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Family Writer's Workshop: A Case Study

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FAMILY WRITERS' WORKSHOP: A CASE STUDY

by

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ABSTRACT

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Old Dominion University, 2022
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Today's students need to be prepared for a successful future in our competitive world. Families and educators need to work together to provide children with a comprehensive literacy foundation. Currently, there are many school-based and community-based family literacy programs that are being implemented. While these programs are successful, they are missing a crucial component: writing intervention. Writing is a skill that our students will need for higher education and future careers.

The problem for this study was that research is lacking in regards to ways to assist parents who are interested in working on writing with their child outside of school. This research study focused on bringing writer's workshop from the classroom to an out-of-school setting entitled, Family Writer's Workshop (FWW). In FWW, parents and children had the opportunity to attend eight sessions that were led by the researcher. The sessions followed the same structure as writer's workshop in the classroom. In each session there were mini lessons that were anchored in mentor texts. After each mini lesson, participants engaged in a writing block, conferencing (with the researcher and their parent/guardian) and author's chair. As parents and their children worked together, the researcher observed interactions between parents and their child, as well as provided conferencing, modeling and coaching. Pre-, mid-, and post-interviews were conducted to capture parent perceptions.

To my friend, mentor, and hero, Dr. Diane Armstrong. Dr. Armstrong saw my potential and fostered it throughout my undergraduate education and beyond. She was instrumental in building my confidence as an educator and individual. Dr. A taught me not only about educating students, but also about creating an environment for them to thrive in. Dr. A fueled my passion for teaching writing, and it is my hope and honor that I can continue to carry on her dedication to students and educators. I hope that I have made her proud as I aspire to follow her words of advice: to "keep them writing." This dissertation is dedicated to Dr. Armstrong and her memory.

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INTRODUCTION

We need to prepare our students for a globally competitive society. Without a strong foundation in writing, a student's future opportunities, such as education beyond high school and employment, could be negatively impacted (Harris, Graham, Friedlander, & Laud, 2013). In many professions, being able to write is a necessary skill to maintain employment. For instance, as an employee, you may need to create technical reports, emails, memos, and other clearly written documents (Cutler & Graham, 2008). A survey of American business leaders found that writing is a skill reviewed for both employment and promotion, and two-thirds of salary employed Americans have a writing responsibility as part of their job (National Writing Commission, 2004). In addition, it has been cited that greater than 90% of midcareer professionals viewed the need to write effectively as an important component of their daily workload (National Writing Commission, 2003).

To set up our students for a successful future, educators and parents need to help provide a support system for children. A child's literacy foundation is largely formed and influenced by the interactions, behaviors, and activities that take place in their home (Burgess, Hecht, & Lonigan, 2002; Niklas, & Schneider, 2013; Niklas, & Schneider, 2015). Reading and writing knowledge begins in a child's home environment, prior to formal education, and is an important component of literacy development (Purcell-Gates, 2001). Children are constantly observing those around them and learning from their examples. They observe family members during activities that include communicating, reading, and writing. Therefore, families can be an important and direct influence on their child's literacy skills.

As their child's first teacher, parents may need guidance from educators on how to assist

their child beyond basic literacy at-home. If parents were provided focused literacy support, they could possibly bridge home and school knowledge. Research has shown that when parental support is present, there are numerous benefits. Some positive effects of parental involvement include students developing qualities that lead to academic achievement, increased value towards learning, and self-regulatory skills and knowledge (Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2007). School academic achievement reports signify that parental involvement was a significant factor in both accelerated and maintained student performance in reading achievement and vocabulary (Hara & Burke, 1998). The relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement has been found to be somewhat consistent despite age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and type of achievement measure (Englund, Luckner, Whaley & Egeland, 2004). One form of parental involvement related to writing is the area of family literacy.

An abundance of family literacy research in the areas of reading development and school-based home literacy has been conducted. Research on home literacy has found that the home environment is statistically significantly linked to vocabulary, oral language, phonological awareness, and decoding (Burgess, Hecht, & Lonigan, 2002; Niklas, & Schneider, 2013; Niklas, & Schneider, 2015). One area of literacy that has often been overlooked, however, is writing. Family literacy discourse is inclusive of the oral and written communications within the family and it includes all of the family's efforts to support the language and literacy development of their children (Wasik, & Horn, 2012).

What can I do to help my child become a better writer? This is a question that numerous parents have asked when trying to discern what can be done at-home to assist with their child's writing development. Parents are a child's first teacher, and educators should work with families to assist and support the growth of our youth. Insights into out-of-school writing practices that

are effective could potentially allow educators to bridge what is being taught at school to be reinforced and extended at-home.

Statement of Problem

Studies have shown that at-home reading yields positive success with children that transfers to their academic performance (Burgess, Hecht, & Lonigan, 2002; Niklas, & Schneider, 2013; Niklas, & Schneider, 2015). As stated by the International Literacy Association, a complimentary component to reading is writing. Research has also shown that writing is a vital component to an individual's future success, not only in academics but also for future educational opportunities and careers (Harris, Graham, Friedlander, & Laud, 2013; Cutler & Graham, 2008; National Writing Commission, 2003; National Writing Commission, 2004). In order to understand how parents or guardians may assist students with becoming successful writers, it may be useful to investigate a method that has been found to be effective in the classroom. Specifically, writer's workshop is an effective writing process approach used in today's classrooms to educate students. Writer's workshop is a teaching method that supports constructivist theory through teachers encouraging students to engage in discussions about writing with the teacher and their peers (Rothermel, 2004). The primary foundation to writer's workshop is that the writing that occurs during this time is meaningful and personal to the student. It is now one of the most popular approaches to writing instruction in the primary grades. Both the International Literacy Association and the National Council of Teachers of English have validated the writing process approach. Many states and districts have mandated writer's workshop to be the standard writing instructional approach (Jones, Reutzel, & Fargo, 2010).

Since at-home reading positively impacts students, then there is a possibility that at-home

writing could produce positive results. The positive effects of at-home reading are well documented (Burgess, Hecht, & Lonigan, 2002; Niklas, & Schneider, 2013; Niklas, & Schneider, 2015). Yet, we know little about writing outside of school. Both reading and writing are important components to literacy. Not much is known about how educators can assist parents to work with their children at-home with writing.

As previously mentioned, a common and effective writing structure in the elementary school classroom is writer's workshop. Could this structure be transferred outside of school to writing interactions that take place between a parent and their child? Since research is lacking in regards to ways to assist parents (who are interested in working on writing with their child outside of school); the problem for this study is that educators are unaware of at-home writing practices in regard to the kinds of assistance and guidance that they can provide to parents who are seeking ways to assist their child with their writing development. The writer's workshop format was utilized outside of school, through an intervention called Family Writer's Workshop (FWW), to provide a structure for these out-of-school writing interactions and to study its potential in assisting parents with writing instruction at-home with students.

This study addresses the following research question:

1. What are parent perceptions regarding engaging their child with the writing process before, during, and after their participation in Family Writer's Workshop with their child?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was formed using sociocultural theory and the Family as Educator Model. The Family as Educator Model (Rodriguez-Brown, 2001) was chosen as part of the conceptual framework to guide this study because it supports the viewpoint that both parents and educators are valued in providing education to children. The problem for

this study was that educators are unaware of at-home writing practices in regard to the kinds of assistance and guidance that they can provide to parents who are seeking ways to assist their child with their writing development. This model, as part of the conceptual framework, not only identifies current practices, but it also supports the educator and the parent working with one another to provide meaningful and consistent educational opportunities (Rodriguez-Brown, 2001; Saracho, 2002).

In the Family as Educator Model, the family's current literacy knowledge is addressed and appreciated, and the role of the educator is to build upon the family's current home literacy knowledge to enhance their child's learning. Home literacy environments can be cultivated through nurturing high quality literacy interactions such as parent-child book reading, reinforcing beginning literacy skills, or engaging in conversations about books. The family is viewed as an educator whose purpose is to be an advocate for literacy and to positively impact their child's literacy development (Rodriguez-Brown, 2001; Saracho, 2002).

The sociocultural perspective (Gutíerrez, 2002; Rodriguez-Brown, 2001) is also part of the conceptual framework for this study. The sociocultural perspective (Gutíerrez, 2002; Rodriguez-Brown, 2001) views culture being central to an individual's learning. When utilizing sociocultural theory in literacy, it may be done so through social practice, multiliteracies, and critical literacy (Perry, 2012). This current study focused on the sociocultural theory situated in social practice between parent and child during authentic writing interventions.

The higher psychological processes of writing and reading have origins in social processing and are mediated through signs, symbols, actions, and objects (Vygotsky, 1978). Writing is used as a way to communicate in social situations. Depending on the circumstances, it has been found that both in and outside of the classroom writing is composed of planning and

writing on a specific topic (Bazerman, 2016). Writing is also based on an individual's personal situations and interests (Bazerman, 2016).

Additionally, sociocultural theory views meaning as when individuals, culture, and activity convene (Englert, C. S., Mariage, T. V., & Dunsmore, K., 2006). During the FWW study, parents and children worked together on specific writing interventions, which resulted in a joint writing relationship. One of the sociocultural pedagogy principles stresses the importance of supporting novices through cognitive apprenticeships as they learn a specific discipline (Englert, C. S., Mariage, T. V., & Dunsmore, K., 2006). Within this study, the parent took on the role as the expert and the child the novice. "The expert and novice take up relational positions with respect to each other: The novice takes increasing responsibility for performing facets of the writing activity for which he or she is capable, while the expert assists participation by stepping in to coach, perform, or support the actions and processes that lie beyond the independent attainment of the novice" (Englert, C. S., Mariage, T. V., & Dunsmore, K., 2006, page 209).

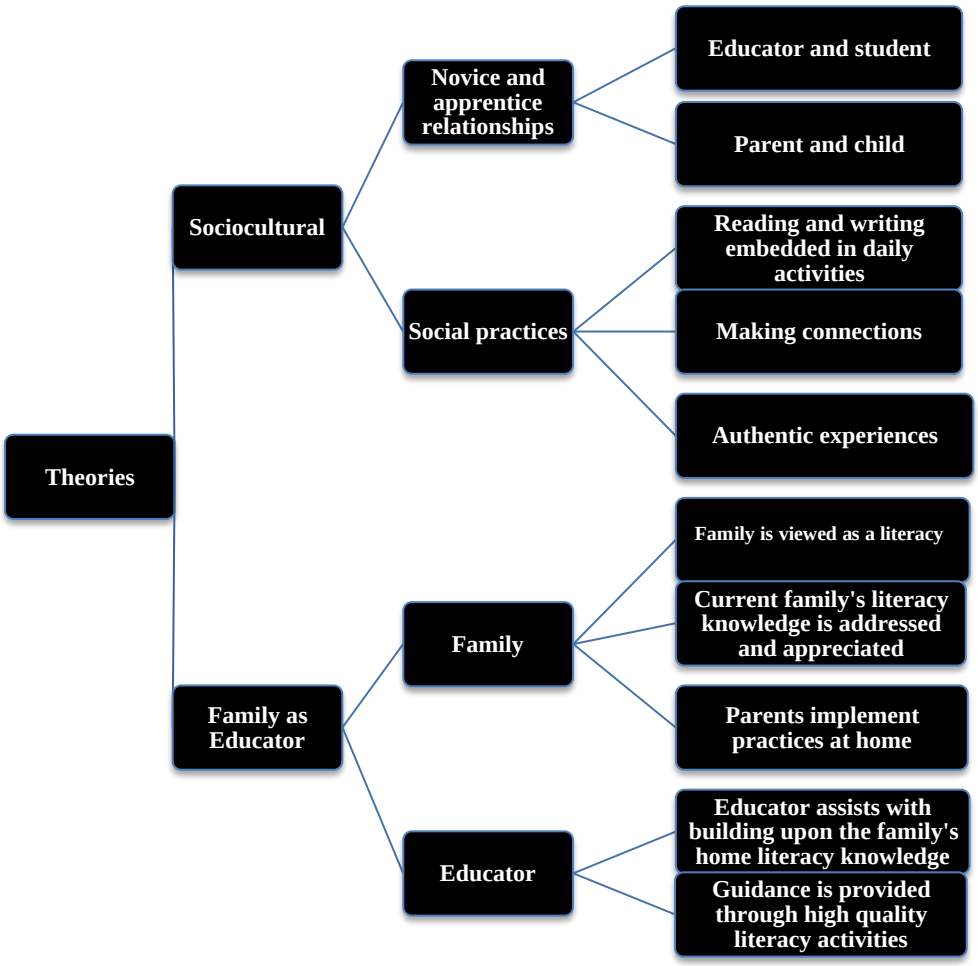
In this study, the family, or parent, took on the role of the educator with their child. Information on current literacy practices in their home environment are acknowledged and respected. The researcher then guided parents on how to incorporate meaningful and valuable experiences in their home, with the goal that they will influence writing growth. The sessions that parents and their child attended were rooted in sociocultural theory by creating a collaborative, literacy rich environment that promoted discussion and communication.

For purposes of this study, the family as educator model and sociocultural theory will be fused together. The family member and child worked with one another in a social setting and created authentic pieces of work and participated in discussions about writing with one another

and with the group. The family member simultaneously learned more about how to interact with their child and writing, therefore taking on the role similar to an educator or an advocate for writing.

In this framework, the components of these theories work together. Within sociocultural theory, this model addresses the novice and apprentice relationships and the social practices. The relationships being examined are educator and student, as well as parent and child. Social practices with this framework have been identified as: reading and writing embedded in daily activities, making connections, and authentic experiences. In the Family as Educator theory, the framework breaks this section down to the parts or roles of the family and the educator. The family is viewed as a literacy advocate that positively influences literacy development, their current literacy knowledge is addressed and appreciated, and parents continue the implementation of literacy practices at home. In the Family as Educator theory, the role of the educator is to assist with building upon the family's current home literacy knowledge through high-quality literacy activities. *Figure 1* below provides a visual representation of how these theories fit together.

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework; Family as Educator Model and Sociocultural Theory



Purpose Statement

The purpose of this single case study (Merriam, 2009) was to examine parents' perceptions following their participation in and utilizing writer's workshop with their child outside of school, both at-home and through workshop sessions that were held at the public library. If knowledge is obtained concerning out-of-school writer's workshop interactions, we may gain a better understanding of writing outside of the classroom and insight on how to further assist parents. This study utilized qualitative methods to gain an understanding of the perceptions of parents' experiences using writer's workshop with their child.

As Calkins (1994) expresses in *The Art of Teaching Writing*, "By watching us, children can learn that writing is not only doable, it is also worth doing" (Calkins, 1994, p. 60). Children often observe parents and educators writing every day. As children watch, they then see writing as a way to communicate with others. Children are constantly observing parents and teachers writing emails, notes, lists, cards, messages, etc. As a former reading specialist, it was the researcher's experience that when students see that the adults in their lives use and value writing, they also see the value in it. Some of the activities that have been documented are list making, letter writing (handwritten and on the computer), messages, forms, diaries, and assignments (Stainthorp & Hughes, 2000).

Research Question

The following research question guided the study.

1. What are parent perceptions regarding engaging their child with the writing process before, during, and after their participation in Family Writer's Workshop with their child?

Research Design

This study utilized qualitative methods to gain an understanding of out of school writer's workshop interactions that occur between a parent and their child, specifically a case study approach. Case studies also provide the opportunity for insights that will enrich and build upon current research (Merriam, 2009). Data were gathered from multiple sources: pre-, mid-, and post- FWW interview transcripts, parent/child workshop sessions, field notes, student work, parent emails, and text messages were analyzed and coded.

Parents and children attended a series of eight workshops that the researcher provided at the public library. These eight sessions were held once a week, at the local library. Each session was approximately an hour and fifteen minutes. Topics for each FWW were selected based on

writer's workshop research in the field that has had a positive impact on student writing progress and achievement in the classroom (Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003; Ray & Cleveland, 2004).

Significance of Study

This study addressed a gap in family literacy research by examining the at-home writing experiences that took place between a parent and their child. Researchers have a solid understanding of at-home reading, however little research has been conducted to inform us about at-home writing practices (Burgess, Hecht, & Lonigan, 2002; Niklas, & Schneider, 2013; Niklas, & Schneider, 2015). Therefore, in order to progress in this area of literacy research we need to explore the topic in depth.

Additionally, information from this study could assist educators in how to create support and create a bridge between school and home literacy experiences. Educators could utilize the research to provide guidance for parents. Information from this study could also benefit parents by assisting them in gaining an understanding of how and what could be done at-home to assist their child with writing.

Limitations

The limitation to this study is the generalizability of the participants. Participants are all from the same geographical location. Additionally, participants are from similar SES backgrounds. However, the interventions that students are exposed to at-home could be replicated in different environments.

Furthermore, these students attended the same public elementary school district and therefore were taught the same standards in the area of writing. Additionally, the one participant that was homeschooled adhered to the same state standards as those used in public school. However, children may be assigned different classroom teachers whose approach to teaching

writing may vary. The participants in this study took part voluntarily. Therefore, they were self-motivated to seek out ways to assist their child at-home with writing.

There was a potential for bias because the researcher was developing and implementing the workshop for the parents. Since the researcher was the one preparing and presenting the workshop for the parents, they needed to take the stance of an observer so their bias did not impact the research decisions or findings. One way that this bias was avoided was by having critical colleagues review any preliminary findings that were conflicting.

Delimitations

This research study focused on at-home writing practices over the course of an eight-week time period. The researcher aimed to have 12 parent/child partnerships in this study. Students were all elementary age at the time of the intervention and all but one student attended a public elementary school in northeastern North Carolina. One student was home-schooled during the time of the intervention.

Prior to the parent sessions, someone other than the researcher interviewed each parent. Parents participated in a face-to-face induction workshop given by the researcher at the public library. Subsequently, each week parents met with the researcher for a 60-to 75-minute workshop that was created by the researcher. During each workshop session, parents learned about a specific aspect of implementing writing and how to practice it with their child at-home. After each workshop session, parents were guided to apply what was learned in the session with their child at-home. If work was completed outside of the FWW sessions, parents were instructed to collect and keep the work that they completed with their child and bring it to each workshop session and final interview. Mid-way through the workshop sessions, each parent was interviewed by an individual other than the researcher. At the conclusion of the parent

workshops, each parent participated in a post-interview individually regarding the experience.

After the interviews, parent workshop sessions, and at-home writing practices took place, the researcher created a coding frame to examine the interview transcripts, field notes, and transcription of the recordings of the FWW sessions. Student work was also utilized during the mid-and post-interview sessions to receive information about the participants' experiences.

Definitions of Key Terms

The following terms and definitions are applicable to this study:

Authentic Writing- Writing that is utilized as a part of everyday life. For example: writing letters, list making, etc. Each workshop session that parents attend will focus on authentic writing experiences to complete at-home, as well as making these interactions relatable to real world situations.

Family as Educator Model- The family's current literacy knowledge is addressed and appreciated, and the role of the educator is to build upon the family's current home literacy knowledge to enhance their child's learning. Home literacy environments can be cultivated through nurturing high quality literacy interactions. The family is viewed as an educator whose purpose is to be an advocate for literacy and to positively impact their child's literacy development (Rodriguez-Brown, 2001; Saracho, 2002). The researcher will take inventory of each family's current literacy practices and acknowledge and attempt to enhance their at-home experiences. As the parents work with their child each week, they will be working to provide a nurturing environment that is rich in purposeful writing.

Family Literacy- Family literacy refers to pedagogical practices related to home-based literacy learning. The term family literacy also honors parents as their children's first teachers and indicates the numerous ways that parents, siblings, and extended family members influence the

literacy learning of children (Crawford & Zygouris, 2006). The researcher will be respectful of each family and their personal at-home literacy practices.

Family Writer's Workshop- The name given to the intervention that will take place in the current study that will be conducted by the researcher. The structure of the intervention sessions will follow the same layout as writer's workshop found in the classroom: mini lessons (with mentor texts), writing time/conferencing, and author's chair.

Literacy- "Effective literacy is intrinsically purposeful, flexible and dynamic and involves the integration of speaking, listening and critical thinking with reading and writing" (Department of Employment, Education, Training, 1991, page 5)

As defined by Scribner and Cole, "socially organized practices [that] make use of a symbol system and a technology for producing and disseminating it." It is a matter of applying knowledge for specific purposes in specific content use. This means that literacy is really like a family of practices-literacies-that includes socially evolved and patterned activities such as letter writing, keeping records and inventories, keeping a diary, writing memos, posting announcements, and so on. Therefore, for the purpose of this study literacy, was viewed as an integration of communication through writing and reading. Additionally, these literacy interactions were purposeful and social in nature since the parent and child worked together on their written work.

Mentor Text- Mentor texts are a tool to assist students to situate their own experiences and words similarly to other writers (Newman, 2012). "Mentor texts are pieces of literature that we can return to again and again as we help young writers learn how to do what they may not yet be able to do on their own" (Dorfman & Cappelli, 2007, pages 2-3). The educator guides the children in discussion about specific aspects of the text- for instance, punctuation use, text

structure, how illustrations are used, word use, where authors get ideas, focusing on a specific moment in time, etc.

Parental Involvement- Parental involvement can include both in school involvement such as volunteering in the classroom. The term parental involvement can include the following types of involvement: parent's communication with their children, teacher and parent communication, the amount of time a parent volunteers in their child's school, completing school related activities with children at-home, and parental expectations in terms of their child's accomplishments (Englund, Luckner, Whaley & Egeland, 2004). For the purposes of this study, parents worked with their child at-home completing writing activities that could possibly be similar to what their child experiences in school.

Process writing approach- Writing instruction in which the students are guided through the writing process.

Sociocultural theory- Sociocultural theory can be viewed from three different lenses: literacy as a social practice, multiliteracies, and critical literacy (Perry, 2012). For the purpose of this study, the focus is on the social practice perspective. Through this perspective, literacy is viewed as reading and writing that can be found in everyday life.

Writer's workshop- An instructional writing approach in which children move through the writing process. Writer's workshop provides children the choice of what to write about, provides time for writing, and gives feedback to writers about their writing process (Farnan, Lapp, & Flood, 1992). Each workshop follows a daily routine of a mini lesson, independent writing time/conferencing, and author's chair (Calkins, 1994; Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003; Ray & Cleveland, 2004).

Writing- When an individual encodes and records words; can be recorded in a variety of ways

(paper, digitally, etc). In regards to this study, students and their parents will record different types of writing on paper. While recording the story to print, words will be encoded by the student, or the student and the parent working together.

Writing practice- Implementation of a structured system that assists in the development of a skill. Each week throughout the study, parents interacted with their child on a specific writing practice.

Summary

As our world and economy becomes more globally accessible, we as citizens need to become more capable in communication skills. More importantly, we need to prepare our students for these written communication skills.

Chapter 2 provides a review of literature related to family literacy, writing, and parental involvement. Current family literacy research will be discussed and the gap in family literacy research will be addressed, as well as parental involvement found within schools. Writing practices that are currently being utilized in the classroom will also be addressed. The methodology and research design of the study will be depicted in Chapter 3. Chapter 3 will also include the sample, how data was gathered, and the procedures for the study. Chapter 4 will include an analysis of the data, as well as a discussion of the findings. The summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study will be included in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter will review relevant and empirical literature that addresses both writer's workshop (Murray, 1973; Graves, 1983; Calkins, 1994: Ray & Cleveland, 2004) and family literacy. Since the problem for this study is that research is lacking in regards to ways to assist parents, who are interested in working on writing with their child outside of school, both areas need to be explored. Within this study, writer's workshop format was utilized outside of school in order to provide a structure for these out-of-school writing interactions and to study its potential in assisting parents with writing instruction at-home. It is necessary to thoroughly understand both components and how they can be intertwined. Therefore, commonalities between these two topics will also be discussed.

Theoretical Framework

Family as Educator Model

This review is also situated in a family literacy theoretical framework (Rodriguez-Brown, 2001). The term family literacy has a variety of definitions. In the Family as Educator Model (Rodriguez-Brown, 2001), the family's current literacy knowledge is addressed and appreciated, and the role of the educator is to build upon the family's current home literacy knowledge to enhance their child's learning. Home literacy environments can be cultivated through nurturing high-quality literacy interactions. The family is viewed as an educator whose purpose is to be an advocate for literacy, and to positively impact their child's literacy development (Rodriguez-Brown, 2001; Saracho, 2002).

Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural theory may be used to examine how literacy is used in context, or in an authentic manner (Perry, 2012). Sociocultural theory can be viewed from three different lenses: literacy as a social practice, multiliteracies, and critical literacy (Perry, 2012). For the purpose of this study, the focus is on the social practice perspective. Through this perspective, literacy is viewed as reading and writing that can be found in everyday life. Vygotsky (1978) concluded that, "practical implications of writing development should be meaningful for children, that an intrinsic need should be aroused in them, and that writing should be incorporated into a task that is necessary and relevant for life." This interaction is not solely seeing print and written text but also making connections, as well as forming values and social relationships (Perry, 2012). Sociocultural theory states that "activity is situated in concrete interactions that are simultaneously improvised locally and mediated by prefabricated, historically provided tools and practices" (Prior, 2008, page 55). These activities can be written and completed with other individuals within a social-material environment (Prior, 2008).

During writer's workshop, time students are creating authentic writing, and as Calkins states, "children should generate their own texts, using material from their own lives" (Calkins, 1994). Writer's workshop also provides ample opportunities for students to actively participate with their peers. This is accomplished through class discussions during mini lessons, peer conferencing, co-authoring a piece of work and author's chair. Writer's workshop also supports a social environment and relationship between the student and the teacher during mini lessons and conferences. These aspects of writer's workshop allow opportunities for teachers to encourage students to engage in discussions about writing with the teacher and their peers (Rothermel, 2004). Therefore, since FWW utilized the writer's workshop framework, the

sociocultural theory can be directly tied to the structure and work that is done during writer's workshop.

Integration of Family as Educator Model and Sociocultural Theory

As previously mentioned in Chapter 1, the Family as Educator Model and sociocultural theory were merged. This is due to the fact that the family member and child worked together to create authentic pieces of work within a social setting. While family members worked with their children, they also were provided the opportunity of learning in-depth information on working with their child on writing, as well as participating in discussions about writing with one another. Since family members learned more about writing and how to interact with their child and writing, they took on a role similar to an educator or advocate for writing.

In order to understand how to incorporate writing into family literacy, we first need to understand how writing is instructed in schools and approaches that have been found to be successful with elementary age students.

Teaching Writing in Elementary School

Writing in Today's Classroom

It is important to consider the broad scope of writing, which research primarily discusses in classroom settings, to ground this review. In order to apply writing to family literacy, it is important to understand how students are instructed at school. Additionally, since there is limited research that focuses on family literacy and writing, we should turn to writing research that focuses on elementary students and writing. This study directly addressed this gap in at-home writing research. Gaining an understanding of writing in the classroom was beneficial to this study in order to inform elementary writing and families.

Research suggests evidence-based writing practices that should be provided in the

classroom include establishing the reasoning behind strategies, and teachers modeling strategies which involves guided practice and these should be taught until the students are able to apply the strategies independently and with fidelity (Gilbert & Graham, 2010). A national survey of teachers found that the two most common writing practices in lower elementary classrooms are process writing and skills instruction/traditional instruction, or an integration of the two practices (Cutler & Graham, 2008). When implementing the process writing approach, first, the teacher focuses on one skill during a mini lesson, then the children have an independent writing time, and finally, the class concludes with a sharing time. During the independent work session, the teacher conferences one-on-one with each child and peers work together. A meta-analysis of the process writing approach has shown that this teaching approach is effective and is statistically significant with students producing quality writing in grades 1 thru 8. Additionally, when students were provided the opportunity to work through the writing process together, the writing quality of second through eighth grade student's work improved (Graham, Harris, & Santangelo, 2015).

It is important to understand how students are primarily taught in the classroom, when writer's workshop is not being implemented so we can gain an understanding of what is or is not working in the classroom. Generally speaking, skill instruction is found to be more prevalent in classrooms when compared to the process writing approach (Cutler & Graham, 2008). When implementing skills instruction, teachers explicitly teach a skill and then the students practice implementing the skill. In upper elementary (grades 4-6) the most common writing tasks were found to be: writing short answer responses, completing worksheets, writing in the content areas, note taking, and writing summaries (Gilbert & Graham, 2010). This shows that many students may not be experiencing the writing process or composing authentic meaningful text;

this information sheds light on what aspects are lacking that can be found through the use of the writer's workshop approach.

We also need to have knowledge of how students are taught the writing process through methods besides writer's workshop, to compare with areas that writer's workshop addresses and learn from these other methods. Teachers can teach the writing process through other more traditional methods. These methods include: writing prompts, shared writing, graphic organizers, journal writing, story maps, silent writing, and collaborative writing. It has been proven possible for students to understand the writing process through these methods as well as the use of teacher modeling (Martens & Lowe, 2010). However, they are not experiencing a deep understanding of how the writing process works, creating authentic meaningful text, examining text and reading like authors, or collaborating with peers and conferencing with the classroom teacher on specific individual needs. In the FWW study, participants addressed what is missing from the traditional methods that are currently found in the classroom. Participants were given the opportunity to analyze mentor texts, write about topics of their choosing, collaborate, and receive feedback.

Martens and Lowe (2010) self-reflected on how they taught writing and came to the realization that they did not need prompts for writing instruction, but instead needed to model what real writers do. Students were provided opportunities for five minutes of free writing, journaling, and dialogue journals. They moved to these types of writing because, by simply using writing prompts, it was found that the first two stages of writing were often missed (Martens & Lowe, 2010). The reflection from this study (Martens & Lowe, 2010) showed that when writing prompts were solely implemented, the entire writing process was not taught. In addition to this, instead of using writing prompts, students were given the freedom to write about

topics that were important to them. This provides further support to implementing writer's workshop since it addresses all stages of the writing process, while providing authentic composition experiences.

Another study (Joshua, 2007) was conducted to examine the effects of pictures and writing prompts with 165 kindergarten through second grade students. The study found that the more structured the prompt, the more it hindered the students creativity, thereby affecting their writing. If a child was given a picture, it provided too much structure, however if the prompt was given to the students orally it allowed the students to be more creative and explore their own ideas (Joshua, 2007). When students were provided with more freedom, their composition skills benefitted. In writer's workshop, students are given the freedom to select their own writing topics. The writing prompt study (Joshua, 2007) supported a less structured approach to writing, which will be represented in the FWW study.

A third study examined the use of writing prompts with second grade students to determine how writing prompts affected a student's compositional fluency, spelling and handwriting (Hudson, Lane, & Mercer, 2005). Each student responded to six different writing prompts. The results from this study indicated that writing prompts did little to aid in students writing more, it was noted that it may have inhibited the student's success. It was also found that the use of writing prompts may constrain the generation of ideas in developing writers. The writing conditions had an influence on student success. When they were given the opportunity for discussion and topic conditions, they produced higher writing fluency (Hudson, Lane, & Mercer, 2005).

The writing approaches that have been discussed above were teacher modeling, writing prompts, shared writing, and picture prompt writing. (Martens & Lowe, 2010; Hudson, Lane, &

Mercer, 2005; Joshua, 2007). While there were some benefits, these methods had limitations in regard to students gaining an understanding of the writing process. Utilizing writing prompts stifled student creativity and did not let them experience the entire writing process. Preventing students from generating their own ideas, was also found to limit their creativity, as well as writing fluency. As documented in the following section, writer's workshop has the potential to provide a well rounded writing experience that includes experiencing the entire writing process on a continual basis, offers the opportunity for students to choose and construct their own topics, as well as other potential benefits.

Writer's Workshop

Research has shown that students are not receiving enough writing time in the classroom and must be provided more time to write; one way to increase writing time for students is for students to write more often at-home (The National Commission on Writing, 2003, Gilbert & Graham, 2010). However, in a national writing survey teachers indicated that they did not make strong connections for writing between home and school. More specifically, the survey revealed that the majority of teachers did not discuss a child's writing development with parents, ask parents to listen to a piece of their child's writing, or ask parents to write with their child at-home. Stronger connections between the classroom and the home environment need to be forged (Cutler & Graham, 2008). In the FWW study, the researcher used the structure and philosophy of writer's workshop and applied it outside of the classroom. The structure of writer's workshop includes: mini lesson, writing time, conferencing, and sharing time (Calkins, 1994; Ray & Cleveland, 2004). These components were as identical as possible in the FWW. This home school connection could possibly be established if the structure of writer's workshop were implemented with parents outside of the classroom environment.

General Overview

The primary foundation to writer's workshop is that the writing that occurs during this time is authentic and significant to the student and allows them to fully develop as writers (Calkins, 1994).

Writer's workshop is structured time for writing that follows the same routine each day: mini lesson, writing time (which includes teacher/student conferences), and concludes with author's chair. The majority of time the children are working on composing their own writing. Each student is at a different part in the writing process, moves at his or her own pace, and works at his or her developmental level. Students are given free choice on their writing topic. Writing topics can come from every day, typical life experiences (Calkins, 1994). The instructor may also use mentor texts, idea conferences, or mini lessons that focus on where writers get their ideas. The teacher helps guide them through generating ideas through the use of specific units of study such as how authors get ideas, small moment writing, reading like a writer, how to use punctuation, and text structure (Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003; Ray & Cleveland, 2004). Through the use of mentor texts, teacher guidance and classroom discussions, students begin to look at books in a different light and gain ideas through these insights (Ray & Cleveland, 2004). Additionally, as students become immersed in the workshop structure and process, they begin to see writing possibilities throughout their daily life. They begin to think like authors (Ray, 1999).

The Foundation

The movement for the writing process came from a time of change and social conflict in American history. A professor at the University of New Hampshire, Donald Murray, utilized his own experiences of being a writer and developed the concept of one-on-one conferences. Previously, traditional writing instruction was depicted as teacher-directed lessons in which

students were taught skills in isolation through the use of manufactured writing assignments and occasionally given short writing assignments that only needed to contain a few paragraphs, with a focus on characteristics of writing, such as conventions, as opposed to the construction of the composition (Troia, Lin, Cohen, & Monroe, 2011).

Throughout the 1970s, Graves observed that American students were taught reading and writing. However, students were seldom taught the process of how to construct a piece of work or what the writing process was; at most they were taught grammar and spelling. He argued that students were simply just "receivers" and not given the opportunity to be "senders" (Graves, 1983). Students were deprived of writing instruction that would provide and cultivate the skills and habits of a writer (Feinberg, 2007).

Lucy Calkins's work and her book, *The Art of Teaching Writing* is originally based off of the early work of Donald Murray and his work with the writing process (Richgels, 2003). Students need to make outlines, rough drafts, rewrite, edit, revise, before they can even consider publishing (Calkins, 1994). Through the process writing approach, that is the structure and routine in writer's workshop, students are able to experience what writing truly is. Through the implementation of the writer's workshop, writing instruction moves from being teacher-centered to student-centered pedagogy which motivates students to "take up the pen" (Karsback, 2011).

Writer's workshop has also been identified as the best instructional method to teach the writing process to emergent writers (Jones, Reutzel, & Fargo, 2010). The writing process approach has been validated by both the International Literacy Association and the National Council of Teachers of English. Many states and districts have mandated the standard writing instructional approach (Jones, Reutzel, & Fargo, 2010).

Rationale and Benefits

The format of writer's workshop is not centered on what the final project will be; the heart of the approach is the act of writing (Brown, 2010). Students come to view themselves as authors and not a student completing a piece of writing. Students need to also see that writing is a form of communication and that what they create during their writing time is meaningful (Karsback, 2011).

In order to thrive in writer's workshop, students need to be provided experiences within their writing curriculum that enables them to be critical examiners who challenge, question, and analyze the work of others. By doing so, students are then able to better understand the purpose and reasoning behind having structure within their writing. Therefore, the use of mentor texts, or the work of writing scholars, offers the opportunity for students to be critical and systematic authors. When students are presented with an exemplar text, they view it with an analytical eye and discuss the strengths and process that the author took in order to successfully construct their piece (Ray & Cleveland, 2004).

Writer's Workshop Research

Jasmine & Weiner (2007) conducted a mixed methods study to evaluate the effects of writer's workshop with first grade students. Twenty-one first graders were involved: 12 boys and 9 girls in the study of how their independence in writing was developed through writer's workshop time. Children were engaged in writer's workshop two to three times a week for approximately three months, with each workshop session lasting between 35 and 40 minutes. At the completion of the project, it was found that there was a slight increase in the enjoyment of writing. Data confirmed that the workshop experience created enthusiasm among the children, an increase in enjoyment of sharing their writing, students enjoyed peer review conferences, liked revising and editing pieces, and confidence grew. This study showed that writer's

workshop is an effective way of instructing writing and helps children choose topics, revise, edit, share their work, and work independently (Jasmine & Weiner, 2007). This study found that students' writing growth and excitement grew through the use of writer's workshop, but it does not address how or if the structure of writer's workshop outside of the school setting would influence a student's writing enthusiasm or application of skills. The FWW study may possibly be able to fill this gap in research.

Another study piloted by Kos and Maslowski (2001) aimed to understand and provide details about student perceptions on what made writing good within the writer's workshop framework. Fifteen rural second grade students participated in this five-month study. At the beginning of the study students described good writing as correctly formed letters and correctly using conventions. Students then received interventions centered on making the content of writing a priority. This was achieved through 16 small group writing sessions with the classroom teacher and the researcher. After the intervention, it was evident that students viewed writers as people who write frequently and express themselves through writing. It was found that:

> "These children had begun to think of writing more globally, as their interpretation of the term writer in the question indicates. To them, writers were persons who engaged in the act of writing frequently and used writing to express ideas" (Kos & Maslowski, 2001).

Thus, it is important for students to understand that the measurement of quality writing is more about the content than having the appearance of looking perfect due to neatly formed letters and flawless conventions. Handwriting and conventions are aspects of writing that can be easily taught, however the heart of writing is the content and structure of the work. Therefore, writing instruction needs to convey this message to students. Since the primary end result of

writing is the quality of composition, construction and organization of written work, this should be the aspect of writing that would be most beneficial to reinforce outside of the classroom. Parents and guardians could feasibly reinforce this important aspect of writing if provided with how to do so outside of school. The FWW workshop study attempted to provide this information to its participants.

Another study was conducted by Hachem, Nabhani, & Bahous (2008) that involved 20 second grade students in a mixed ability international classroom. The researchers specifically investigated the implementation of writer's workshop in terms of differentiation and improvement of writing skills. In order to confirm findings, a variety of sources were utilized: classroom and collaborative observations, self-reflection checklist, and a professional journal with recordings from the classroom teacher. Writer's workshop was beneficial in creating the willingness to write, individualized, promoted differentiation, motivated students, and created a safe classroom community. When comparing the pre- and post- writing samples all participants demonstrated improved writing skills (Hachem, Nabhani, & Bahous, 2008). This research showed that writer's workshop provided substantial benefits within the classroom. On the other hand, it is unknown whether or not parental involvement through writer's workshop will motivate students or create a safe writing environment for students.

A kindergarten writer's workshop case study (Snyders, 2014) looked closely at the development of three students for the duration of ten weeks. The children were observed and participated in pre- and post-interviews, and their work samples were collected. Writer's workshop provided the students with genuine, comprehensive, and purposeful tasks that extended their thinking and academic vocabulary. Through the implementation of writer's workshop, it was found that the students began to form their own writing identities and viewed

themselves as authors and illustrators. Additionally, being provided the structure, time, and discussion in writer's workshop allowed these students to work at their developmental stage and use the writing process. Results from this study found that after experiencing writer's workshop, these students were applying the writing process more consistently (Snyders, 2014). The results from this research demonstrated that writer's workshop in the classroom setting assists with students forming their own writing identities. Additional research needs to be completed in order to determine if similar results can be accomplished outside of the classroom setting.

A yearlong study in a second grade classroom reviewed how the implementation of writer's workshop impacted the students' writing development and understanding of the writing process (Seban & Tavsanli, 2015). The environment and procedures of writer's workshop provided these second grade students with the tools for developing as writers. Since students were continually immersed in genre unit studies, sharing their work, and responding to their peer's writing, there was also an increase in their understanding of the writing process and the purpose of writing. Likewise, there was a significant impact on struggling writers' progress with their personal writing identities. Since students were exposed to a variety of genres, they were able to positively integrate them to form a writing identity (Seban & Tavsanli, 2015). Seban & Tavsanli (2015) recommend that future research include gathering data from others, such as interviewing family members to gain a better understanding of how students develop as writers. The FWW study addressed this gap through the pre-, mid-, and post-interview sessions with parents.

Each of the writer's workshop research studies that were reviewed above found writer's workshop in the classroom to be beneficial for students. It was found that students showed improvement in writing abilities (Hachem, Nabhani, & Bahous, 2008), formed writing identities

(Seban & Tavsanli, 2015), apply and have a better understanding of the writing process (Snyder, 2013), and the structure assists students with skills such as topic selection, revision, editing, sharing their work, and working independently (Jasmine & Weiner, 2007). However, it is unknown how the incorporation of the writer's workshop structure outside of the classroom environment will impact a student and their writing.

Structure of Writer's Workshop

Mini Lesson

The first component of writer's workshop is the mini lesson. Through writer's workshop mini lessons, educators provide their students with shared writing practice, explanations of their writing or the work of an author, and model writing techniques. At the beginning of each writer's workshop session, the class meets with the teacher for a fifteen-minute lesson. Each mini lesson focuses on an aspect of writing that correlates with the curriculum. The teacher is viewed as the expert and guides the children so that active learning is taking place (Ray & Cleveland, 2004).

Mentor Text

Many times the mini lesson is anchored by a children's picture book, but can also be a time that the teacher and children brainstorm, share the pen, focus on an aspect of the writing process, etc. When students are provided the opportunity to analyze mentor texts in a mini lesson, it allows them to see the writing craft and how it is part of public domain (Ray, 1999). As Ray (1999) stated, "Teach your students to learn to write from writers." The primary purpose of mentor text is for students to analyze, observe, and discuss writer's work through the use of mentor texts. After sharing a mentor text, the teacher and students have discussions with one another in order to further develop understanding. These discussions also allow the teacher the

opportunity to facilitate the scaffolding of students' previous knowledge to new information that they encounter (Ray & Cleveland, 2004). The use of mentor texts allows an opportunity for students to become more aware of the writing process in an authentic manner. Through the use of authentic literature during mini lessons, students participated in discussions that provided them the chance to gain a deeper understanding of the thought process and purposeful decisions that authors and illustrators make (Snyders, 2014). Another positive impact of using mentor texts to assist with writing was shown when it positively and directly influenced students reading ability in a second grade study (Seban & Tavsanli, 2015).

A yearlong study conducted by Baumann and Ivey (1997) focused on examining the effects of the implementation of an integrated literature envisionment program. The participants of the study were nineteen, second grade students in Athens, Georgia. Baumann and Ivey (1997) noted the inclusion of literature provided a power medium for learning: "In order to maximize the time children spend immersed in books and literature and to capitalize on the power of authentic reading and writing events, literature-based instruction can be effectively provided in the form of mini lessons" (Baumann & Ivey, 1997).

At the conclusion of the study (Baumann & Ivey, 1997), it was determined that there were five main benefits resulting from the yearlong literacy based classroom: (a) students developed into readers, (b) students became engaged with literacy, (c) students grew in regards to word identification and fluency, (d) students' comprehension increased, and (e) students showed growth in written composition. In addition to these results, the authors found that the students became more proficient readers and writers; further students' interest, knowledge, and attitude increased in regards to reading, writing, and literature (Baumann & Ivey, 1997). Consequently, the inclusion of mentor texts within writer's workshop could possibly provide

similar positive outcomes for students.

Independent Writing

After the mini lesson, students then move on to the writing portion of the workshop. The independent writing component of writer's workshop allows students to have the time to practice what they are being taught. During this time, students work independently or with a peer on their writing. Each day students work for approximately thirty to forty minutes on a variety of writing projects, all of which they have selected. If they complete a piece of work, the student then begins the writing process again with a new topic of their choosing. The students are the decision makers and decide on their topic, genre, and how the writing will be organized, drafted, and revised (Ray & Cleveland, 2004).

Conferences

"Writing conferences are the backbone of the writing workshop. Good conferences move the teaching of writing from the whole- class carpet gathering to the individual writer's desk" (Ray, 1999, page 248). While students are independently working on their writing, the teacher conducts one-on-one conferences with students. Writing conferences give the teacher time to provide specific feedback for writing growth, as well as the chance to gain an understanding of how the student is applying what they are learning from mini lessons. When a student meets with the teacher, they read a piece of his or her work in order to receive both positive and constructive feedback. The conference setting is designed to be a predictable routine in which the student is provided the opportunity to speak about their work and how they constructed it (Graves, 1983). This time also allows the teacher to become more familiar with each student on an individual basis and modify instruction to the child's personal needs (Calkins, 1994). As the student shares their writing, the teacher uses the conference time to listen and observe in order to determine the

potential of the piece and the next steps that the student can take in order to grow as a writer (Graves, 1983).

Author's Chair

At the conclusion of each writing session, children are given the opportunity to share their work in the author's chair. All students gather together and are given the opportunity to share their written work with their peers. This work can be published, a completed draft, or an incomplete draft. This ten to fifteen minute time frame provides the opportunity to give further purpose to a student's work, offers peers the opportunity to ask questions and compliment the author, and also a time for the author to receive feedback (Calkins, 1994).

These components of writer's workshop are also summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 2.1: *Structure of Writer's Workshop*

Component	Description
Mini Lesson	Educator provides their students with shared writing practice, explanations of their writing or the work of an author, and models writing techniques.
Mentor Text	Mini lessons may be anchored with text, which provides exposure to a variety of genres, opportunity to analyze writing styles and text structure, provides an awareness of the writing process
Independent Writing	Students have the time to practice what they are being taught.
Conferences	Teacher indicates specific feedback for writing growth, as well as gains an understanding of how the student is applying what they are learning from mini lessons.
Author's Chair	Presents an audience and purpose to a student's work, offers peers the opportunity to ask questions and compliment the author, and also a time for the author to receive feedback.

Writer's workshop has been shown to have positive benefits in the classroom in teaching children the writing process. It provides an authentic writing experience for students. Therefore, it is plausible that the writer's workshop approach has the potential to be applicable to family literacy and writing. Each of these components was taught to parents through the writing

intervention in this study. Parents gained an understanding of how to model writing to their children, how to confer with them, as well as practice written composition as a family. Therefore, past family literacy approaches and their outcomes must be considered.

Reading/Writing Connection

Since research has shown that reading and writing are related to one another, students should have out of school experiences in both areas. This section will focus on the connection between reading and writing in order to bridge writing with family reading. An abundance of research has been conducted on parent-initiated reading (Burgess, Hecht, & Lonigan, 2002; Niklas, & Schneider, 2013; Niklas, & Schneider, 2015). Because reading and writing are reciprocal in nature, this research might inform parent-initiated writing research. According to Graves (1994), "Writing is the making of reading. If you know how to construct reading through writing, we will better understand how to take reading apart' (Graves, 1994, page 282). When an individual is reading they are applying their knowledge of letters and sounds in order to decode, while also paying close attention to what the text is conveying (Duke, & Carlisle, 2011). Whereas when an individual is writing, they are utilizing their understanding of linguistic knowledge which includes the letters and sounds to encode words on paper, while also recording their thoughts into text (Tolchinsky, 2016).

The reading-writing relationship must be explored in considering writing in the home environment. According to the International Literacy Association (ILA), "The reading-writing connection is a dynamic issue that can offer exciting areas for study that have the potential to inform how we help today's students become better readers and writers." There are three primary models that confirm the link between reading and writing: cognitive relationships, sociocognitive relationships, and combined use (Shanahan, 2015).

The sociocognitive model of reading and writing views the relationship as "taking place in the mind of a literate person the relationship in sociocognitive models takes place in the transactional space between readers and writers" (Shanahan, 2015). Since reading and writing are cognitively inverse aspects of each other, they must both be taught efficiently. Instruction has been found to be most powerful when reading and writing are taught in tandem. The FWW study utilized both reading and writing to enable making connections. Participant connections were made through using mentor texts as springboards to begin writing. These mentor texts were presented as looking towards authors to: focus on composing stories that fixate on small moments, read like a writer, and identify text structure. If students are taught solely reading and no writing then there is little chance that writing and reading will be reciprocal (Shanahan, 2015). According to Purcell-Gates (2001), "emerging literacy needs to be concerned with emerging conceptual and procedural knowledge of written language, including the reading and writing of that language." Therefore, students need to be provided reciprocal reading and writing opportunities not only in school, but also at-home.

A research study (Sénéchal, LeFevre, Thomas, & Daley, 1998) that explored the implications of home literacy on oral and written language found ties between reading and writing. It was determined that when parents shared direct teaching about reading with their children, it aided in the development of the child's written language proficiencies. In addition, when kindergarten age students' parents provided experiences with books and direct teaching, there was a positive correlation found with oral and written language abilities (Sénéchal, LeFevre, Thomas, & Daley, 1998). Saint-Laurent and Giasson (2005) reported that when a family literacy program focused on book reading, writing, and providing home literacy activities that supported their child's education, it reaffirmed the importance of connecting reading and

writing. The study also found that students and parents benefitted not only from interactive reading activities, but writing activities as well. Students whose families participated in these workshops not only saw an increase in scores, but also saw an increase in student quality of work on a consistent basis (Saint-Laurent & Giasson, 2005). These studies found that exposure to reading directly impacted writing in a positive manner; these correlations highlight the potential and need for writing as a primary component of family literacy. In the FWW study, participants were provided the opportunities to analyze text in order to learn from the author and apply similar techniques.

Interventions within the FWW study were centered on using mentor texts to guide interactions between the parent and child. Text was used to make a connection between an author's piece of work and application to the children's written work. Research has shown that the use of literature with writing directly influences students reading ability (Seban & Tavsanli, 2015), as well as creates an opportunity for discussions about an author's work resulting in a deeper understanding of the writing process (Snyders, 2014).

In order to understand how to incorporate writing into family literacy, we first need to have an understanding of how family reading programs are being implemented and how they are beneficial to students.

Family Literacy

Benefits of Parental Involvement

The home environment has the potential to positively influence a student's literacy development. This can be achieved by a parent and child working together and being exposed to activities such as reading books, writing grocery lists, learning the alphabet and its corresponding sounds, among a variety of other learning opportunities.

Family literacy is defined as "the literacy beliefs and practices among family members and the intergenerational transfer of literacy to children" (Wasik & Herrmann, 2004). There are two types of family literacy: home-based and school/community programs. Home-based family literacy refers to literacy activities that take place in, and are initiated by, the student's family. School/community family literacy programs are prescribed workshops or interventions in which families participate (Crawford & Zygouris, 2006).

The common thread throughout family literacy programs is that communities, schools, families, and teachers all establish a common practice through a structured literacy program. Studies suggest that throughout family literacy programs, families come together and are directly instructed on how to support their child's literacy growth at-home.

Although children spend a great deal of time at school with their teacher, the majority of their time is spent at-home. "Since elementary students, for the most part, spend more time at-home than at school, it seems reasonable to encourage parents to create home environments that promote reading and writing" (Raisnski & Fredericks, 1991). Roberts, Jurgens, & Burchinal (2005) found that the most powerful indicator of well-founded language and literacy skills was the support of the home environment. Evidence from a study conducted by Burgess, Hecht, & Lonigan (2002) pointed to similar results: their findings attributed the home literacy environment being statistically significant in relation to oral language, phonological awareness, and word decoding ability with preschool age children. Furthermore, Niklas & Schneider (2013) researched the home literacy environment; the results from this study denoted that a child's home literacy environment directly correlated with vocabulary, as well as the overall academic achievement. Additional research by Griffin and Morrison (1997) revealed an abundance of positive effects for those students who came from a strong home literacy environment. The

benefits were as follows: higher reading recognition skills in kindergarten, higher receptive vocabulary scores, and increase in general knowledge throughout early elementary school (Griffin & Morrison, 1997). The strong correlations among these studies are examples of how family literacy can positively impact the literacy development of a child. However, research in the area of family literacy and writing is lacking. It would be potentially beneficial to educators, families, and children's futures to understand more about the impact of integrating writing outside of the school setting.

Family Literacy- Reading

Research has shown us that there are positive correlations between family literacy that is focused on reading interventions (Baker, 2013; Bennett, Weigel, & Martin, 2002, Neuman, 1996; Saracho, & Spodek, 2010; Sénéchal, 2006). While research is still needed in the area of family literacy and writing, numerous studies have been conducted that focus on family literacy and reading. As discussed in the reading/writing connection section of this literature review, reading and writing are reciprocal in nature, therefore gaining an understanding of family literacy and reading could inform the potential positive impact of families writing together.

More specifically, in regards to literacy-focused parental involvement, students can receive guidance, support, and positive influences to their reading development from their families (Saracho, & Spodek, 2010). Baker (2013) found that when a young child's mother and father used activities to support literacy skill development at-home there was a positive correlation to both cognitive and social emotional development. Additionally, parental involvement furthers language, literacy, and reading skills. If parental involvement centered on reading skills exemplified student reading progress, it is possible that the same could be done if parents worked with their child in the area of writing.

When parents directly teach literacy skills, the child benefits in the areas of phonemic awareness and vocabulary (Baker, 2013; Saracho, & Spodek, 2010; Sénéchal, 2006). Research has also found that when parents provide their children with a foundation of emergent literacy skills, their overall school experiences are more positive and reading success is more likely (Sénéchal, & LeFevre, 2001). Through these studies, it can be noted that when a parent is involved in their child's literacy development, positive academic progress, as well as social emotional development is attained. Therefore, it is possible that such interactions may positively influence children's writing skills as well.

Parent-child book reading has been directly linked to enhanced reading comprehension, vocabulary and language development. One common area of parent-initiated reading research is storybook reading. Information on storybook reading research may be able to inform the use of mentor texts in writer's workshop. When an adult interacts with a child through reading it has been found to advance the child's language, vocabulary, reading achievement, understanding of story structure, making connections and comprehension skills (Saracho & Spodek, 2010; Neuman, 1996; Bennett, Weigel, & Martin, 2002). Due to the text and the conversation that takes place between a parent and their child during storybook reading, there is direct impact on a student's vocabulary development. Discussions that take place between a parent and a child often center on the meaning of the text itself and directly impact the comprehension of the story (Sonnenschein & Munsterman, 2002). Moreover, vocabulary acquisition is heightened when a parent reads a story to a child at least two times (Sénéchal, & LeFevre, 2001). A meta-analysis of parent and preschooler joint storybook reading reported similar findings that reported language growth, emergent literacy, and reading achievement as positive outcomes of storybook reading (Bus, Ijzendoorn, & Pellegrini, 1995). The inclusion of writing as a component of home

literacy practices could further support emergent literacy and language growth through the encoding of words and story composition.

In the majority of family literacy research, it was found that families continued to apply what they learned even after the program had concluded. In particular, Learning Begins at Home (Graham, McNamara, & VanLankveld, 2011), cites students continuing to show age appropriate literacy growth once the program ended, which the researchers attributed to families continuing to support literacy at-home. Alternatively, Longwell-Grice & McIntyre (2006) who looked closely at a project entitled FAB:ulous (Family and Books), suggested that when implementing a family literacy program careful considerations need to be made in regards to the community and school culture in order to make a positive impact. As can be seen through these research examples, current family literacy programs have a positive influence not only during the programs, but if parents continue to implement what they learned about literacy, their child directly benefits and continues to develop.

These research findings found positive correlations between family literacy involvement and a student's reading progress. If student's benefit from family involvement that is reading focused, perhaps they will also benefit from family literacy guidance and support that is centered on writing. In this research study, parents were directly supporting their children in written composition which could potentially impact their personal development.

Family Literacy- Writing

When students are in school, families are often coached and offered support that centers on reading skills such as developmental spelling, reading books for fluency, decoding, comprehension, and sight word lists that can be implemented in their home (Saracho & Spodek, 2010; Neuman, 1996; Bennett, Weigel, & Martin, 2002; Sonnenschein & Munsterman, 2002).

The majority of family literacy research that includes writing originates in the classroom and is reinforced through home and school communication. One common form of school-initiated writing is the use of journaling (Fleisher & Pavlock, 2012; Newman & Bizzarri, 2011; Kay, Neher, & Lush, 2010; Valerie & Foss-Swanson, 2012). This is when the classroom teacher implements, fosters, and monitors the use of journaling between parents and their child. The child writes an entry at school telling their family about what he or she is learning about at school and brings the journal home to share with their family. The family member then replies to the child's entry. Through these parent-child interactions, the student's awareness of audience, as well as advancement of writing composition, increases (Fleisher & Pavlock, 2012; Newman & Bizzarri, 2011; Kay, Neher, & Lush, 2010; Valerie & Foss-Swanson, 2012). For instance, Kay, Neher, & Lush (2010) investigated a study in which three teachers decided to create a dialogue journal with families. Based on the experiences of the teachers who implemented dialogue journals, they found that the use of journals provided an opportunity for families to form a common bond. Utilizing dialogue journals also created mutual respect (Kay, Neher, & Lush, 2010). Another family message journal study (Wollman-Bonilla, 2001) cited that the interaction between the family and student included instructional feedback and scaffolding, as well as provided a variety of modeled genres. These positive interactions, due to the implementation of journaling, provide promise that parents and families are capable of assisting with writing at-home, especially considering that parents were not provided directives on how to respond to their child's work. Families were simply asked to reply to entries made by the student. In the FWW study, the joint parent-child writer's workshop class that was provided aimed to promote positive writing interactions through the class sessions, as well as encouraged this bond to carry over to home. The in-class parent-child interactions also provided the

opportunity for the children to have a purpose and audience for their written work and provide parents the chance to model writing for their child.

A home-based writing family literacy study conducted by Aram & Levin (2004), researched the longitudinal effects of the mother's involvement in writing instruction. This study determined that even when controlling for the family's socio-economic level, when a child received interventions with their mother in kindergarten, there was a direct correlation to higher literacy competency (Aram & Levin, 2004). When students are provided the opportunity to engage in writing, their basic writing skills become automatic. This automaticity allows for the student to then focus on other areas of writing such as composition (Ritchey, 2008). As a result, when students are immersed in writing at-home, they gain an advantage because the skills that are learned at school become instinctive. This, in turn, allows for the student to continually build on their abilities and make connections between reading and writing.

Although there are a few studies that focus on writing at-home, more research is necessary to build an understanding of writing interactions that take place at-home, as well as how educators and parents can work together to provide a cohesive writing learning experience for children. An important starting point is to find the connections between family literacy research and writer's workshop research.

Considering Family Literacy and Writer's Workshop

Authentic experiences in literacy can be provided for students both in and outside of the classroom. Students can experience reading for a purpose, interacting with everyday print, composing letters, exchanging information with others through discussions or through writing with a pen pal, selecting their own writing topics, creating pieces of writing that are found in everyday life, and creating stories for an audience. When students are able to make a tangible

connection between literacy and their real life, the opportunity for understanding and growth is present.

The following section will review family literacy and writer's workshop research and how it can be beneficial to authentic experiences and environments. This context is important to understand because the FWW study incorporated and developed authentic experiences between families, as well as provided a literacy-rich environment outside of the classroom. Furthermore, since there is little research in family literacy pertaining to writing, reading-based literacy literature will be discussed to prompt consideration of a reading writing connection to create a collaborative social environment.

Family literacy

Environment. Parent-child reading based workshops is one way for families to integrate reading in an authentic manner into their homes. As previously discussed, these workshops are centered on helping parents understand how to further develop reading skills with their children. These authentic experiences involve the parent and child working within their home environment with basic, everyday reading skills. These authentic experiences could include reading (books, magazines, newspapers, websites, etc.), reading for directions (recipe, game), creating lists, and reading environmental print. When reviewing the results of parent-child family literacy research it was found that these studies were significant because the children did not experience a summer learning loss, but rather a gain in reading skills. This increase in achievement did not cease after the programs concluded. The children continued to make appropriate academic reading growth, which the researchers attribute to the families continuing to practice what was taught during the workshops. Through at-home implementation it was also determined that parents were able to motivate and improve their children's reading abilities (Graham, McNamara, & VanLankveld,

2011; Saracho, 1997). Since the reading programs were successful, and reading and writing are reciprocal, it can be hypothesized that a parent-child writing-based workshop may yield similar results. The FWW study addressed this gap by assisting parents with creating an authentic writing environment with their child outside of the classroom.

Through the establishment of a child-parent reading relationship, a social collaborative environment can be formed. The establishment of this environment has the potential to reap many benefits. An accumulation of parent-child storybook research has found that when engaging in this activity children acquire vocabulary, school reading experiences are enhanced, comprehension skills develop, an awareness of story structure is formed, and positive reading behaviors are built (Baker, Mackler, Sonnenschein, & Serpell, 2001; Newman,1996; Saracho, & Spodek, 2010; Sénéchal, & LeFevre, 2001). Additionally, receptive language and concept of print skills dramatically improved when proficient parents read with their low level readers (Newman, 1996). If parent involvement improves a child's reading experiences, further research of parent writing involvement needs to be explored to see if it can yield similar results.

Communication. Exposure to a variety of reading that is found in the home environment influences a child's learning. One aspect of family literacy, that is found in the home environment, is communication with a child through the use of reading. A common way to form an interactive and collaborative environment between a parent and their child is through the use of books (Baker, 2013; Sonnenschein & Munsterman, 2002). It has been found that the way the parent interacts with their child during this time directly impacts areas of their reading development. When a child is exposed to simple, direct communication within their home, they have difficulty with evaluating books, resulting in poorer quality reading. (Juel, 1988). However, if a child has been read to and participants in more abstract communication, they have

a better understanding of story structure, comprehension, and a higher vocabulary (Juel, 1988). Therefore, if a child comes from a household that is highly collaborative through engagement in conversations, and interactions with texts, they have an advantage when learning at school (Juel, 1988). Consequently, if a family is explicitly taught how to assist their child with writing through a specified process, their child could hypothetically benefit when writing in the classroom (Juel, 1988). There was a possibility for conceptual communication to develop through the mentor texts discussions that the researcher facilitated in FWW mini lessons. Furthermore, since the FWW provided opportunities for participants to connect to text there was also the potential for a better understanding of text structure.

Research has cited that everyday conversations that are rich in dialogue can positively impact a child's language and reading growth (Pinkham, & Neuman, 2012). One common family activity that provides parents with the opportunity to have meaningful conversations that are rich in language is joint storybook reading. "It is during rich discussion, which can take place while reading both narrative and informational text, that students acquire a critical skill-engaging in academic discourse" (Gambrell, Hughes, Calvert, Malloy, & Igo, 2011). Books provide a medium for social interaction between a parent and child, and this discussion contributes to their child's reading growth both in and outside of school. These kinds of conversations were present in the writer's workshop intervention that took place in this study. Parents learned how to utilize mentor texts with their children in a way that analyzed the work of authors through rich discussions.

Parent guidance. As previously mentioned, many family literacy interactions yield positive results when families and their children read together. Reading together provides the opportunity for parents to scaffold a child's comprehension, vocabulary, and understanding of

content (Saracho & Spodek, 2010; Neuman, 1996; Bennett, Weigel, & Martin, 2002). However, if parents are not provided with guidance on how to scaffold their child's learning experiences while reading, opportunities may be lost (Pinkham, & Neuman, 2012). Therefore, when story reading guidance is provided to parents, they are able to have a greater impact on their child's learning. Likewise, since reading and writing are interrelated, if parents are not provided guidance on how to scaffold writing experiences opportunities may also be lost.

More specifically, in a mixed methods study conducted by Huebner (2000), preschool children and their families received language skill interventions. The aim of the study was to promote regular reading between parents and their children, while also directing the child's verbal participation through questioning. It was determined that with this guidance there was a change in parent attitude in regards to home literacy, as well as an increase in how often children were read to on a weekly basis (Huebner, 2000). Since assisting parents positively influenced reading, it is possible that if parents were guided in the area of writing it would produce comparable results. If parents were given the opportunity to promote regular writing with their child, there might be an increase in components of writing.

Writer's workshop

Authentic experiences

A significant benefit of writer's workshop is that it provides students ample opportunities for authentic writing. When participating in writer's workshop, students are given the freedom to select their own topics based on their personal interests or prior experiences. Both personal interests and prior experiences would involve the students pulling in real life experiences into his or her writing. During the independent writing block of writer's workshop students are able to select topics that have personal significance, making their writing experiences realistic. Calkins

(1994) felt that children should be encouraged and provided the opportunity to discover their own writing style. This can be accomplished by children using their own thoughts from their lives to create pieces of writing.

Providing children with a real-life writing experience can also be accomplished through the use of pen pals. A pen pal study had students and their adult pen pals read the same books and exchange letters about the books they read, as well as mention information about themselves. During the post-interview, students indicated that having an attentive audience in their pen pal made writing more enjoyable and meaningful (Gambrell, Hughes, Calvert, Malloy, & Igo, 2011). Also, the fact that the students and their adult pen pals were composing letters that focused on a shared, real experience of reading the same book provided common ground and provided focus and a purpose to their writing. This type of writing provided students with a concrete example of how writing could be applied outside of the classroom setting. Moreover, writer's workshop would provide an authentic audience for the students, which in the Gambrell, Hughes, Calvert, Malloy, & Igo, (2011) study was cited through student interviews as making their experiences more meaningful.

Real-life, authentic texts have been shown to enhance reading and writing when teachers include them in their classroom instruction (Purcell-Gates, 2006). Classroom writing interventions are embedded in experiences. A common, school initiated writing approach is the use of journals. One type of journal is a dialogue journal. A dialogue journal is a journal in which the student writes a message and brings the journal home, and their parents read and respond to their message. Based on the experiences of the teachers who implemented dialogue journals, they found that the use of journals provided an opportunity for families to form a common bond. Benefits of family message journals included modeling of real world genres,

provided instructional feedback, and families adjusted their responses to the child's changing abilities (Wollman-Bonilla, 2001). Utilizing journals also created mutual respect, provided an authentic audience, student writing improved and became more advanced as the school year progressed (Kay, Neher, & Lush, 2010; Valerie & Foss-Swanson, 2012).

Another common authentic writing experience is letter writing. While many people may not write handwritten letters, individuals compose emails on a regular basis. Communicating through writing has become a part of our everyday lives, especially with the increased use of technology. This is an activity that many children see their parents doing. A letter writing study with three to five year old children found that when parents showed a higher level of control over their child's compositions, the child's role was to be responsive and the result was a letter that looked conventional. On the other hand, when the parent allowed the child to be in control of the activity, in a sense making it more authentic, the focus was on the content of the letter, which resulted in an emergent piece. When a child is provided the opportunity to initiate a writing experience, they are more likely to understand the function of writing and become more independent. This independence could result in the child being more successful than their peers whose focus is primarily on the conventions of writing (Burns, & Casbergue, 1992). Joint writing also provides parents the opportunity to support and guide their child's composition skills (DeBaryshe, Buell, & Binder, 1996). Therefore, in this current research study when children were provided support from their family, the probability of becoming independent writers with strong composition skills was possible.

Collaborative environment

Writing is a social activity. Due to today's writing standards it is important for children to have a supportive, collaborative writing community. Students need to be able to write for a

variety of reasons, for diverse audiences, and to plan their writing thoughtfully. Being part of a trusting, positive, and respectful writing community, in which the teachers and students work together as well as peers working together, would assist students to meet these objectives. An ideal classroom environment allows for students to be thoughtful, reflective, and collaborate with their peers (Graham, et al., 2015). In the FWW study, parents became part of a writing community with their child and other participants. The experience provided an authentic audience with the hope that it was a respectful and collaborative environment.

According to Purcell-Gates (2006), "Language genre forms (oral and written) are seen as socially constructed, reflecting sociocultural norms and expectations, to accomplish social purposes." Writing should be viewed as a social activity as opposed to an independent activity. Collaborative writing has shown to have many benefits which include: trust between writing partners must be present, writing should be structured, and individuals need to have engagement with the topic, writing process, and writing partners (Smedt & Keer, 2014). This research informed the interventions of the FWW study by providing and teaching parents to create collaborative writing opportunities between them and their child, as well as with other participants.

The process writing approach, which is embedded in writer's workshop, provides several opportunities for collaboration (Beach, Newell, & VanDerHeide, 2016). The formation of these relationships can be found in writer's workshop mini lessons, conferencing, and author's chair. Based on the sociocultural perspective, writing is a social event that incorporates construction of writing with relationships that have been formed with others (Beach, Newell, & VanDerHeide, 2016).

The feedback component of a social environment is also supported by the Common Core

State Standards, as a part of formative assessment and is to be used to track student progress, as well as inform instruction (Graham, Harris, & Santangelo, 2015). Perhaps, this type of writing discussion may be useful to consider in regard to family literacy. If parents were taught similar feedback techniques they may be able to assist with writing growth through writing performance feedback. In the FWW study, parents were taught throughout the writer's workshop sessions, on having writing conferences with their child. The researcher taught and modeled how to have a conversation with their child on a piece of their written work.

During the first portion of writer's workshop, students are provided a lesson that correlates with specific writing standards. Throughout the lesson, the teacher and students have discussions with one another in order to further develop understanding. These discussions also allow the teacher the opportunity to facilitate the scaffolding of student's previous knowledge to new information that they encounter.

Feedback on written work has been found to be successful with elementary aged students, while simultaneously focusing on social purposes. Teacher-student and peer collaboration is made possible due to the social environment in which the writing occurs. Hier and Eckert (2014) found that when students were given direct feedback on a weekly basis there was a significant increase in writing fluency within a six-week intervention program. Half of the students who were provided this intervention reached the mastery level of writing fluency at the end of the intervention (Hier & Eckert, 2014). Parents that were a part of the FWW study worked with their children on listening to their written work and provided them with specific feedback.

More specifically, a recent study took a close look at the effects of feedback on student writing. It was found that the largest effect size was adult (teacher and parent) feedback, followed by self-feedback, peer feedback, and computer feedback. When students received

feedback on their daily writing progress, student writing improved (Graham, Herbert, & Harris, 2015). These interactions with others had a positive correlation on student writing. Therefore, an increase in parental writing involvement, one on one conferences between the teacher and student, and peer conferences could potentially increase writing progress. The FWW study attempted to create and facilitate this type of conferencing and feedback opportunity for the parent and their child.

Collaboration also takes place during conferences between the child and teacher, or among peers. The feedback that they receive is tailored to each student's personal needs. During this time, the teacher evaluates the student's work and provides them with constructive feedback. This would include not only what needs to be altered, but also the strengths in the student's writing.

Research has found that when students work together with their peers on combining sentences when composing, a student's quality of writing, sentence combining skills, and revisions have a positive impact as compared to students who are solely exposed to traditional grammar instruction (Saddler & Graham, 2005). It could be hypothesized that the collaborative experience between the peers helped enhance their writing experience and therefore positively impact their writing development.

Author's chair, a time in which students are given the opportunity to read their written work to their peers, also fosters community. During this time students are given the opportunity for feedback if they chose to share their work at the conclusion of writer's workshop (Calkins, 1994; Graham, Harris, & Santangelo, 2015; Graham, & Sandmel, 2011). When students participate in this closing portion of writer's workshop, they are provided the chance to develop audience awareness through experiencing their peers' reactions and using their comments to

make revisions to their work (Beach, Newell, & VanDerHeide, 2015). If students were provided the opportunity to write for a real audience, through the parent/child writing sessions in this study, they would then be provided an authentic audience, as well as an opportunity to use the experience to further develop as writers.

When students share their work with their peers, they are writing for a real audience. An authentic audience provides the option to create a product for a specific individual (Calkins, 1994; Feinberg, 2007). Research has shown that when writers consider their audience, the end result is that the quality of their writing evolves (Shanahan, 2015). Therefore, if children are provided an enhanced perspective of audience awareness or directly interacting with an audience who interacts with their work, such as their classmates or family, there is a potential for their writing to improve.

Research has shown that students benefit from having a target audience that they are constructing a piece for, by providing them with a joint purpose. "Writing, especially when we know the writing will be shared with others, promotes both deepened understandings and meaningful interactions- and these develop community, which leads to improved learning conditions" (Dean & Warren, 2012). Beach, Newell, & VanDerHeide (2015) believe educators and their students unite to establish a classroom setting for writing to and for an audience. When these supportive relationships and classroom community are formed students benefit. This type of collaborative environment also provides purpose and a real audience for the child. A child's family has the potential to be an authentic audience and provide students with significant and rich interactions centered around writing.

As read above, there are countless ways in which family literacy and writing are used to create a social collaborative environment. This type of environment can be established through

rich discussions, storybook reading interactions, receiving feedback, collaborating with others (parents, teachers, peers), and writing for a genuine audience.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the literature related to writer's workshop purpose and classroom implementation, as well as the influence that family literacy has had on student progress. Research in classroom-based writer's workshop has shown a positive impact on children's writing progress. Additionally, literature has shown that family literacy involvement in the area of reading has supported student growth. There is a lack of literature in the areas of out of school writing and family literacy that is focused on writing. This points to a gap in research in regards to how the structure of writer's workshop between students and their family members may or may not be beneficial outside of the classroom environment. Further research is needed to determine the impact of family literacy involvement and writer's workshop outside of the classroom setting.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methods used for this study. This investigation implemented an out-of-school writing intervention that was completed with children and their parents. The intervention lasted for the duration of eight weeks, with a new writing focus, anchored by mentor text, being addressed each week. The framework of this writing intervention was based on the writer's workshop structure that is used in elementary schools across the United States. This intervention took place at the public library with six pair parent-child pairs. The researcher conducted the workshop, and another graduate student assisted with the interviews and attended some intervention sessions to assist with observations.

In the first section, a case study as the appropriate method for understanding the writing relationship between a parent and their child is described. In the second section, the structure of the intervention is described. In the final section, the data collection methods are reviewed.

Research Question

This study examined the following question:

1. What are parent perceptions regarding engaging their child with the writing process before, during, and after their participation in Family Writer's Workshop with their child?

Methodology Overview

This qualitative study utilized the case study approach (Merriam, 1998). The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences that parents and their children encountered with out-of-school writing, in order to better understand the interactions that take place between a parent and their child, as well as how to create a consistent home school connection with writing.

A case study approach was the appropriate selection for this study because the researcher

conducted an in-depth study of a case that occurred within a real life setting, over a bounded period of time. Case studies also provide the opportunity for insights that will enrich and build upon current research (Merriam, 2009). Additionally, data was gathered from multiple sources.

Case study

Merriam (2009) defines a case study as: "an in-depth description and analysis of a unit around which there are boundaries, or a bounded system" (Merriam, 2009, p. 40). Approaching this research through the case study approach; allowed the researcher first hand experiences, observations, and access with the participants. Additionally, the researcher selected a qualitative case study because the researcher was interested in discovery, awareness, and a thorough understanding of the parent-child out of school writing phenomenon.

> "Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real life, contemporary bounded system or multiple bounded systems over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information and reports a case description and case themes." (Creswell, 2012)

The bounded case that is identified in this study is the group of parents who participated in and utilized the writing intervention with their elementary-aged child. This case is bounded since these individuals are all members of the group and are participating in a unique situation. As stated by Creswell (2012), "A case study approach is appropriate to use when the inquirer has clearly identifiable cases with boundaries and seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of the cases or a comparison of several cases." The intent of this study was to present a detailed understanding of the experiences that parents and their children encountered with out of school writing.

According to Yin (2009), "a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a

contemporary phenomenon in depth and within context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident." Within this study, the researcher studied parents' perceived experiences of how the FWW influenced their interactions with their children and writing outside of the classroom. The case study approach allowed the researcher to penetrate barriers and obtain rich data of the writing interactions between a parent and their child.

A case study approach allowed the researcher to collect data from a variety of sources in order to answer the research questions. When creating this study, the researcher was interested in how the structure of writer's workshop worked between a parent and their child outside of the classroom setting. Additionally, the researcher wanted to gain an understanding of any positive and negative impacts from the implementation of intervention sessions. Pre-, mid-, and post-interviews, observation of the parent child interactions during the intervention writing sessions, field notes, student work samples, and any correspondence between the researcher and participants (emails) were all sources of data.

The pre-, mid-, and post-interview data was used to address the research question. The comparison of pre-, mid-, and post-interview questions, along with parent responses on how they reflected on the experiences addresses how parents report how they will continue or not continue to utilize the writer's workshop approach at-home, what parents report in regards to the interactions that took place between intervention sessions, and changes that parents perceive of writing outside of school.

There was a potential for some email correspondence to possibly take place between the researcher and participants addressing the research. Participants were provided the researcher's email address to contact during the times between sessions; any questions, concerns, trouble

shooting, etc. Participants were not required to contact the researcher between sessions with it was optional. If parents chose to contact the researcher, this data was also used as additional information on the interactions that took place at-home.

Throughout each of the intervention sessions, the researcher, along with a graduate student who attended four sessions, observed and took anecdotal notes of the interactions between the parents and their children. These observations and notes were used to assist with providing insight on the experiences between the parent-child partnerships.

Student writing from each intervention session and any writing that was completed at-home were collected, a photo was taken of the finished work, and the originals were returned to the participants. The researcher noted when and where (intervention session or home) each completed writing piece was constructed. These artifacts were used during the mid-and post-interview sessions to discuss the writing experiences with parents.

Notably, since the population was small, a case study approach allowed for more depth and a richer portrayal of the data and findings. Through the use of this approach, a well-rounded picture could be depicted of the parent and student interaction of writing outside of the classroom.

Context and Participants

Role of the Researcher/Participant Observer

Within this qualitative research, the researcher also utilized the method of participant observation. Participant observation is a qualitative method in which the researcher immerses themselves with study participants in a community setting (Spradley, 1980). "The participant observer comes to a social situation with two purposes: (1) to engage in activities appropriate to the situation and (2) to observe the activities, people, and physical aspects of the situation"

(Spradley, 1980, p.54). During this time the researcher recorded objective field notes, as well as interacted informally with participants. Through these observations the researcher collected data and compared it to the information that parents provided during their interview sessions, as well as the observations made by the outside individual, who attended four sessions to observe. These direct observations were also examined to see if they would provide the opportunity for new topics or information that might not be discussed during an interview session to arise (Patton, 2015). As a participant observer, the researcher consciously made the effort to be explicitly aware of the social environment by increasing self-awareness and made a conscious effort to observe what was seen and heard around them during the entire experience (Spradley, 1980).

The researcher in this study also had the role as the individual leading the writer's workshop, creating and planning mini lessons, as well as modeling conferencing for parents. Therefore, the researcher was also a participant observer.

During each session, the researcher worked directly with participants and their learning. This began at the start of each session when welcoming participants for the day and bringing the group of participants together for each mini lesson. Throughout each session, the researcher also worked one-on-one with participant pairs (adult and child) during the independent writing portion of the workshop. This was done by directly having students share their writing with the researcher, asking them questions to further develop their work, as well as answering any questions from parents.

Due to the dual role of the researcher also being a participant observer, interviews were all completed by another doctoral-level student with experience interviewing human subjects. Additionally, this individual also attended half the sessions and provided observations in regards

to the sessions.

Participants

Participants were selected through convenience sampling (Merriam, 2009). Convenience sampling was the most beneficial method for this study in order to reach the desired number of willing and committed participants. Participants were elicited by contacting individuals within the community to see if they or any other individuals in their neighborhood would be interested in participating in the research study. Current community members assisted the researcher with obtaining participants.

The researcher's original goal was to have twelve parents/guardians agree to the terms to participate in the study; however seven contacted the researcher. The parents/guardians would be working with their elementary age children on implementing the writer's workshop structure outside of the classroom setting. The majority of the elementary students attended a public elementary school in northeastern North Carolina. One family home schooled their child. Elementary age students were selected because they are typically at a developmental writing stage. During this stage students are beginning to create stories with a beginning, middle, and end and their writing may begin to contain more complex structure such as paragraphs.

Originally there were seven volunteers that contacted the researcher to be a part of the FWW study. One volunteer did not return emails or phone calls made by the researcher; therefore they were never interviewed and did not attend any of the FWW sessions. Of the six adult participants that completed the pre-interview and attended the first two sessions, five of the adult participants were parents, and one of the adult participants was a guardian. After the first two sessions, the participant that was a guardian no longer attended sessions. Therefore, there were five pairs of participants for the remainder of the six sessions.

Child participant ages ranged from five to seven years old, with two participants being male and five female (one female did not respond to contacts being made by the researcher and was not interviewed and did not participate in any sessions). Each participant attended with one adult, and most participants attended with their mothers. One male participant attended with his guardian, who was also his uncle. All participants that attended sessions were Caucasian. There was one African American female who volunteered; however they did not attend any sessions after signing up for more information on workshop. All participant information can also be found in Table 3.1; all names are pseudonyms.

Table 3.1 *Participants*

Participant (all names are pseudonyms)	Number of adult(s) with each child and relationship	Gender	Race	Age	Interview Participation	Note
Brandon Lawrence	1 adult, uncle/guardian	Male	Caucasian	5	Pre-interview only	Did not complete FWW
Katie Thomas	1 adult, mother	Female	Caucasian	6	All 3 interviews	
Isabel Clifford	1 adult, mother	Female	Caucasian	7	All 3 interviews	
Claire Rowe	1 adult, mother	Female	Caucasian	8	All 3 interviews	
Tiffany Stone	1 adult, mother	Female	Caucasian	8	All 3 interviews	
Mitchell Spencer	1 adult, mother	Male	Caucasian	8	All 3 interviews	Home schooled

These participants were asked to participate in the study with the understanding that they would not receive any compensation, but they might be able to help positively impact their child's writing growth, as well as their own understanding on how to work with and assist their child in the area of writing.

The researcher, with support from co-chairs, completed and submitted an exempt IRB

form prior to any data collection. Once the researcher received approval from the Human Subjects Board, participants were provided consent forms (Appendix G) to review, inquire about, and sign. These consent forms, along with any other hard copies of data collection materials, were kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher's residence. The researcher was the only individual who had a key to access the cabinet.

The identities of all participants remained confidential and were assigned a pseudonym. The pseudonym was used for all data collection, which included observations, interview recordings, interview transcripts, field notes, as well as any other items that arose. The researcher assigned each participant their pseudonym.

Setting

Intervention training between the researcher and the parents took place at a local public library in northeast North Carolina. The location has 6,800 sq. ft. dedicated to library services that include reading collections for adults, teens, and children, computers, weekly classes and programs, and meeting rooms. The sessions took place in a meeting room, which could hold up to 45 people. This setting was selected as the location for training since it was a common, neutral, non-threatening environment, and easily accessible to all participants. Additionally, mentor texts were a component of the writer's workshop intervention and the public library was a convenient and logical place for the parents to check out texts if they wanted to work with their child at-home between intervention sessions, while using books for models. The public library was contacted for permission, as well as the process of reserving a meeting room from the children's librarian. See Appendix A for the email that was initially sent to contact librarians.

As participants walked into each session, there was a writing materials station that contained a supply box for each participant. Each supply box was labeled with the participant's

name and contained crayons and several sharpened pencils. Additionally, there was an area that included a variety of writing paper, stapler, tape, children's dictionary, and thesaurus available for community use.

At the front of the room was a central area in which mentor text mini lessons and author's chair took place at each session. In this area, a schedule of the writer's workshop was displayed on the white board and an array of mentor texts that corresponded with the focus of each session was on display for students to utilize or borrow. The mentor texts were changed each session and reflected the focus of the session. Chairs were also arranged for parents and students to sit in during the mentor text lesson and author's chair. Any anchor charts created during the mini lesson were also kept in this location for the duration of the session. Each anchor chart was then posted each week, for participants to refer back to throughout the sessions.

In the main area of the conference room were six tables with chairs for guardians and students to work at during independent writing and conferences. In the center of each table were additional materials for participant use. The additional materials included alphabet charts, conferencing cards, dictionaries, and a variety of writing paper. Participants selected their own tables to work at and this could change on a weekly basis. Instead of the researcher having a central location, the researcher moved from table to table to conduct, as well as model, conferencing with families.

At the first session, students each received a writing folder. Each student folder was labeled with their name and when opened, one side was labeled as completed work and the other as work in progress. Students were shown how to organize their work in their folders. They took this folder home with them each week and returned to the subsequent session with their

folders. Participants took their folders home with them each week so they could continue to work on, complete, or create new pieces of writing at home.

Since the location of the intervention took place at the public library students also were encouraged to check out library books and to find books that we learned about in our mini lesson if the genre or text type interested them. Considering that each session had a mini lesson that focused on a particular genre, the researcher also provided an array of books at each session that corresponded with the topic of study. These materials were made available to the participants throughout the writing time at the central area, displayed on the tray under the white board. These books were also made available to students to take home if they wanted to read and look at them further. A complete list of the books that were provided at each session can be found in References: Mentor Texts.

All pre-, mid-, and post-interviews were conducted by a graduate student and took place at the same local library in which intervention training was held. Each interview was recorded and transcribed. The setting was selected for interviews because it was a familiar setting that was unbiased to both parties and unintimidating.

The time of each of these interviews was based on what worked for the families. The pre-interview sessions were set up individually with families prior to the FWW sessions, whereas the mid-interviews were conducted prior to or after a session. Post-interviews were primarily completed on the day of the last session, as well as the days that immediately followed.

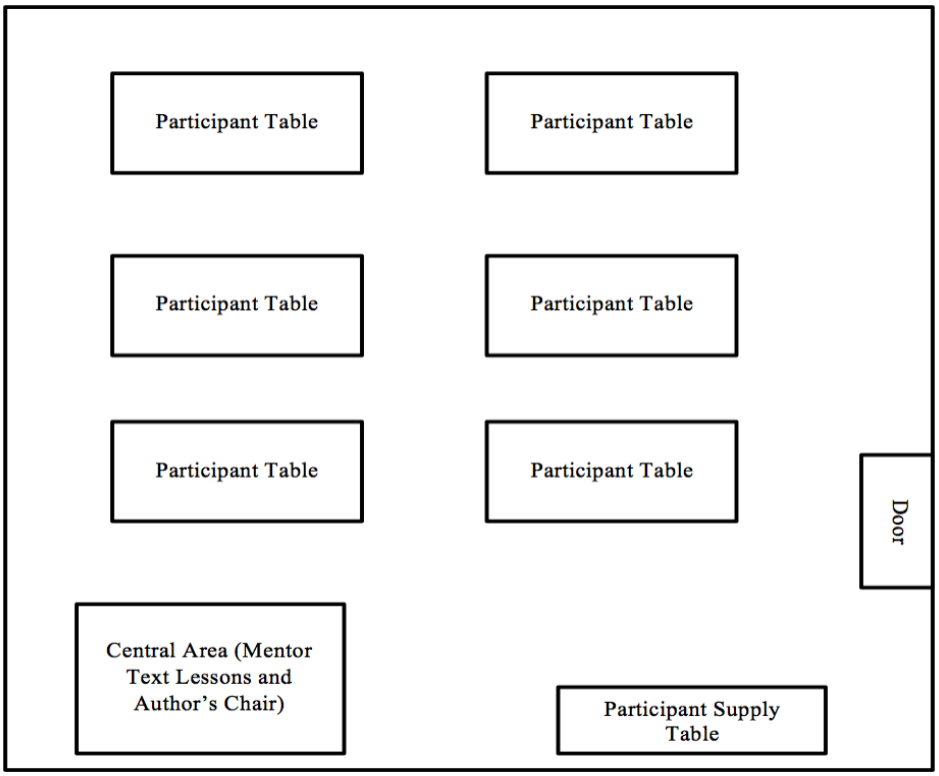
The interview consisted of a series of questions (Appendix H) with the purpose of gaining knowledge of each parent's literacy perceptions, current literacy beliefs, and at-home literacy practices. Participants were also interviewed mid-way through the FWW so the researcher could adjust the sessions as needed. At the end of all workshop sessions, individual

parents participated in a post-interview. Brandon's guardian only participated in the pre-interview, whereas all other participants completed all three interviews.

Participants agreed to participate in all three interviews, attend at least six of eight sessions, and if they missed any sessions, watch the video recording of the mini lesson, and have their child's work photographed as artifacts. There were some participants who had previously planned family vacations, two participants missed one session each due to this conflict.

During the time frame between sessions, parents were encouraged to write with their child, utilizing what they learned at their workshop sessions. Parents could implement writing at-home as frequently as desired. Throughout the week, parents were given the means necessary to contact the researcher at any time if they had any questions, concerns, etc. Participants were provided the researcher's contact information.

Figure 2 Family Writer's Workshop Floor Plan



Intervention

The intervention was developed, compiled, and presented to the parents by the researcher (see Table 1*)*. This intervention was based on research in writer's workshop and mentor texts (Calkins, 1994; Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003; Ray, 1999; Ray & Cleveland, 2003).

Elements

The primary elements to this intervention were (a) instruction and guidance of implementing components of writer's workshop outside of the school setting, (b) parents and children working together through the writing process, and (c) the use of mentor texts.

Implementing the Intervention

The structure of writer's workshop was applied to the eight intervention workshops that parents and their children attended. Writer's workshop, a common writing process approach used in elementary schools, provides students with structure and guidance to move through the writing process as an author would. As students work through their piece of writing, they were provided with opportunities to learn about a particular writing topic/focus through mini lessons, discuss their writing, work on composing and revising a piece, and sharing their work (Calkins, 1994; Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003; Ray, 1999; Ray & Cleveland, 2003).

Structure of sessions

The structure of the intervention sessions was set up similar to the structure found in writer's workshop. Each session was approximately an hour and fifteen minutes. Topics for each FWW were selected based on writer's workshop research in the field that had a positive impact on student writing progress and achievement in the classroom (Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003; Ray & Cleveland, 2004).

These sessions all utilized mentor texts and focused on the following: small moments,

writing conferences, reading like a writer, and text structure. Each of these sessions focused on a different aspect of implementing out of school writing practices that are similar to those found in writer's workshop. Sessions were interactive and allowed for instructional time, practice, conferencing, sharing, and reflections. Workshop topics were designed to showcase writing interactions and products that were authentic. Each session had a primary focus.

Each session also followed the same structure and familiar format, which was intentionally similar to the structure of writer's workshop in the classroom (Calkins, 1994; Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003: Ray, 1999; Ray & Cleveland, 2004). Both the parent and child attended each workshop together. The sessions each began with the researcher providing a mini-lesson to the parents and children that focused on the topic for the session. In addition to the weekly topic, the mini lesson also provided parents with background knowledge, information on at-home implementation, possible troubleshooting guidance, and materials. This was followed by a writing block for parents and children to participate in together. As the parent and child wrote, the researcher recorded field notes while observing the participants, modeled and coached conferences, as well as answer any questions that they had as they were working. In addition to this, an outside individual attended four sessions and completed field notes. The researcher also recorded thoughts, reflections, and observations after each session in a reflexive journal.

Each session began with a mini lesson given by the researcher to the participants about how to approach a specific aspect of working on writing. The mini lessons each included a mentor text to help guide the instruction and support the understanding of the concept being taught. Please refer to Table 3.2 *Family Writer's Workshop Schedule,* for a complete list of topics and mentor text. The mini lesson portion lasted about twenty minutes. This was slightly longer than the traditional writer's workshop mini lesson time so the researcher could provide

extra time for parents to ask questions and for the researcher to provide further guidance as needed.

As previously mentioned, each mini lesson session was anchored by a mentor text. The mentor text was read aloud and the researcher prompted a discussion with the parents on how to apply each author's work to initiate writing with their child. The mini lesson sessions were recorded and made available to families on a private YouTube channel. These were made available to parents so they could rewatch sessions and, if they missed a session they could still be provided an overview of what was covered. Mentor texts were also made available while participants were working on writing in case they needed to refer back to the author's work, or wanted to explore different mentor texts that were the same format as the one used for the mini lesson.

Parents and their children then moved into a thirty minute writing and conferencing time. Again this time for independent writing and conferencing was longer than a traditional writer's workshop since the children were working with an adult, and the researcher needed to be able to have ample time to model conferencing with all of the participants, and answer any questions. Participants were given the freedom to work on a topic of their choosing, and offered support by the researcher to brainstorm topics if necessary. They were also provided a variety of writing materials to use to construct their pieces (Appendix B). While parents and their child were working, the researcher was a participant observer and took field notes on the interactions and dialogue taking place between each parent and child pair. Parents also observed the researcher modeling writing conferences so the parent could begin to implement conference strategies as the sessions continued. At the beginning of each session, a timer was set and when the timer sounded, writing time had concluded and all work went in student portfolio folders. Student

portfolio folders were basic folders in which children placed their completed work on the left-hand side and uncompleted work on the right-hand side. Student portfolio folders were taken home with families each week, so that they could work on any of the writing that they chose or create new pieces of work and add it to the portfolio. These folders were also used in both the mid-and post-interviews. Each parent kept their child's original work. The researcher made a copy of completed student work for data collection purposes.

There were a variety of different types of conferencing that the researcher modeled for participants: idea conference, drafting conference, revising conference, and editing conference cue cards. Parents were taught about the different types of conferences and provided conference cue cards to assist with conferencing (Appendix C). Parents received a set of conference cards to keep and use at-home, and were also provided a set to use during FWW sessions.

The final portion of each session was dedicated to an author's chair and time for questions. Prior to the first share time, participants were taught the procedures for author's chair (Appendix D). Children and their parents gathered in a central area of the room and were provided about ten minutes to share work with the group. The share time was optional; participants did not need to share with the group. The researcher was available after each session in case participants had questions, as well as to provide participants the opportunity to receive further guidance from the researcher on what to work on at-home until the next session. Parents were not required to work with their child between sessions, however they were highly encouraged to do so. If participants engaged in FWW at-home, the researcher requested that the work they completed at-home was brought to the next FWW session. The researcher then made a copy of this work and returned the original to the parent, so the child could continue to work on their piece and so they could keep their original work.

There were eight weeks of intervention sessions. Similar writing research averaged between six to ten weeks (Jasmine & Weiner 2007; Snyders, 2013; Stahl, Pagnucco, & Suttles, 1996). Table 3.2 shows the week, topic, and mentor text that was used for each session. Appendix E provides the Weekly Agendas and Appendix F outlines the lessons for each session. After each session, the researcher reflected, then recorded thoughts, and observations in a reflexive journal in order to create transparency.

Table 3.2 *Family Writer's Workshop Schedule*

Week	Topic	Mentor Texts
1	Introduction/Where writers get their ideas/Small Moments (Calkins, 1994; Ray & Cleveland, 2004)	Roller Coaster (Frazee, 2006)
2	Realistic Fiction	"Let's get a pup!" said Kate (Graham, 2003)
3	Memoirs (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)	*Two Mrs. Gibson's* (Igus, 2001)
4	Family Stories (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)	*Good-bye, 382 Shin Dang Dong* (Park & Park, 2002)
5	Literary Nonfiction (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)	*Loki & Alex* (Smith, 2001)
6	Photo Essay (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)	*A Cool Drink of Water* (Kerley, 2006)
7	How-to (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)	*Veterinarians* (Ready, 1997)
8	Everyday writing (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)	*Diary of Worm* (Cronin, 2003)

Mentor text

Each intervention week there was at least one mentor text shared and used to guide the instruction for that session's topic. These mentor texts were selected through the recommendations of unit of study of Calkins (2003) and Ray & Cleveland (2004). Units of study that focus on mentor texts allow students ample opportunities to analyze text and learn about how to structure texts, as well as a variety of genres (Ray, 1999). "Mentor texts provide

ready-made opportunities to demonstrate the power of writers' language choices" (Newman, 2012, page 27). Research has shown that the inclusion of mentor texts within instruction reaps many benefits which include: literature provided a power median for learning (Baumann & Ivy, 1997), students participated in discussions that provided them the chance to gain a deeper understanding of the thought process and purposeful decisions that authors and illustrators make (Snyders, 2014), assisted with writing positively and directly influenced students reading ability (Seban & Tavsanli, 2015), students became engaged with literacy, students grew in regards to word identification and fluency, students' comprehension increased, and students showed growth in written composition (Baumann & Ivy, 1997).

Work at-home

Parents were encouraged to write with their child at-home (utilizing what was learned in the intervention sessions); however, it was not a requirement. If a parent worked with their child outside of the intervention sessions, they were asked to provide the student's work sample as part of the data collection. The researcher provided parents with additional mentor text suggestions that correlated with the topic of that week's intervention. Therefore, if desired they could also check out books from the public library meeting place to assist with implementation outside of the sessions.

Data Collection and Analysis

Overview of Data Collection

Data was gathered from a range of sources in order to answer the research question. Pre-, mid-, and post- FWW interview transcripts, parent/child workshop sessions, field notes, student work, parent emails, text messages, student work from intervention sessions and any student work completed at-home with their parents were analyzed and coded. All interviews were

conducted one on one by a graduate student in the same location that the intervention sessions were held.

During the intervention sessions the researcher set up the sessions similar to the structure of writer's workshop with a mini lesson, independent writing time/conferences, and author's chair.

The researcher took observational field notes during the work time between the parent and child, conferences, and author's chair. The researcher consciously alternated between parent/child pairs in order to collect information on all groups multiple times.

Data was collected the summer of 2017 and into the fall of 2017 during each intervention session. Each session lasted approximately an hour and fifteen minutes. While parents and children were working and conferencing with their children, the researcher modeled conference techniques (as needed), as well as showed interest in their work and thought processes.

Data Sources

Measures

While engaged in the FWW sessions, each parent implemented the same writing intervention with their child during the sessions and was provided the same follow up suggestions for home. Interventions were developed as a uniform treatment in order to create consistency among the experiences of the parent and child. According to Merriam (2009), a holistic qualitative approach contains observations that provide firsthand accounts of the study, interviews, and data analysis. These components were all a part of the researcher's data collection and analysis (Table 3.2 *Data sources and purposes*).

Interviews

Three focused interviews (Yin, 2009) were conducted by an outside doctoral student with

the adult participants: pre-interview, mid-interview, and post-interview. Prior to participating in the intervention workshops, each participant completed a pre-interview. An interview was also conducted at the midway point of the study, so that the researcher could reflect and adjust the sessions as necessary. Once interventions were concluded, five participants completed a post-interview. Since the researcher was providing the FWW sessions, a graduate student conducted the interview with each individual.

Prior to beginning the interview, participants were reminded of the purpose of the study and ensured that their identity would remain confidential. Interviewees had previously reviewed and signed an informed consent (Appendix G) form at the intervention training, and at this time were reminded of the informed consent. Interviewees were also asked for permission to record the interview session. Interviews took place at the public library and were arranged at a time that was convenient for the participant and his or her schedule. The pre-interview sessions were completed prior to the first FWW session. The mid-interviews were held before and after the workshop session and the post-interviews were held after the day of the final session, or the days immediately following the final session.

A focused interview with each participant was completed. A focused interview is a one on one interview, in which open-ended questions are utilized in a style similar to a conversation. Each interview took approximately 30-45 minutes. Although the interview is conversational in nature, the interviewer follows a prescribed set of questions (Yin, 2009).

The interview questions (Appendix H) were formulated using a blueprint that included the focus of the research question to ensure that the interview questions were directly aligned to the research question that the study was seeking to answer. All questions were open-ended in order to allow the interviewee the opportunity to provide depth in their responses.

Prior to using the interview in the field, the researcher provided the interview protocol to the co-chairs and the questions were reviewed. The co-chairs provided feedback, as well as suggestions on rewording questions. Their advice was taken into account in order to elicit the clearest and most effective questions to interviewees.

The purpose of the individual post-interviews was for the researcher to gain a more detailed account of the interventions that took place at-home. This concluding interview session was completed to encompass the new understandings of what was implemented, if and how their at-home practices had been altered, and their opinions regarding at-home writing practices.

The pre-, mid- and post-interviews were conducted by an outside interviewer, as opposed to the researcher, to allow participants the opportunity to speak more freely. The interview protocol also allowed the researcher to probe more deeply into the experiences that were encountered, in addition to gaining a deeper reflection from each participant.

Intervention Data Collection

Observations/field notes

During the writing, conferring, and sharing portion of each intervention session the researcher observed and recorded field notes. Additionally, an elementary teacher with multiple years of experience using writer's workshop, attended four sessions and also observed and took field notes of the children and their parents working together. The researcher kept track of how many times and the duration that each parent/child pairing was observed and during which sessions in order to obtain an equal amount of observation types for all participants.

All observational field notes were taken from the position as a participant observer. Merriam (2009) defines participant observation as an activity that the researcher participates in while simultaneously staying detached in order to observe and analyze the situation. The

observations made during this time were recorded in a field notebook and later transferred to a computer file. These notes were transcribed as soon as possible after each session in order to record notes that were as conclusive and conceivable (Merriam, 2009). This method for note taking was selected because the researcher did not want a computer to be intrusive to the work that the participants were completing.

Field notes were highly descriptive. The participants, setting, activity, and behavior of the participants were written in enough detail so that the reader was able to visualize what the researcher had seen (Merriam, 2009). Notes included participant quotes, detailed descriptions of the setting, descriptions of the interactions that took place during each activity, and participant observer comments.

Student writing pieces

Any work that was completed during the independent writing time between the parent and child was collected and photographed, and the original was given to the family to keep and use at their mid-and post-interview sessions. These pieces were kept in student portfolios. Each of these pieces was dated and utilized in the mid-and post-interview sessions to initiate conversation with the parent about the construction of pieces.

Data Procedures

The researcher provided weekly parent/child writer's workshop sessions for all participants to attend. Participants were provided the researcher's contact information at their initial interview to use if they had any questions or difficulties throughout the intervention process.

For the duration of eight weeks, the parents worked with their child at the writer's workshop sessions at the library. Each week they were responsible for attending the session and

were encouraged to complete a follow up writing activity at-home with their child. Pieces of writing that were created during intervention workshops and at-home were collected. The researcher took pictures of each completed piece and returned the original to the parent to keep.

Once the intervention was concluded, the researcher arranged for one on one interviews with each individual. The interviews were conducted by an individual other than the researcher and were recorded and later transcribed and coded by the researcher. Additionally, an outside researcher coded a portion of the transcriptions in order to create validity and reliability. Table 3.3 provides an overview of each data source and the purpose of each of the sources.

Table 3.3 *Data sources and purposes*

Data source	Purpose
Pre-interview	To gain an understanding of each of the parent participant's current understanding of the writing process, and what is currently done at-home in the area of writing.
Mid-interview	To gain an understanding of what is or is not working thus far in the intervention sessions and adjust as necessary.
Post-interview	To gain an understanding of how the intervention sessions did or did not change each parent participant's perception about assisting their child with writing, what they have learned, what support is still needed.
Field notes	To gather detailed information about the parent and child writing partnership. Observe the interactions between parents and their children as they approach writing throughout the intervention sessions.
Observations	Notes taken by outside observers in order to provide a neutral perspective and triangulate data.
Student work samples (from intervention sessions)	To provide artifacts to the parents during their mid-and post-interviews as a way to initiate discussion and further explanations; documentation of the work completed during intervention sessions.
Student work samples (from at-home work)	To provide artifacts to the parents during their mid- and post-interviews as a way to initiate discussion and further explanations; documentation of the work completed at-home.
Parent emails	To gain an understanding of the challenges and successes that parents encounter when trying to write with their child at-home.

With the permission of each participant, each interview was audio-recorded. The

researcher reviewed, listened to, and transcribed each interview session. Once each session had been transcribed, the researcher listened to each recording again while proof-reading the transcription in order to ensure that each session was accurately transcribed. Each transcription was then coded and analyzed.

Data Analysis

According to Merriam (2009), when conducting qualitative research data collection, the researcher is continually and simultaneously collecting and analyzing data. In the FWW intervention, there were multiple data sources and techniques that contributed to the rigor: (a) the researcher as the participant observer, (b) interactions between the researcher and participants, (c) participant interactions, (d) interviews (pre-, mid-, post-), (e) student work samples, (f) researcher memos, (g) an outside individual recording observations and conducting interviews.

As data was collected throughout the study, the researcher regularly reviewed the data for emerging themes and trends; it was an ongoing process. During qualitative data analysis, data collection and analysis occurs simultaneously (Merriam, 2009). As data was collected during each session, it was also reviewed and analyzed. This was accomplished in between sessions by recording comments and memos about what was being learned.

Once pre-interviews were completed, the researcher read through the data. This was done by listening to, recording (in text) and reading through each parent's response to the questions. Next, the researcher looked at each question and how each participant answered it. This allowed the researcher to see if there were any similarities among responses. Data collection continued throughout the sessions through field notes, and the outside observer notes. After each session, the researcher read the outside observer notes and reread their own field notes. These observations were then compared to the pre-interview responses to see if there

were any observable behaviors that mimicked their pre-interview responses. The same process was done with the mid-interview responses, as it was for the pre-interview. In addition to listening to, recording (in text), reading through parent responses, and comparing questions across participants, the researcher also compared responses from pre-to mid-interviews. In between the mid-interview and pre-interview, the researcher also continued to review and reflect on field notes and outside observer notes. Once the sessions were completed, post-interviews were completed and the same process for reviewing interview data took place. Some sample quotes from the researcher's journal can be found in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 *Examples of Researcher Journal*

Session Three	"I then explained to the students that a memoir is a special memory about people, places, and objects and that it is from the past. Student: It could be about you or someone else. I explained that lots of times authors write about something personal, or important to you."
Session Seven	Since she was using completely blank paper (no lines) we discussed how she was going to use her paper. If she would put her words at the top and pictures at the bottom, pictures at the top and words at the bottom, or change it throughout the book. We talked about how some authors change it throughout the story.

Once the eight sessions and all interviews were completed, the researcher then reviewed the data collected from the entire study. This was completed by reviewing each data source and the themes that emerged within each source. Once each source was coded, the researcher then looked at each source and identified the themes that were common across multiple sources. In order to ease this process, color coding was utilized, with each code having a different color. The researcher then reviewed the coding for each piece of data and compiled lists of common themes. Next, the researcher compared common themes among various data sources. During this process, the researcher condensed themes that were similar, and eliminated any themes that were outliers or that did not align with the research question. Please see Table 3.5 *Examples of*

Coding for specific samples of codes. Results of this data collection and analysis are provided in detail in Chapter 4.

Table 3.5 *Examples of Coding*

Data Source	Example	Code
Pre-interview	"I know for reading I can sit and read with my child, or have them read to me. With writing, I am not sure what to have them do or work with them on."	Uncertainty
Post-interview	"I have learned through these sessions and have felt more encouraged to focus on the content of writing, and the grammar will come in time."	Writing comfort and appropriateness
Field Note	The participants were eager to get started on their writing, and began working as soon as we transitioned from the mini lesson to the independent writing time.	Writing comfort and appropriateness
Observations	Participants appear to be more interested in the other mentor texts (ones provided as other examples besides the ones used for mini lessons) that were provided. For instance, during the how to session, Claire, asked to look at one of the how to books.	Reading-writing connection

Researcher's Memo

This researcher memo is important to this study in order to understand the researcher's experiences in and with literacy, as well as gain an understanding of how the researcher's educational practices influenced their research and study, and how the researcher found a gap in the research for writing and family literacy.

The researcher was first introduced to writer's workshop when they took an elective education course as an early childhood education undergraduate student. There had been little guidance in the researcher's other coursework on how to best teach students how to write. Therefore, the researcher was interested in how they could teach writing in a way that would allow students to be avid and enthusiastic writers. In addition, when the researcher was in graduate school they noticed that there were many studies that covered the area of reading in

both the educational and home setting. However, when the researcher began to branch out and seek research in the field of writing and family literacy it was lacking.

The researcher began their career as an educator as a first grade teacher. The researcher taught first grade, at the same elementary school for nine consecutive years. As a first year teacher, the researcher began by trying to teach writing like the colleagues on their grade level. The five other teachers on the grade level all taught writing using prompts. However, the researcher noticed that the kids were struggling with writing and that they did not enjoy teaching writing. The researcher took the time to reflect on what they learned throughout their undergrad coursework and decided to implement writer's workshop in their classroom (with administration's approval), despite the fact their colleagues instructed writing differently. In addition to utilizing the text *The Art of Teaching Writing,* the researcher also used the book *About the Authors* by Katie Ray Wood and Lisa B. Cleveland

The researcher followed the writer's workshop structure in their classroom on a daily basis. The majority of their mini lessons were centered around reading and analyzing mentor texts that were structured into units. The researcher found that the one-on-one writing conferences were extremely beneficial. Conferencing allowed the researcher to understand and become more familiar with their students' abilities, as well as individualize and goal set with the students. Conferencing with students also made them accountable for their work. Through the researcher's experiences with author's chair, they noticed that it allowed students the opportunity to share their work with an authentic audience, build student confidence, and allowed the chance for students to learn from one another.

Through the researcher's teaching experiences, after implementing writer's workshop, the children began to look forward to writing and it quickly became the researcher's favorite

subject to teach. The children began to enjoy writing and viewed themselves as authors. The children also experienced writing a variety of texts, worked through the entire writing process, and experienced writing for an authentic audience. These benefits were noted each year that the researcher's students participated in writer's workshop. The progress that the researcher's students made was also noted by other teachers and administration. The researcher then assisted other staff members by helping them implement writer's workshop in their classroom. Since the researcher personally experienced student growth using the writer's workshop method, and did not see significant growth through the use of writing prompts, their assumption was that writer's workshop was more beneficial to their students.

Throughout the researcher's nine years as a classroom teacher one question they continuously got asked by parents was how to help their child at-home with writing. It became clear to the researcher that parents felt more comfortable working with their child with reading or math, but when it came to writing they became overwhelmed with what to focus on and where to begin. There were often misconceptions on how to appropriately work with children on spelling, creating stories, and general writing strategies. This common question, in conjunction with the researcher's interest in teaching writing, has led to their interest in family literacy that focuses on writer's workshop.

As the researcher was working in the classroom, they attended graduate school and earned a Master's in Reading, and became a licensed reading specialist. Through their graduate work the researcher gained a greater understanding of reading and writing. The researcher also gained a deeper understanding of the connection between the two areas of literacy.

In addition to being a classroom teacher, the researcher was a reading specialist for five years. The researcher was a reading specialist in Norfolk, Virginia for three years, and at the

time of the intervention was in their second year as a reading specialist in Virginia Beach, Virginia. In their role as a reading specialist the researcher worked with children and coached teachers from kindergarten through fifth grade. Each year, one of the researcher's primary focuses was on writing instruction, and more specifically, writer's workshop. As a reading specialist, the researcher has provided model lessons for teachers, professional developments for school districts, within their school building, for the school division, as well as at the Virginia Beach Reading Council Fall Conference.

Currently, the researcher is an Elementary Language Arts Teacher Specialist (Curriculum and Instruction) with Hampton City Schools in Hampton, Virginia. In this role, they work directly with overseeing the district English Language Arts curriculum, creating and analyzing assessments at the district level, conducting instructional walks and providing feedback to school level administrators, providing professional development for teachers, administrators, and literacy leaders. In this role, the researcher is also the dyslexia representative for Hampton Public Schools and has led two cohorts of LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) through training provided by the Virginia Department of Education. Additionally, the past school year and the current school year, the researcher has been a consultant with other districts that have been utilizing Hampton's curriculum and assessments.

Due to the researcher's background in literacy and because they feel as though they have had a very successful experience with writer's workshop while teaching first grade, there was potential for bias going into this study. This also extends to the researcher's integration of mentor texts with writer's workshop. Since the researcher utilized mentor texts on a weekly basis as an anchor for their mini lessons, they saw how children were able to analyze text, and apply what they learned to their own written work.

The researcher's prior research experience with writing and family involvement includes research that was completed for their comprehensive exam. The purpose of the comprehensive exam study was to build an understanding about parent-initiated home writing practices through a study of blogs written by parents about their child's at-home writing practices. In the parent blog entries used in this study, parents wrote about writing practices that included types of basic writing and writing skills. The home environments that parents wrote about in their blog entries depicted writing practices that embraced emergent writing skills that were also found within the classroom. Parents also wrote about how they supported the craft of writing through the teaching of specific skills such as: spelling, vocabulary, and word choice.

Since the researcher had such a successful experience with how their undergraduate course was structured, they felt it would be easily adaptable for the structure of the intervention sessions in this study. The parents would be provided the opportunity to learn about how to assist their child with writing during the mini lesson, then be provided the time to apply what they learned. The independent work time would also allow the researcher the opportunity to conference with groups of parents, as well as observe their interactions with their child.

Due to the researcher's close work and personal experiences with writer's workshop, they needed to ensure that they took precautions during the study so they would not allow their bias to interfere. One way of protecting their influence from being placed on participants, was by having an individual outside of the intervention sessions conduct the interviews. This would allow the study participants to be more candid and honest with their responses. Additionally, a graduate student attended four of the sessions and took observational notes on the intervention. These notes were utilized to triangulate data, including the observations by the researcher.

Summary

This chapter discusses the methods used for this study, the participants, intervention, and data collection. The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of out of school writing with parents regarding their perceptions of utilizing writer's workshop with their child, both at-home and through writer's workshop sessions that were held at the public library. Multiple data sources were collected and analyzed in order to answer the research questions.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In this chapter, results of the qualitative data analysis of the FWW are discussed. Data analysis addressed the following question in this case study (Merriam, 2009):

1. What are parent perceptions regarding engaging their child with the writing process before, during, and after their participation in writer's workshop with their child?

As described in Chapter 3, this is a bounded case study (Creswell, 2012), since these individuals are all members to the group and are participating in a unique situation. Parents utilized the writing intervention to work with their elementary age child. In what follows, the researcher analyzed the perceptions and what participants reported as a result of the FWW sessions. The primary data source for this study was the pre-, mid-, and post-interviews. These interviews provided insight to how the participant's perceptions altered before, during and after the sessions. The interviews were conducted as follows: pre-interview prior to their first workshop session, mid-interview after the fourth workshop session, and the post-interview was done at the completion of all eight sessions. While the interviews were the primary data source, examples from observations during the sessions, as well as student work samples are also included for contextualization.

Results of Family Writer's Workshop

Three overarching themes of uncertainty, writing comfort and appropriateness, and reading-writing connection materialized during the analysis of the interventions. These themes are discussed in detail in this chapter.

Uncertainty

Uncertainty materialized as parents expressed being uncomfortable, unsure, and unaware of how they use writing with their child. When the participants spoke about writing with their child at home, they felt very anxious about how to approach writing with their child and felt uncomfortable with doing so. Parents indicated that they did not know how or where to begin when working with their child. They also expressed being overwhelmed with the variety of areas that their child needed help with and were uncertain of what to focus on and when to focus on different aspects of their child's writing. They were overwhelmed with everything that their child needed to work on and were unsure where to begin. For example, parents did not know if they should focus on writing a sentence or several sentences, be concerned about spelling errors, spacing, handwriting, grammar, etc. The theme of uncertainty addresses this trend in the data.

Adult participants noted personal growth in how to assist their child with working on writing through the interactions and modeling with the researcher. In pre-interviews, parents were very unsure of what to say, do, or how to guide their child when writing. They expressed that with reading it was easier because they could easily read with their child and have discussions with them about what they read. However, they were hesitant with working on writing with their child because they did not know where to begin. Parents found that from watching conferences and how the researcher asked the students questions and guided their work, that they were able to replicate conferences with their child. As stated in the mid-interview, "When watching Mrs. Innes work with my child she used several questions that led my child to add more details to their work and notice things that they missed like ending marks." These interactions assisted them with how to apply the conference cue cards and work with their child.

Each parent that was interviewed expressed their uncertainty through statements such as, "I know for reading I can sit and read to my child, or have them read to me. With writing, I am not sure what to have them do or work with them on."

In the pre-interview, the majority of parents stated that when they thought about working on writing with their child at home they felt that it was a struggle, as well as the most difficult school subject to work on at home. Comparatively, parents found reading an easier area to work on with their child on because they could easily sit and read their child a story, listen to them read, and ask them questions about the stories that they shared with one another. Each parent that was interviewed expressed this through statements such as, "I know for reading I can sit and read to my child, or have them read to me. With writing, I am not sure what to have them do or work with them on."

Brandon's uncle (who is also his guardian) spoke openly of his and his wife's frustrations when working with Brandon at home. During the pre-interview he expressed his understanding of writing as follows, "My current understanding is trying to get him to write his letters the correct way and take his time when he is writing. We do create a sheet that he can copy letters and sentences. But it is like World War III to get him to do that. We usually have to bribe, some kind of motivation to get him to do that." Brandon's guardians also expressed that they felt as though it was difficult for him and his wife to relate to Brandon and know how to work with him. This can be found in the following statement from the pre-interview, "It is us trying to relate to him and us trying to teach him why it is important to get him interested in it. Knowing how to teach him is challenging."

Another parent who expressed uncertainty during the pre-interview was Tiffany's mother. She stated "Right now she (her daughter) is behind in reading, math, and writing. She

has had a difficult time the past few years. I am not sure how to support writing or how to get her interested or what extra things I can do. I want to better understand what she needs for third grade and how to help and assist her." Mitchell's mother also exhibited some uncertainty in her pre-interview by saying the following, "I know that writing is developmental, but I do not know what I should be focusing on with him. I want to make sure that I am not putting writing in a box and that it has to be a certain way. I would like him to have some ownership, maybe with a checklist." Isabel's mother made additional reference to her uneasiness with several statements in her pre-interview. These statements were as follows, "We don't create any type of writing at home. I read with the kids, but the only type of writing we do is if we have to write something down during homework. So, I am not sure what to do. But, I am open to whatever I can learn. Anything I can learn to help my daughter."

"Writing is the hardest to work on at home," stated Katie's mother at her pre-interview. "For us reading always comes first; it is our go to school activity. I want to be able to write with her at home, but I don't want to squash her creativity."

At the mid-interview, adult participants stated that they were beginning to feel more comfortable with writing with their child. Participants noted that when observing the researcher have conversations with their child about their writing, and being able to join in it made them feel more confident in interactions about writing. The adult participants displayed doubt in the first session when we transitioned to the independent work component. During this time, they sat and watched their child work and had very limited interactions. The parents were not expected to work with their child yet, however it was interesting to see their comfort level of working with their child on writing. As each session progressed, the adult participants seemed to become more comfortable with working with their child and this uncertainty soon became

understanding and comfort in their role to support and work with their child, which data analysis revealed to be a second major theme in this study.

Writing Comfort and Appropriateness

The second theme of writing comfort and appropriateness refers to parents moving from a place of not understanding where to begin with their child and moving towards gaining an understanding of how to work with their child and assist with promoting writing. This theme identifies the trend in data that demonstrates a shift in understanding and awareness of writing.

One primary finding from this study was the shift in perception in the area of writing. Based on pre-interview data, adult participants aligned writing with proper grammar, capitalization, spelling, and penmanship. Therefore, these were the components that they focused on with their children.

When looking at the mid-interview and post-interview data, it was noted that parents cited the changes to their perceptions of writing and working with their child. Instead of solely focusing on the editing portion of the writing process, they now saw the value in providing feedback and encouragement when their child was creating a piece of writing. They had begun to understand that they should be focusing on the content of what was being written. The majority of participants stated that through the FWW sessions they learned to be more encouraging and supportive during the prewriting and brainstorming, the construction of sentences and story elements. Participants stated this in both the mid-interview and post-interviews. Mitchell's mother expressed this during her mid-interview when stating, "From watching Mrs. Innes and seeing her ask Mitchell questions, I see him being more creative with his actual writing and then once it is written, she goes back and assists with any sentence writing mistakes. Also, when she does this, she asks him questions instead of just having him fix it."

Along with this, participants expressed in their pre-interview that they needed to learn to be patient. Many times they would immediately want their children to fix grammar, spelling, punctuation, and penmanship errors immediately. By the mid-interview, parents noted that there was a shift in patience. Parents also noted in the post-interview, that they were becoming more accustomed to working with their child, and it aided in being more patient. Additionally, they began to understand that they needed to let their child be creative and write. Then once the child composed their piece, they could go back and work on the revising and editing components of the work that was completed.

Through their pre-interview, several parents seemed to understand that writing was developmental. However, those that had this understanding stated that while they understood this, they did not know what was appropriate for their child to be doing for their age or grade level. These same parents were able to express that writing is on a continuum, but again they were unsure of how to support their child along this continuum or how to work with and support them on their developmental level. This is important because it exhibits awareness versus the reality of practice. Brandon's uncle, expressed this when describing the challenges he faced when working with Brandon, "It has been 35 years since me or my wife have done writing at his level. So knowing how to teach him is challenging."

Nearly half of the participating parents/guardians expressed that when they think about writing and their child, they felt that writing should be focused on writing the letters correctly. Many parents commented on how they would like to be able to assist their child at home with their letter formation. For instance, Tiffany's mother (whose daughter was eight years old and entering third grade) stated "I would like to be able to help her with letter formation and neatness, and working on spacing." Another participant, Katie's mother, expressed similar

concerns. "She doesn't want to do things like finger spacing. I would also like to help her with holding the pencil and have a checklist for her to go back and fix her work." This was related to comfort and appropriateness because this parent explained to the researcher that she did not feel comfortable on where to begin with her daughter and when she tried to work with her child she was not sure if her expectations were appropriate for her age and grade level.

In addition to wanting to learn more about assisting with correct letter formation, neatness, and spacing there was also a focus on grammar when parents responded to how they would like to assist their child. Brandon's guardian expressed that he would like to be able to assist his nephew with punctuation, knowing what a noun and a verb are, past tense, present tense, and English grammar. However, he also stated that with his nephew's age and entering first grade he was not sure if that was something he should be doing with Brandon or where the appropriate place was to begin to focus on, which made him uncomfortable with assisting him.

Interestingly, while parents and guardians expressed the desire to assist their children with letter formation, grammar, and punctuation during the pre-interview, they also expressed that a challenge they faced at home with writing was that their child struggled with feeling the need to be a perfectionist when it came to things such as grammar and spelling. Isabel's mother made a reference to this when explaining the challenges of working with Isabel at home, "She is a perfectionist, which limits and squashes her creativity and makes her not want to write at all." Claire's mother also expressed that it was very challenging working with her daughter with writing at home due to the fact that Claire was a perfectionist. This was classified as comfort and appropriateness because the parents wanted to be able to focus on what was appropriate for their child's age, because at this time their child's work would not be perfect.

Other participants felt and stated at their pre-interview that they had little to no background knowledge of how to assist their child with writing. One participant expressed that all of their current understanding of writing was whatever writing they completed as homework assignments, which were just simply writing responses to questions. While participants did not have (as they perceived) adequate knowledge for working at home with writing, they did express that they were eager and willing to learn more about this. For example, Isabel's mom stated that she felt excited to be working with her daughter with writing because she did not currently work on this at home. Furthermore, when considering what she would like to learn about writing and working with her child, Isabel's mother conveyed, "I am open to whatever I can learn and anything I can learn to help my daughter." This statement was made at the time of the pre-interview, Isabel's mother expressed that because she did not work on writing at home, she wanted to gain an understanding of what would be appropriate for Isabel and feel comfortable doing so.

Another aspect in which parents expressed growth, or a shift, when working with their child, was that they found that they needed to be more patient with their child and with the writing process. After reflection, and watching the researcher conference, Isabel's mother noticed that she often did not provide enough wait time for her child to think or get out their own ideas. In addition, she expressed that she often became impatient when Isabel was working, which caused mutual frustration. However, through FWW Isabel's mother came to the realization that her daughter needed time to think through what she was working on and that her thought process was not like an adult's. Therefore, it was appropriate to give her daughter processing time and this created a more comfortable working environment for them both.

During the first session many parents did not interact with their children and the interactions that did occur were focused on spelling words and simply telling them to write. This reflected the data gathered in the pre-interview in which the parents expressed that they did not work with their child at home with writing and were unsure how to approach it. The adults seemed to feel very unsure and uncomfortable assisting and working with their children. Many of the parents/guardians simply sat there and watched the child they were with and did not interact with them while they worked. When the parents did work with their children it was simply to spell words for them.

One student, Katie, was very enthusiastic to begin writing her piece. She was very eager to write a story about her dog and a time that her dog was acting crazy. She did very well thinking of one specific time that her dog was acting silly, and wrote about that small moment. Her mother did interact with her but only by assisting her when spelling words.

Prior to being a participant in the study the majority of parents expressed that they did not currently work with their child at home with writing, and there was no writing being done outside of school. The few parents who did work with their child with writing at home focused on activities such as copying sentences or using a sentence starter. This was not surprising because the pre-interview showed that their perception of what writing included was centered more on the editing component of the writing process. They stated that they wish that they could be of better assistance in mechanics (capital letters and ending punctuation), penmanship, letter formation, neatness, spacing, and grammar. None of the participants spoke about the actual construction or craft of writing.

For example, at the mid-interview portion of the workshop (halfway through the sessions), parents expressed that they felt they were more patient with their child as they were

working on writing, began to feel more comfortable viewing their child's work through the eyes of the content as opposed to grammar and neatness. Mitchell's mother expressed this in her mid-interview when she stated, "I have learned through these sessions and have felt more encouraged to help him focus on the content of writing, and that the grammar will come in time."

At the second session, both Claire and her mother wrote. During the second session, and the following sessions, her mother brought along her laptop and while her daughter was writing, she wrote on her laptop. Throughout this conference, Claire's mother also became involved in the discussion. She became involved when talking about what they did together as a family, as well as agreeing with the statement that there are many books written on the same topic and that they differ based on the experiences and information provided.

During her mid-interview and post-interview, Katie's mother expressed that she was feeling more comfortable with having writing conversations with her daughter. As soon as the writing and conference component in session five began, Katie immediately came to the researcher asking if they could assist her with revising her work. She had decided that she wanted to add more to her current story, therefore they worked on taking apart her book and reordering it with her new pages. This also exhibits how Katie has developed a good understanding of the writing process, and that as writers we continually revise our work prior to publishing. Once these changes were made, she was eager to immediately share these changes with her mother. Her mother was very attentive, she had been working on her own writing again today, but paused to listen to her child read to her and ask her questions about what she had written. Once the researcher moved to another table, her mother took over seamlessly.

Throughout her mid-interview and post-interviews, Mitchell's mother mentioned how learning to focus on one aspect of writing (composition) at a time allowed their child to not

become overwhelmed. She also stated that this allowed her to not become frustrated with everything the child needed to fix, and the process was much more pleasant for both of them. In addition to interview statements about feeling more assured when working with her son, she also stayed after the third session and reported to the researcher how she was feeling more comfortable letting her son be creative. During the sixth session, the researcher noted that Mitchell's mom began to follow the researcher's example and ask him questions as he was writing to help him get his thoughts down on paper. Since he had taken the time to plan out his pictures, adding the text and answering the prompts that his mother provided made it much easier for him to complete his writing.

During the final interview, Mitchell's mother discussed that prior to the sessions she was hyper focused on the editing portion of the writing process, which includes spelling, punctuation and grammar. Through the workshops she found that when focusing on the content her son was able to create content and write more freely. Then once Mitchell completed his content she stated, "Once he completed his content I was able to work with him by going back to his work. The conferencing techniques and questions that were used during the sessions also helped me work with him without upsetting him."

Participants also noted a change in their child's perception of writing. During the final interview, Isabel's mother expressed that she had a deeper understanding of how to work with her child with writing, as well as identified the importance of making time for these kinds of writing activities. Isabel's mother expressed that based on her experiences, "I need to carve more time out to work together. Since she has a little brother at home, we do not get as much time together one on one. This has allowed us to focus on something special, and I have learned a lot about my child through this process." Prior to the FWW interventions, this same parent had

expressed that they did not work on writing at home and that she did not know what to do. As seen from the post-interview comment, the parent now felt confident and certain that she had the tools to work with her child at home and would make time to do so.

Some of the student participants came into the intervention enjoying writing and others were not interested in and avoided writing. Parents of those students who were successful or enjoyed writing prior to FWW stated that they noticed a change in their child. They stated that their children were seeking out new writing opportunities at home, looking forward to weekly FWW sessions, generating writing ideas throughout everyday situations, and making connections with what they were reading to possible writing opportunities.

Some parents of these students expressed that their children went from putting up a fight to write to seeking opportunities to write, looking forward to working on writing, and also sharing their writing with others. As the children began to write and interact with the mini lessons and author's chair, their confidence grew as well. For those students, and in particular with the participant Mitchell, their view of writing went from negative to positive. Mitchell's mother stated that the author's chair of the FWW gave her child purpose to their writing and that when they were now writing at home, they found enjoyment in sharing their work with other family members. The parents of the previously reluctant writers also stated that they felt that when they (the parent) shifted their thinking from focusing on editing to the creative content that their child was constructing, their child's motivation for writing increased, which consequently made it more gratifying for the adult and child.

In addition to parents noting a shift in the parent participant's comfort level with writing, Mitchell, a reluctant writer, became enthusiastic and comfortable with writing. Mitchell was an eight year old, entering third grade, and his mother home schooled him. His mother stated that

previously she was focusing with him on correcting his grammar, mechanics, and handwriting. Through watching the researcher work with her son and focus more on the content first, and letting the revising and editing come into place after composing, she saw that her son was able to be creative. She felt that by allowing him to just write, he wasn't held back. Then once he was done writing, he was able to go back and edit his work with guidance and was more willing to do so than when she had him stop continuously as he was writing. At the conclusion of the second session, Mitchell's mother stayed after and expressed to me that her son despised writing. Whenever she tried working with him at home, he would become easily frustrated and reluctant to write. His mother then told the researcher that since he was what she referred to as a reluctant writer, she had signed her son up for FWW without telling him. She decided not to tell him until they got to the library the day of the first session. His mother then went on to express that at the conclusion of the first session, before they got back to the car, her son turned to her and said, "That was a lot of fun, can we come here again?" His mother also expressed that throughout the week he was already working on writing at home. This was something that he had never done at home previously on his own. She found it very promising that after just one session of the FWW, she saw that there was a change in her son's attitude toward writing. This was classified under writing comfort because Mitchell found comfort in the FWW setting, and through mid- and post-interviews his mother also expressed that this comfort level eventually transferred to writing at home as well.

By the mid-interviews, it was noted that the majority of the parents were becoming more comfortable working with their child. For example, Isabel's mother began to pick up where the resercher left off from conferencing with her daughter. When the researcher conferred with Isabel, the researcher had her share what she had been working on and she expressed that she

was struggling with deciding what to write next in her story. The researcher guided her to look at what she had drawn and describe the picture to them. The researcher and Isabel talked about how authors write so that the reader can picture, or visualize, what they are reading. Next, the researcher and Isabel used her picture to make sure that she was creating sentences and using words in order to achieve this. Once Isabel seemed to feel confident with these next steps, the researcher moved to another table. The researcher noted that after they left the table, Isabel's mother followed the researcher's lead and began to ask her some questions about the work she previously completed and asked her follow-up questions. Some of the follow-up questions that Isabel's mother asked were as follows: "What else are you going to add to your story?", "Can you review it?", and "What do you want to add next to your list?"

At the beginning of session seven's independent writing time, Katie decided to start a new piece of writing, therefore the researcher made sure to give her some thinking time before conferring with her. Once it was evident that she had begun writing, the researcher decided to have a conference with her to see if she needed any assistance getting started. She had decided to write about how to take care of a pet. When she read the title to the researcher, her mom noticed that Katie accidentally omitted a word. The researcher had noticed this when they sat down. However, the researcher was interested to see how the parent would handle it since they had modeled it several times with the parents. Katie's mother mimicked how the researcher had modeled it in the past: she reread the title and pointed to the words as she read it. The student immediately noticed her error and fixed it.

Furthermore, another thought expressed by a participant, Isabel's mother, was that they needed to be more focused on the process and the content that their child was producing. They stated that, as a parent, they often just want to get the work done and move on. However, after

seeing their child work through the process and have their own voice in the work that they were creating, they now realized that they were often rushing their child and inhibiting their creativity and the writing process.

For example, Mitchell was a very reluctant writer and was described by his mother as hating to write and feeling as though he could not do so. As previously stated, Mitchell's mother shared that she had specifically signed her child up for the study because he was a very reluctant writer and she did not know what to do to assist him. The participant said that after the first session, her child expressed how much fun he had and that he did not know that writing could be so much fun. Mitchell's mother expressed after the first two sessions that she saw a visible change in how he approached writing and that he was getting excited about what to write about. By the mid-interview, Mitchell's mother stated, "His view on writing has completely changed. He absolutely loves coming each week, loves writing, and wants more writing workshops. In the past, he struggled to get words on the paper and never knew what he should write about." Through his experiences in FWW, Mitchell's mother indicated he became self-assured and he was always ready and eager to write. He would come to FWW sessions with ideas and begin writing as soon as independent writing time began. Additionally, he not only immersed himself in his writing process, but was always attentive and asked questions when his peers shared during author's chair. This child moved from being an uncertain and apprehensive writer, to a self-assured and avid writer.

At the post-interview, Mitchell's mother also stated that she noticed a change in how she felt about working on writing with her son. She said, "I feel more comfortable not getting held up on the technical aspect of writing."

Claire's mother also noticed a change in her daughter's writing tenacity. In the pre-interview Claire's mother expressed that her daughter enjoyed writing and had a journal at home that she wrote to her father when he was on deployment. At the mid-interview, Claire's mother stated that she has seen her daughter enjoying writing more than she used to and that she was seeing Claire find ways to be more expressive. Additionally, at the post-interview her mother discussed how Claire's enjoyment and love for writing had grown even more since the mid-interview. She stated that Claire continually wrote in between sessions and that she had learned to be even more expressive and creative in her work.

At her pre-interview, Tiffany's mother referred to her daughter as a struggling student and her daughter had several difficult years in school. While most of the children in the study seemed to gain their confidence quickly (in one or two sessions), it took several sessions for Tiffany to begin writing right at the start of the independent work time. However, with encouragement from other participants and feeling successful, Tiffany began to be more attuned to her capabilities. Tiffany's mother also began to encourage her daughter more and as Tiffany became more excited her mother did as well. During her post-interview, Tiffany's mother shared that by the conclusion of the FWW sessions, Tiffany was enjoying writing more and felt more comfortable with writing.

Tiffany's mother also cited that being able to work with another child seemed to help her daughter become more confident and less reluctant when writing. Tiffany and Claire began sitting with one another at every session. The two worked well together and Tiffany looked to Claire for support and guidance. For example, when working on her horse book she asked Claire what information she should add to her book.

Through the mid-and post-interviews parents indicated that their children got used to the routine and the expectation that they would be writing. Therefore, they saw that their children seemed to come prepared with ideas about what to write about and if they did not, they had also become accustomed to reflecting on the topic and/or book from the mini lesson for ideas.

Furthermore, the librarian at the location stopped the researcher after the third session to express how she had noticed the confidence change between the first and second session. She said that parents and their children were expressing to her how much they were learning and how much they enjoyed writing through the workshop sessions.

As explained in this section on the theme of writing comfort and appropriateness, based on pre-interview data parents were not comfortable with working on writing with their child and were unsure of what was appropriate to focus on based on their child's age, grade level, and needs. Parents expressed through their mid-and post-interview that through their FWW experiences, they became more comfortable with working with their child in regards to writing, as well as knowing what was more appropriate for their child.

Reading-Writing Connection

Reading-writing connection was substantiated by parents coming to the realization that there is a connection between what is read and what is written, viewing text through the lens of a writer, and seeing new writing opportunities when encountering text.

The theme of reading-writing connection is one that transpired for participants as the FWW sessions progressed. It was noted in the pre-interview from parent responses that they saw these as two distinctly different areas, and that they were not connected. As the sessions continued, there was a progression for parents as evidenced through mid-and post-interview

comments. Additionally, parents expressed during their mid- and post-interviews that they noticed their children in the study also began making these connections.

One aspect of the pre-interview explored reading and writing activities completed at-home. Overwhelmingly, the reading activity that participants did with their child at-home was read books. Parents read together with their child, children read independently, and children read with their siblings. During the pre-interview every participant mentioned reading books with their child at home. Participants referenced the following reading times and activities at home: reading a book at bedtime, reading instructions when playing video games, getting books to read from the school library, reading books online, reading with brother/sister, child reading by themselves, completing comprehension passages, and listening to their mom read. Two parents even explicitly expressed that reading is the priority. This was expressed by Katie's mother when she stated during her interview, "Reading comes first in our home, before we do anything else. It is our go to after school activity."

Conversely, when asked at the pre-interview about writing activities at-home participants expressed that they do not do very many writing activities at-home and some participants had difficulty thinking of any activities. When asked more deeply about working with their children on writing at-home parents expressed that they felt it was necessary but a struggle, and that it was the hardest area for them to work on with their child.

At the pre-interview, some writing activities that were mentioned were creating lists, journaling, spelling, grammar, copying sentences, and answering comprehension questions. Both Brandon's uncle (five year old child) and Tiffany's mother (eight year old child) specified that they have their children copy sentences. The parents each would write a sentence and then have the child copy it. Brandon's uncle also stated during his pre-interview, "Me and my wife,

at least once a day we try to get him to write sentences and his name." The only writing that Mitchell's mother could think of doing with her son was after they read comprehension passages (for homeschooling), having him answer some comprehension questions in writing. At her pre-interview, Mitchell's mother stated, "There is writing as part of his reading comprehension book. He has to write down his answers and I make sure he uses correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling."

Parents also shared that their children rarely saw them writing at home. When parents were asked if they ever modeled, or wrote in the presence of their children it was minimal or non-existent. One parent stated that she does write a lot for work related reasons. However, her children never see it because she does not write unless they are asleep. Some parents stated that occasionally their children may see them write a list or an email. The majority of participants also did not seem to recognize that they are writing throughout their own day at home when writing emails, making lists, composing a note, sending a text message, etc. This was evident because when asked in the pre-interview parents responded to the question that acknowledged what their child saw them writing at home by the following: we don't do much writing in front of him, not much, thinking aloud, simple sentences, and words. For example, when asked what types of writing do you model for your child, Mitchell's mother stated, "He doesn't see me write, not much at all, I guess he sees me write lists." Brandon's uncle responded to the question by stating, "I don't write, so he doesn't see me write. Just copying a sentence that I may give him to copy." Isabel's mother was also at a loss when asked this question during her interview; she responded by stating, "I don't do a lot of writing, I guess I write some lists."

These findings were also supported by the mid-interview data. Mitchell's mother shared that she had never thought to approach writing through the use of the books, like the researcher

did at the beginning of each session. She also said that after reading at home, her son was starting to think of writing ideas based on what he read and how he created a new type of book. At her mid-interview, Claire's mother also cited how her daughter had been reading books at home and then using those books as inspiration for her own writing. She also mentioned this at her post-interview and brought up a how-to book that Claire completed at home during the week and between sessions. Claire's mother stated, "Claire really liked learning about how-to books, I think because she likes teaching people. So she started getting some of those kinds of books and then looking at them to help her decide how to write her own." By the third session, there was evidence the participants began to make connections between the craft of writing and literacy components found in reading. Throughout this session, it was also noted that children were beginning to make connections between what they were learning about different writing genres and their own work. One student began their conference with the researcher by stating that they were going to start a new piece of work and would like to write a realistic fiction story like they learned about at the last session. The participant was able to verbalize their understanding of this type of text by telling the researcher that they wanted to make up a story, but wanted it to be something that could really happen.

Parents did state that they felt their children seemed to come prepared with ideas about what to write about and if they did not, they had become accustomed to reflecting on the topic and/or book from the mini lesson for ideas. The parents also stated that observing the researcher using books in lessons also helped them assist their child with making decisions about what to write about.

At the post-interview, Mitchell's mother stated that through the mini lessons she was looking at books a little differently and began to see types of writing her son could write that she

never thought of before, such as the photo essay. From this statement, the participants were gaining an understanding of the different types of writing and were able to apply it to their own work. The researcher observed children modeling their work after the genre that was taught in the mini lesson. When conferencing with children, they were able to tell the researcher what type of writing they created and what characteristics classified it as that genre.

Several parents commented during their mid-and post-interviews about the connection between using mentor texts when teaching writing. Katie's mother expressed the following, "Using the different books helped Katie think of different ways that the authors think and she saw that she could do the same thing when she writes." Additionally, Katie's mother also mentioned in an interview that at home she has been trying to follow the same style as the lessons in FWW by using books and looking at what the author did while writing. Mitchell's mother explicitly stated that her view of writing with her child changed when she was able to see how books were being used. This was said in part by the following, "I feel more comfortable not getting held up in the technical aspects of writing and the books from the lessons helped me focus on the writing. I really liked the different types of writing. There were many that I never would have thought of and one of my favorites was using photographs for writing." Claire's mother also reflected on the experience and saw changes in her viewpoint that included the connection between reading and writing, "I have been encouraged to write more with my daughter and to read books as a way to get more excited about creating writing. Using books helped Claire be more creative in what she writes about and her favorite part was being able to write books like the ones that Mrs. Innes read to them."

Summary

In this chapter, the results of the case study (Merriam, 2009) are described, which was used during a Family Writer's Workshop intervention. Details from each of the eight FWW sessions were shared, as well as changes of participant perception prior to the workshop and after the final session. The interactions throughout these eight sessions were also examined and discussed. Three themes materialized during the analysis of the interventions: uncertainty, writing comfort and appropriateness, and reading-writing connection. Uncertainty referenced parents expressing being uncomfortable, unsure, and unaware of how they use writing with their child. The second theme of writing comfort and appropriateness cited parents moving from a place of not understanding where to begin with their child and moving towards gaining an understanding of how to work with their child and assist with promoting writing. Lastly, the theme of the reading-writing connection was established by parents gaining an understanding that there is a connection between what is read and what is written.

In Chapter Five, these results will be discussed in further detail, including in regards to how they will assist educators in creating a home-school writing connection and how these results enrich family literacy research, as well as provide information on how to create an effective writing focused family literacy program, implications for instructional practice, and future research.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This chapter presents affirmations from qualitative analysis of the data collected during the case study and discusses those in regard to (a) the results presented in Chapter 4, (b) unanticipated outcomes, and (c) limitations of the study. Recommendations for possible family literacy integration and future research are also discussed.

Summary of the Study

Overview of the problem

There are many school-based and community-based family literacy programs that are being implemented. While these programs are successful, they are missing a crucial component: writing intervention. Writing is a skill that our students will need for higher education and future careers (Cutler & Graham, 2008; National Writing Commission, 2003).

The problem for this study was that research is lacking in regards to ways to assist parents who are interested in working on writing with their child outside of school. This research study focused on bringing writer's workshop, specifically Family Writer's Workshop (FWW), from the classroom to an out-of-school setting. In FWW, parents and children had the opportunity to attend eight sessions that were led by the researcher. The sessions followed the same structure as writer's workshop in the classroom. In each session, there were mini lessons that were anchored in mentor texts. After each mini lesson, participants engaged in a writing block, conferencing (with the researcher and their parent/guardian) and author's chair. As parents and their children worked together, the researcher observed interactions between parents and their child, as well as provided conferencing, modeling and coaching.

Research has also shown that writing is a vital component to an individual's future success, not only in academics, but also for future educational opportunities and careers (Harris, Graham, Friedlander, & Laud, 2013; Cutler & Graham, 2008; National Writing Commission, 2003; National Writing Commission, 2004). In order to understand how parents or guardians may assist students with becoming successful writers, it is important to investigate a method that has been found to be effective in the classroom.

Purpose Statement and Research Question

The purpose of this single case study (Merriam, 2009) is to examine the perceptions of parents regarding utilizing writer's workshop with their child outside of school, both at-home and through workshop sessions that were held at a public library. If knowledge is obtained concerning out-of-school writer's workshop interactions we may gain a better understanding of writing outside of the classroom and insight on how to further assist parents. This study utilized qualitative methods to gain an understanding of the perceptions of parents' experiences using writer's workshop with their child.

As Calkins (1994) expresses in *The Art of Teaching Writing*, "By watching us, children can learn that writing is not only doable, it is also worth doing" (Calkins, 1994, p. 60). Children often observe parents and educators writing every day. As children watch, they then see writing as a way to communicate with others. Children are constantly observing parents and teachers writing e-mails, notes, lists, cards, messages, etc. As a reading specialist, it is the researcher's experience that when students see that the adults in their lives use and value writing, they also see the value in it. Some of the activities that have been documented are list making, letter writing (handwritten and on the computer), messages, forms, diaries, and assignments (Stainthorp & Hughes, 2000).

The following research question guided the study:

1. What are parent perceptions regarding engaging their child with the writing process before, during, and after their participation in Family Writer's Workshop with their child?

Review of Methodology

This study implemented an out-of-school writing intervention experience, Family Writer's Workshop (FWW), that was attended by six pairs of students and their parents/guardians. This qualitative study utilized the case study approach (Merriam, 1998). Due to the fact that the researcher wanted to gain a thorough awareness and comprehension of the parent and child out of school writing phenomenon, a qualitative case study was most appropriate. A case study approach was also best for this study because an objective of this case study was to obtain a detailed understanding of the experiences that parents and their children had with out-of-school writing through FWW sessions. Also, since the population of this study was small, a case study approach allowed for an in-depth picture of the data and findings. The primary source of data came from pre-, mid-, and post-interviews with the participants. In addition to collecting data through interviews, anecdotal notes from both the researcher and graduate student (who attended four of the eight sessions) were collected and analyzed.

Participants were selected through convenience sampling (Merriam, 2009). These participants were solicited through posting throughout the community such as the local YMCA, library branches, and through social media. Participants included six pairs of parents/guardians and their child. Each of these sessions was held at a neutral location, the local public library.

The researcher conducted the mini lessons, conferenced with participants, and ran each of the eight sessions. Due to this fact, another graduate student assisted with administering the three interviews (pre-, mid-, post-) with adult participants. A graduate student also attended four

of the intervention sessions to assist with observations in order for it to be triangulated with the researcher's. Additionally, students' completed pieces of writing were photographed for data collection purposes. The researcher and graduate student also took notes of the sessions that were used for data collection purposes. Therefore, multiple data sources (interviews, session observations, and field notes) were collected and analyzed in order to answer the research questions.

Each of the eight FWW session, contained the following elements: a) instruction and guidance of implementing components of writer's workshop outside of the school setting, (b) parents and children working together through the writing process, and (c) the use of mentor texts (based on a specific type of writing). These elements can be found within the traditional writer's workshop format that is found in American elementary schools. Each session lasted approximately an hour and fifteen minutes.

Students were provided writing folders to keep all of their FWW materials in one location. Participants took their folders home with them in between sessions. They were highly encouraged, but not mandated, to work on their writing at home. If participants completed writing work at home, they were asked to add the work to their FWW folder to share with the researcher during the next session.

Since each FWW mini lesson was anchored with a mentor text, the researcher also provided an array of mentor texts for participants to borrow in between sessions, as well as read and review during sessions. The library setting of the sessions also allowed the opportunity for families to check out books prior to or after FWW sessions. Participants were also encouraged by the researcher to check books out from the library that were aligned to the genre or type of writing that they were introduced to that day during the mini lesson.

Findings Related to the Literature

Research has shown us that there are positive correlations between family literacy that is focused on reading interventions (Baker, 2013; Bennett, Weigel, & Martin, 2002, Neuman, 1996; Saracho, & Spodek, 2010; Sénéchal, 2006). Further research needs to be conducted in the area of writing to understand its impact on family literacy. FWW was created to address this gap in the research. Three themes emerged from the data: uncertainty, writing comfort and appropriateness, and reading-writing connection.

Uncertainty

When students are in school, families are often coached and offered support that centers on reading skills such as developmental spelling, reading books for fluency, decoding, comprehension, and sight word lists that can be implemented in their home (Saracho & Spodek, 2010; Neuman, 1996; Bennett, Weigel, & Martin, 2002; Sonnenschein & Munsterman, 2002). The majority of family literacy does not involve a writing component. When parents participated in the pre-interview for this FWW study, they expressed that they felt comfortable working with reading at home with their child. However, when it came to the area of writing they were unsure of where to begin, what was appropriate, or even what to ask their child's teacher about in regards to writing.

The theme of uncertainty developed as parents expressed being uncomfortable, unsure, and unaware of how they use writing with their child. Parents were very uncertain of where to begin when working with their child and writing. During the pre-interview, some parents expressed that they knew that writing was developmental but were uncertain of what that meant for their child and where to start. Writer's workshop that was implemented in the FWW model, was an ideal fit for this uncertainty. As found in a kindergarten writer's workshop case study

(Snyders, 2014), when these students were provided with a structured writing time that included discussions they began to view themselves as writers and were able to work at each of their developmental levels. Similarly, FWW intervention provided the same aspects for participants. Through mid-interview statements, parents expressed that the guidance of a structure for writing with their child and the modeling of conferences allowed them to become more confident when working with their child.

Through this research study, parents were put into the position of learning directly from the researcher modeling mini lessons and conferring with students in anticipation of making them feel more certain in their own abilities. Similarly, a study that used dialogue journals (Kay, Neher, & Lush, 2010) and a family message journal study (Wollman-Bonilla, 2001) cited positive interactions through these studies between the family and students. This FWW research study, the dialogue journals (Kay, Neher, & Lush, 2010) and a family message journal study (Wollman-Bonilla, 2001) each allowed families to interact with their children through writing. These studies also found that when families were provided feedback it enhanced the experience between parents and children. Additionally, these studies show potential for parents being capable of providing writing support at home.

Another aspect of the uncertainty theme was that parents did not have confidence in themselves as writers. In a mixed methods study conducted by Huebner (2000), preschool children and their families received language skill interventions. Families were provided guidance on language skill interventions to develop regular reading between parents and their children. It was determined that with this guidance there was a change in parent attitude and increased confidence in regards to home literacy, as well as an increase in how often children were read to on a weekly basis (Huebner, 2000). When asked during the pre-interview about

what writing they (adult participants) do at home and what writing their children see them do, parents felt that they did not write. Parents expressed in their pre-interview that they never or rarely wrote at home, could not think of times that their child sees them writing, and did not view themselves as examples of writers for their children. Meanwhile, after being a part of FWW, cited in both the mid-interview and post-interview, participants began to see writing throughout their everyday experiences. Parents stated that they became more aware and recognized when they were writing at home. This was also brought to light during the final FWW session that focused on everyday writing. Both parents and students were able to create an exhaustive list of times they write or see family members writing throughout the day, while during the pre-interview parent participants were unable to recognize these moments in their lives.

The theme of uncertainty developed from parent pre-interview data citing that they were unsure and uncomfortable with their ability to work with their child at home. Parents not only struggled with what writing with their child looked like, but also with the everyday opportunities of writing in daily lives and did not view themselves as writers. Additionally, as the study progressed, it was evident through the mid-interview and post-interview data there was a shift from this uncertainty to becoming more aware and certain of their abilities.

Writing comfort and appropriateness

Writing comfort and appropriateness refers to parents moving from a place of not understanding where to begin with their child and moving towards gaining an understanding of how to work with their child and assist with promoting writing. Throughout the theme of writing comfort and appropriateness, parents stated in their mid- and post-interviews that it was beneficial to see an educator (in this case the researcher) work directly with the students in both the mini lessons and the conferences.

A goal of writing is quality composition and the organization of written work. It was evident during the pre-interview that parents were focused on their child's handwriting, grammar, and punctuation. This seemed to be an area that they felt most comfortable with, however they were not sure if this was appropriate to focus on or not for their child. In a study by Kos and Maslowski (2001), students participated in a study that focused on student writing perceptions. Interestingly, the students in the Kos and Maslowski (2001) study felt that good writer's had neat handwriting and correctly used conventions. By the conclusion of this study, the students viewed writer's as people who wrote frequently and were able to express themselves through writing (Kos & Maslowski, 2001). The researcher found a similar parallel with the parents in the FWW intervention. Prior to the first FWW session, parents focused on the penmanship, grammar, and mechanics of writing. However, beginning in the mid-interviews and throughout the post-interviews parents spoke of writing as the composition and what their child was writing. By the conclusion of the FWW interventions, they saw that writing was a process and that when their child was engaged in writing it was primarily when their child was constructing thoughts on paper. While grammar and mechanics are important, it is only a piece of the writing process and is addressed when their child is editing and revising their work.

During the pre-interview it was stated by the parents that they needed to be in control when writing, in other words continually stopping and correcting their child as they constructed their writing. Through writing conferences, they began to see how the researcher guided students with questions and allowed the student to take ownership of their work. Karsback (2011) expressed this as "taking the pen," when writer's workshop is implemented, the instruction moves from being teacher centered to student centered. In turn, this directly motivates the child to take ownership and control of their work (Karsback, 2011). It was evident

through mid-and post-interview data that parents began to see this switch with their child and the power behind it.

Within this theme, parents also disclosed that not only did their perception of working on writing with their child change, but they also cited a positive change in their children's attitudes towards writing. Jasmine & Weiner (2007) found that there was an increase of writing enjoyment when first grade students participated in writer's workshop. Similarly to FWW, Jasmine & Weiner (2007) also noted that the data supported that the reasons for this increase in enjoyment was attributed to sharing their writing with others and enjoying the process of revising and editing their work.

Another study, Seban & Tavsanli (2015), found that when second grade students were immersed in writer's workshop, specifically genre studies, sharing their work, and responding to their peers work they had an increased understanding. Through the FWW intervention, the researcher was able to gather data on how parents saw their children grow in the area of writing. For those parents whose children were not confident prior to the FWW sessions, it was found that by the mid-and post-interviews, their children began to view themselves as writers and were confident in their abilities. Parents attributed this to having a better understanding of writing through the use of mentor texts, having dedicated time to write about topics of their choosing, and being able to share their work with others in the workshop. This was similar to findings by Ray & Cleveland (2004), which showed that the use of mentor texts, teacher guidance and classroom discussions allowed students to look at books and writing differently. The mini lessons and inclusion of mentor texts had a similar effect on parents who participated in FWW.

A primary component of writer's workshop and of the structure of FWW was the inclusion of writing conferences. Throughout mid-and post-interviews, parents expressed how

the modeling of conferences that the researcher conducted helped them understand how to work on writing with their child. They saw the value in the conferring time and that when working with their child, they could focus on what was needed. Parents stated in their mid-interviews and post-interviews that as they attended FWW sessions they realized through the mini lessons, conferencing, and following the writing process that they needed to turn their attention to content of their child's work first. Previously, parents solely focused on grammar, punctuation, and handwriting. The parents stated that they saw the importance of working on content first, and that the other components could be addressed once a draft was written and that it would fall into place at the appropriate time. This mirrored work by Calkins (1994) that conferring time allows the teacher to become familiar with each student and their specific needs. As stated by Graves (1983), the conferring with students provided time for them to explain their work, their thinking, and allowed teachers insight on what next steps the student should take. Parents indicated that by observing their child in conferences with the researcher, as well as participating in them allowed them to see how to understand their child's thought process and what to focus on with their child.

In summary, the second theme, writing comfort and appropriateness, showed the development of parent participant comfort level with writing with their child and what would be appropriate areas of writing to focus on. The data showed that there was a shift from focusing on grammar, punctuation, and handwriting to the content that was being written. It was important to this study that parents became comfortable with and provided appropriate guidance for their child because other family literacy research (Baker, 2013; Saracho & Spodek, 2010; Sénéchal, 2006) found that when parents were directly involved in teaching certain aspects of reading there was a direction correlation with student reading success.

Reading-writing connection

The third theme of this study focused on the reading-writing connection. Reading-writing connection was identified as parents coming to the realization that there is a connection between what is read and what is written, viewing text through the lens of a writer, and seeing new writing opportunities when encountering text. Parents began to see how working on reading at-home could be tied to working on writing. As seen in the 2005 study by Saint-Laurent and Giasson, when a family literacy program included both reading and writing the students and the parents both saw benefits. The participants in the study (Saint-Laurent and Giasson, 2005), found that what they were working on in reading influenced their child's writing and vice versa. In addition, the study by Saint-Laurent and Giasson (2005), a study by Sénéchal, LeFevre, Thomas, & Daley (1998) also found that exposing students to reading directly impacted their writing. In the current FWW study, parents expressed that they better understood the connection of reading and writing through the use of mentor texts as models for writing. Through this modeling, they stated they began to see books in a different way and were able to begin to point out connections with their child between what they have read to what they were writing or what they could write in the future.

FWW used mentor texts to guide the interactions between parents and their children. Mentor texts provide exemplars of an author's work and when used with students (and parents) mentor texts showed a direct tie from reading a text to learning about the construction of the text and how to implement it in their own writing. Through mini lessons, books were used as examples of high quality writing and participants were guided on how to apply it to their own work. Parents in the FWW study felt that the use of mentor texts not only helped them, but also helped their children with their writing. This not only allowed guidance and an exemplar for

writing, but also provided participants with a deeper understanding of how and what to construct. Snyders (2014) found that using an author's work resulted in a deeper understanding of the writing process, as was seen in the FWW study.

Parent participants also cited how they began to perceive books in a different way, as well as consider different types or genres of writing with their child. This is directly supported in literature, Ray & Cleveland, 2004 found that through the use of mentor texts, teacher guidance and classroom discussions, students begin to look at books in a different light and gain ideas from these insights. Through the FWW intervention, parents noted that their students looked at books differently; however, the current FWW intervention took it a step further by showing parents how to see writing through an author's lens.

Limitations

This study had limitations that related to the design and data collection. The duration of this study was an eight week case study and was conducted in one setting outside of school. If the duration of the study had been extended then it would have allowed for further data collection of the intervention. More time with the participants could have allowed the researcher further insight to the views and growth of the participants. It would have also allowed the researcher more time to work directly with the participants and help coach them further when conducting writing conferences with their child.

While the findings might be useful to individuals with family literacy programs, the data and results are distinct to this somewhat limited time frame and only one setting. These results and their analysis are also conditional until further research is conducted that focuses on implementing this intervention in other settings. The participants of this study were not a diverse group in regards to gender, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, or geographic location.

In order to further understand the impact and possible potential of FWW, it is necessary to provide these interventions in settings that include diverse populations. Future endeavors should strive to be more inclusive of diverse populations beginning at the invitation stage of the FWW. Thus, it is recommended that future research in a variety of settings and with a variety of populations be conducted in order to gain a better understanding of what can be done to further family literacy in the area of writing. Previous family literacy research, in the area of reading, was conducted with diverse groups and settings.

Allowing for an extended family writer's workshop would also possibly assist with the attendance of participants. An extended family writer's workshop, would be a longer time span than the current study. This might be helpful to see if providing sessions beyond eight weeks would enhance parent and child progress as they work through the school year. This would also allow for possible collaboration with classroom teachers.

Future research may also want to look into conducting the intervention sessions at a different time of the year. Since these sessions were held at the end of the summer and into the beginning of a new school year, some families went on vacation. Therefore, some participants had to miss a session. Although each mini lesson was recorded and made available to parents, they still missed out on the other valuable components of these sessions such as conferencing, observing and interacting with the researcher as they worked with students, and the author's chair time.

Participants in the current study were asked at their post-interview about the timing of intervention sessions in regards to the time of year and the day and time that sessions were held. In general, parents stated that weekends were busy and that caused conflicts at times. However, during the week was also difficult because of work, family obligations, and weekday activities

that their children participated. Most participants also felt that although they may have missed a session due to a family vacation, they felt it was the best time of the year as it might be too much for them and their children to also have these sessions to attend in the summers. Perhaps, future studies could extend the duration of the sessions beyond eight weeks, and/or provide make up sessions for families to attend if they missed a session and were interested in having more one on one time for conferencing and feedback.

Another limitation of this study was the factor of the participant observer. Although the researcher being a part of the process as a participant observer was not a detriment to the study, it may have caused some influence since they were the individual modeling for the adult participants and working directly with the students. Since the researcher was directly providing the modeling and leading the sessions, the issue of objectivity when analyzing data must also be considered when reviewing limitations. This was addressed by having an outside observer attend four of the sessions. The outside observer also provided field notes and these were compared and triangulated with the researcher's.

Implications for Family Literacy

This study was conducted due to the lack of research of writing within family literacy. As a researcher, the priority was to begin to fill this gap in family literacy research by conducting a family writer's workshop with writing, as opposed to reading, as the primary literacy focus. Therefore, the researcher was interested in taking the structure of writer's workshop as it is found in the classroom, and see how it could be applied with families in an out of school experience.

Data collected in this study suggests that there is a positive outcome from providing families with opportunities to support writing outside of school. For example, parents gained a better understanding of writing. Parents came to understand that writing is more than grammar

and proficient handwriting. These adults gained an understanding of the importance of the writing process, how to assist their child throughout the process, and also the power of using mentor texts. Additionally, the students benefited as well and found purpose in writing. For instance, they no longer viewed writing as a tedious task but approached writing with more eagerness. This was exemplified as the sessions progressed. Each week the students became more comfortable and confident with learning about different types of writing and applying these characteristics to their own work. The participants also began to seek and find many opportunities to explore their own experiences and interests in their work.

The FWW provided students with an authentic audience and purpose for their writing. As each session progressed, students were eager to share what they had written with the group. Participants also enjoyed asking one another questions about what they had created, and it was noted that the questions that were asked helped the writer improve his or her work, as well as provide the peer with inspiration for future writing. During the author's chair, students would often make connections between the work being shared and something they were working on.

The results of this case study can be used to guide family literacy program implementation, as well as add to current family literacy and writing research. As noted, in Chapter 2, there are gaps in family literacy research in regards to writing. This study helped provide some information on how a writing intervention could be implemented outside of the classroom with families and their children. Research suggests that evidence-based writing practiced in the classroom should be taught to students until they are able to apply it independently and consistently (Gilbert & Graham, 2010). One possible way of achieving this automaticity and independence with writing would be to provide further implementation through family literacy programs.

In addition to informing family literacy, this case study can also be utilized to advise educators on how they can provide further information to families about their child's writing. The results of this study show that parents were primarily focused on handwriting, grammar, and punctuation in their child's writing. However, once participants became more familiar with the writing process, they came to the realization that content was the primary focus. Then once their child was able to get their thoughts down, participants were able to guide their child to make corrections during editing. It would also be beneficial for educators to see how the initial viewpoint of the adult participants was focused on their comfort level with writing. When comparing the first theme of uncertainty to the theme of writing appropriateness and comfort, it was found that there was also a shift in parent focus. The parents focused more on their child and their needs, as opposed to the uncertainty and conflict that they felt internally.

Furthermore, this research could also provide possible avenues for librarians. The reading-writing connection was one that parents found enlightening and that students were also motivated by. Schools and family literacy programs could work with librarians on creating mentor texts lists that align with the types of text that students experience through their standards. This would allow families to read texts that are directly related to the type of writing that students are working on in school. Making these connections could potentially inform student writing development, especially if the librarian were able to help guide parents to components of an author's work that aligned with the type of text.

This study could also inform future programs created by librarians. Collaboration could occur between school divisions and libraries. Data could be used to help guide librarians on how to create mentor text mini lessons that align with standards being currently taught or that have been taught in school. These lessons could be offered to families throughout the summer

months, or even throughout the school year on weekends. Likewise, librarians could create programs or add to current programs for preschool aged children, to include simple talking points about authors and how they construct their work. This would allow a foundation, as well as, background knowledge to be established prior to students entering their schooling careers.

Previous family literacy research can be used in conjunction with the results from this current study to enhance the family literacy experience. Since literacy encompasses a variety of components (phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, language, communication, writing), it would be important to determine which components to focus on for family literacy programs.

Future Research

Family involvement with reading has been researched (Baker, 2013; Bennett, Weigel, & Martin, 2002, Neuman, 1996; Saracho, & Spodek, 2010; Sénéchal, 2006). However, little is known about families and writing interactions. This qualitative study shows that family writing could possibly enhance student writing experiences and assist them in gaining an understanding of the writing process.

One consideration for future research would be to conduct a more in-depth study that includes more participants. This would allow for a greater variety of participants and provide an in-depth understanding based on categories such as a variety of age groups and grade levels, developmental levels, socioeconomic status, race, and gender. The current study is limited in regards to these areas. This study focused on a group that has advantages that other individuals may not. For instance, these parents were available on the weekends, able to provide their own transportation, and have time throughout the week to continue to work with their child at home if they would like to.

This study looked at a small group of participants that ranged in grade levels. This would be necessary to understand and obtain data on a variety of ages, and to potentially see if there was a specific stage of development or grade level that would be ideal for this writer's workshop intervention. The approach could also be beneficial to future research to conduct this study with groups of participants whose children are the same ages and of similar levels developmentally. In doing so, the Family Writer's Workshop mini lessons could be tailored more specifically to the developmental needs of that age range, as well as be more aligned to the state standards for that particular group. It would be helpful to see the impact of this type of intervention with our youngest writers, as well as those who are more developed and gauge the changes that are made. Additionally, comparisons between these groups could also be made. This would provide insight on what and how interventions impact a specific age of students, as well as what was most impactful for helping them be successful.

In the current study, it was highly recommended that families continue to work on writing in between class sessions. As noted previously, only a few select participants took advantage of this recommendation. It was also observed and noted that those participants who did work outside of the FWW sessions saw many positive outcomes in regards to their child's work, as well as their perception towards writing. Therefore, another component future researchers may want to include is that families are required to write outside of each class session to see if this has a further impact on student writing. This would require families to work on the writing from workshop sessions, or create new pieces of work while they are at home with their child and bring this in each session for the FWW researcher to document.

Additionally, if this study was duplicated it would be worthwhile to conduct follow up interviews with parents and teachers. These interviews could be done after completing FWW, at

the six-months mark and a year later. This would allow time to see if the FWW had a lasting impact on student writing development, attitude, and confidence, not only from a home perspective, but from an educational perspective as well. Other family literacy research (Graham, McNamara, & VanLankveld, 2011), cited that parents continued to implement what they learned after the program concluded and that these students continued to make appropriate literacy growth after the program, which researchers attributed to parents continuing to do the work at home after the literacy program concluded. It would be helpful to see if the same were true for FWW. Respectively, it would be helpful to receive input from educators as well in regards to gains as opposed to summer learning loss, and if academic growth continued. It was determined in reading based family literacy programs (Graham, McNamara, & VanLankveld, 2011; Saracho, 1997), that there was an increase over the summer months and that they continued to show academic reading growth. Again, this would need to be determined for family literacy programs grounded in writing.

Another concept that future research may want to include is asynchronous work for participants. This would be very similar to continuing the writing throughout the week or between sessions, however it could be tracked through assignments or tasks given online. These could be done through a platform such as a Google Classroom and the tasks could be writing activities for families to do at home such as completing graphic organizers for prewriting, compiling a list of possible topics, reading a book from the same genre as the mentor text that the families are learning about, etc. This platform could also be used for participants to have discussions with one another, as well as with the researcher, which would provide another data point for collection.

Another area of future research consideration is to require all adult participants to write during the workshop time. During the current study, adult participants were highly encouraged to write alongside their child. As seen from the current study, there was one parent who consistently did this during sessions. Her child was one who consistently worked on writing outside of the intervention sessions, and the mother also cited that her daughter's enjoyment and engagement for writing increased tremendously throughout the eight week intervention. Therefore, it could potentially be beneficial to see if parents were also required to write, how or if that impacted the child's writing, engagement with the work, and enthusiasm with writing.

Future iterations of this research may also include providing the workshop sessions in a variety of circumstances. In order to see if the results are applicable in other situations, it would be suggested that this intervention is implemented in a variety of settings. This could include, but would not be limited to, different times of the school year, a variety of socio economic statuses, grouping of students by grade level/age/developmental levels, as well as other considerations for locations to conduct the sessions. Again, in order to understand the impact and possibilities for this component of family literacy, there needs to be a variety in all of the areas mentioned above.

One potential variation of FWW for future research could be to have the sessions be held virtually, and then compare the results from in person intervention sessions to the results of virtual sessions. For virtual sessions, the researcher could hold the mini lesson with the entire group at the beginning of the session, then place participants in break out rooms for independent work time and conferencing, and have the group come back together for author's chair. Some aspects that may need to be taken into account if doing this work virtually would be to ensure that families have the technology tools and internet to attend, material for writing (variety of

paper, writing utensils, conference question cue cards, dictionaries, writing folders, etc.), access to mentor texts, if opportunities for participants to work with one another (for example share a breakout room so students and parents could share ideas with one another), and how the researcher would collect digital copies of student work. It would also be possible to then compare this platform to the in person sessions to determine if parents found it easier to attend virtually, if similar growth was found as with in-person sessions, as well as any unexpected positive outcomes of conducting the sessions virtually.

Researchers may also want to explore a hybrid of an in person and virtual FWW by having an intervention that has both types of meetings. This hybrid version could also then be compared with sessions that are solely in person, as well as virtual. Perhaps this would provide the convenience of being able to work from home for some of the sessions, as well as building rapport and relationships in person when going to a physical location for the intervention.

It may also be beneficial to have the researcher not only work directly with the families, but also collaborate with the classroom teachers of the participants involved. In this instance, the classroom teacher or teachers could assist with providing guidance and assistance to the researcher in regards to grade level expectations and experiences. This would allow for connections to be directly made between what is being taught in the classroom and what the families are experiencing in the workshop setting. It would be recommended that if there was a collaboration between a classroom and an out-of-school experience that the students are immersed in writer's workshop in both settings. Additionally, the teacher and researcher could align their units of study so that participants would receive reinforcement of the same genres at the same time.

These results would also allow us to see not only the potential progress from the viewpoint of the families in the study, but also add the component of how or if growth in the area of writing is being enhanced in the classroom setting through workshop experiences. In other words, How does Family Writer's Workshop experiences impact classroom experiences and writing development?

Lastly, one area that arose from the current study was the social aspect of FWW between all of the participants. It would be worthwhile to conduct a study examining the relationships that are built between the children participants and the adult participants. This would be important for future research since this may be a component that enhances the experience for participants in a positive way. Family literacy and social interactions, is an area that is another gap within family literacy research. As previously noted, throughout the progression of the workshop sessions, children wanted to work near one another and were often helping each other during the independent writing time. Writer's workshop does provide for many social interaction opportunities through sharing work with peers, author's chair and writing for an authentic audience (Calkins, 1994; Feinberg, 2007). This was a concept that was unexpected prior to the study being conducted. It would be interesting and worthwhile to see if these interactions provide further in depth experiences and benefits to family literacy .

Closing

This case study examined the experiences and perceptions of parents and their elementary age children in a family writer's workshop. Results indicated that guardians had a shift in their mindset on expectations of writing, how to assist their child with writing, and the importance of mentor texts. Participants shared that these changes in perception were positive and assisted them in understanding how to more effectively work with their child in the area of writing.

Additionally, participants expressed that their children showed growth in the area of writing. Not only did their understanding of the different types of writing and the writing process evolve, but so did their attitude towards writing. Furthermore, it provided both the adult and child participants with a different way to view texts. They were able to not only look at texts as readers, but also through the lens of a writer. Comprehensively, this study suggested that family involvement in writing may benefit students in the area of writing. While the results from this study were encouraging, further research is needed in order to create a cohesive and comprehensive intervention. Through supporting and promoting family literacy programs that involve families gaining a deeper understanding of the writing process and how to work together, it may be an advantageous approach to complement the instruction that takes place in the classroom.

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APPENDIX A

EMAIL INQUIRY FOR MEETING SPACE

To whom it may concern,

My name is Alisa Innes, I am currently a PhD student at Old Dominion University. This summer I plan on entering the study portion of my dissertation and will need a neutral meeting space in order to do so. My study is working with elementary children and their parents on writing interventions. More specifically, writer's workshop with the use of mentor texts. Since I will be using mentor texts and encouraging the parents to do so as well, I feel that the public library would be the ideal location for these intervention sessions.

I am contacting you in order to see if it would be possible to meet at your library. If it is a possibility, would you be able to provide me with the contact information of your Youth or Children's Director? Also, how do I go about reserving a space?

Please let me know if you need further information or details.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Alisa Innes

ainne001@odu.edu

APPENDIX B

MATERIALS FOR FAMILY WRITER'S WORKSHOP SESSIONS

- ✓ Chart paper
- ✓ Alphabet chart
- ✓ Chart paper
- ✓ Paper trays
- ✓ Staplers and staples
- ✓ Staple remover
- ✓ Pencils
- ✓ Sticky notes
- ✓ Tape
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Student Portfolios/Writing Folders
- ✓ Box for holding writing folders
- ✓ Paper of different sizes, colors, types
- ✓ Crayons
- ✓ Markers
- ✓ Erasers
- ✓ Mentor Texts
- ✓ Dictionary
- ✓ Thesaurus
- ✓ Conference Cue Cards

APPENDIX C

CONFERENCE CUE CARDS

Conferencing

When may I have a conference? You may have a conference <u>when</u>:

- ❖ You need an idea for something to write about *(Idea Conference).*
- ❖ You are having trouble with your rough draft *(Drafting Conference).*
- ❖ You have finished a piece of writing and need help deciding if you said what you wanted to say *(Revising Conference).*
- ❖ You aren't sure if you have found all of your mistakes (*Editing Conference).*

(Calkins, 1994; Ray, 1999)

How Can I be a Good Conference Helper?

Listen <u>carefully</u> to the writer so you will know what he needs help with.

- ❖ Ask questions if you are not sure what the writer means in his/her story, poem, letter, etc.
- ❖ Connect their writing to the work of a specific author or text.
- ❖ State specific examples from the piece that sound good and explain why you like that particular phrase, word choice, etc.
- ❖ Comment on something specific that the student is doing well.
- ❖ Share something you learned from reading their work.
- ❖ Share something that their writing makes you think of.
- ❖ Share questions that their work makes you think of.
- ❖ Make sure you know what your job is in each type of conference.
- ❖ Make sure to treat the writer the way that you want him/her to treat you when you need help.

(Calkins, 1994; Ray, 1999)

How do I Conference?

(to assist student on how to start a conference)

- Make sure to tell them what you need help with. "I need help…
  - getting an idea to write about"
  - working out a problem in my rough draft."
  - deciding if I said what I wanted to say."
  - finding my spelling, punctuation, and sentence mistakes."
- Begin to talk quietly about your problem.

Talk only about your writing.

Keep your conferences short (5-10 minutes).

(Calkins, 1994; Ray, 1999)

Type of conference and what your job is:

Idea Conference:

- Ask the writer what he/she knows about or is interested in, or what people, pets, hobbies, or places he might want to write about.
- Ask the writer what topics he/she has already written about that seemed to turn out okay.
- Brainstorm topics that both of you know about or that you know other people are writing about.
- Suggest that the writer walk quietly around the room to see what everyone is writing about.
- Suggest that the writer look at books (stories, encyclopedias, etc.) to get ideas.

(Calkins, 1994; Ray, 1999)

Type of conference and what your job is:

Drafting Conference:

- ❖ Ask the writer to tell you what he/she is having trouble with.
- ❖ Ask the writer to read his/her paper out loud. Sometimes we can solve our writing problems when we hear our words.
- ❖ Try to think of ways that you might solve the problem and make suggestions.
- ❖ Ask the writer what she/he thinks she/he will do.

(Calkins, 1994; Ray, 1999)

Type of conference and what your job is:

Revising Conference:

- ❖ Ask the writer to read his/her piece to you.
- ❖ Tell the reader what you heard him/her say in his writing.
- ❖ Ask the reader if what you heard is what he/she wanted to say.
- ❖ If he/she tells you it is what he/she wanted to say then tell the writer that you think he is on the right track.
- ❖ If he/she tells you it isn't what he/she wanted to say. This will help him/her think about their topic.

(Calkins, 1994; Ray, 1999)

Type of conference and what your job is:

Editing Conference:

- ❖ Ask the writer what he/she needs help with (spelling, punctuation, sentences, etc.)
- ❖ Make sure the writer has already looked for and edited possible mistakes.
- ❖ Read the piece of writing and look for mistakes.
- ❖ Return the paper to the writer.

(Calkins, 1994; Ray, 1999)

APPENDIX D

AUTHOR'S CHAIR SHARING WORK PROTOCOL POSTER

SHARING WRITING

1. Sit quietly and listen carefully to the writer while he or she reads his or her piece of writing.

2. Tell the writer what you liked about his or her piece of writing.

3. Ask the writer questions about his or her piece of writing. (The writer may call on students who have questions).

   Examples:

   Where did you get your ideas?

   Why did you write it as a poem? (or story or letter?)

   How did you learn about…?

4. Give the writer advice on what could be added or changed in his or her story to make it better.

5. Thank and give the writer a round of applause for sharing his or her piece of writing.

APPENDIX E

AGENDAS: SESSIONS 1-8

Session 1: Introduction/Where writer's get their ideas/Small Moments (Calkins, 1994; Ray & Cleveland, 2004)		
Welcome	Researcher introduction Participant Introductions	10 minutes
Introduction to Family Writer's Workshop	Overview of the structure of Family Writer's Workshop	10 minutes
Family Writer's Workshop	Mini Lesson ● *Roller Coaster* by Maria Frazee ● Discussion about mentor text Independent Writing Time Author's Chair ● Review procedures for sharing writing ● Optional share time	20 minutes 20 minutes 15 minutes
Next week	● Realistic Fiction (Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003). ● Conferencing	

Session 2: Realistic Fiction (Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003)		
Welcome	Welcome back participants Review structure of FWW	5 minutes
Conferencing	Structure of conferencing Types of conferences How to hold a writing conference	15 minutes
Family Writer's Workshop	Mini Lesson ● *"Let's get a pup!" Said Kate* by Bob Graham ● Discussion about mentor text Independent Writing Time/Conferencing Author's Chair ● Review procedures for sharing writing ● Optional share time	15 minutes 25 minutes 10 minutes
Next week	● Memoirs (Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003) ● Conferencing	

Session 3: Memoirs (Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003)		
Welcome	Welcome back participants	5 minutes
Family Writer's Workshop	Mini Lesson ● *Roller Coaster* by Marla Frazee ● Discussion about mentor text Independent Writing Time/Conferencing Author's Chair ● Review procedures for sharing writing ● Optional share time	20 minutes 30 minutes 10 minutes
Next week	● Family Stories (Ray & Cleveland, 2004) ● Conferencing ● Reminder about mid-interviews	

Session 4: Family Stories (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)		
Welcome	Welcome back participants	5 minutes
Family Writer's Workshop	Mini Lesson ● *Good-bye, 382 Shin Dang Dong* by Frances Park and Ginger Park ● Discussion about mentor text Independent Writing Time/Conferencing Author's Chair ● Review procedures for sharing writing ● Optional share time	20 minutes 30 minutes 10 minutes
Next week	● Literary Nonfiction (Ray & Cleveland, 2004) ● Conferencing	

Session 5: Literary Nonfiction (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)		
Welcome	Welcome back participants	5 minutes
Family Writer's Workshop	Mini Lesson ● *Loki & Alex* by Charles R. Smith ● Discussion about mentor text Independent Writing Time/Conferencing Author's Chair ● Review procedures for sharing writing ● Optional share time	20 minutes 30 minutes 10 minutes
Next week	● Photo Essay (Ray & Cleveland, 2004) ● Conferencing	

Session 6: Photo Essay (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)		
Welcome	Welcome back participants	5 minutes
Family Writer's Workshop	Mini Lesson ● *A Cool Drink of Water* by Barbara Kerley ● Discussion about mentor text Independent Writing Time/Conferencing Author's Chair ● Review procedures for sharing writing ● Optional share time	20 minutes 30 minutes 10 minutes
Next week	● How-to (Ray & Cleveland, 2004) ● Conferencing	

Session 7: How-to (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)		
Welcome	Welcome back participants	5 minutes
Family Writer's Workshop	Mini Lesson ● *Veterinarians* by Dee Ready ● Discussion about mentor text Independent Writing Time/Conferencing Author's Chair ● Review procedures for sharing writing ● Optional share time	20 minutes 30 minutes 10 minutes
Next week	● Everyday Writing (Ray & Cleveland, 2004) ● Conferencing	

Session 8: Everyday Writing (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)		
Welcome	Welcome back participants	5 minutes
Family Writer's Workshop	Mini Lesson ● *Diary of a Worm* by Doreen Cronin ● Discussion about mentor text Independent Writing Time/Conferencing Author's Chair ● Review procedures for sharing writing ● Optional share time	20 minutes 30 minutes 10 minutes
Closure	● Thank you ● Reminder about post-interviews	

APPENDIX F

SESSION PLANS 1-8

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Session 1: Family Writer's Workshop</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Topic: Introduction/Where writer's get their ideas/Small Moments (Calkins, 1994; Ray & Cleveland, 2004)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Resources and Materials: Roller Coaster by Marla Frazee
Timer
Writing materials (Appendix B)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Procedures</td><td>Welcome
The researcher will introduce themselves to the group. Participants will then take turns introducing themselves and their child to the group.

Introduction to the Family Writer's Workshop Structure
The researcher will provide the following over view of writer's workshop to the participants:
Writer's workshop is a writing approach in which students work through the writing process, view themselves as authors, and complete pieces of work on topics of their choosing. This is an instructional approach used in many elementary classrooms. Our Family Writer's Workshop will follow the same structure that is found in writer's workshop in the elementary classroom. We will begin each lesson with a mini lesson. A mini lesson will focus on a specific teaching topic and in our sessions each mini lesson will use a mentor text. A mentor text is a piece of work completed by an author that participants will listen to and discuss aspects of the author's craft. Each mini lesson will last approximately 20 minutes, these sessions are usually shorter in the classroom, however since I will be providing a mini lesson as well as directions to participants it has been extended. We will then move</td></tr>
</table>

	into the writing and conferencing portion of the workshop, which will last approximately 30 minutes (depending on the session). During this time children and their parents will create stories on a topic of their choosing. Parents will also observe the researcher modeling writing conferences so the parent can begin to implement conference strategies as the sessions continue. At the beginning of each session, a timer will be set and when it goes off, writing time has concluded and all work goes in student portfolio folders. Student portfolio folders will be kept by the researcher and during the post-interview the parents will receive the original work. The researcher will copy all student work for data collection purposes. Lastly, we will have author's chair. This is an optional share time, that lasts between 10-15 minutes, in which children and their parents may share what they are working on. **Mini Lesson** The researcher will introduce the book, *Roller Coaster* by Marla Frazee. The researcher will also state how they will first listen to the story, paying close attention to what the author wrote about. The researcher will then explain to the participants that when author's write they often write about small moments in their lives and that they can do the same. Author's do not always write about big moments, but also focus on small everyday moments. After reading the text, participants and the researcher will discuss what the author wrote about and how every day events can be turned into a story. Possible discussion questions: What did the author use to write their story? How could you do something similar? **Independent Writing Time**

	The researcher will set a timer to ensure the group stays on track. Participants will be provided time to work on composing a piece of writing of their choosing. Materials will be provided in a central location for participants to use. Each parent-child group will also receive a folder in which to place all work, complete and incomplete. They may choose to work on this at the following week's session. Once a piece of writing is completed, and the parent and child have conferenced. They may then begin another piece of writing. Since this is the first class session, conferences between the parent and the child will not be held. As necessary, the researcher may initiate and model conferences for the parents. When the timer goes off, all participants will clean up their area, put completed and uncompleted work in their student portfolios and go to a central location for author's chair. **Author's Chair** Since this is the first session of FWW, the researcher will review the sharing writing procedures with the group (Appendix D) Time permitting participants will be invited to share their work with the group.
Closure	Remind parents of the following session's meeting time and place. Make participants aware that the next session will focus on Realistic Fiction (Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003) and conferencing with their child. The researcher will remind parents that they do not need to work on writing at-home with their child, however if they do to please bring in any work that they complete with one another. All original work completed at-home will be returned after the researcher has made copies. The researcher will make sure that all parents have her contact information in case any questions or issues arise.

Session 2: Family Writer's Workshop	
Topic: Realistic Fiction (Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003)	
Resources and Materials:	*"Let's get a pup!" Said Kate* by Bob Graham Timer Writing materials (Appendix B) Conference cards (Appendix C)
Procedures	**Welcome** The researcher will welcome back participants and briefly review the structure of FWW. **Introduction to Conferences** Today participants will learn about the different types of conferences that they can have with their child, as well as how to conduct a conference (Appendix C). Each set of participants will get conference task cards that contain conference descriptions, reminders, and prompts. These can be used for conferencing. Parents will be proved a set for home and a set to use during FWW. **Mini Lesson** The researcher will introduce the focus for the week, Realistic Fiction. The researcher will introduce the book, *"Let's get a pup!" Said Kate* by Bob Graham. This is a story about a family going to the animal shelter and picking out a new pet. The author focuses on the event of getting their new dog, instead of trying to tell the reader everything they can think of about their pet. The researcher will also state how they will first listen to the story, paying close attention to what the author wrote about. After reading the text, participants and the researcher will discuss what the author wrote about and discuss how the text could happen in the real world. Possible discussion questions:

	What details about getting the new pet does the author write about? Is there a realistic fiction book that you could write? Do you have any similar experiences you could write about? **Independent Writing Time/Conferencing** The researcher will set a timer to ensure the group stays on track. Participants will be provided time to work on composing a piece of writing of their choosing (completing work from the previous week or begin a new piece of work). Materials will be provided in a central location for participants to use. The researcher will move to each pair of participants to observe parent-child interactions, as well as, model and coach conferencing with participants. When the timer goes off, all participants will clean up their area, put completed and uncompleted work in their student portfolios and go to a central location for author's chair. **Author's Chair** The researcher will review the procedures for sharing work. Participants will be invited to share their work with the group.
Closure	Remind parents of the following session's meeting time and place. Make participants aware that next week's session will focus on Memoirs (Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003) and conferencing with their child. The researcher will remind parents that they do not need to work on writing at-home with their child, however if they do please bring in any work that they complete with one another. The researcher will make sure that all parents have her contact information in case any questions or issues arise.

Session 3: Family Writer's Workshop	
Topic: Memoirs (Oxenhorn, & Calkins, 2003)	
Resources and Materials: *Two Mrs. Gibsons* by Toyomi Igus Timer Writing materials (Appendix B)	
Procedures	**Welcome** The researcher will welcome back participants and briefly review the structure of FWW. **Mini Lesson** The researcher will remind the participants of the focus that began last week: memoirs. The researcher will introduce the book, *Two Mrs. Gibsons* by Toyomi Igus. This is a story about an individual and two special people in their life, their mother and their grandmother. After reading the text, participants and the researcher will discuss what the author wrote about and brainstorm memory ideas that they could write about. Possible discussion questions: How did the author compare the two special people in their life? Do you have any special family members you could write about? **Independent Writing Time/Conferencing** The researcher will set a timer to ensure the group stays on track. Participants will be provided time to work on composing a piece of writing of their choosing (completing work from the previous week or begin a new piece of work). Materials will be provided in a central location for participants to use. The researcher will move to each pair of participants to observe parent-child interactions, as well as, model and coach conferencing with their child. When the timer goes off, all participants will clean up their area, put completed and uncompleted work in their student portfolios and go

	to a central location for author's chair. **Author's Chair** The researcher will review the procedures for sharing work. Participants will be invited to share their work with the group.
Closure	Remind parents of the following session's meeting time and place. Make participants aware that next week's session will focus on Family Stories (Ray, 2003) and conferencing with their child. The researcher will remind parents that they do not need to work on writing at-home with their child, however if they do please bring in any work that they complete with one another. The researcher will make sure that all parents have her contact information in case any questions or issues arise.

Session 4: Family Writer's Workshop	
Topic: Family Stories (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)	
Resources and Materials: *Good-bye, 382 Shin Dang Dong* by Frances Park and Ginger Park Timer Writing materials (Appendix B)	
Procedures	**Welcome** The researcher will welcome back participants. **Mini Lesson** The researcher will introduce the new topic that the participants will be focusing on this week: Family Stories. The researcher will introduce the book, *Good-bye, 382 Shin Dang Dong* by Frances Park and Ginger Park. This is a story about a little Korean girl who moves from her home in Korea to America. The researcher will also state how they will first listen to the story, paying close attention to what the author wrote about. After reading the text, participants and the researcher will discuss what the writer did. Possible discussion questions: Do you have a family story you can share? What patterns do you see that the author used when writing this story? What do you notice about the author's words and the illustrations? What writing ideas does this author give you? **Independent Writing Time/Conferencing** The researcher will set a timer to ensure the group stays on track. Participants will be provided time to work on composing a piece of writing of their choosing (completing work from the previous week or begin a new piece of work). Materials will be provided in a central location for participants to use. The researcher will move to

	each pair of participants to observe parent-child interactions, as well as, model and coach conferencing with their child. When the timer goes off, all participants will clean up their area, put completed and uncompleted work in their student portfolios and go to a central location for author's chair. **Author's Chair** The researcher will review the procedures for sharing work. Participants will be invited to share their work with the group.
Closure	Remind parents of the following session's meeting time and place, as well as the upcoming mid study interviews. Make participants aware that next week's session will focus on literary nonfiction (Ray, 2003) and conferencing with their child. The researcher will remind parents that they do not need to work on writing at-home with their child, however if they do please bring in any work that they complete with one another. The researcher will make sure that all parents have her contact information in case any questions or issues arise.

Session 5: Family Writer's Workshop	
Topic: Literary Nonfiction (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)	
Resources and Materials: *Loki & Alex* by Charles R. Smith Timer Writing materials (Appendix B)	
Procedures	**Welcome** The researcher will welcome back participants. **Mini Lesson** The researcher will introduce the topic: Literary Nonfiction. The researcher will introduce the book, *Loki & Alex* by Charles R. Smith. This story is about a boy and his dog and playing together. The researcher will also state how they will first listen to the story, paying close attention to what the author wrote about. After reading the text, participants and the researcher will discuss what the writer did. Possible discussion questions: How did the reader use point of view when the boy and dog were talking? Can you think of a story you could write about that has information and tells a story? **Independent Writing Time/Conferencing** The researcher will set a timer to ensure the group stays on track. Participants will be provided time to work on composing a piece of writing of their choosing (completing work from the previous week or begin a new piece of work). Materials will be provided in a central location for participants to use. The researcher will move to each pair of participants to observe parent-child interactions, as well as, model and coach conferencing with their child. When the timer goes off, all participants will clean up their area, put

	completed and uncompleted work in their student portfolios and go to a central location for author's chair. **Author's Chair** The researcher will review the procedures for sharing work. Participants will be invited to share their work with the group.
Closure	Remind parents of the following session's meeting time and place. Make participants aware that next session will focus on Photo Essay (Ray & Cleveland, 2004) and conferencing with their child. The researcher will remind parents that they do not need to work on writing at-home with their child, however if they do please bring in any work that they complete with one another. The researcher will make sure that all parents have her contact information in case any questions or issues arise.

Session 6: Family Writer's Workshop	
Topic: Photo Essay (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)	
Resources and Materials: *A Cool Drink of Water* by Barbara Kerley Timer Writing materials (Appendix B)	
Procedures	**Welcome** The researcher will welcome back participants. **Mini Lesson** The researcher will introduce the topic, Photo Essay (Ray & Cleveland, 2004). The researcher will introduce the book, *A Cool Drink of Water* by Barbara Kerley. This is a story that features photos of how individuals get water around the world. The researcher will also state how they will first listen to the story, paying close attention to how the author wrote their story. After reading the text, participants and the researcher will discuss what the writer did. Possible discussion questions: How is this book structured? How could you use pictures to create a story? What type of photo essay could you write? **Independent Writing Time/Conferencing** The researcher will set a timer to ensure the group stays on track. Participants will be provided time to work on composing a piece of writing of their choosing (completing work from the previous week or begin a new piece of work). Materials will be provided in a central location for participants to use. The researcher will move to each pair of participants to observe parent-child interactions, as well as, model and coach conferencing with their child. When the timer goes off, all participants will clean up their area, put

	completed and uncompleted work in their student portfolios and go to a central location for author's chair. **Author's Chair** The researcher will review the procedures for sharing work. Participants will be invited to share their work with the group.
Closure	Remind parents of the following session's meeting time and place. Make participants aware that next week's session will focus on How-to (Ray & Cleveland, 2004) and conferencing with their child. The researcher will remind parents that they do not need to work on writing at-home with their child, however if they do please bring in any work that they complete with one another. The researcher will make sure that all parents have her contact information in case any questions or issues arise.

Session 7: Family Writer's Workshop	
Topic: How-to (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)	
Resources and Materials: *Veterinarians* by Dee Ready Timer Writing materials (Appendix B)	
Procedures	**Welcome** The researcher will welcome back participants. **Mini Lesson** The researcher will introduce the topic of How-to (Ray & Cleveland, 2004). The researcher will introduce the book, *Veterinarians* by Dee Ready. This book provides information about being a vet. The researcher will also state how they will first listen to the story, paying close attention to what the author wrote about. After reading the text, participants and the researcher will discuss what the writer did. Possible discussion questions: What is something you know about and could teach others? What ideas did the author provide you after reading this text? **Independent Writing Time/Conferencing** The researcher will set a timer to ensure the group stays on track. Participants will be provided time to work on composing a piece of writing of their choosing (completing work from the previous week or begin a new piece of work). Materials will be provided in a central location for participants to use. The researcher will move to each pair of participants to observe parent-child interactions, as well as, model and coach conferencing with their child. When the timer goes off, all participants will clean up their area, put completed and uncompleted work in their student portfolios and go

	to a central location for author's chair. **Author's Chair** The researcher will review the procedures for sharing work. Participants will be invited to share their work with the group.
Closure	Remind parents of the following session's meeting time and place. Make participants aware that next week's session will focus on Everyday Writing (Ray & Cleveland, 2004) and conferencing with their child. The researcher will remind parents that they do not need to work on writing at-home with their child, however if they do please bring in any work that they complete with one another. The researcher will make sure that all parents have her contact information in case any questions or issues arise.

Session 8: Family Writer's Workshop	
Topic: Everyday Writing (Ray & Cleveland, 2004)	
Resources and Materials: *Diary of a Worm* by Doreen Cronin Timer Writing materials (Appendix B)	
Procedures	**Welcome** The researcher will welcome back participants. **Mini Lesson** The researcher will introduce the topic of Everyday Writing (Ray & Cleveland, 2004). The researcher will introduce the book, *Diary of a Worm* by Doreen Cronin. This is a story about a worm and their diary entries. The researcher will also state how they will first listen to the story, paying close attention to what the author wrote about. After reading the text, participants and the researcher will discuss what the writer did. Possible discussion questions: What kinds of writing do you see everyday? When do you see other people writing? What kinds of writing can you create from the everyday world? **Independent Writing Time/Conferencing** The researcher will set a timer to ensure the group stays on track. Participants will be provided time to work on composing a piece of writing of their choosing (completing work from the previous week or begin a new piece of work). Materials will be provided in a central location for participants to use. The researcher will move to each pair of participants to observe parent-child interactions, as well as, model and coach conferencing with their child. When the timer goes off, all participants will clean up their area, put

	completed and uncompleted work in their student portfolios and go to a central location for author's chair. **Author's Chair** The researcher will review the procedures for sharing work. Participants will be invited to share their work with the group.
Closure	Thank the participants for their involvement in the research study. Remind participants that at their post-interview they will receive their student's portfolios with their original work.

APPENDIX G

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

PROJECT TITLE: Family Writers' Workshop

INTRODUCTION
The purposes of this form are to give you information that may affect your decision whether to say YES or NO to participation in this research, and to record the consent of those who say YES.

RESEARCHERS
Alisa Innes, Graduate Student, Master's of Education, Old Dominion University, Darden College of Education

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY
Several studies have been conducted looking into the subject of the family literacy with a focus on reading. None of them have explained how parents can assist their child with working on writing outside of school.

If you decide to participate, then you will join a study involving research of writer's workshop sessions, and three interview sessions (pre, mid, post). If you say YES, then your participation will last for eight weeks at the Moyock Public Library. Approximately 12 adults will be participating in this study.

RISKS AND BENEFITS
RISKS: If you decide to participate in this study, then you may face a risk of not learning new information to assist your child at-home with writing. The researcher tried to reduce these risks by providing complete and thoughtfully planned sessions and making themselves available for questions and concerns. And, as with any research, there is some possibility that you may be subject to risks that have not yet been identified.

BENEFITS: The main benefit to you for participating in this study is you may learn new ways of working with your child at-home.

COSTS AND PAYMENTS
The researchers are unable to give you any payment for participating in this study.

NEW INFORMATION
If the researchers find new information during this study that would reasonably change your decision about participating, then they will give it to you.

CONFIDENTIALITY
The researchers will take reasonable steps to keep private information, such as interview recordings and transcripts, email correspondence, student portfolios, and field notes confidential.

The researcher will remove identifiers from the information, destroy tapes, and store information in a locked filing cabinet prior to its processing. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications; but the researcher will not identify you. Of course, your records may be subpoenaed by court order or inspected by government bodies with oversight authority.

WITHDRAWL PRIVILEGE

It is OK for you to say No. Even if you say YES now, you are free to say NO later, and walk away or withdraw from the study—at any time. Your decision will not affect your relationship with Old Dominion University, or otherwise cause a loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled. The researchers reserve the right to withdraw your participation in this study at any time, if they observe potential problems with your continued participation.

COMPENSATION FOR ILLNESS AND INJURY

If you say YES, theny your consent in this document does not waive any of your legal rights. However, in the event of harm, injury, or illness arising from this study, neither Old Dominion University nor the researchers are able to give you any money, insurance coverage, free medical care, or any other compensation for such injury. In the event that you suffer injury as a result of participation in any research project, you may contact Alisa Innes, 757-646-6061. Dr. George Maihafer the current IRB chair at 757-683-4520 at Old Dominion University, or the Old Dominion University Office of Research at 757-683-360 who will be glad to review the matter with you.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

By signing this form, you are saying several things. You are saying that you have read this form or have had it read to you, that you are satisfied that you understand this form, the research study, and its risks and benefits. The researchers should have answered any questions you may have had about the research. If you have any questions later on, then the researchers should be able to answer them:

Alisa Innes, 757-646-6061

If at any time you feel pressured to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, then you should call Dr. George Maihafer, the current IRB chair, at 757-683-4520, or the Old Dominion University Office of Research, at 757-683-3460.

And importantly, by signing below, you are telling the researcher YES, that you agree to participate in this study. The researcher should give you a copy of this form for your records.

Subject's Printed Name & Signature	**Date**
Witness' Printed Name & Signature (if Applicable)	**Date**

INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT

I certify that I have explained to this subject the nature and purpose of this research, including benefits, risks, costs, and any experimental procedures. I have described the rights and protections afforded to human subjects and have done nothing to pressure, coerce, or falsely entice this subject into participating. I am aware of my obligations under state and federal laws, and promise compliance. I have answered the subject's questions and have encouraged him/her to ask additional questions at any time during the course of this study. I have witnessed the above signature(s) on this consent form.

Investigator's Printed Name & Signature	**Date**

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Pre-interview questions

1. What reading activities do you currently do with your child at-home?
2. What writing activities do you currently do with your child at-home?
3. What types of writing do you model for your child?
4. What is your current understanding of writing with your child?
5. Do you currently create writing products with your child at-home? If so, what do you create?
6. How do you feel about working with your child at-home in the area of writing?
7. What challenges you when working with your child with writing at-home? Why is this challenging?
8. What do you find to be successful when working with your child at-home with writing?
9. When considering the area of writing, what would you like to learn? Why?
10. What do you wish you could assist your child with at-home in the area of writing? Why?

Mid-interview questions

1. Has your view on writing with your child changed at all? If so, how?
2. Has your child's view on writing changed at all? If so, how?
3. Do you notice any changes in how often you and your child write with one another at-home?
4. Thus far, what have you learned through your Family Writer's Workshop sessions? How have you used this?
5. What is the most challenging aspect of working with your child?
6. What has been a successful aspect of writing with your child?
7. What area of writer's workshop would you like more guidance with?
8. What have you learned so far from the FWW experience?
9. What is the most important thing that you have learned so far?
10. What has your child learned so far from the FWW experience?
11. What is the least important thing that you have learned so far?
12. Can you please select a piece of writing (utilizing the student portfolio) and explain an experience related to it?

Post-interview questions

1. What have you learned through your Family Writer's Workshop sessions?
2. Has your view on writing with your child changed at all? If so, how?
3. Has your child's view on writing changed at all? If so, how?
4. Can you please select a piece of writing (utilizing the student portfolio) and explain an experience related to it?
5. Do you find it easier to work on writing with your child? Why or why not?
6. What is the most challenging aspect of working with your child?
7. What has been a successful aspect of writing with your child?
8. What have you learned from the FWW experience?
9. What has your child learned from the FWW experience?
10. Do you think you will utilize anything you learned from Family Writer's Workshop sessions, if so what?
11. Are there any aspects of the Family Writer's Workshop that you will not continue implementing with your child? Why?
12. What area of writing do you feel that you still need assistance with when working with your child with writing at-home?

VITA

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EDUCATION

2010	Master of Science in Reading Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA. 4.0 GPA
2004	Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education Heidelberg University, Tiffin, OH. 3.8 GPA

EXPERIENCE

2018- Present	Elementary Language Arts Teacher Specialist, Hampton City Schools, Hampton, VA
2016- 2018	Reading Specialist, Virginia Beach City Public Schools, Virginia Beach, VA
2013-2016	Reading Specialist, Norfolk Public Schools, Norfolk, VA.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRESENTATIONS AND GUEST LECTURER

2018-Present	Variety of Leadership, Curriculum, Reading and Writing Professional Developments, Hampton Public Schools, Hampton VA.
March 2016	Guided Reading: Beginner Readers DRA 4-12, Norfolk Public Schools, All City Staff Day, Norfolk, VA.
November 2014	Professionalism and Advocacy in the Field of Literacy, READ 385: Organizing and Supervising Reading Program Development, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA.

References available upon request