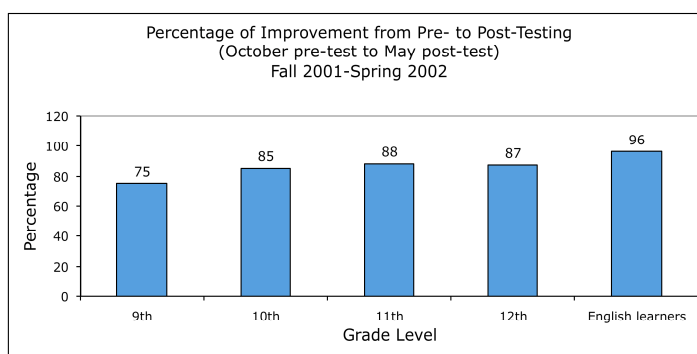
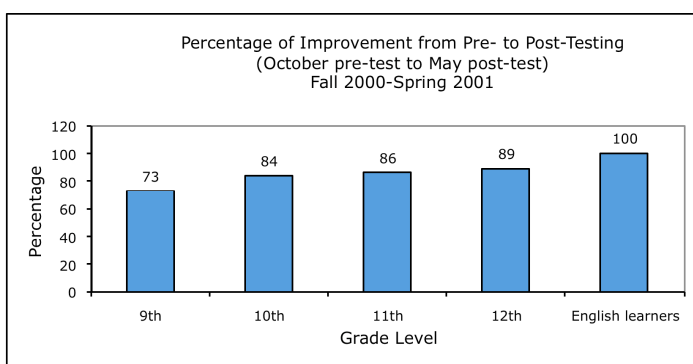


What does the research say?

Improving Students' Academic Writing (ISAW), a CWP statewide initiative, evaluated the performance of 12,789 students of eighty-five writing project teachers from forty-six high schools on a recognized assessment of academic reading and writing: the University of California Systemwide Analytic Writing Placement Examination. This examination, used by UC for placement, requires students to write an analysis of a published nonfiction essay. The goal of this project was to improve student achievement through teacher professional development and evaluation of pre-/post-test results. An outside group of experienced, certified AWPE readers evaluated students' improvement from fall to spring across five dimensions.

In the 1999-2000 year, pre-/post-results showed that 74% of all students improved. During 2000-2001 and 2001-2002, more than 80% of students in all grades improved their scores from a pre- to post-test, and over 90% of all English learners earned higher post-test scores.



The results of the 2001-2002 evaluation show that in nearly all the writing dimensions measured, more than two-thirds of eleventh- and twelfth-grade students earned a post-test score of three or four on a four-point scale. Also of significance is that 40% of ninth- and tenth-graders earned a post-test score of three or four in the dimensions that demonstrate understanding of the writing and reading of this complex analytic task, and one-third of the students were able to organize and develop the writing at a level of controlled competence.

Post-test Performance - Percentage of Students Scoring 3 or 4 on a 4 Point Scale

Writing Dimensions	Ninth & Tenth Grade Students		Eleventh & Twelfth Grade Students	
	3	4	3	4
Response to Writing Topic	42%	4%	60%	17%
Understanding and Use of Reading Passage	36%	3%	55%	21%
Organization	30%	3%	59%	13%
Development	28%	2%	54%	13%
Written Convention	31%	2%	41%	6%

Overall, these findings show that students in classrooms taught by CWP teachers made significant progress over the course of the school year in improving their analytic writing and critical reading. By the end of the school year, a majority of students in the study reached strong or exceptional achievement across the five dimensions of writing assessed. These findings hold true for students with different racial and ethnic backgrounds, English learners, students from low socio-economic status, and males and females.

Studies in 2006 and 2007 replicated these findings. In 2008, CWP's ISAW was awarded funding from the National Writing Project for a three-year study that is part of the NWP/US DOE national evaluation.