

# EXPLICIT WRITING INSTRUCTION IS EFFECTIVE

## WHAT DID THEY DO?

The study compared three groups of 5th grade students that were learning to write opinion letters: Students that received Explicit Writing Instruction (EWI) and had peer feedback, students that received EWI without peer feedback, and a control group that mostly used a writing workshop approach. Teachers in the EWI groups were trained to teach five key strategies: considering the reader of the letter, the consistency of the argument, structuring the letter, using varied sentence types, and using varied and rich vocabulary. Students practiced these strategies in three phases: analyzing sample letters, revising the pre-assessment letters, and creating a new letter. This instruction included 15 lessons that were each 90 minutes long, delivered over 6-8 weeks.

## ARTICLE

Falardeau, É., Guay, F., Dubois, P., & Pelletier, D. (2024). Effects of teacher-implemented explicit writing instruction on the writing self-efficacy and writing performance of 5th grade students. *Journal of Writing Research*, 16(1), 1–38.  
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## WHAT DID THEY FIND?

Overall, students that received EWI improved more than the control group. There was no significant difference between the groups that had peer feedback included and the group that did not. They found the most growth in the use of varied sentence types, letter structure, and awareness of the audience. There was less difference for vocabulary, and no significant difference in the consistency of the argument.

## WHAT COULD THIS MEAN FOR TEACHERS?

This study highlights the value of explicitly teaching writing strategies, including those less emphasized in typical curricula, such as varying sentence types. The instructional cycle—prewriting, analyzing mentor texts, revising, and creating new work—offers a useful model for teaching writing in any genre. The findings also suggest caution when using peer feedback: while it didn't hinder student progress, it didn't enhance it either. Peer feedback might be most effective when paired with direct teacher instruction and guidance.

