ALL ABOUT
THE UPSTATE WRITING PROJECT
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Dawn Hawkins, Co-Director
What is the National Writing Project?

The National Writing Project (NWP)- a nationwide professional development program for teachers that begun in 1974 at the University of California, Berkeley.

The primary goal of the project - to improve student writing achievement by improving the teaching of writing in the nation's schools.

The NWP model- based on the belief that teachers are the key to education reform, teachers make the best teachers of other teachers, and teachers benefit from studying and conducting research.
Location of NWP Sites
What is the Upstate Writing Project?

The Upstate Writing Project (UWP) - an official National Writing Project (NWP) site, supported by financial and professional resources of Clemson University and local school districts.

UWP's primary goals - To improve students’ writing abilities by improving the teaching and learning of writing in the nation’s schools.

Provide professional development, researched based programs for classroom teachers.

Expand the professional roles of teachers.
What can UWP do for you?
Professional Development Programs

- Full/Half Day - all staff
- Full Day - grade level model lessons
- Full Day - grade level planning sessions
- After School - all staff
Topics Covered

- Overview of Writing Workshop and Unpacking of Common Core Standards (Beginning of the year)
- Conferencing in the Writing Workshop (Middle of the year)
- Assessment to guide instruction (End of the year)

Activities Performed

Dawn Hawkins leads the philosophy of the Writing Workshop. A Teacher Consultant presents a demonstration based on current research with student samples. Participants are active members of the demonstration, working the strategy with the Teacher Consultant.
Topics Covered

- CCSS mini lesson-grade level specific
- Writing Workshop-grade level specific

Activities Performed

Dawn Hawkins facilitates conversation and questioning of writing workshop in the classroom.

A Teacher Consultant models mini lesson in a classroom (grade level specific).

The Teacher Consultant presents Writing Workshop from her classroom (grade level specific).
K5-2nd Grade Mini Lessons

Just the Facts? Using Research to Blend Fiction & Nonfiction

Goals
• Students will research two animals using at least two print sources.
• Students will find meaningful facts about their topic.
• Students will blend facts from their research into a fictional story about their made-up animal.

Utilizes PBS Kids video for voice effect.
Mini Lessons model a balance of informational reading, speaking and listening, informational and opinion writing.

What Do You Want? Developing an opinion
My Goal
- Introduce terms of Native American and European and have students develop a true understanding of the terms.
- Create an opinion about the differing views of Native Americans and Europeans take over of American land using varied resources.
- Create a written response (letter) using facts gathered to support their opinion over who should have the land.

As shown in Table 1, the three types of texts represent a continuum of increasing complexity with respect to the following six aspects (which can be abbreviated to “RSVP”):

- **Relationships** (interactions among ideas or characters)
- **Richness** (amount and sophistication of information conveyed through data or literary devices)
- **Structure** (how the text is organized and how it progresses)
- **Style** (author’s tone and use of language)
- **Vocabulary** (author’s word choice)
- **Purpose** (author’s intent in writing the text)
How does STEM and 21st Century learning relate to the Common Core Teaching Demonstrations?

- Reading, Writing and Vocabulary are at the forefront.
  - Cross-Curricular lessons
  - Critical thinking
  - Complex text
  - Informational text
  - Collaboration
  - Inquiry based lessons and learning
  - Problem Solving
After-School Sessions-All Staff

Topics Covered

- Overview of Reading Informational, Speaking and Listening, Informational and Opinion Writing.
- Demonstration of each mini lesson.

Activities Covered

Dawn Hawkins leads the philosophy of the Writing Workshop and CCSS.
A Teacher Consultant models a strategy to teach the CCSS.
Participants are active members of the demonstration, working the strategy with the Teacher Consultant.
UWP – Getting Results!
Student Improvement on Prompted Writing Assessment

On 7 of 7 measures, the program school’s improvement from pre to post prompt writing outperformed the match schools improvement, and in all cases the differences were statistically significant.

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Change in Teacher Practice

Teacher practice shifts.

- Over the course of two years of study at two different schools, a simple comparison between two typical writing lessons shows that teachers integrated targeted writing strategies and lessons.
  - Program School 08: teachers demonstrated 71% more of the targeted practices at the end of the year
  - Program School 09: teachers demonstrated 67% more of the targeted practices at the end of the year
Teacher practice — more than numbers

Themes that emerged among teachers at program schools

- Confidence — teachers are more confident teachers of writing and believe they have the tools to be effective teachers of writing
- Consistency — shared vocabulary and practices benefits students and teachers
- Ownership — writing became the students work, not work for the teacher
- Community — schools felt they developed a community of writers
- More writing — students spent more time writing
STUDENT SAMPLES

3rd Pre
3rd Post
4th Pre
4th Post
5th Pre
5th Post
“The best teachers of writing are teachers who write!”