

## Harness the Power of Nonfiction Writing in Every Classroom

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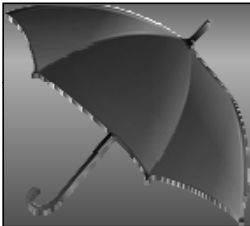
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## What Do We Mean?



“Nonfiction writing” is an umbrella term that means “writing to inform.”

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## Why Nonfiction Writing?



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# 85%

**of the Reading and Writing That We Do  
as Adults Is Nonfiction**

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## Why Nonfiction Writing?

- **Approximately 80 percent of students taking the National Assessment of Educational Progress writing test have scored in the basic range for 30 years.**
- **Business leaders overwhelmingly cite writing skills as critical to success in the workplace.**
- **The public thinks writing skills are more important than ever.**

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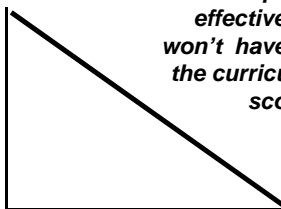
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## “I Don’t Have the Time for More Writing” Hypothesis

Math, Science, Social Studies,  
M.C. Tests



Writing Assessment Time and Results

*“If we spend more time on effective assessment, we won’t have time to cover all the curriculum and our test scores will decline.”*

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### Is the Hypothesis True?

Math, Science, Social Studies,  
M.C. Tests

*“As time devoted to writing increases, test scores increase.”*

Source: *NASSP Bulletin*, Dec. 2000, “Standards Are Not Enough”

**Writing Assessment Time and Results**

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### Writing Is Important

**So what can teachers do about it?**

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### Positions on Writing

(National Council of Teachers of English)

- **Everyone has the capacity to write, and writing can be taught.**
- **Writing grows out of many different purposes.**
- **People learn to write by writing.**
- **Writing is a process.**
- **Writing is a tool for thinking.**

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## 2007 Research on the Writing Of Adolescents

- The quality of student writing is inadequate.
- Writing is essential for adolescent students.
- Students without adequate writing skills suffer in multiple subjects.
- Half of students entering college are not prepared for the writing that is expected.
- Better writing instruction can remedy these problems!

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## Why Nonfiction Writing?

- **Cognitive Effect** — Writing allows students to reflect on their learning.
- **Teaching Effect** — Writing provides teachers with valuable formative and summative assessment information.

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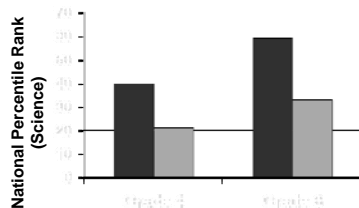
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## Nonfiction Writing Works!

Four-year study funded by National Science Foundation



Writing not only improved science but all other test scores as well!

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## Nonfiction Writing Works!

- **Low-achieving** math students using writing-to-learn techniques improved their state test results to a greater percentage than did **average** math students in a classroom not using writing.
- A physics teacher saw a steady three-year improvement in overall grades when using writing-to-learn techniques.
- Students writing in history classes improved their writing and also demonstrated greater historical accuracy.

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## Nonfiction Writing Works!

- **West Carrollton, OH:** Doubled the total number of state standards met by the district in just two years
- **Woodland High School, SC:** From academic watch to an excellent improvement rating in one year; average SAT score rose 22 points
- **Tehipite Middle School, CA:** Doubled the number of students proficient in organization of writing in two months and got the highest scores ever on the state tests that year

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- **Bartlett Middle School, Savannah, GA**
- **St. Helens Middle School, St. Helens, OR**
- **Waterloo Middle School, Waterloo, NY**



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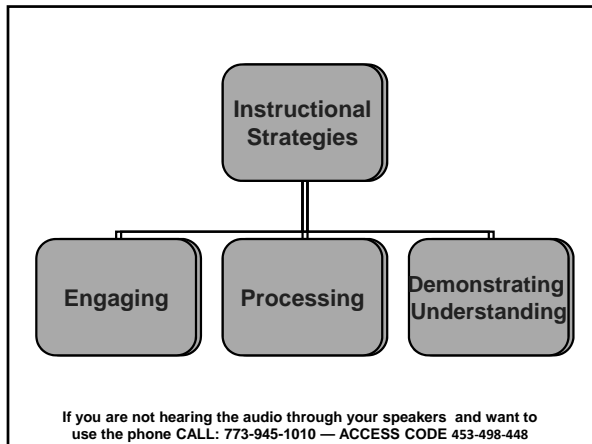
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### Assessment of Nonfiction Writing

- Common language about writing
- Shared expectations for writing
- Common, cross-curricular rubrics aligned with your state standards
- Collaborative scoring with ongoing data monitoring

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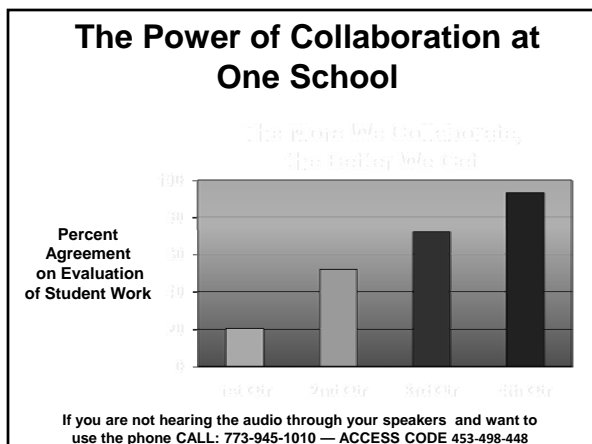
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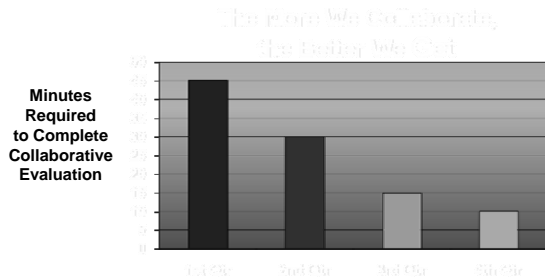
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## The Power of Collaboration at One School



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## Your Questions



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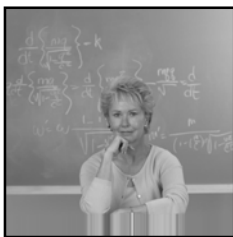
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## We Need Great Teachers to Do What They Do Best



... Encourage students to think, reason, write, and communicate their understanding... These strategies maintain the professionalism of our teachers and also lead to significant improvement in student achievement.

Douglas Reeves

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**The 2009 Writing Institute  
St. Pete Beach, Florida  
February 5-6**

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