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Collaboration During Writing in a First Grade Classroom

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Table of Contents

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to discover if providing students with a collaboration intervention would increase the times they chose to work with a peer and if they found the collaboration beneficial. The participants were sixteen students from one first grade classroom in a midwestern city. This study included quantitative data to determine the impact of the intervention. The researcher tallied if students chose to ask a teacher for help or collaborate with a peer. Students completed reflection forms stating if the help was beneficial. The results do not reveal a significant difference between whom the students ask for writing help after the intervention. The analysis of reflection sheet data revealed that students found their partner's help beneficial about half of the time before and after the intervention, with an insignificant difference. The researcher offers several suggestions for future study.

Keywords: collaboration, feedback, writing, primary grade

Collaboration During Writing in a First Grade Classroom

Students should build a strong writing foundation is in the primary grades. However, the expectations of students and teachers are high with the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The standards provide educators with a complete list of what to teach, but it is unrealistic to think it could all be taught and assessed well (Ainsworth & Donovan, 2019). Teachers feel the pressure of time yet want to support each student at their level. Despite its thoroughness, there is no guidance from the CCSS about what instructional methods to use (Coker et al., 2016).

Much of the writing instruction in elementary schools is in a whole group setting with a wide range of time spent on writing instruction and practice (Coker et al., 2016). The problem with whole group instruction is that students are passive rather than active learners. Teachers often ask questions with lower-level recall answers rather than higher-level questions that enable students to connect new learning to previous learning (Jesson & Cockle, 2016). Also, when students work with partners or in small groups, they are more engaged and responsible (Dobao & Blum, 2013). In response to recent research, educators are shifting to differentiated instruction to meet the diverse needs of students (Heacox, 2012). This is a way for teachers to extend some students' learning, while providing necessary instruction and practice and for others (Heacox, 2012).

Research indicates peer feedback and collaboration with upper elementary or older students result in higher quality writing and improved critical thinking skills (Tavsanli & Kara, 2021; Philippakos & MacArthur, 2016). Many primary teachers have classroom experience that shows explicit instruction and collaboration have a positive impact on student engagement and

learning. However, the research is lacking in the use of collaboration and feedback in the primary grades.

The purpose of this literature review is to discover how strategies like collaboration, peer feedback, and explicit instruction impact student writers. The findings from the literature review guide the choice of methodology for the action research.

To determine if teaching students how to collaborate impacts whom they seek out for help, two questions were the focus of this action research: Do first graders use their peers for help rather than the teacher after participating in a collaboration intervention? Do opportunities for collaboration during writing time increase student's perceived ability to solve writing problems with a peer? This knowledge gained from this action research can be used to empower students to become better and more engaged writers.

Young writers need support generating ideas, checking to see if their story makes sense, punctuation, and spelling. Often the teacher cannot provide the support in a timely manner, resulting in wasted time for students. If students can be explicitly taught how to effectively collaborate and support their peers, maybe they can provide the needed supports.

In this paper, the methodology for this research, including the participants, intervention, and tools used to collect the data will be explained. The data will be shared, and data analysis will be provided. A discussion of the findings, limitations, and areas for future research will be offered.

Review of the Literature

Current Writing Instruction

It is important for a researcher wanting to improve writing instruction and engagement in the classroom to be aware of the current state of writing instruction in an elementary school setting. Several studies involving teacher observation during writing instruction conclude that even though the amount of instruction time may differ, much of the writing instruction in elementary schools take place in a whole group setting (Coker et al., 2016; Jesson & Cockle, 2016; Schuldt, 2019). Coker et al. (2016) noted that most of the teacher's focus during whole group writing time is on teaching skills and process writing with little time spent modeling good writing and few opportunities for the students to share their writing pieces.

A lesson format often observed is the teacher leading a whole group lesson and then students being given time to write independently (Jesson & Cockle, 2016; Schuldt, 2019). Students need ample time to formulate, reflect, and compose their pieces of writing whether on their own or through conversation with someone else (Schultz, 1997). However, just giving students more time to write does not equate to a better piece of writing (Smedt & Hilde, 2018). Often teachers select the writing topic or genre, relating it to the content or experiences of the students (Jesson & Cockle, 2016). This may be a helpful strategy for some students because it ensures that they have the background knowledge to draw from, but the lack of choice may also stifle the creativity of others.

Another aspect of whole-class instruction that restricts many students are the discussions that occur before writing because they are aimed at preparing students to write with a specific genre and purpose in mind (Jesson & Cockle, 2016). Students need to know about the specific characteristics of different genres of writing, but they also benefit from having time to talk

through their ideas before beginning their writing. Jesson & Cockle (2016) also noted that although teachers had focused lessons, the students in the study put more effort into including the components of the genre of writing, rather than putting energy into finding their voice and personality through writing. By encouraging conversation or turning the conversation to smaller groups, more students will have opportunities to speak and share their ideas and connections to previous learning (Hong, 2015). Teachers who made time for reflective talk about writing and thinking about writing helped students become strategic writers because they became more aware of the writing process (Laman, 2011).

Dialogue

Several studies show the benefits of encouraging dialogue about writing within the classroom, specifically between students. Children develop their oral communication skills before written communication skills, so it is natural to have a conversation before writing (Spencer & Petersen, 2018). González et al. (2013) claim dialogue during group work is essential for English Language Learners to brainstorm ideas for writing. This allows students to generate ideas, choose the words, and practice their plan for writing in a safe place (Hawkins, 2019; Laman, 2011). Hong (2015) agrees that dialogue helps students develop their voice and writing personalities. Talking about their ideas and writing is the beginning of being a reflective writer which is an important aspect of developing their writing identity (Hong, 2015). When a student shares an idea with a peer or teacher, they are testing it out, making changes and additions before committing it to paper (Hawkins, 2019).

Using dialogue builds a beginning writer's self-esteem and motivation to write when their ideas are heard and valued (González et al., 2013; Hong, 2015). Dobao (2013) also reports that university students studying a foreign language appreciate opportunities for dialogue because

they can share their ideas, incorporate their partner's ideas into their writing, and it builds their creativity. González et al. (2013) reports that students who feel confident in their role or with the language participate more than students who are unsure of themselves.

Teachers need to be purposeful about the dialogue they engage in with students during conferences as well. During teacher-student writing conferences, many teachers do the talking and do not expect students to "do the work" in response to feedback (Schuldt, 2019). Teachers should plan the conference to allow for genuine dialogue that puts the child in charge and will help the child develop as a writer (Hawkins, 2019). Intentional conversations with the student will guide the student towards making connections with the writing process (Hawkins, 2019). These types of conversations will also serve as a model for students to use when they work with a partner as well.

Partners

Researchers have discovered benefits and weaknesses to both student-selected and teacher-selected partners with students from primary grades through college. Student-selected partners are based on friendships rather than the perceived effectiveness of the peer as a writing collaborator (Schultz, 1997; Mozaffari, 2017). Schultz (1997) claims several benefits of students selecting their partners. The first is giving students choice provides opportunities for diverse students to work together, building a positive classroom climate. The partnerships can change as friendships evolve. Also, some students feel more comfortable working with someone they know well.

Mozaffari (2017) argues that student-selected pairs are more off-task than teacher-selected pairs because they have many things in common to talk about. Schultz (1997) reports that teacher-selected partners and groups finish their work more often than student-selected pairs.

Teacher-selected pairs also produce more accurate writing with more language issues resolved (Mozaffari, 2017). In contrast, Smedt & Hilde's (2018) study of peer evaluation did not result in better writing. They hypothesize several reasons for these results including less structure when working with peers, static partners, and students being given opportunities rather than being forced to work with a peer.

However, Mozaffari (2017) cautions teachers to be intentional when selecting partnerships considering personalities, writing levels, and communication skills. Teachers need to be sure the pair or group will be able to focus on the writing-related tasks. Students should be able to communicate and provide feedback at a level similar to their partner (Mozaffari, 2017). Students report that communicating with a partner not only holds them more accountable, but they appreciate the time to talk through their ideas, resulting in more creative writing (Dobao & Blum, 2013; Tavsanli & Kara, 2021).

Social Aspects of Collaboration

Collaborating with peers can be a positive or negative experience for students. Providing students with time to collaborate can enhance their social interactions and build relationships with peers (Schultz, 1997). Research on collaboration with English Language Learners aligns with the conclusion that time spent orally sharing ideas for stories builds the students' language skills (Dobao & Blum 2013; González et al., 2013). Peers become models as the English Language Learners hear the use of language during conversations.

The use of digital technology can play a role in collaboration and feedback. Chen et al. (2011) who studied peer feedback through blogging, report that students like the anonymity of giving feedback online. Students share that it is easier for them to provide feedback without worrying that the peer might get upset with them. The students in Lenters & Grant's (2016)

study on using an audio or video device to provide feedback to peers, state students reported it was awkward at first to use the video to provide feedback, but it ended up being more helpful because their facial expressions helped to clearly express the feedback. The writers appreciated being able to listen to the feedback multiple times (Lenters & Grant, 2016).

Some students state they do not provide feedback because they are not confident in their abilities and fear that their feedback will be poor (Chen et al., 2011; González et al., 2013). They do not want to be looked down upon. In addition, some students may have anxiety about being criticized and view opportunities to collaborate and receive feedback negatively (Tavsanli & Kara, 2021). These students may need more teaching and guidance about the purpose and benefits of giving and receiving feedback or sharing ideas with a peer.

Explicit Instruction and Modeling

Researchers agree teachers must provide explicit instruction before beginning peer collaboration in the classroom (Chen et al., 2011; Philippakos & MacArthur 2016; Shultz 1997). Students need to know the purpose of collaboration, its benefits, and what it looks like in action. For peer feedback to be successful, the instruction needs to be systematic, and students should know the criteria to use when providing feedback or reflecting on their work (Philippakos, 2017). Philippakos (2017) emphasizes the effectiveness that modeling and practicing providing feedback on strong and weak writing has on improving a student's writing.

Multiple studies show that students who receive explicit instruction on providing feedback make more gains in their writing than students who do not receive the same intervention (Smedt & Hilde, 2018; Tavsanli & Kara 2021). Based on their research, Smedt & Hilde (2018) expected to see students that receive explicit writing instruction and use peer assistance to outscore the students that only receive explicit writing instruction. However, the opposite was true. They also

discovered that students who use peer assistance but do not receive explicit instruction do not produce better writing.

Based on their 2018 study, Spencer & Peterson suggest that explicit instruction on narrative writing delivered exclusively in an oral modality has a positive effect on students' writing. Students in this intervention wrote longer stories with more story grammar elements during and after the conclusion of the intervention. This study echoes the positive effects of using dialogue to build oral schema to improve students' writing. Using dialogue-based instruction may be an effective strategy to teach ELLs or students with learning disabilities (Spencer & Peterson, 2018).

Feedback

Feedback from teachers or peers has a positive impact on student writing. Numerous researchers claim that students who participate in feedback with a peer or teacher perform better than students who do not engage in feedback (Chen et al., 2011; Philippakos & Mac Arthur, 2016; Wang et al., 2014). Specifically, students receiving in person peer feedback wrote longer pieces with richer vocabulary than students who received teacher feedback. One reason for this difference could be that the students could clarify the feedback in follow-up face to face meetings with their peer rather than the teacher whose attention is in higher demand (Wang et al., 2014).

When students engage in dialogue about their writing, they make connections within the writing process (Hong, 2015). A writing conference or conversation gives the student writer an opportunity to explain their thinking whether it be the ideas, organization, or words. These conversations can be powerful as students share who they modeled their writing after and as peers make suggestions with their style in mind. Students also notice and are influenced by the

writing styles of their peers and famous authors (Hong, 2015; Laman, 2011). There is a shift in the student's mind from viewing others as authors, to themselves as authors, to themselves as reflective authors (Hong, 2015).

When students have conversations about and receive feedback on their writing with their peers, they begin to see their writing from a reader's point of view (Philippakos 2017). The writer hears the reader's thoughts about the writing. When students learn how to use a critical eye when collaborating and providing feedback to peers, they begin to look at their work critically as well (Boon, 2016; Philippakos 2017; Tavsanli & Kara, 2021). They read their peer's writing, thinking critically to provide effective feedback and can use that skill to make improvements to their own writing (Philippakos 2017).

Depending on the purpose of the feedback session, the ability, and confidence of the writer, some students trust the teacher or peer more than the other (González et al., 2013; Philippakos, 2017; Schultz, 1997). Hawkins (2019) states that depending on the purpose of the feedback session, it may be more beneficial for a teacher to be the one providing feedback. If the topic for a young writer is conventions, the teacher is more knowledgeable and will be able to provide better feedback. Wong et al., (2014) concludes that peer feedback has a bigger impact on students with a higher writing ability as they provide more feedback and perform significantly better on a writing posttest. As mentioned before, low-ability students may not feel as confident, so they do not give as much feedback. Peer feedback was not as helpful for these students, but their post-intervention writing included more details than their original writing.

The use of a digital platform for students to provide feedback to each other is another effective way to improve students writing (Lenters & Grant, 2016; Woo et al., 2013). The time students have to provide feedback using digital technology is more flexible than face to face

feedback. The number of comments posted on the wiki correlated to the number of revisions students made to their work (Woo et al., 2013).

Multiple studies have demonstrated that giving students the time to clarify written or verbal feedback is beneficial (Boon, 2016; Lenters & Grant, 2016; Wang et al., 2014). Students can read the feedback, process it, and then ask questions to clarify rather than leave the notes up to be interpreted, before they make changes to their writing. Students may also test out the proposed changes with their partner and continue to get feedback. Boon (2016) learned from student reflections that students use and place value in peer feedback when they are given the time to use it and make changes to their writing.

What researchers believe is effective feedback does not align with their observations of feedback in the classroom. In Schuldt's 2019 study of teachers providing oral feedback to students, the lower-achieving students and students who initiated feedback were the ones who received more feedback from teachers. However, Schuldt (2019) observed most teachers spent between 10-60 seconds providing feedback to a student. Many of the interactions were constrained to answers to the teacher's questions rather than an honest dialogue (Shuldt, 2019). Students are not given the needed time to work through the content and feedback they receive.

Conclusion

Much of the writing instruction in an elementary school setting is done whole group with the teacher leading the lesson before students write independently. Dialogue about writing helps students develop oral communication skills and provides a safe place for them to form their ideas before putting them on paper. Teachers can guide the dialogue to encourage thinking about writing.

There are positive and negative reasons for who selects student partners. Therefore, teachers need to be thoughtful about how partners are selected. Opportunities for students to work with peers may not be welcomed by English Language Learners or lower ability students as much as confident writers. Explicit instruction and modeling are effective instructional strategies for writing. Teacher or peer feedback also has a positive effect on student writing.

This literature review demonstrates that research has been done on the effect of teachers or students providing feedback and students collaborating during writing time. However, there have not been studies done to see if when students are presented with the option of collaborating with a peer or receiving help from the teacher, who will they choose?

Methods

Participants

The participants in this study are first grade students from a school with 465 preschool through fourth grade students. This number fluctuated during the 2020-2021 school year due to the number of students who moved between in-person learning and virtual learning. This school is part of a large district in eastern Iowa with seven elementary schools and 5 schools for fifth through 12th grade students. The city and school district continue to grow at a fast rate. The school district built two new intermediate schools in 2020 to accommodate for the growth.

The first grade classroom has 17 students, including nine girls and eight boys. Of these students, 88% are white, 18% are Black or African American, and 59% qualify for free or reduced lunch. Six of the students receive reading support and three have Individualized Education Plans for reading. One student is dual enrolled and does not participate in the writing part of the school day. Therefore, data was not collected from this child for this research.

Data Collection

Prior to beginning the study, the researcher applied for approval from the Northwestern College Institutional Review Board. Although the intervention was within a typical educational setting, minors were completing reflection forms, so IRB approval was necessary. After receiving IRB approval, the researcher informed the principal and teammates of the action research. The researcher notified parents and guardians of the study and received permission to use the child's data through email and paper permission slips.

Two tools were used to track whom students asked for help and if they believed the help to be beneficial. The first is a tally chart (See Appendix A1) to record if students asked the teacher or a peer for support. The second is a reflection form (See Appendix A2) that students

completed after each writing time when they had the opportunity to collaborate. The students' answers were recorded on a tally chart (See Appendix A3). These tally charts were used so averages of each response could be calculated using Excel. Responses were organized in the following categories pre- and post-intervention: student asks the teacher for help, student asks a peer for help, student finds the peer help beneficial, student does not find the peer help beneficial. Dependent samples *t*-tests were used to determine if there were statistically significant findings.

Due to restrictions from COVID-19, the time students could spend in close proximity to their peers was severely reduced for much of the school year. In late spring students were introduced to the reflection sheet and practiced using it. They gave feedback on the ease of use and the researcher made changes to the reflection form. The students received guidance as they completed the next two reflection forms to ensure they understood how to do it.

Data was collected for 12 writing opportunities over the course of nine weeks. The data was collected for writing assignments that were given to the whole class and included longer pieces rather than shorter question-response writing assignments. Six of these writing opportunities occurred before the intervention and 6 occurred after the intervention.

Variables

The independent variable in this action research is the collaboration intervention. The dependent variable is how often and whom the students ask for help during their writing and if they view the help as beneficial. The times a student asks for help will be tallied by the researcher. Whether the help was beneficial will be noted by the participant and then tallied by the researcher.

Intervention

The whole class intervention explicitly teaching, modeling, and practicing feedback and collaboration occurred for a minimum of 30 minutes over 10 days. The first 5 days were focused on feedback. The teacher and instructional coach first taught what feedback is through the use of a video and book. Feedback stems (Appendix A4) were introduced to students to help focus their feedback. The use of the feedback stems was modeled to the students by the teacher and instructional coach with a writing piece. During a whole class lesson, the students used the feedback stems to provide feedback to the teacher on another writing piece. Next, students completed a directed drawing. Students used the feedback stems with their peers to provide feedback on the drawings while the teacher and instructional coach provided individual guidance.

On the next day, posters relating collaboration with the school expectations were introduced (Appendix A5). The students and researcher role-played examples and non-examples of following the expectations and then discussed what the students did well and need to improve upon. Next, students practiced using these rules while they worked together to answer a question related to a story everyone read earlier that day. On subsequent days, the poster was reviewed, and students collaborated on writing tasks. Partway through each writing task, students were asked to pause, reflect, and share with the class how their partner was following the expectations for collaboration. This focused the students on the expectations in a positive manner.

The students participated in six writing assignments when they had opportunities to ask a peer or the teacher for support. At the beginning of each writing task during the data collection, students were told they could ask their partner or the teacher for help generating ideas, checking

to see if it makes sense, punctuation, spelling, or something else. The feedback stems and green pencils used for showing feedback were available to students.

For this research, the teacher assigned partners, which were used for the duration of the data collection. Social skills, personalities, and writing abilities were considered by the teacher when making the partners. To avoid partner burn-out, other pairings and small groups were used for other activities throughout the day.

Findings

Data Analysis

A dependent samples *t*-test was conducted to determine whether there was a significant change in whom the students ask for help on their writing pre- and post-intervention. Prior to the intervention, a one tailed *t*-test reveals that students indicated a significant preference for peer help ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 1.71$) than teacher help ($M = 1.38$, $SD = 1.63$), $t(15) = -2.63$, $p = 0.009$. This was not the predicted outcome.

After the intervention students asked the teacher for help an average of 2.06 times ($SD = 1.53$) and a peer 2.44 times ($SD = 1.36$). The results of the one-tailed *t*-test do not reveal a significant difference between whom the students ask for writing help after the intervention, $t(15) = -0.73$, $p = 0.23$.

Dependent samples *t*-tests were also conducted to determine whether there was a significant change in how students viewed the help they received from their partners. Before the intervention, students believed their partner's help was beneficial approximately half of the time ($M = 49.75$, $SD = 21.59$). After the intervention, students believed their partner's help was beneficial nearly half of the time ($M = 47.19$, $SD = 24.86$). The results of the one-tailed *t*-test do not reveal a significant difference between students viewing their partner's help as beneficial before and after the intervention $t(15) = 0.22$, $p = 0.411$.

Before the intervention, students did not find their partner's help beneficial an average of 40.63 of the time ($SD = 49.05$). After the intervention, students did not find their partner's help beneficial an average of 9.38 of the time ($SD = 27.20$). The results of the one-tailed *t*-test reveal a significant difference with students stating their partner's help was not beneficial more often before the intervention than afterwards, $t(15) = 2.08$, $p = 0.03$, which is the predicted outcome.

Dependent samples *t*-tests were also conducted to determine whether there were significant changes in students asking a teacher, peer, or no one for help before and after a feedback and collaboration intervention. Although these comparisons were not the primary focus of the study, the researcher was interested in what insights this analysis would provide.

Before the intervention students asked the teacher for writing help an average of 1.38 times (*SD* = 1.63). After the intervention students asked the teacher for help an average of 2.06 of six times (*SD* = 1.53). The results of the dependent samples one-tailed *t*-test reveal a significant difference between the pre and post-intervention, $t(15) = -1.79$, $p = 0.04$ which was not the predicted outcome.

Before the intervention students asked a peer for writing help an average of 2.88 times (*SD* = 1.71). After the intervention students asked a peer for help an average of 2.43 times (*SD* = 1.36). The results of the dependent samples one-tailed *t*-test did not reveal a significant difference between the pre and post-intervention, $t(15) = 0.77$, $p = 0.23$.

When given six opportunities for collaboration, students chose no help from peers or the teacher an average of 2.25 times (*M* = 2.4, *SD* = 1.59). After the intervention students chose no help an average of 2 of the six times (*M* = 2, *SD* = 1.21). The results of the dependent samples one-tailed *t*-test did not reveal a significant difference between the pre and post-intervention, $t(15) = 0.59$, $p > 0.28$.

Discussion

Summary of Major Findings

The purpose of this study was to discover if providing students with a collaboration intervention would increase the times they chose to work with a peer and if they found the collaboration beneficial. While the results of this study did not show an increase in peer collaboration, it does provide needed insights in a gap of research on writing collaboration in the primary grades.

Students chose to collaborate with their peers more often than ask the teacher for help before the intervention. After the intervention, there is little difference between whom the students chose to work with. Students reported their partner's help beneficial about half the time before and after the intervention. However, there was a significant decrease in the number of times students reported their peer's help was not beneficial.

In addition, when comparing the time students asked the teacher for help before and after the intervention, the researcher discovered the students asked the teacher for help more often after the intervention. There was not a significant difference between how often the students collaborated with a peer before and after the intervention. The time students chose to work independently was similar before and after the intervention.

Based on the review of literature that stated the positive academic and social benefits of collaboration, the researcher expected students to choose to collaborate with peers during many aspects of the writing process (Hawkins, 2019; Hong, 2015; Laman, 2011). While no studies compared whom students preferred to collaborate with, it was unexpected for the students to choose to work independently or ask a teacher for help rather than collaborate with a peer.

Limitations

One major limitation was the COVID-19 pandemic for several reasons. Students missed out on months of their kindergarten school year before coming to first grade. During their first grade school year, students were restricted by how close they could get to a peer, what materials they could share, and how much time they could spend together. Students had to learn in various settings including online, in-person, and a mix of both. These changes severely limited the time typically spent building teamwork and social skills within the classroom.

There are limitations when using researcher-created measurement tools and asking young children to use them. First, the teacher may not correctly tally which students asked for help. Second, students may not have wanted to complete the student reflection forms after a writing session or they may have not always remembered what kind of help they asked for, affecting the reliability of the form.

The unexpected findings could also be due to students' views. They may have equated their excitement to work with a peer as the help being beneficial or they didn't know what it looked like to be helpful regarding writing. Some students didn't want to work with their assigned partners. Students said this was due to the partner's struggle to stay on task or their ability to provide feedback. One student who was a poor writer only asked the teacher for help which aligns with research done by González et al. (2013).

The teacher was also piloting a new literacy curriculum which limited what instructional strategies and content could be used. It was expected the curriculum be taught with fidelity. Much of the writing in this curriculum was shared writing or short answer writing.

Further Study

Several recommendations are made for future research. First, more time should be spent explicitly teaching, modeling, and having students practice feedback and collaboration. Second, students should be given more opportunities to write with a partner. This writing should include various types of writing rather than just the longer pieces the researcher focused on. Lastly, when assigning partners, the teacher should put a heavy emphasis on keeping the writing abilities of the pairs within the same range for a more balanced workload.

Conclusion

Writing instruction is often taught in a whole group setting with controlled discussions. However, studies have shown that dialogue, peer feedback, and collaboration are valuable in developing students' writing. The writing dialogue between peers helps students develop their ideas and think critically about their partner's and their own writing. Explicit instruction and modeling of feedback ensure the collaboration will be effective. However, there is little research on giving students the choice of collaborating with their peers, their teacher, or working independently.

Therefore, this action research was completed to discover if students would prefer to collaborate with a peer and if they found this help beneficial. The results of this research show the intervention did not lead students to collaborate with their peers more often than before the intervention. The students viewed their peer collaboration beneficial about half the time before and after the intervention. Although this research yielded unexpected results, it does provide insights into giving students the choice to work collaboratively during witting and ideas for future research.

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Appendix

Figure 1 Who does the student ask for help? Tally Chart

	Pre-intervention Ask for Help			Post-intervention Ask for Help		
Student	**Teacher**	**Peer**	**No one**	**Teacher**	**Peer**	**No one**
1						
2						
3						

Figure 2 Student Reflection Form

Your Name	**Date**
I asked for help from my partner Mrs. Schafer	
How did your partner help you? ideas does it make sense? . ? ! , “” spelling uppercase and lowercase letters _____	
Was your problem solved?  Yes  Kind of  No	

Figure 3 Did the student find the support helpful? Tally Chart

	Pre-intervention			Post-intervention		
Student	**Yes**	**Kind of**	**No**	**Yes**	**Kind of**	**No**
1						
2						
3						

Figure 4 Feedback stems for students

One positive	Specific feedback for improvement
I noticed that you….. 	I was wondering if you….. 
I heard….. 	I was confused about….. 

Figure 5 Collaboration Expectations posters