



theExact Word's Innovation: The First Report Informal Impact Results 2007-2008

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LANGUAGE ARTS PARADIGM SHIFT

CALL FOR NEW METHODS

Researching the educational literature reveals a broad need for new methods. theExact Word, both a company and a methodology, offers a new method and a genuine paradigm shift. In several respects, the English-speaking world has a communications crisis. This crisis includes the need for skills mastery in addition to the need for critical thinking. Plaguing many students and adults as well, the sense of not fully understanding the scope and depth of how English works affects their confidence and their futures. Feeling that they cannot use language well enough to realize their fullest abilities reaches across the curriculum and professional workplaces alike. And this disappointment says nothing of lost enthusiasm and motivation, or the lost opportunity to change wide-spread drop-out rates. Worst, failed expectations also diminish the belief that schools can make assessing good writing a more universally objective process.

THE PRICE PAID

The money spent for writing remediation alone indicates the breadth of the problem, a problem that The Aspen Institute addressed. Private industry spends \$3.1B annually and state and local governments \$221M annually on remediation. According to Steve Graham and Karen Harris, ninety-nine percent of American colleges and universities have writing clinics to address this problem.

HISTORICAL FACTS:

- 70% of students in grades 4-12 are low-achieving writers (Persky et al., 2003)
- Nearly 1/3 of high school graduates are not ready for college-level English composition courses (ACT 2005)
- College instructors estimate that 50% of high school graduates are not prepared for college-level writing (Achieve, Inc., 2005)
- The knowledge and skill required for higher education and for employment are now considered equivalent (ACT 2006)
- A report to the Carnegie Corporation, Alliance for Excellent Education, suggests that traditional programs for teaching students how to think, to write, and to understand the “system of language” do not work as hoped, as evidenced by a wide-spread failure of teaching writing and Language Arts. (*Writing Next, Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools*, a report written by Steve Graham and Dolores Perin, © 2007.)

The report, *Nation at Risk*, in April 1983, initiated a focus upon the need to improve **writing training**. When thought turns to sentence, writing skills apply. But, the thought process, which engenders writing, needs considerable attention. Thinking well, the writer can choose designed thought, not remain a prisoner of what first comes to mind. When students know how to think well, and additionally know the language elements for expressing thought, then students gain both confidence and a new sense of possibility.

Even though the improvement of writing skills has been a national focus for over three decades, many of today's students are still not meeting even basic writing standards. America is the one of the few countries which tries to educate all its citizens, particularly without a state test channeling the populace into academic or career tracks. Americans feel that failing even a few is too many. Nonetheless, every year a large number of high-school students graduate, or drop out, lacking the basic skills necessary for college or employment. Despite teachers' best efforts, leaving them frustrated without solutions disappoints America's expectations to remain the best of the best. At the September, 2008 Aspen Institute conference, corporate CEOs and executives cited the dire need for and lack of excellent critical thinking as a paramount corporate global priority *whether or not new-hires come from American institutions of higher education*. The country that produces critical thinkers, they emphasized, will take global leadership.

MISUNDERSTANDING HOW ENGLISH WORKS

Schools are not at fault. Neither schools nor teachers have failed to put forth effort or resources. theExact Word's method, therefore, differs by addressing not only the symptoms, but the fundamental misunderstanding by which we structure language, not only Language Arts instruction. The grammatical model, interestingly, has misled us.

No one deserves blame for this misunderstanding because both our language and its alphabet were superimposed upon the English language in A.D. 597 by Roman Catholic monks *using their Latinate language paradigm*. The original English speakers had only an oral language without a written form; to translate the Bible, therefore, the monks overlaid their Latinate structure upon the spoken English. That writers and teachers have used this eight-parts-of-speech approach ever since has also unfortunately blocked, not clarified, student understanding about how thought in English turns to sentence. English does not change word endings to create meaning and instead uses word-order, word-grouping connections, and overlapped groups of words to express strings of thought.

Because Latin is our language model with its grammar superimposed over English we have a pervasive misunderstanding. Since English works differently, the well-meaning monks have inadvertently shifted our focus to names and labels to match the Latin system. Rather, English operates by connecting thoughts in groups of words. Because the grammatical nomenclature sounds so foreign, students have to almost “translate” how thought works before they can write. Again, teachers and scholars have made a Herculean effort to translate the grammatically complex system of rules and exceptions to our students. Guiding students with paper-grading and fighting student “eye-rolling” about grammar and mechanics makes the teaching process huge if not overwhelming. No matter how hard they work or how many papers they diligently grade, teachers’ intensifying more of the same has not been enough to make English *intuitively accessible*. Also, beyond grammatical problems, far too many students cannot generalize how language works to other classes, to daily life, or to standardized testing. For real success, students need to learn to structure what they think, or to say what they mean with mastery and confidence. The workplace laments this gap.

HOW ENGLISH (REALLY) WORKS

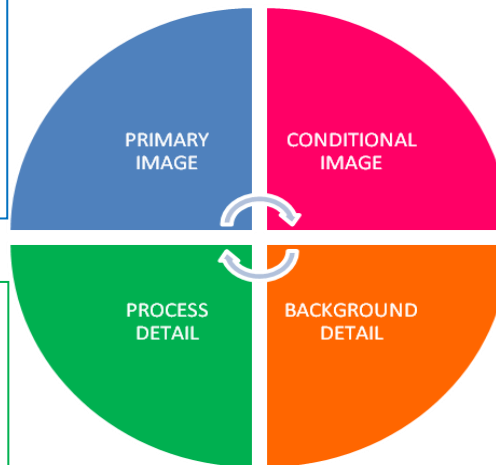
As it turns out, English has a binary model which underlies the entire language. English has two Image word groups: Primary Image and Conditional Image; and two Detail word groups: Process Detail and Background Detail. And meaning itself derives from a syntax of “fixed-word order,” not part-of-speech. The following sentence illustrates:

Welling up, he said, in a few well-said words, “Well, when I feel well, I’ll run out to the well.”

Additionally, both Nounness and Verbness (comprising the two fundamental elements of English) function in two ways: tied together in Images and separated in Details. We construct all sentences in English by one or a combination of these four word-group patterns.

Even more, all words and groups of words in English, except verbs in tense, operate as either Nounness or as Qualifiers. All four word groups always maintain their formulae and all add considerable context meaning to words. No exceptions.

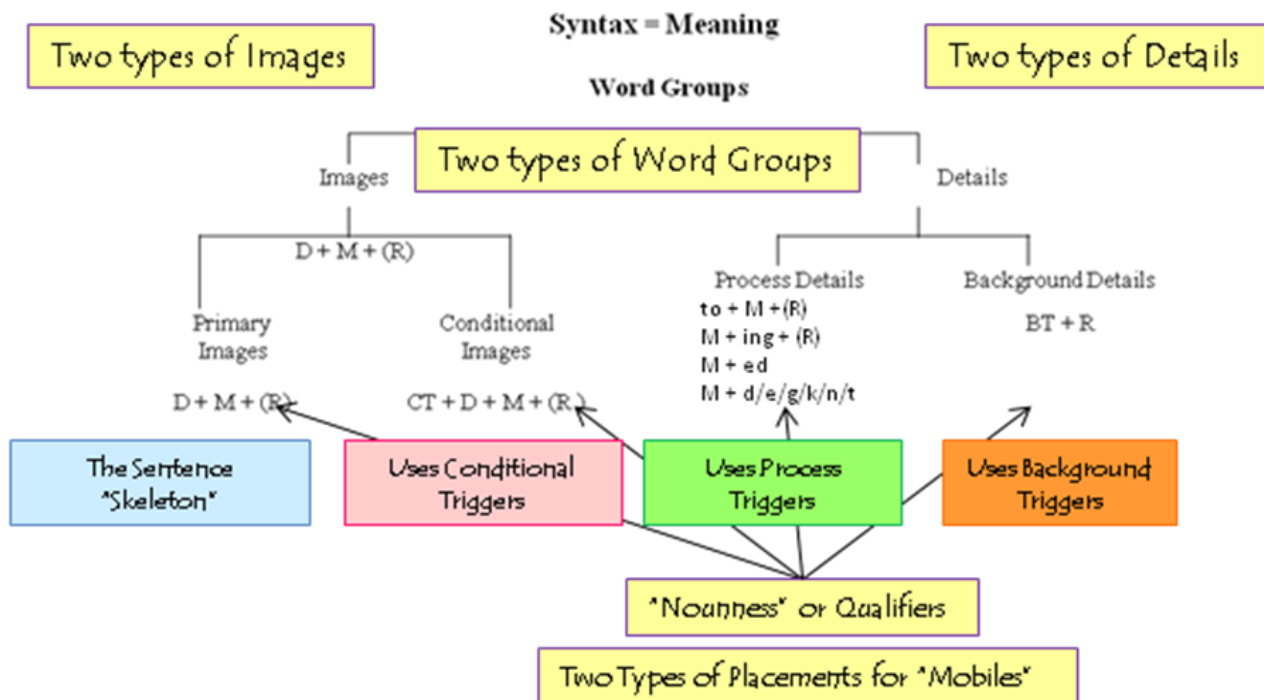
1. Central or supporting structure
2. Not necessarily "the" point
 - Added meaning
 - Result
 - Contrast
3. Authority, closure, breadth



1. Limits as Qualifier
2. Expands as Nested agent
3. Identifies circumstances, condition
4. Identifies cause or result, timing, or location of events
5. Creates expectation
6. Creates supporting reasons

1. Compresses
2. Prevents multiple Images
3. Helps to control excess length
4. Present, past, future on-going process
5. Self-defining
6. Shows affect of a process

1. Deepens meaning
2. Defines, limits
3. Provides critical, completed meaning
4. Focuses time, place, grouping



These charts illustrate that English word groups operate by formula and create specific context meaning. Students directly experience thought in language units as opposed to seeing thought as an abstraction...and they think it's fun.

All sentences operate by one or a combination of the four patterns, with functions and "flippable" interchanges among them in rule-governed ways. The Nounness and Verbness connections create thought relationships and complexities beyond single-word definitions. The four patterns either overlap each other, and "stack" or "Nest" inside each other; or, they Qualify, limit, and refine each

other. This unique language trait allows English speakers to move beyond focusing primarily on vocabulary and correctness to composing thought from a foundation of conceptual and contextual relationships. English has only two sets of groups of words (Images and Details) with patterns and formulae for each set. Movement in Image (Verbness) also always operates by formula. Always.

PARADIGM SHIFT

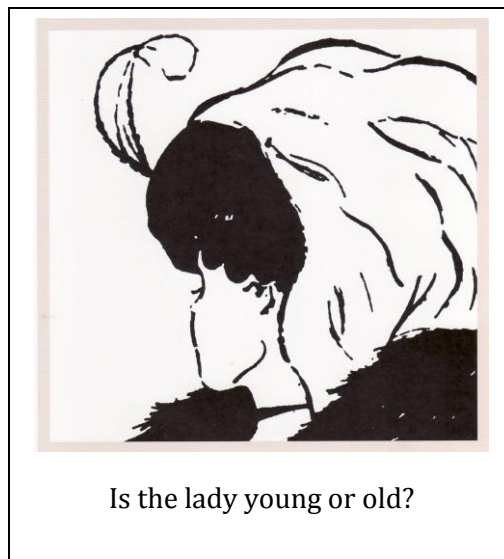
An intuitive mental ordering process accompanies thinking in English. Making this process conscious creates language command which shifts the language paradigm.

The method: uncovering meaning “between the lines;” in other words, an English speaker can visualize meaning in context for composing thought. This innovation organizes English into thought-string patterns, in everyday language. Color-coded, these strings match how we think. theExact Word’s method addresses meaning in **groups of words**, not only single words. We do not write and think with single words which Latinate grammar implies.

Connected, overlapping thought in reading and writing becomes conscious and designed. English speakers intuitively choose, *by default or design, the only four context patterns which exist, without exception, to form English sentencing.* With patterned thought-strings as tools, ease of language use becomes immediately accessible. Meaning and the logic of thought become a scheme of procedure. Further, not replacing other approaches or terminology, theExact Word reveals logic in Latinate grammar as tied to thought. theExact Word’s method helps students approach such terms as voice, inference, and inquiry with immediately useful, concrete understanding by applying theExact Word’s binary, natural-language logic. Everyone can learn to write and think well using theExact Word’s methodology. Anyone can expect to feel new excitement about understanding language complexity with greater ease.

SHIFT HAPPENS

theExact Word’s patented, revolutionary approach creates a paradigm shift in language, from focusing on single words, vocabulary, definitions, and traditional grammar, to seeing an architecture of meaning in contextual blocks of words. These blocks of meaning operate as absolutes, in binary patterns, without exceptions. They are easy to recognize and use, yet have the sophistication of the best literature in English. Furthermore, all English speakers use these four patterns of meaning intuitively and as a matter of default; they are all we have. When we understand these patterns, we begin to see the strengths we have in our writing and speaking styles, and we develop strategies to use those strengths better. We also become more competent in addressing the needs of listeners and readers. We begin to have more choice. theExact Word shifts the definition of writing to literally how we “see thought.” An organic change occurs; the learner sees in a new way. Think, for example, of seeing a 3-D picture “appear” in a painting made up only of line drawings or a line drawing with multiple images, as in the illustration.



Think of any moment when an Ah ha! occurs; you literally see in a new way. Read the comments and writing samples from the three projects presented here. They describe this Ah ha! and chronicle that shift with 2nd and 11th graders and three groups of teachers.

THE "AH HA!" MOMENT

Two sentence examples illustrate how theExact *Word's* method reveals the intuitive patterns in thought. The first, "scrambled" sentence:

to
store
the
want
I
go

Second, the "still" sentence:

My uncle runs a still in West Virginia. When the tax people come after him, he stills the engines, hides under the still, lying very still; still, he still runs his still next to the still-life store.

Both create a nano-second pause, while the reader "orders" or "sorts out the meaning" in these examples.

For the writer, that moment needs to stay permanently alive. What looks to be "confusion," no matter how fleeting, is the threshold for thinking in more than one way. If we can maintain our readiness for "productive confusion," we bring the moment of insight, the "Ah Ha!" to the surface. A kind of cognitive dissonance accompanies discovery; we "un-see" a direction as part of the process of seeing a new direction. Pattern flipping and thinking with context keep a positive cognitive dissonance as a productive tool.

Language operates by pattern. Having a paradigm which articulates language pattern and the freedom to "flip" insight then models the search for seeing in more than one way, shifting vision, and thinking in ways we don't think.

And this shift has occurred every time we teach theExact *Word* methodology. Without fail. For twenty years. With hundreds of people from 2nd grade to retirement.

We track the shift. With the results, we quantify quality. Since all writing falls into three writing behaviors: motivation, skills, critical thinking, we have developed a framework for comparing how students of any age or participants of any occupation shift into new understanding of how language works.

theEXACT WORD'S APPROACH

First, teachers and students look at how they think with a ThoughtPrint® inventory. Visualizing their thinking styles and collecting them as a classroom ThoughtMap makes their thinking processes concrete and immediate. Understanding their thought patterns, students have loved seeing how they, their friends, their teachers, and their parents think. ThoughtMaps also guide teachers for modulating teaching styles to various types of learning and new ways to connect subject matter to each student. Teacher expectation has broadened to motivate all kinds of student thinkers.

Next, learning the four patterns from which all English sentences derive, and learning theExact Word's color-coding which graphically illustrates the triggers and connects thought, students master what makes English work, how to use English by design, and how to add strategies to their strengths. It's fun, intuitive, and permanent. Students can immediately visualize, practice, and experiment with flipping and reconnecting thought. Students play with the language in multiple educational ways, i.e., literally drawing visualized examples and experimenting with sentence and reading patterns. One student wrote a perfectly grammatical, beautifully related two-page, *one sentence* story. Students feel smart, become original, take chances, and excel right away. As they learn and experiment with patterns of context and visualized thought, they learn complex structures without agony, dread, or confusion. Not just feeling good, they very quickly begin to trust their ability to use Language Arts tools.

Conventional teaching and learning models may address only limited aspects of language, but the learner has the mental facilities for complex models to address complex processes. theExact Word's binary model encompasses complex language functions in a very simple progression. And we assume every participant is a complex thinker. This simplicity untangles the complex nomenclature of Latin grammar to reveal an elegant language beneath.

An example will speak for itself. These before/after samples came from a second-grade girl writing during class time after less than five theExact Word instructional hours. A fuller description of this project follows later in this document as Project 3.

Writing Sample - Rebecca

Original:

I go to the park. I play on the monkey bars. I slide down the slide. I play in the sandbox.

Final:

What if I was a flower? I want to be a flower so butterflies can drink my nectar. Once I see lots of kids feet, I am afraid the kids will step on me. So I got picked. Then Layla took me home and she put me in water. She looked at me. She was still. And one day, deciding to take a walk, Layla started to have a normal day. She ate dinner. She had dessert. After she took a shower, then she went to bed. She woke up and ate breakfast. She went to school. She cooked dinner. She set the table. She had fun. She was home. It was bed time. It was breakfast time. It was school time. Then it was playtime. Walking on the grass, Layla saw a flower. She picked it up after she cooked dinner.

MEASURING WRITING AND LANGUAGE ARTS

We need objectivity to see changes in our knowledge. Within a learning experience of genuine inquiry, we cannot anticipate exactly how we will proceed and what we will learn. We cannot know what we will discover; likewise, we cannot know how discovery will affect our perspectives. We cannot know how new thinking will change us. We inquire. We discover. Discovery adds to what we know. Self-assessment, in a sense, “turns us around.”

People tend to forget where they began. With self-assessment, we can look back. We see objectively where we began and thus measure how far we have progressed. Comparing starting and ending points gives us a third benefit: articulating change. We gain the language to talk about language and about learning. We see either a difference in *what* we know now or we validate *how much* we know.

“Once we stretch our mind around a new idea, it never returns to its former shape.”
Oliver Wendell Holmes

Can we teach critical thinking? Yes. Can we quantify quality? Yes.

QUANTIFYING QUALITY: PRE/POST SELF-ASSESSMENT

Since its founding, theExact Word has always valued pre-instruction self-assessments and post-instruction outcomes because each individual participant needs to remember where s/he began and have a means to compare the outcomes to initial expectations. Moreover, theExact Word assesses return-on-investment for the group as well as the individual. The outcomes for the group determine what the group needs to learn next, how to tailor, and how to track a fully successful program.

theExact Word values self-assessment as a model for articulating learning. We have empirical gathered results for both the educational and corporate environments since the company began. As learners gain objectivity, they change the sense of possibility that they see in themselves; they gain strategies and respect for their own strengths. Keeping the same basic questions, we, together with teachers, rewrote this pre/post inventory using language appropriate for varied grade levels. The fundamental questions, however, remain the same. Thus, facilitators and teachers, have the same “song sheet” for assessing big-picture results and how to better meet students’ needs.

Every seminar or course begins and ends with self-assessment. Twenty-five “pre” questions address attitudes and experiences about writing. Thirty-five “post” questions ask participants to assess expected improvement and skills gained. All thirty-five questions fall into seven aspects of writing, aspects which all writers must address. The three tenets summarize the writing process. Once motivated to believe we can communicate well, even a jaded learner will revisit skills s/he has considered inaccessible. A new positive experience leads to both paradigm shift and critical thinking.

Seven Aspects	Three Tenets
Motivation	Motivation
(In)accessible skills	A Paradigm Shift From Struggles To Solutions
Impediments to Writing	
Writing as Thinking	
Matching word to thought	Critical-Thinking Skills
Structures for writing	
Writing to adapt to audience	

LEARNING LANGUAGE ABOUT LANGUAGE

The assessment form itself creates “language for commenting about language.”¹ theExact Word’s paradigm shift focuses upon thought strings and groups of words in context, mirroring how we think. This pre/post initially grew empirically out of theExact Word’s participants’ answers to the questions, “What do you hope to gain from communications/writing instruction? Or “What about communication troubles you?” Fifteen clear and patterned questions and sub questions arose repeatedly capturing a common denominator of abilities crucial to communicating well. They have thus remained the core of the assessment for every one of our schools.

For any school or parent, these results constitute return-on-investment. We can assure that solid evaluation has an empirical foundation. We can look objectively at whether we accomplished what we intended. Unanticipated benefits educate everyone in the process. theExact Word facilitators, therefore, learn from and with the learners. Simultaneously, the learner gains objectivity and closure, and has the chance to express what s/he needs to do in the future to learn more, to practice, and become stronger with new abilities. We establish and value collaborative partnerships with our schools, administrators, principals, teachers, parents, and students. From them, and together, we learn, adjust, tailor, improve.

Another important feature of the pre/post self-assessment is that it creates personal expectations. The pre/post assessment does not examine how people *feel* about learning theExact Word, but demonstrates to themselves that they will communicate more skillfully, with more awareness, choice, and design. Remarkably similar results have occurred with every group, whether students, teachers, or adult professionals in the workplace. These recurrences have provided us with consistent crucial insight into how language works and how people learn. Self-assessment and project specifics follow.

OVERVIEW OF THE THREE PROJECTS

theExact Word’s method directly addresses techniques to replace the shortfall in understanding how language works. This method leads to organic student revision, reduces paper grading significantly and inspires both students and teachers. The three projects illustrate. All three, in a western American state, created some parallel outcomes:

1. Teacher expectation of student ability changed;
2. Students made surprising steps ahead;
3. Sustained teacher and student enthusiasm grew;
4. Both teachers and students emphasized the surprise they felt at their progress.

The time frames varied. In all, however, the time spent fell far below what educators conventionally believe necessary for any mastery of Language Arts. We briefly describe the three projects below, and then offer fuller explanations and descriptions of results in the pages following.

1. **Teachers’ Professional Development:** A western American state school district: 35 teachers from middle schools, high schools, and one alternative school attended

¹ Master Teacher Randy Olsen

professional-development writing institutes, gaining lane and re-licensure credits, for one thirty-five hour week and three 6-hour follow-up days in October, January, and April for 53 total hours. These teachers primarily, but not exclusively, teach English/Language Arts at all levels, from “special needs” to honors, from 7th-10th grade. Some teach reading, history, foreign language. Throughout the school year, they spent varied amounts of time teaching theExact Word’s methodology to students.

2. **Eleventh Grade:** A western American city, public high-school: a pre-service English/Language Arts teacher carried out a service-learning project with a mixed 11th-12th grade class of 32 students and their teacher in a large urban high school. The students were part of the AVID program of largely minority students (about half English-Language Learners) and potentially 1st-generation college students, in classes specifically designed to help them become prepared to apply for and successfully attend college. The service-project student-teacher teamed with the regular classroom teacher over a period of 8 weeks, with inconsistent instructional time due to other activities in the class/school. Total theExact Word instructional time with the whole class, small groups, and individuals came to a little over four hours during 10 visits.
3. **Second Grade:** An independent elementary school in the same western American city: an associate English professor from a neighboring university teamed with a second-grade teacher to carry out a writing project for twenty second-graders. This involved teaching and applying theExact Word in a writing workshop project. Total instructional time working with the whole class, in “small-group centers,” and individuals amounted to four hours and twenty minutes over seven weeks.

The results speak volumes. If you wish, we will provide you references, student before/after writing samples, detailed teacher comments, a pilot-program model written by teachers for formally gathering theExact Word’s results for all students in one school, and tailored pricing.

These teachers describe the theExact Word paradigm-shift for new mastery as it reached the teachers, students, and parents in their school. theExact Word’s patented method works. Furthermore, it is logical, fresh, immediate, and long-lasting, and feels new and fun.

PROJECT ONE

WESTERN AMERICAN STATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

In July 2007, seventeen teachers completed the five-day course introduction to theExact *Word's* Language Arts methodology and three follow-up training days over that school year. The course facilitators, Barbara Stuckey, theExact *Word's* originator, and Dr. Janet Kaufman, Associate Professor of English at the University of Utah supported these teachers by phone, e-mail access, and school visits through-out the 2007-8 school year. The participating teachers folded the methodology into their curricula in various and individual ways. The second cohort began in July, 2008 and both groups will continue through 2008-9.

The combined groups included thirty-three teachers:

- A faculty of eleven middle-school Language Arts teachers, including a resource/support teacher;
- Five high-school English teachers from separate schools;
- One middle-school English teacher from a neighboring Catholic Diocese;
- Two alternative high school teachers from the same school;
- Three middle-school resource teachers, two from the same school;
- One middle school reading teacher;
- Six middle-school Language Arts teachers, four from the same middle school;
- One middle school social studies teacher;
- One substitute teacher;
- One teacher on temporary hiatus;
- One English Department Chairperson from a neighboring district piloting the course for her school, the same school which the eleventh graders described in this document attend;
- One high school Spanish teacher.

District Goals:

- Provide new tools for teaching writing and new approaches for all Language Arts skills.

theExact *Word's* Goals:

- Providing the teachers with a methodology to teach language and context tools to meet core curriculum objectives;
- Adding to teachers' experience by practicing approaches to higher-order thinking, inquiry, writing, and language structure with theExact *Word* tools;
- Modeling and practicing teaching characterized by rigor, intellectual inquiry, risk, and originality;
- Introducing theExact *Word's* tools of language for seeing the unconscious context of wording and thought;
- Addressing the risk inherent in intellectual challenge and helping students gain confidence in the learning process—grappling with struggle and finding resolution;
- Tying tools of language to thinking, writing, reading, lines of reasoning, and inquiry;

- Showing parallels between traditional grammar and theExact Word design, while seeing how the elements and patterns of English address meaning, thought, and perspective beyond nomenclature, mechanics, or developing writing style.
- Helping teachers—and their students—to understand choice in thinking and writing, to read closely with depth, to articulate their learning, and to begin to activate language arts mastery across the curriculum.

TEACHER PRE/POST SELF-ASSESSMENT RESPONSES

JULY, 2007 AND JULY, 2008 -- TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Don't skip this part!

Participants use this pre/post instrument to self-assess. The chart below lists the self-assessment questions with both pre- and post-responses. Self-assessment has real significance, especially for a paradigm-shift experience. Each individual measures: what did I need when I came here? and what did I gain as a new insight?

Teachers completed this fifteen-question section during the first morning, answering each with

a) Never; b) Rarely; c) Sometimes; d) Often; e) Usually; or d) Always.

We tally the first three choices, “never, rarely, or sometimes” as one percentage for the group. The post-seminar tallies ask each participant to respond, “I think I will improve this: Yes or No” (*whether or not I thought I needed help in this area*). Teachers answered the post questions at the closing of the first week's training.

Participants gain significantly where they had not expressed or anticipated need. They identify a shift in their thinking.

2007: “Yes, I think I will improve” for 33 of the 35 questions, a 92% gain in ability and confidence.

2008: “Yes, I think I will improve” for 35 of the 35 questions, a 100% gain in ability and confidence.

Additionally, for both years, 100% of the teachers expected improvement in both quality of their communications and in time spent communicating.

Interestingly, the eleventh graders in the AVID pilot-project report, which follows, answered, “Yes, I think I will improve” for 27 of the thirty-six questions,” a 75% gain in ability, interest, and confidence after only five hours total training. Most also added comments that they wanted more classroom time to learn the system well.

Pre-Seminar Questions: Page One of Four

1. Why did you enroll?

- 2007: 100% desire to find new ways to develop themselves and their students. Of these, 44%: want to improve students' writing and their own; 44% want techniques to improve students' grammar and editing and willingness to learn it!
- 2008: 100% desire to find new ways to develop themselves and their students; and they feel the course work will give them effective methods.

2. What do you want to take back?

- 2007: 100% desire to gain confidence, new ideas, specific ways to permanently improve student writing and grammar skills including their own mastery.
- 2008: 100% desire structures, approaches, methods, and techniques which give students access to language and 100% of the teachers have positive expectations for the use of the system. Nearly 80% wish for added confidence for themselves or their students; nearly 80 % wish for successfully incorporating better grammar skills and writing tools into their teaching.

3. Your wish from this workshop if this system really works.

- 2007: 100% have positive expectations for the use of the system. Specifically, nearly 80% wish for added confidence for themselves or their students; nearly 80% also wish for successfully incorporating better grammar skills and writing tools into their teaching. In the teachers' voices:
- That I become the "idol" of all my colleague Language Arts teachers!
 - My students will be excited about writing and revising their own work.
 - Confident, proficient, systematic use of grammar.
 - Have my entire department adopt it.
- 2008: 69% want to incorporate theExact Word in their classes. In their voices, they hope:
- Access [to how language works]
 - I'll wish that it could be taught state/U.S.-wide.
 - To incorporate it.
 - That I will have some "Ah-ha" moments w/my students.

Post Seminar

Do you feel you will be able to improve the quality of the time you spend writing or helping other to write?

2007: 100%

2008: 100%

Do you feel you will be able to improve the quality of your writing or of others' writing?

2007: 100%

2008: 100%

SPECIFIC SKILL AREAS PRE/POST-COURSE SELF-ASSESSMENT

2007 and 2008 Total # of Participants: 33		GRAND TOTAL				
WESTERN AMERICAN STATE		PRE ASSESSMENT		POST ASSESSMENT		
		Never, Rarely, Sometimes	Often, Usually, Always	Yes, I will Probably Improve	No, I will Probably Not Improve	Need More Time
1	Do you feel you do not communicate what you really mean to say?	94%	6%	91%	9%	0%
2	Do you wish you could think in more than one way?	42%	52%	94%	3%	3%
3	Do you feel your thoughts sometimes escape you because thinking develops faster than you can write?	48%	52%	91%	9%	0%
4	Do you have trouble identifying your subject matter?	97%	3%	82%	18%	0%
5	Do you feel dissatisfied with your final written product, or do you feel you did not address the topic in the best way?	88%	12%	91%	6%	3%
6	Do you wish you could write with more than one style?	39%	61%	97%	3%	0%
7	Have you had to make a forced change in your style to suit someone else?	70%	30%	91%	9%	0%
8	How much do you struggle each of the following four writing processes:					
8a	Eliminating ideas	82%	18%	91%	6%	3%
8b	Expressing ideas	91%	6%	94%	3%	3%
8c	Eliminating details	85%	15%	88%	9%	3%
8d	Expressing details	76%	24%	94%	3%	3%
9	Do you wish you could write the way someone else does?	64%	36%	85%	12%	0%
10a	Have you ever felt you could not be objective about your own writing?	61%	39%	100%	0%	0%
10b	Have you ever felt you could not be objective about your own thinking?	58%	42%	91%	6%	3%
11	Do you wish you could write faster?	36%	64%	73%	21%	6%
12a	Do you ever look at your writing positively?	39%	61%	97%	3%	0%
12b	Do you ever look at your writing negatively?	70%	30%	97%	3%	0%
13	What percentage of the writing process do you spend procrastinating?	0%-40% 55%	50%-80% 45%	79%	18%	0%

		PRE ASSESSMENT		POST ASSESSMENT		
WESTERN AMERICAN STATE		Never, Rarely, Sometimes	Often, Usually, Always	Yes, I will Probably Improve	No, I will Probably Not Improve	Need More Time
14	Which do you see as #1 in importance:					
	Write More Quickly	28%	#3	82%	15%	0%
	Procrastinate Less	28%	#2	73%	18%	0%
	Write slowly & well	28%	#1	94%	0%	0%
	Capture Thoughts	17%	#4	94%	0%	0%

Extra Post Questions

15	Has English grammar made writing more difficult for you?	88%	12%			
16	Do you anticipate feeling less fearful about writing?			94%	0%	0%
17	Can you separate Images from details in editing and originating thought?			100%	0%	0%
18	I feel I have gained insight into the English language?			100%	0%	0%
19	I feel I can match thought to wording.			94%	0%	6%
20	I can make:					
20a	A Primary Image			100%	0%	0%
20b	A Process Detail			100%	0%	0%
20c	A Conditional Image			97%	0%	0%
20d	A Background Detail			100%	0%	0%
21	I feel I have identified my strength in my writing.			82%	12%	6%
22	I feel I can identify strategies for my writing future.			97%	0%	6%
23	I feel I have gained an ability to "shift."			91%	3%	6%
24	Do you expect to be able to make wording or perspective shifts in your communicating?			88%	0%	12%

PLEASE SEE ATTACHMENT 1 FOR A VIVID ILLUSTRATION OF DRAMATIC TEACHER GROWTH.

POST-SEMINAR ASSESSMENTS

1. How did you react to your own writing when you analyzed its structure?

2007: Seeing one's own writing objectively stymies everyone initially because "what we meant to say" gets in the way. Yet, 100% gained objectivity about their writing and their ability to assess it. Half the group felt real surprise about their insights. A few of their voices:

- I was amazed and stunned.
- Surprise at where I fell in the four structures.
- I feel like my writing was very fine-tuned.
- I need to vary my triggers in order to put more depth into my writing.
- My meaning is hidden in detail (green and orange).

2008: 100% gained objectivity about their writing and their ability to assess it. theExact Word's method creates a startling objectivity which runs counter to our initial intention. Participants feel stymied, caught between "what I meant to say" and "Oh, I had no idea that this is how I sounded" or "I didn't realize what I actually said." Half of this group also felt real surprise about their writing when they could see it objectively.

- I was surprised by some of my misconceptions. I was delighted by the expansiveness of my writing samples.
- I noticed it needed the variety – (change pattern; change meaning).
- I was surprised at how much easier it is to improve my writing using the colors as a tool.

2. General comments from the pre/post: again, the teachers' voices.

2007: 90% see significant potential for their use of this approach.

- I've been blinded by something huge, tremendous, life-changing. Once my eyes clear, I will have no choice but to spread theExact Word.
- I've really developed a love for grammar, and I'm excited that I won't have to abandon that in order to implement theExact Word.
- I can see things I couldn't see before. I believe I can help my students edit now without imposing my beliefs on them.
- I love it and I hope it works and is implemented District-wide.
- theExact Word is just what I was looking for to help me teach students to read and write better.
- I loved this class and will teach what I learned to my students.
- I feel like I'm beginning to understand how language actually works.
- I loved looking at the communication patterns.

2008: 100% see significant potential for their use of this approach.

- *All colors mixed together created deeper meaning, more fun and expressiveness.*

["Colors" means the highlighting color-matching that we do for recognizing the patterns.]

- *I'm amazed! This will change the world.*
- *A very eye opening class that will be incredibly useful to me.*

Expectations:

2007: 100% of these comments anticipate positive benefits to them in the future. Additionally, however, teachers want more strategies and more exercises for classroom application. They want to move past their own professional development into ways to build student confidence. They want more theExact Word books, curricula, and materials to help them teach. These threads continue in other answers.

- *I underestimated how much I would like the "new way." ☺*
- *They were exceeded. ☺*
- *I feel excited to use it in my own writing and to help my students to see how language works and how using it makes meaning (intended or not).*
- *I felt they had been met; however, I now have new expectations/questions.*

2008: 100% of these comments see expectations met, and surpassed.

- *I thought it would be some small strategy to help but it was HUGE! Thank you!*

3. Do you expect to be able to make wording or perspective shifts in your communicating?

2007: 100% continue the emerging theme that the teachers want more strategies for implementation and ways to build confidence. We addressed both strategies and building confidence in the January and April follow-on day with the text, *Before Mastery*, which we have also used to provide exercises which the teachers found successful during the year.

2008: 100% see English and its models in a new way.

4. Do you feel that some aspect of this course remains unaddressed in this Pre/Post assessment? Please identify.

2007: 86%, express needing a strong support system during later training to build their confidence, and reinforce needing exercises for implementation. Both assessments underline the benefit of a strong partnership with theExact Word.

- *The emotional tie to the class members: I was so concerned that everyone get it. I was also worried that I would get it. There is nothing on assessment about this.*
- *Maybe add something such as confidence rated on a scale of 1-20 (relating to using this method)*

- 2008:** 100% of these answers continue the emerging theme that the teachers want more strategies for implementation and ways to build confidence.
- *It works!*
 - *Not at all! It was fantastic – I can't wait until October! Thanks for the eye-opening and synapse-growing, fun experience...so valuable. ☺*
 - *I think I will know how to answer this after I become more familiar with the process! I am excited to get going.*

theExact Word's Response: Because we view our relationships with our teachers as collaborative partnerships, during the three follow-on days, we addressed both requests for providing strategies and building confidence. The text, *Before Mastery*, directly speaks to their stated need for concrete exercises. It includes exercises which the 2007 teachers used throughout the year and will add exercises from succeeding years with credit for each teacher's work.

SAMPLE OF INITIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT RESULTS

Four teachers in a 7th grade English/Language Arts team implementing theExact *Word* in 2007-08 reported, in their words, "remarkable results" in students' learning and identifying context patterns. Among the targeted students, the method produced clearer understanding of basic sentence structure, subject/verb identification, and the ability to create more varied sentences in writing.

A smaller but still significant percentage began to apply theExact *Word* to their reading comprehension. In one 7th grade teacher's class, for example, in one grading period, 86 of 90 students performed at the grade of B or above; 1/3 of "special needs" students moved up 1-3 reading levels; in classroom testing, for another example, "special needs" students scored only slightly below the "honors" students—both at a high level.

As cited earlier in this document, in one teacher's three classes, seven students taught with theExact *Word* methods increased reading comprehension at least one grade level *without focusing the method specifically on reading*. In a parallel class *without theExact Word methodology*, no other students improved reading levels comparably.

Teachers cited strong connections between theExact *Word* paradigm and the state Core Curriculum with its emphasis on inquiry, 6 Traits + 1, critical thinking, reading comprehension, and applying that knowledge to school-wide literacy goals. Teachers expressed confidence that, as they continue to monitor their progress and measure their results, they "are transforming the teaching of English as we have known it."

PROJECT TWO

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL: 2ND GRADE CLASS

Teacher's Goals, to investigate whether:

- Second-graders would understand, see, learn, and use context patterns.
- Second-graders would connect thought to writing in learning language.

Principal's Goals:

The school's principal identified one primary goal:

- Increase student excitement for writing.

theExact Word's Goals:

- Compare student thinking styles to their writing;
- Give students tools to match their thinking to their wording and style;
- Increase skill levels to enable broader choices for expressing complex thought beyond the simple sentence;
- Increase students' abilities to extend their thought, develop an idea, find something new/more to say when they think they're done or have said it all;
- Give students the tools to connect one idea to the next.

Results

- The length of writing increased, from an initial 1-2 sentences per child to 1-3 pages.
- The children in the class identified as having special needs (a learning disability and autism) wrote sophisticated stories using the four context patterns as tools; one of these children began writing at home and in school in unexpected quantity and quality.
- In the initial writing sample totaling 80 sentences for all students, 79 sentences began with an independent clause. The final drafts of the writing workshop project involved many times that number of sentences, and much more diversity of sentence patterning and the corresponding complexity of thought.
- In the majority of sentences starting with independent clauses, students used the full range of patterns to add to and deepen their ideas. They developed writing that created intricate settings, involving the senses and inviting emotional responses. Their final paragraphs display texture that allows for a depth of interpretation, adding detail not only by the addition of a single adjective or adverb but through the complex blending and nesting, or overlapping, of context patterns.
- Revising a sentence such as "It is fun to be a dragon" to "Being a dragon could change my life, the students immersed themselves linguistically and imaginatively in a *process*, and then brought themselves to consider the effects of that process. Significance: the articulated thought processes of seven and eight-year-olds.
- The students' final drafts often contained literary qualities—narrative circularity; rhythm through the repetition of patterns; lines of reasoning traceable through distinct patterns; tone and feeling occurring in particular patterns.
- 63% of the children at the start of the project could identify their own thinking and speaking patterns when shown them, meaning that they have an intuitive sense of their own "voice"—their "ThoughtPrint." Their initial writing samples did not at all reflect this quality of voice.

However, given both language tools and the freedom to imagine and create a story or poem, their individual ThoughtPrints did emerge as voice on the page, matching their ThoughtPrint assessment to initial perception of their “voice.” The writing was diverse in style and structure, as well as in idea and meaning.

SECOND-GRADE TEACHER’S ASSESSMENT

Current recommendations in the Language Arts field for grades K-3 include teaching beginnings and ends of sentences, elaboration of a basic sentence with descriptive information, and word endings. However, writing well beyond the current recommendations, second graders *do* use the full complexity of intuitive English structure in their speech and *can* use it in their writing.

In this study, in every case, the outcome in students’ writing, and students’ sense of their thinking with the theExact Word methodology, differed from the conventionally accepted initial approaches of Language Arts teaching—working with simple sentences and word orientation.

This study raises questions about whether classroom instruction hinders students by explicitly or implicitly encouraging the traditional idea of the “basic” sentence—the independent clause or simple sentence—as the way to start learning writing. The combination of ThoughtPrint assessments with the final drafts of their writing in this study suggest that, early on in a child’s education, we can begin identifying the language patterns through which a child prefers to filter information and processes and expresses thought. If we retain only one pattern as the predominate one for instruction and writing, i.e., the simple sentence, and that pattern does not match a given child’s preference, we risk conveying the message that the child cannot think or write, or cannot do it *right*.

Modeling diversity of language thought and expression, and showing that it is natural and valuable, does not take long periods of time nor need to involve lengthy instruction. Helping students learn tools to write *in their own voices* with linguistic and mental complexity happened both quickly and with good affect upon both the quality of their writing and the motivation and enthusiasm they gained for writing.

PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT AND MOTIVATION

For the students, complexity, curiosity about learning, originality, excitement, and intellectual risk took the place of writing perfunctorily to complete assignments. Personal expressions of enthusiasm and eagerness during class time, numerous reports from parents of children writing poems and stories at home, reports from the teacher of students writing for twenty minute periods without asking “Can I be done?” or “Have I written enough?” all were documented.

The teachers did not administer the pre/post self-assessment. For future projects with the second grade, we recommend that the school and teacher plan sufficient time with the children to ask the pre/post questions aloud in terms meaningful to the children. theExact Word will provide a suitable model.

If you would like to see samples of the children’s writing beyond these four, we will be happy to forward a copy.

SECOND-GRADE WRITING SAMPLES

For the “Original” samples written before theExact *Word* training, the regular classroom teacher used a visual prompt: a picture of children in a park. theExact *Word*’s teacher used verbal prompts, including Shel Silverstein’s poem “The What Ifs,” and then William Steig’s *Sylvester and the Magic Pebble*.

The four samples included here include those from two girls and two boys; one of the four children is a functioning autistic child, and one of them is dyslexic. All their parents endorsed theExact *Word*’s showcasing of their children’s writing saying they felt honored and excited to be asked.

Writing Sample #1 - Rebecca

Original:

I go to the park. I play on the monkey bars. I slide down the slide. I play in the sandbox.

Final story:

What if I was a flower? I want to be a flower so butterflies can drink my nectar. Once I see lots of kids feet, I am afraid the kids will step on me. So I got picked. Then Layla took me home and she put me in water. She looked at me. She was still. And one day, deciding to take a walk, Layla started to have a normal day. She ate dinner. She had dessert. After she took a shower, then she went to bed. She woke up and ate breakfast. She went to school. She cooked dinner. She set the table. She had fun. She was home. It was bed time. It was breakfast time. It was school time. Then it was playtime. Walking on the grass, Layla saw a flower. She picked it up after she cooked dinner.

Writing Sample #2 – Eoghan

Original:

I like Independence Park. It is very fun. When I get there I get very excited. I like the slide and the swings. I like it because it is fun.

Final:

I asked my mom if I could go to the dock of the ocean. She said "yes," I set off. When I got there I saw a fisih starting at me. All of a sudden the fish turned me into a great whie shark. I looked exactly like a great white shark. Right away I started eating fish because I was hungry. After I ate I got caught in the mouth by a fisherman. I got mad and bit the man and jumped back into the sea. Deciding to swim down to the bottom of the ocean, I escaped so nobody could catch me. The fish that turned him into a shark felt bad and turned me back into a human. I was happy to be a human again.

Writing Sample #3 - Chloe

Original:

I like to go to the Independence Park. The park has two swings. The park has three slides. The park is cool.

Final:

What if I became a river? After the rain fall, I became a river. I would travel to places. When I traveled to the beach, I would turn into an ocean. Whenever people would go to the beach, they would swim in the ocean. I would go into animals' bodies and see what they look like and go back out. I would travel over mountains which would be rocky, and then I would go into canyons which would be calm. The rocks on the bottom would feel like a massage. To flow like a river would be magical.

Writing Sample #4 – Colin

Original:

I like to go to Davis Park. The kids are doing fun stuff. The park has one swing set. The park is close to my house. The park is fun and you can feel comfortable.

Final:

What if I became air? I would sneak behind people and scar them. I would walk through people and give people air. After that I would get hungry for dessert. But I guess I still have to look for a wishing rock. What if I found a wishing rock? I would wish to become air and do whatever air can do like make thunder or a tornado. Then, by pushing them up, I would make people fly. Swirling around the trees would make me feel clean and I would eat more air to get stronger. When I would go into a park, I would find a child with ice cream. I would go inside of it, and when the sun melted the ice cream, I would feel the sticky liquid. To turn into air to do all these things, I need a wishing rock.

PROJECT THREE

WESTERN AMERICAN CITY: 11TH GRADE CLASS

Teacher's Goals:

- Help the students to see the uniqueness of their own use of the English language;
- Determine if theExact Word's context patterns would provide a solution to help them unlock their seemingly hidden ideas.

theExact Word's Goals:

- Increase students' sense of access to English and heighten student confidence;
- Increase skill levels for students to articulately express their thinking, feeling, and reasoning;
- Give students tools to see their own writing more objectively and add specific strategies to their existing strengths;
- Improve students' awareness of their thinking styles and the ways they can both maximize the use of those styles and strategize with them;
- Enable students to create conscious choices for understanding and interpreting what they read and choose to write, by giving them knowledge of how English pattern structures work.
- Give students tools to deepen and extend their thinking; to find something more to say about a topic when they would otherwise think they're done; and to show the connections between their ideas.

Despite many differences in goals, time allotted, and skill levels within the distinct groups and among them, quantitative and qualitative patterns emerged. These patterns form a framework for pilot project work with theExact Word's methodology. Pre/Post Assessment: 27 of the 35 enrolled completed it.

How did you react to your own writing when you analyzed its structure?

- a. 95% gained an objective view of their writing.
- b. 40% felt surprised at what they saw
- c. 60% saw ways to improve
- d. 75% cited something positive that they had gained.

These results accrued after *less than 5 total hours of instruction, and no paper revisions by the teacher. The teacher simply color-coded (separate colors signify each of the four patterns) the writing samples for students to revise from.*

- I thought I could improve it a lot more.
- I found that my style is one of power and by changing colors, I can sound more sensitive.
- Surprised
- I didn't freak out. It was not completely horrible I just need to better my grammar.
- Surprised.
- I react like I'm breaking down my paper.
- I was surprised to see the way I use the colors.
- It seemed very different than what I usually do because I never really paid attention to how I communicate with people.
- I just really was surprised. I feel like I got to know myself better.

ELEVENTH- GRADE TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT

This spring, (2008), I got my very first class, still sort of unofficially, and it confirmed every glimmer of the teaching tingles that I've ever had. I'm new and young, full of passion and pure idealistic naiveté, and I cherished every moment with my new students.

I was first introduced to the AVID class as a tutor, and was invited to work with the students to hone their writing skills through an alternative to Latinate grammar, using theExact Word®...licensed to my professor [who would oversee my work]. AVID is a program designed to sculpt lower-income high-schoolers with mediocre academic performance into first-generation university students, and it was a perfect place for a test-run of theExact Word. With college entrance essays to write, the students of the AVID class were in need of a few lessons on how to capture their voice as individuals, see their strengths, and explicate their ideas; and we, their teachers, were hopeful for theExact Word to do precisely that. Hence, though I was new to this arena, I found myself...[experiencing] an on-going problem for every teacher. How does one get her students to expound their ideas and spell out exactly what they mean to convey?

With only a short time, totaling approximately 5 hours, we attempted to show the students the uniqueness of their own use of the English language and ... a solution to help them unlock their seemingly hidden ideas. Slowly, we used theExact Word's system of four patterns that encapsulate the English language and, bit by bit, gave them the tools to understand how these patterns come together most clearly by design but also personally in communication.

The students, as expected, were fascinated by their own use of the patterns, insight into their own partiality to particular patterns, and into other individuals who use the patterns similarly. Through our time together, they were able to explore different uses of English language patterns and learn to manipulate them in a way that is meaningful for them and their readers. Three students in particular stood out in response to the problem we hoped to address: explication of thought in writing. While response to the opportunity for self-expression, for other students, Gabriela, Eddie, and Robert "blew me away" with their final assignments.

What stood out to me most, however, was the students' response to the writing process using theExact Word. All three students explained to me that the revision assignment gave them the opportunity to fix what they felt had gone wrong in their first draft, and they said the highlighted color patterns of theExact Word allowed them to see what was good. I was pleased to hear that they were able to use the colors to figure out where their writing... [worked] well. However, the interesting thing is that both Gabriela and Eddie referred to "comments" I had made or "my revision," meaning a revision that I, as the teacher, had ... [written] on the first draft that I reviewed and handed back. This response was a slight misunderstanding of what I had done, because both students were implying that I had left some kind of constructive criticism or model to help them revise their papers, but this was not the case. After receiving the student's first drafts, I simply highlighted the color patterns in their writing as designated by theExact Word and returned their papers to be revised by them. I did not leave any comments or make any kind of revisions. I simply wanted them to see how they were using the patterns encoded in the English language and decide for themselves what was communicated effectively. I was astounded by the way that theExact Word was able to replace a teacher's comments. These students did not need a teacher to tell them what was good or bad, or what needed further explanation. The language itself did it for them; they simply needed to see the language in color!

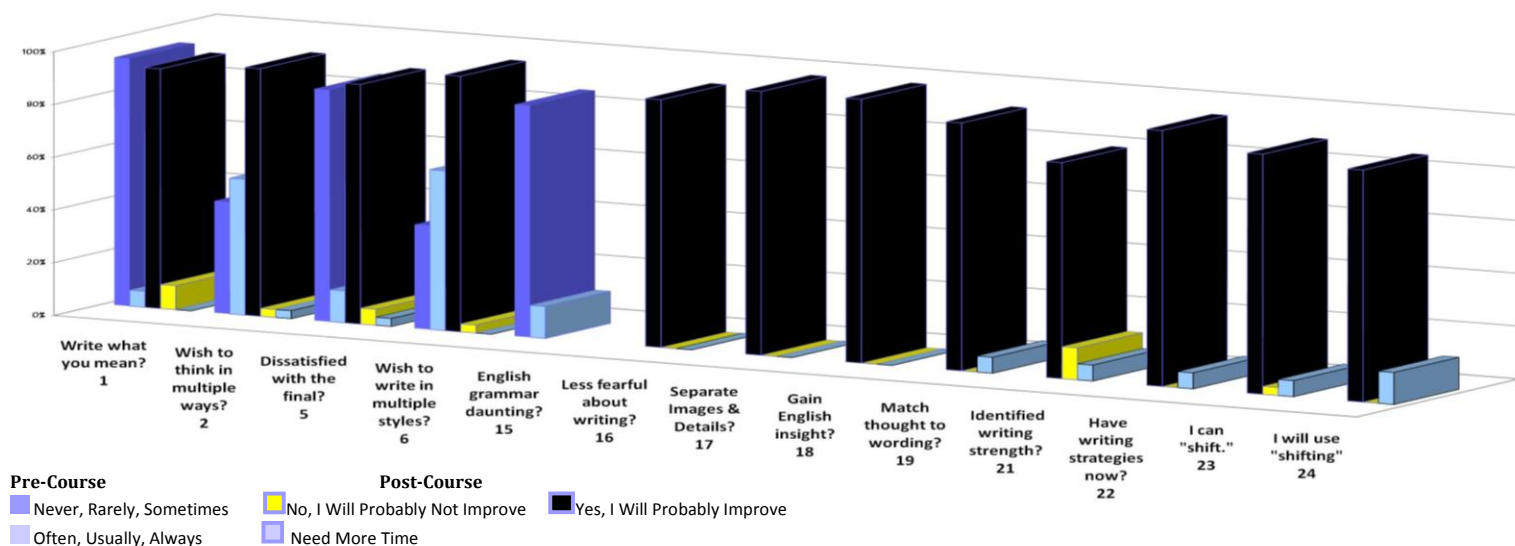
ATTACHMENT 1: QUANTIFYING QUALITY – PROJECT 1 – TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

theExact Word's participants grow. These teachers exceeded their own expectations. Teachers had not considered that thinking skills could be tested or that quality could be quantified. Before theExact Word experience, they had pre-conceived concepts about writing:

- Keep all sentences short.
- We bring writing talent with us at birth, or not.
- English is awkward, unwieldy and full of exceptions.

Skepticism results. Born of experiences, these notions block higher-order and critical thinking. These beliefs cripple potential and lower teacher expectations of their students.

Writing has seven aspects; motivation is first and most critical. If you do not believe you can write, you will avoid it. Avoiding writing has serious impact in the United States. Because struggle to write well discourages so many people, ninety-nine percent of American colleges and universities require freshmen to attend writing classes and clinics. Or, students pursue careers which they feel do not require writing.



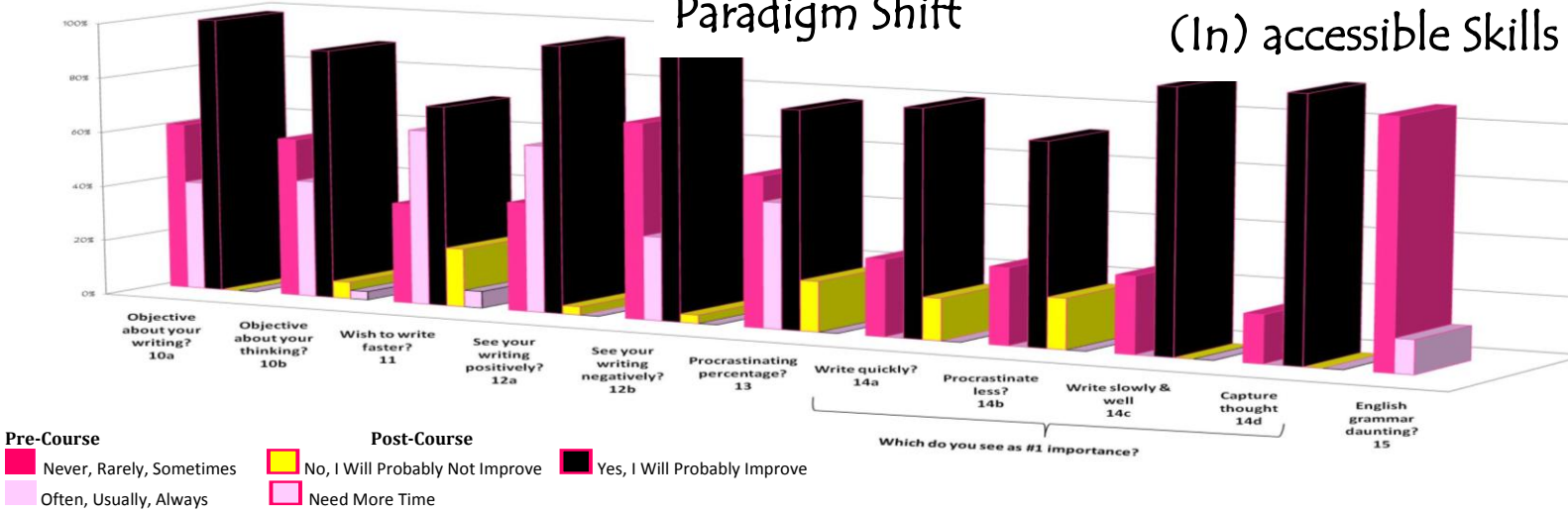
Teachers considered why motivation legitimately qualifies as the first step in writing. Students become excited about writing. Student reading improves. Students begin to feel smart whereas before they have doubted their abilities. Students stop asking, "Is this right? Do I have enough? What do I say next? How do I do this?" A middle-school principal in a mid-western state says, "I see students excited about writing in ways they do not do with other programs. I hear them talking about writing and about English in the halls."

Motivation does not mean simply paying attention and doing homework. Motivation means a belief in ability. Students do not invest vulnerability in futility. theExact Word creates the experience of success. Motivation means students believe in their potential. That belief becomes the matrix for writing and for thinking. And it engenders the energy to grow. The following charts model new knowledge gained in the remaining six aspects in theExact Word process.

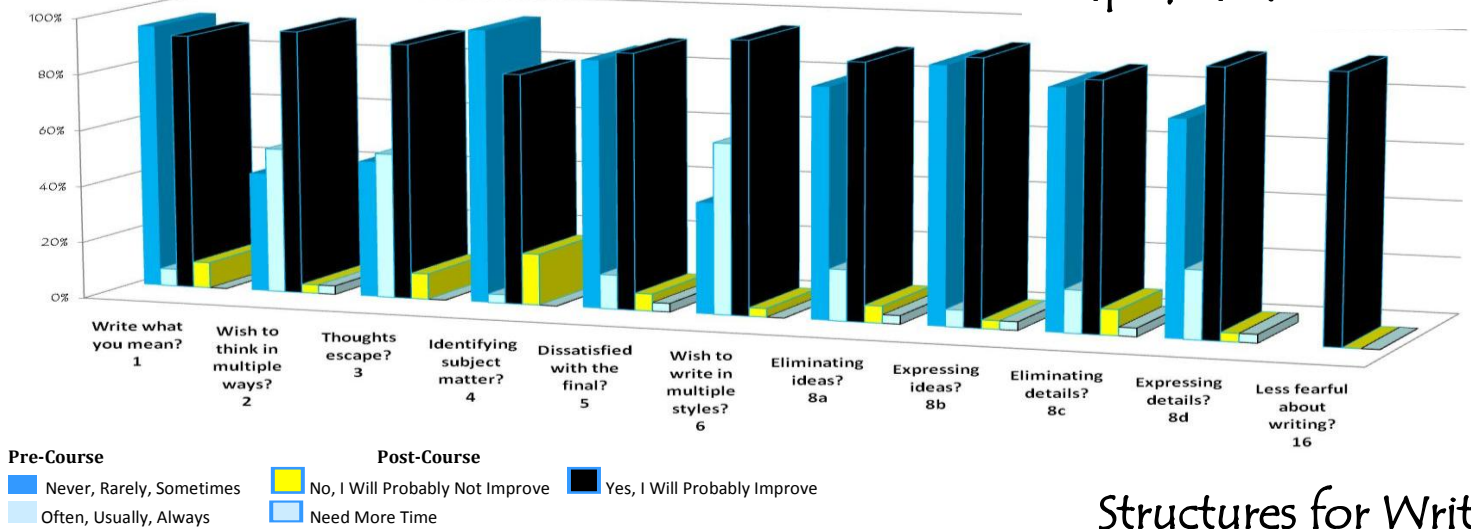
Informal Impact Results 2007-2008

Paradigm Shift

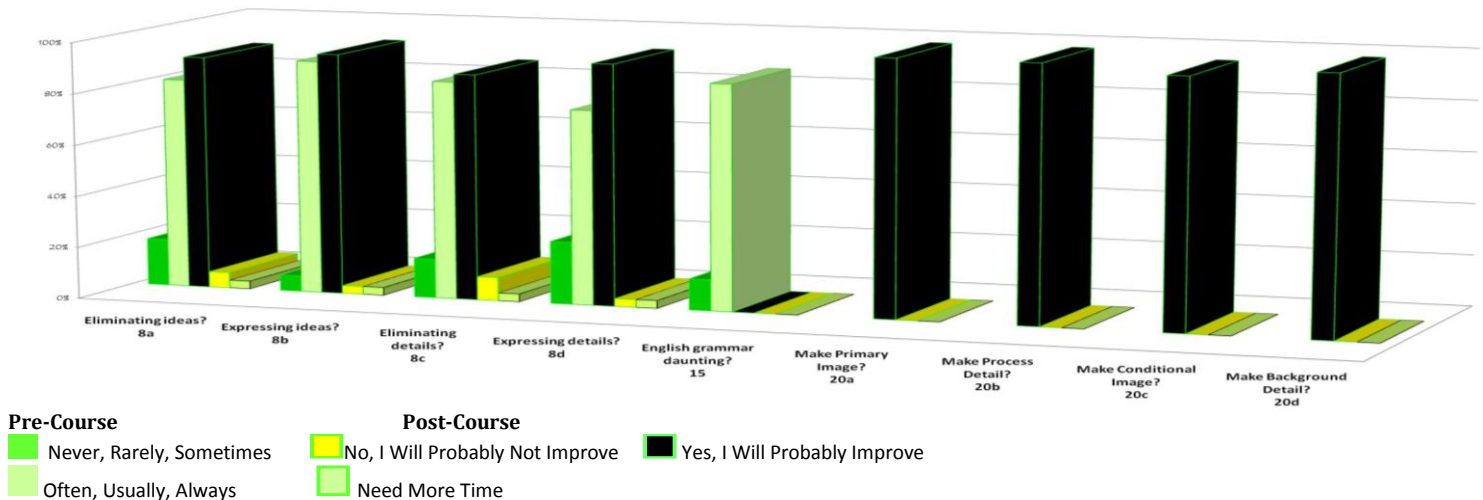
(In) accessible Skills



Impediments to Writing

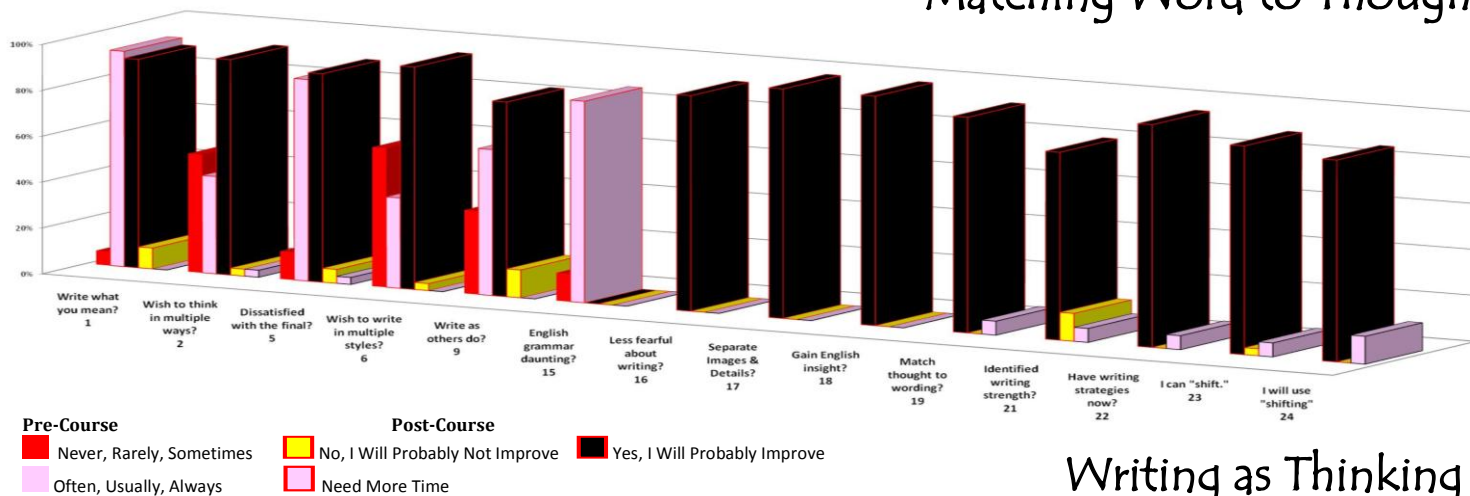


Structures for Writing

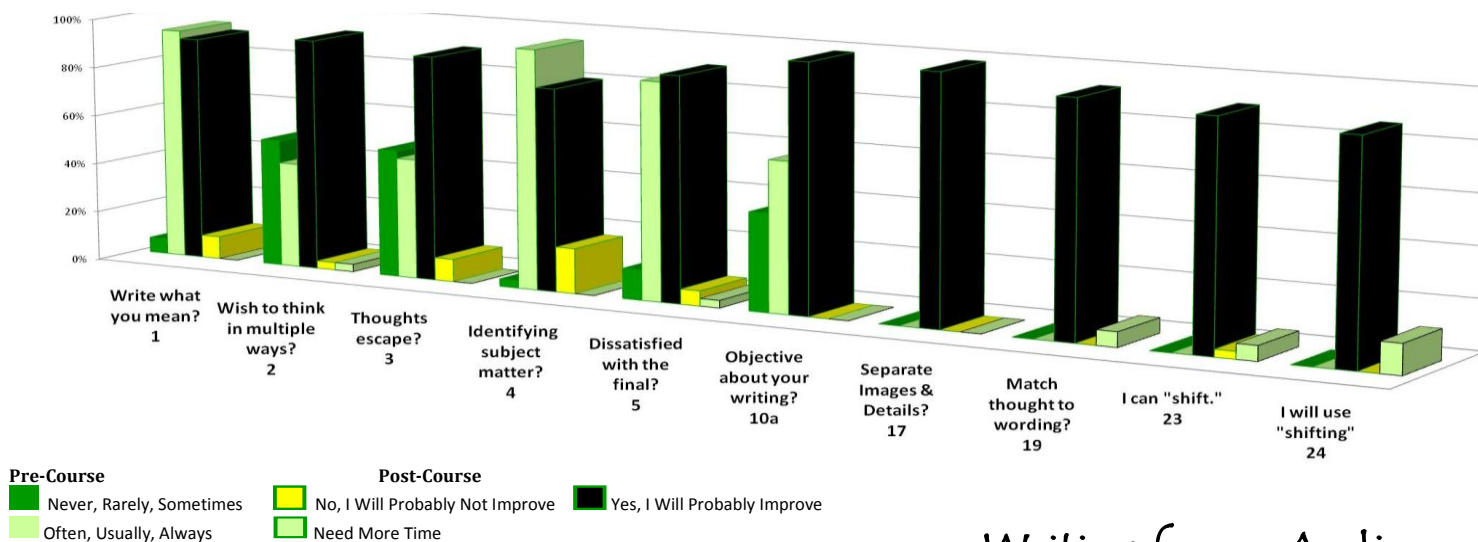


Paradigm Shift

Matching Word to Thought



Writing as Thinking



Writing for an Audience

