Exploring Second Grade Curriculum to Support Writing Growth and Development

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The study examined the effects of either the Being a Writer (BAW) or Language for Writing program on grade 2 students’ writing skills and attitudes about writing. The study took place in two elementary schools in a Colorado school district. In the 2016–2017 school year, five grade 2 teachers in one elementary school instructed 72 students using Being a Writer while four grade 2 teachers in another elementary school instructed 67 students using Language for Writing. All the teachers in the study received professional development and coaching during the year. Student writing samples were collected in the fall and spring using prompts from the BAW Grade 2 Assessment Resource Book. In addition, a survey on writing attitudes was administered to students by their teachers in the fall and spring.

The authors report that students in the Being a Writer program demonstrated more growth in writing skills from fall to spring compared to students in the Language for Writing program. These skills were: ideas, organization, style/fluency, and language usage. The authors do not indicate if the differences over time were statistically significant.

Regarding student attitudes about writing, those who were instructed in Language for Writing demonstrated a decrease in positive attitudes about writing during the year (i.e., feeling that they were “good writers” and enjoying writing). Students who were instructed in Being a Writer demonstrated an increase in these attitudes during the same period. Again, the authors do not indicate if these differences were statistically significant.

References


Level of Evidence Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Based on the information provided by the author, this study meets the fourth tier of evidence under ESSA, “demonstrates a rationale.”