes was often the best lesson taught. Therefore, in the writer’s workshop, I encourage learning from mistakes. In a setting such as the writer’s workshop, students are able to hone in on their editing and revising skills. They help not only themselves, but also their fellow peers.

The second major benefit from this study was the increased confidence of my students of their own editing skills. As an educator, I love to see students explore their own editing and revising skills. At the beginning of my research, many of the students were not confident. As the students were introduced to the new concept, I expected apprehension. Yet, as my students practiced the hands-on approach and gained independence, students enjoyed and began to succeed as personal editors. Many students gained skills and confidence. In my future classroom, I hope for the same progress.

A third implication of my research was the impact it had upon my own teaching, which would benefit my students in the long run. This action research study has taught me that my teaching must continually adapt and change according to the needs of my students. When I entered my classroom, I noticed a deficiency in editing and revising. From this observation, I was able to design a research project to the needs of this particular class. In the future, I will take the same measures for a different group of students. This action research project taught me the benefits of classroom research.
Recommendations

If a teacher were to implement a hands-on approach to building confidence levels in student self-evaluation of their personal editing and revising skills through the use of the writer’s workshop, then I would have the following recommendations to better help other educators. The most important recommendation is to plan the hands-on approach from the onset of the school year. It is important for students to become accustomed to the structure. The implementation of the writer’s workshop and hands-on approach needs practice and students need time to develop their skills.

A second suggestion for other teachers is the use of bulletin boards, one large or two small. The first board would display the major steps and questions student should undertake and ask during the revising and editing process. Sample steps include; write, edit your own work, peer edit, rewrite, and edit again. Sample questions include: does that make sense? Can I add any supporting details? Each student should also have a personal copy of the steps and questions. The second bulletin board allows students and teachers to see what step of the writing process each are working on a particular day. For example, the students’ names will be listed. They will change the card next to their name to either PW (pre-writing), W (writing), RE (revise and edit), and P (publish). This board allows the teacher to see where each of students are in the class. The board also aids the students because the students can see who can peer edit their work. The boards should help the students and the teacher gage progress and help the writing process.

Another recommendation for the hands-on approach would be mini-lessons for the students based on need. If a teacher notices that the whole class, groups or students, or individuals need help in a specific area, then the teacher can plan and conduct mini-
lessons. These lessons could include helping students with punctuation, grammar, or adding details to stories and sentences. Teachers can help students improve their writing through the mini-lessons. These mini-lessons would be in conjunction with the morning daily editing and revising sentences.

If another teacher were to conduct the same research, I suggest the teacher provide students with varying forms of writing prompts. The opportunity for students to work on differing types of writing provides students with different types of editing and revising skills. For example, if students are writing persuasive essays, then they will look for different types of changes and revisions then that of a poem or story. Different types of essays can improve student writing and specifically their editing and revisions skills.

New Directions and Questions

After the completion of this project, I contemplated how I could take this study to new and deeper levels in the future. If I were to continue the study or begin it with a new class, then I would take a deeper look into the correlation between practicing editing skills in a daily edit format and the practicing of editing skills in the writer's workshop format. Do editing and revising skills transfer from one subject and activity to another? I find it interesting in my observations of the class that they were making mistakes that they were correcting during the daily edit time. During our school day, the daily edit was right in the morning, while the writer's workshop occurred in the afternoon. Does this gap in time make a difference to learning of the skills?

Another direction I would like to further delve into would be the issue of mastery of editing and revising skills. My study simply explored the confidence levels of students while using a hands-on approach to editing. However, if I began the study at the
beginning of a school year, then I would look not only at confidence levels, but also mastery levels. I have come to the conclusion in my study that increased practice leads to increased confidence. I speculate that increased practice would also lead to increased mastery. Just like the saying states, “Practice makes perfect.”

I am very happy with the outcome of my research. Yet, I would like to take a deeper look into the transferring of skills between two subjects and the mastery of editing skills to ensure even better learning and mastery of editing and revising skills.
References


Dear Parent/Guardian,

As a part of my graduation and student teaching requirements, I am researching and writing a thesis paper. My research will revolve around the data and observations collected from Mrs. Germano’s class. I am researching the most effective revision and editing strategies for our fourth grade class. I will give the students varying forms of writing prompts and then use different strategies to revise and edit their work. This research will only further your child’s educational growth in the classroom.

I am asking your permission for your child to participate in my research. There will be no additional work required for the students. The students will be engaging in the normal everyday schoolwork. I will be examining my teaching methods through their work.

Your decision to whether or not to allow your child to participate in the research will in no way have an effect on your child’s standing in the class. Your child’s work and name will remain anonymous throughout my entire research. If you have any questions, please contact me through either notes or by phone, 856-340-9039. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lauren J. Usignol

I, __________________________, grant my child, __________________________, to participate in this research.

(Parent/Guardian Signature)

I, __________________________, will help Miss Usignol with her research.

(Student Signature)
## APPENDIX B

### Student Information Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Average Grades</th>
<th>Basic Skills</th>
<th>Gifted &amp; Talented</th>
<th>Likes to Write</th>
<th>Interests</th>
<th>Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JM</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>reading, writing, girl scouts</td>
<td>Mom, dad, sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>drawing, movies</td>
<td>Lives with mom, 2 sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VC</td>
<td>A/B</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>drawing</td>
<td>Lives with mom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KD</td>
<td>B/C</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>sports</td>
<td>Mom, dad, brother, sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sports, history</td>
<td>Mom, dad, brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM</td>
<td>A/B</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>sports, band, music</td>
<td>Single mom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

Do You Like to Write?

1.) Do you like to write?
   Yes     No

2.) What is your favorite part of writing?
   Writing  Revising and Editing  Publishing

3.) What is your least favorite part of writing?
   Writing  Revising and Editing  Publishing
APPENDIX D

What is Revising and Editing?

Name: _______________________________________

1.) What is editing? Please give an example.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

2.) What is revising? Please give an example.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

3.) Are you good at both editing and revising?
   Yes  No

4.) Which do you think you’re better at?
   Editing  Revising  Both  Neither
APPENDIX E

Your Editing Skills

1.) Your Name: ____________________

2.) Do you like to edit your work?
   a. yes           b. no

3.) Why or why not do you like to edit your work?
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

4.) Are you a good editor? Rate yourself on a scale from 1-10 (1=bad, 5=ok, 10=awesome) ______

5.) What are some of your biggest editing and revision mistakes? Circle all that apply.
   a. punctuation
   b. capitalization
   c. complete sentences
   d. run-on sentences
   e. not enough description
   f. do you use words incorrectly? (homonyms)
   g. need more adjectives
   h. no opening sentences
   i. no supporting details
   j. other ________________________________
APPENDIX F

Teacher Edit Survey

1.) Name: __________________________

2.) Before the teacher edited your Matilda essay, did you edit it first/
   Yes   No

3.) What were you doing while you were waiting for the teacher to edit your essay?

________________________________________________________________________

4.) Did you understand the corrections your teacher made to your essay?
   Yes   No

5.) Do you think you will make the same mistakes your teacher corrected again?
   Yes   No

6.) What is your biggest editing mistake? Which mistakes do you make over and over again?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

7.) Do you like the teacher edit strategy? Why?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

8.) Do you think you can edit on your own from this point?
   Yes   No
APPENDIX G

Observations

Observation 1: March 15, 2009

Today, during our writing time, the students began the editing process of the writing process. The students have just finished their first drafts of their Matilda essays. The essays are comparing and contrasting the book and the movie Matilda. The students were instructed to have two similarities and two differences. This is the first writing assignment of the study. The first editing and revising strategy is the teacher edit. For this strategy, students write and teachers revise. The students tend to be disengaged in the writing process. During today’s class, the first editing day, both my cooperating teacher and I began to edit student work.

The students are instructed to write their names on the board as they are ready to have their essay edited. The students are not overly encouraged to look at their own work before editing. Students begin to write their names on the board. Mrs. Germano takes one student and I take another. I begin to edit the essay. I am making some changes and asking the student questions. I am trying to engage the student in the process, but my efforts were failing. The student was looking around and not actively paying attention to the editing. I glance over at my cooperating teacher and her student is sitting just as my student. Both students are not really paying attention.
As my cooperating teacher and I are editing, the other students are supposed to continuing writing or reading. However, many of the students were fooling around, talking, and so forth. The students that were waiting to be edited were not learning or gaining anything from waiting.

Observation 2: March 23, 2009

For today’s writing period, Mrs. Germano and I began to explain the Writer’s Workshop. All of the students were asked to take their seats. Two students handed out the writing folders and notebooks from the crate in the front of the room. Before beginning the explanation, there were several papers handed out to the students. The first was the rules for writer’s workshop. Some of these rules include no talking, no erasing, and skip lines. A second paper was a list of questions the students could ask themselves or a peer during the editing and revising stage. A third paper was the list of possible topics for the writer’s workshop. A goldenrod paper was given out to each student for the peer conferences. Lastly, a checklist was given to each student with step by step directions for the Writer’s Workshop.

The students were quiet during the instructions and were given time to ask questions. Sample questions include: Will you and Miss Usignol be editing our work? How often will we do this? The students were very eager and excited to get started. I even heard one of my students who greatly dislikes writing say that this sounded fun. I personally felt happy with this remark, because if this boy could like peer editing, then most of my students could.
Observation 3: March 25, 2009

Today was our first writer’s workshop. Before beginning writing, I took questions from the students about the workshop. We reminded the students that writing time was completely silent. The students had already picked a topic from the list. Today they began writing. The writing lasted for twenty minutes. At the conclusion of the twenty minutes, and several reminders to keep quiet, we stopped the students. Mrs. Germano explains the peer conference. She tells the students that they will work as pairs (cheers) to edit and revise what they had written thus far. As partners, the students were read their stories aloud. Then, using the goldenrod conferencing sheet, the students were to offer suggestions and help each other. Mrs. Germano and I performed an example of peer conferencing. Afterwards, we answered more questions. The students were given fifteen minutes to conference with each other. Students seem to be enjoying themselves. I walk around the room to monitor and listen to student discussions. I was very impressed by the conferences. Not only were students enjoying the process, but also they were providing good feedback to each other. One of my reluctant writers even exclaimed, “This is way more fun that regular writing.” Our first attempt was very successful.

Observation 4: March 27, 2009

Today during writer’s workshop, I gave the students a mini-lesson on nouns and adjectives. I wanted to teach the students little skills to be used during peer and self editing. Two students help hand out writing folders and notebooks. I asked the students to look at what they had written thus far. The students were to circle all the nouns in the
story. I asked the students how many nouns were in their stories. Then the students were to underline how many adjectives were used to describe those nouns. The numbers were greatly lower from the nouns. For an example, I asked one student to read one of their sentences with a couple nouns in it. The sentence read: As she was getting dressed, she noticed that there was snow on the ground. Students raised their hands to offer suggestions for adjectives describing the words snow, ground, and she. After the example, students were told to now try this strategy by themselves. I gave the kids another 15 minutes to “beef” up their writing.

Observation 5: April 27, 2009

Thee students have now finished their peer editing essay. We are now moving onto the self edit strategy. The students were introduced to the strategy briefly during the peer editing process. Many of the same questions should be asked of oneself as they would with a partner. The students are going to be writing a Mother’s Day essay entitled ‘My Mother is Beautiful.’ This essay is a part of an essay contest in the fourth grade. Each student will write an essay and then the essay will be judged by one of the other fourth grade teachers. Since the essays were to be judged, both Mrs. Germano and I told the students we would not be helping them with the editing and revising. The students at first were grumbling, because they at least wanted to peer edit. However, once we explained that someone might take their ideas, the students reconsidered. On this first day, the students were to begin writing. The essay had to have a minimum of 85 words and a maximum of 100 words. As usual, we had to continually remind our reluctant
writers to concentrate and work. On the other hand, our enthusiastic writers had difficulty sticking to the page limit.

Observation 6: April 29, 2009

We began our first day of self editing. As was expected, the students continued their grumbling about having to edit by themselves. Both Mrs. Germano and I encouraged the students to use their editing resources to complete the editing process. The students began working, though not happily. Many of the students worked steadily and seemingly with little difficulty. Other students were having more difficulty. I am surprised by one of my young boys who is usually not enthusiastic about writing. Not only was he writing a lot the days before, but also he was working very hard on his editing. I walked up to him to ask about his progress and see how he was making out with the strategy. He said, “I am ok. This is kind of hard, but I think I’m doing it right.” I asked, “Did you look at the checklist or the questions for help?” He answered, “Yea, the questions are good.” I was hopeful for the rest of the class.
APPENDIX H

Final Survey

Name: _______________________________________

Did you like peer and self-editing?
Yes  No

Why or why not did you like peer and self-editing?

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

Did your editing and revising skills increase when you were able to practice on your own and with a partner?
Yes  No

Do you think you are a good editor and revisor after using Writer’s Workshop?
Yes  No

Did you learn more from peer/self editing or by teacher edit? WHY???

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX I

Interviews

Student: JM

1) Teacher (T): Before, I came to the class, teacher edit was used. How did you feel about teacher edit?
JM: I don’t really think they helped that much. (Why?) Because it’s pretty much just the teacher telling you what’s wrong and right, but they’re ok I guess.

2) T: Once we began the writer’s workshop, did you think you would like it?
JM: I thought I would like it. (Why?) I really like writing, but I like doing different things while writing.

3) T: Did you think WW would help your editing skills?
JM: Yes I think it would. Well, I wasn’t really good at editing when I’m doing writing, because I finish a story I think it’s as good as can be. I don’t really know what to look for.

4) T: How did WW help you?
JM: It helped because I had to edit myself and usually I don’t have time to edit myself.

5) T: Do you like having a more active role in the editing and revising process? Why or Why not?
JM: Yes, because I like doing it myself.

6) T: How confident are you in your own editing skills? Do you think you are good, bad, ok at editing and revising? Why?
JM: After WW I think I’m a lot better. I write a lot of stories at home but I have such a busy schedule I don’t get to edit. But in WW I get to practice.

7) T: If you were able to use WW all year long do you think your editing and revising skills would be better? Why?
JM: Yea, because as I said I need to practice so I would have been able to get better.

8) T: Do you think you are better at editing once we began to do it more on our own or when the teacher edited for you?
JM: I got better when I did it myself. It is easier to catch mistakes instead of the teacher just telling you.

9) T: Does editing on your own make you a better writer?
JM: Better because I find my own mistakes and know what to look for in the future.
Student: KS

1) T: Before, I came to the class, teacher edit was used. How did you feel about teacher edit?
KS: It helped because she showed us the mistakes.

2) T: Once we began the writer’s workshop, did you think you would like it?
KS: Yea because it sounded like it would help with writing because you have to grade your own work.

3) T: Did you think WW would help your editing skills?
KS: Sort of

4) T: How did WW help you?
KS: You learn how to edit by yourself.

5) T: Do you like having a more active role in the editing and revising process? Why or Why not?
KS: Yes because I learned how to do it (editing)

6) T: How confident are you in your own editing skills? Do you think you are good, bad, ok at editing and revising? Why?
KS: Ok, because it is harder but I learned to ask questions and writing.

7) T: If you were able to use WW all year long do you think your editing and revising skills would be better? Why?
KS: Yea, because you’re learning a lot by writing stories and practicing.

8) T: Do you think you are better at editing once we began to do it more on our own or when the teacher edited for you?
KS: Me doing it myself because you learn from your mistakes.

9) T: Does editing on your own make you a better writer?
KS: Yes because if you don’t edit and revise people won’t be able to understand it.
Student: MM

1) T: Before, I came to the class, teacher edit was used. How did you feel about teacher edit?
MM: Sort of helped, because when I do it by myself I know what to look for.

2) T: Once we began the writer’s workshop, did you think you would like it?
MM: No, it didn’t seem interesting to me, because writing is boring to me.

3) T: Did you think WW would help your editing skills?
MM: Yes, because it teaches what to look for in writing.

4) T: How did WW help you?
MM: I liked the conference because it helped me look for mistakes.

5) T: Do you like having a more active role in the editing and revising process? Why or Why not?
MM: Yes I like having control, because I want to see what I know and don’t know.

6) T: How confident are you in your own editing skills? Do you think you are good, bad, ok at editing and revising? Why?
MM: Before WW I was a bad editor because I didn’t know what to do. I think I got better. I’m not as bad.

7) T: If you were able to use WW all year long do you think your editing and revising skills would be better? Why?
MM: Oh yea, if you don’t know what is good and what is bad in editing WW can show you and you can practice.

8) T: Do you think you are better at editing once we began to do it more on our own or when the teacher edited for you?
MM: Probably when I did it. When I did it with the teacher she told me about the mistake and I would do it again. When I was doing it myself I was seeing the mistakes myself and hope to not do it again.

9) T: Does editing on your own make you a better writer?
MM: Uh yes. I can show the skills I learned from WW if we did it all the time. I’d be able to make my writing better.
Student: JC

1) T: Before, I came to the class, teacher edit was used. How did you feel about teacher edit?
JC: I liked it because I didn’t have to check it.

2) T: Once we began the writer’s workshop, did you think you would like it?
JC: Yea I thought I would because it was something new.

3) T: Did you think WW would help your editing skills?
JC: A little bit because you’re writing a lot of long stories.

4) T: How did WW help you?
JC: We were doing it so often that I would get better because it’s a lot of practice.

5) T: Do you like having a more active role in the editing and revising process? Why or Why not?
JC: Yea, because it would help me learn more about editing by helping others and myself.

6) T: How confident are you in your own editing skills? Do you think you are good, bad, ok at editing and revising? Why?
JC: I think I’m ok because I don’t get as many things wrong as when we first started.

7) T: If you were able to use WW all year long do you think your editing and revising skills would be better? Why?
JC: Oh yea because we’d be doing it longer and we’d be able to write more stories and practice editing.

8) T: Do you think you are better at editing once we began to do it more on our own or when the teacher edited for you?
JC: More on my own because my friends were helping and I was helping myself.

9) T: Does editing on your own make you a better writer?
JC: Yea because I learn more about grammar and stuff and the story.
Student: KD

1) T: Before, I came to the class, teacher edit was used. How did you feel about teacher edit?
KD: I didn’t like it because sometimes you had to read to class.

2) T: Once we began the writer’s workshop, did you think you would like it?
KD: Yes at first because it sounded fun because you could do it with partners.

3) T: Did you think WW would help your editing skills?
KD: No because we’re kids and we don’t know everything that needs to be edited.

4) T: How did WW help you?
KD: You got to practice writing and editing.

5) T: Do you like having a more active role in the editing and revising process? Why or Why not?
KD: Yes because it’s more fun and faster. It’s faster because when you do it with the teacher you have to wait.

6) T: How confident are you in your own editing skills? Do you think you are good, bad, ok at editing and revising? Why?
KD: I’m ok because over the time I’ve been getting better and not making as many mistakes.

7) T: If you were able to use WW all year long do you think your editing and revising skills would be better? Why?
KD: Way better because you’d be practicing for so long on your own that you just do it really good.

8) T: Do you think you are better at editing once we began to do it more on our own or when the teacher edited for you?
KD: I did better with peer and self because we get to learn more.

9) T: Does editing on your own make you a better writer?
KD: Yes because you’re learning about the editing and making your story better.
Student: VC

1) T: Before, I came to the class, teacher edit was used. How did you feel about teacher edit?
VC: It didn’t really help me because she wrote down the corrections for me. Some of the things I didn’t really understand why they were wrong.

2) T: Once we began the writer’s workshop, did you think you would like it?
VC: No because I don’t like to write. Well it’s not that I don’t like to write it’s just that I have all these idea and I don’t know how to put them on paper.

3) T: Did you think WW would help your editing skills?
VC: Yes because we were doing a lot of practice, like CUPS (capitalization, understand, punctuation, and spelling)

4) T: How did WW help you?
VC: Because it helped me write more.

5) T: Do you like having a more active role in the editing and revising process? Why or Why not?
VC: Yes I liked doing it myself because I could understand the mistakes I made.

6) T: How confident are you in your own editing skills? Do you think you are good, bad, ok at editing and revising? Why?
VC: I’m pretty good because I like to find mistakes, like the editing on the board, and then correct them.

7) T: If you were able to use WW all year long do you think your editing and revising skills would be better? Why?
VC: Yes because I would have more practice with it. I would think my skills were better.

8) T: Do you think you are better at editing once we began to do it more on our own or when the teacher edited for you?
VC: More on my own because I just think it gave me more help doing it myself and with a partner.

9) T: Does editing on your own make you a better writer?
VC: No because editing doesn’t help me get the ideas down to being with.
A palace is a residence for royalty, and sometimes it serves as a seat of government.

There's a famous place and fortress in Granada, Spain, called the Alhambra, that was built by the Moors.

Karl told us that there's a palace in France where you could get lost because it has about 1,300 rooms.

100% Yes, my Aunt Susan went to the palace of Versailles, and she said that the grounds cover about 250 acres.