

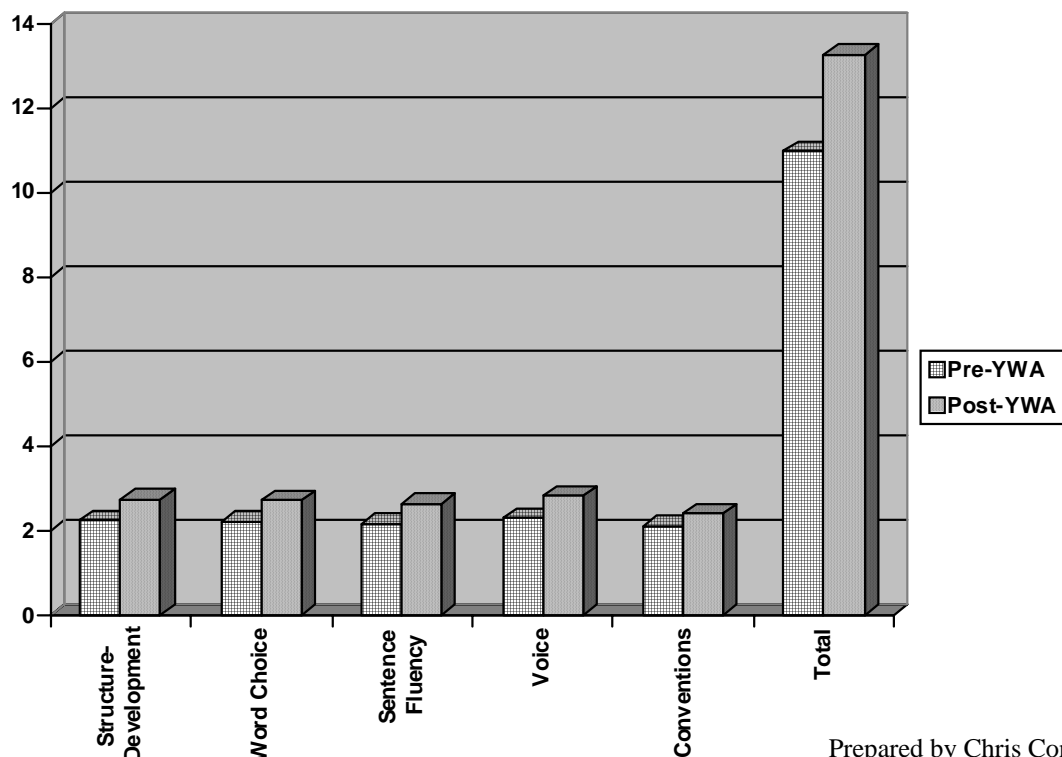
Evaluation Summary

Young Writers Academies for English Language Learners: Summer 2009 A Partnership between the Great Valley Writing Project and Migrant Education

Now in their sixth consecutive year, the Great Valley Writing Project's Young Writers Academies for English Language Learners (ELLs) were conducted in six classrooms at four different school sites in the Central Valley of California during the summer of 2009. These writing academies, supported by school districts and Migrant Education in Stanislaus and San Joaquin Counties, provided ELLs in grades kindergarten through high school with the opportunity to engage in an academically rigorous course of writing instruction addressing a broad range of standards-based genres, including expository, narrative, and persuasive writing. Experienced GVWP Teacher Consultants (TCs) conducted the three-week academies by emphasizing comprehensive skill development and genre-specific pedagogy. They were assisted at several sites by Mini-Corp students. The learning environment in all the academies exemplified a well-articulated research base, primarily drawing upon the research of Vygotsky. This approach fostered a learning environment where students became successful writers through content-specific social interaction and spiraling/scaffolding, thereby enhancing student literacy and boosting motivation. For the sixth consecutive year, a pre- and post-academy assessment of student writing skills demonstrated significant growth (see results below).

GVWP TCs noted several qualitative improvements in the ELL students' facility with writing during the academies, including: (a) growing confidence as writers, (b) increasing the quantity, creativity, and variety of writing genres, (c) taking more risks as writers and being less impeded by conventions of English, (d) revising drafts, (e) conferencing and editing with teachers and peers, (f) polishing writing for publication, (g) using dictionaries, thesauri, and personal word lists for vocabulary expansion, and (h) displaying enthusiasm for writing and sharing their writing with others.

The bar graph below summarizes results of the pre- and post-academy writing assessment for **2009 ELL Young Writers Academies**. Using a four-point rubric that assessed five separate criteria (for a total of 20 points possible), a total mean gain of +2.30 points was evident. The bar chart below displays average gain in scores for each criterion (Structure and Development: +0.49; Word Choice: +0.49; Sentence Fluency: +0.49; Voice: +0.53; Conventions: +0.30; Total Gain: +2.30).



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