

5-2018

Teaching Peer Feedback as Ethical Practice

Derek Miller

Royal Oak High School, derek.miller@royaloakschools.org

Troy Hicks

Central Michigan University, hickstro@gmail.com

Susan Golab

Bloomfield Hills Schools, suewilsongolab@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/lajm>

Recommended Citation

Miller, Derek; Hicks, Troy; and Golab, Susan (2018) "Teaching Peer Feedback as Ethical Practice," *Language Arts Journal of Michigan*: Vol. 33: Iss. 2, Article 7.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.9707/2168-149X.2178>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Language Arts Journal of Michigan by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.

Teaching Peer Feedback as Ethical Practice

DEREK MILLER, TROY HICKS, AND SUSAN WILSON-GOLAB

It was early November and I (Derek) was away from my classroom, attending a workshop. My mind was on my students, thinking about the peer review task I had assigned. We had spent weeks building toward a piece of argument writing, and I pictured dozens of drafts in Google Docs being commented upon in noisy, colorful ways. During a break—when I figured that my 3rd hour was probably right in the thick of the task—I opened Google Drive to log in, open a few drafts, and see how things were going.

Of course, as soon as I jumped into the first essay, the students noticed my icon and, instead of focusing on the work they were supposed to be doing, began peppering me with questions via the chat. Where are you? What are you doing? Why are you online spying on us? I smiled and hoped that questions to their peers were more focused on logical fallacies, use of evidence, and other qualities of writing.

In one doc, I started a chat conversation with the author, Liz (pseudonym). Summarized here, our conversation boiled down to this exchange:

DM: How's it going with the revising? Did you have fun? I mean, for you as the writer, was this an interesting way to revise?

Liz: it was ok, not my favorite personally, but it worked.

DM: Thanks, Liz. What would your favorite way to revise be?

Liz: you giving me potential revisions and critiques. that is my favorite way to revise.

I had, of course, been hoping for a different answer.

Peer review has always been—and continues to be—a challenge for me (and, from my conversations with colleagues, *all* English teachers). Moreover, we face increasing challenges with on-going, high-stakes assessments. Like the National Council of Teachers of English contends in their position statement, “Supporting Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Learners in English Education,” I, too, acknowledge that “[s]tudents bring funds of knowledge to their learning communities” and that I need to model “socially responsible

practices” for my students (2005). Peer review, in this sense, was designed to be an act of reciprocity, an ethical exchange where students would hear one another’s voices and respond in kind. This was not the reality in my classroom.

As I gathered my thoughts, preparing to head back to the workshop, I knew that there were more questions to explore. As it happened, these were questions that I had been pondering for over a year with another collaborative teacher research group, which I will introduce below. At that moment—with Liz’s pointed comments—I realized I needed to help my students see the same value in peer feedback as I did. To get there, I knew that I needed to rethink the role that peer review played in my students’ understanding of what it meant for them to work as writers.

The Path to Peer Review: A Brief Snapshot of My Career as a Writing Teacher

Having taught English for fifteen years at Royal Oak High School, for six years before that at two different middle schools, and having started my career working for Teachers College Reading and Writing Project in New York City, I had tried many different methods for engaging students in peer response. Given these experiences and perspectives, I believe that writing is social, that we write for an audience. As articulated by NCTE, I believe, too, that we need to “[p]ublicly write or read in the moment of teaching—reflecting aloud on literacy decisions, questions, and concerns—making the work of learning more transparent” (NCTE, 2005). During the review stage, which typically came at the end, I aimed for two goals: to have students benefit from the expertise of their peers and to observe the different, specific choices that writers make. Through peer review, I wanted students to internalize qualities of good writing, to see their own work through new eyes, and to look across differences. I wanted them to respond—thoughtfully and thoroughly—to the work of their peers.

However, the stark truth stared at me: Even with the best of intentions, weeks of building a classroom community,

and deliberate instructional scaffolding, I feared that Liz's response reflected the core of the struggle I faced when teaching writing. While I appreciated Liz's respect for my ability to offer help with her work, I knew the rationale behind her comment; no one else would catch the problems with her writing, mistakes that would result in her losing points on her final draft. Whether the words she wrote had impact on her readers, or whether she had gained an understanding of the writing process were, at best, secondary. Like the thousands of students I had worked with before her, even if Liz happened to like her work, or take pride in something she had written, she did not care about the impact her writing had on her peers.

In the moment, I suddenly realized that, if peer review was going to serve the goals I wanted it to for my students, I knew that I had to show them just how much I thought it mattered. As an epiphany, perhaps this was not profound. Yet, to reiterate the aspirations outlined by NCTE, "experiences should serve to empower students, develop their identities and voice, and encourage student agency to improve their life opportunities" (2005). This is the direction that peer review needed to move in my classroom.

Peer Review as a Microcosm: Power, Equity, and the English Classroom

Liz's message came at a fortuitous time, both during the break in a long workshop day as well as in my teaching career. The rest of this article, while written in the first person, documents a long-term collaboration with Susan and Troy, written by all three of us (though, as authors, we chose the first-person perspective for consistency). As director of the Oakland Writing Project (OWP), Susan had enticed me as a teacher consultant to join a statewide collaborative of 6-12 ELA teachers doing action research around peer feedback; she had gathered together a group of about 30 teachers from across the state to study how to build effective peer review and revision. To anchor the teacher inquiry for the group, Susan invited Troy and teachers from the Chippewa River Writing Project at Central Michigan University to join as well, and, within weeks, Susan recruited over two dozen teacher-leaders from around the state, and we began our work in the fall of 2013, extending through spring 2015.

Of course, the reviews on peer review are mixed (Nelson & Schunn, 2009), though recent research has suggested that it can be quite powerful (Sanchez, Atkinson, Koenka, Moshontz, & Cooper, 2017). At the time, Susan was motivated

by Hattie and Tempierly's findings on feedback's impact on learning, who summarized a meta-analysis of studies on the effects of feedback in this manner: "To be effective, feedback needs to be clear, purposeful, meaningful, and compatible with students' prior knowledge and to provide logical connections" (2007, p. 104). Working with Dr. Jeff Grabill from Michigan State University, she convened regular meetings throughout the 2013-14 school year and into the 2014-15 school year. Each teacher developed his or her own action research project, broadly focused on feedback in their English classrooms. During the project, we received complimentary access to an online peer review system that Dr. Grabill and his team at MSU had been developing: Eli Review (elireview.com). Described as "a set of tools that help instructors run [a] feedback-centric classroom," Eli Review offers teachers the opportunity to "help students give and get better feedback and coach them in effective revising skills, the two skills that research has proven to be the most effective for learning" (Eli Review, n.d.).

Yet, there is more to developing this classroom climate than simply integrating a peer review task and some helpful software into the mix. As journalism teacher and edublogger Starr Sackstein notes, it is not just the act of providing feedback that matters. There are many additional factors that lead up to the point where students can provide substantive feedback to one another:

It takes vigilance to make sure that all voices are being heard and respected in all classroom activities and situations. Respect can't be assumed; it must be taught explicitly and modeled continuously. Because students tend to follow our lead, the best way to elicit high-quality, respectful feedback is to start modeling these behaviors from day one. (2017, pp. 19–20)

So, feedback mattered, yes. Yet, how feedback fit into the broader classroom culture mattered even more. These ideas about when, why, and how to provide feedback—and how to teach students to provide feedback to one another—formed the backbone for our statewide inquiry group.

Because I felt that I was not working as effectively as possible with my students, I was eager to join. In my district, we serve about 5,000 students, approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of whom are eligible for free or reduced lunch. When I see our district proficiency scores, which rank us at about 40% on the statewide assessment for writing, the M-STEP, I am proud of the fact that my school and my department appear to "punch above our weight," to support students in a way that helps us reach higher. For each graduating class of about 300, we offer

Teaching Peer Feedback as Ethical Practice

about 75 seats in AP Language and Composition and, - while not every student passes - of the 60 or so who take the exam, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of them pass with a score of 3 or above. Still, I felt the sharp sting that so many other teachers do when questioning our practice: what can I do to teach all my students to be better writers? How might peer review be a pathway to a more ethical, equitable form of English instruction?

These are questions that NCTE, as an organization, and many teachers and teacher educators have struggled with for decades. Among the scholars who explore issues of race, class, gender, and diversity, Sonia Nieto's work is foundational to the NCTE belief statement mentioned above. In her work, she explores how "deficit perceptions" that educators hold can, often unconsciously, influence our work with students (Nieto, 2013, p. 13). Also, in *Why We Teach Now*, Nieto gives us another way to frame the conversation, recasting deficits into a "discourse of possibility." She elaborates, describing: a way of thinking critically but hopefully about teaching and learning, a stance embraced largely by teachers and others who view public education, on the whole, as an unfulfilled but nonetheless consequential ideal in the quest for quality and social justice. (Nieto, 2015, p. 5)

In terms of writing and peer review, my students needed this discourse of possibility. They defined their own success as writers by the products they created, and mostly by the flaws of those products; these were the boundaries of their skills, and the limits of their self-perceptions. With the growing popularity of other work around "a growth mindset" (Dweck, 2007) and "grit" (Duckworth, 2016) in the educational culture, I realized that I needed to adopt a "discourse of possibility." Teachers in our statewide research group, especially those teachers working in high poverty schools and with transient student populations, felt the importance of honoring and making visible the assets their learners brought to the classroom. Rather than assuming students had no useful knowledge or experience, they wanted to create a classroom open to effective feedback; by building on students' prior engagement with feedback practices, teachers worked to develop new strategies that leveraged students' existing skills. This is particularly important in classrooms where students have prior negative experiences receiving feedback on their work, or when they have experienced classroom discrimination based on their linguistic or cultural backgrounds. In these cases, establishing a safe space for students to share their work may be the biggest obstacle in building a community where feedback is possible.

What we in the statewide research group came to understand was how purposeful we needed to be in valuing both writing itself as well as peer feedback. All too frequently, feedback occurs near the end of the writing process. Reviewers are weighted down with long checklists and writers are reluctant to take up any substantial revision when the due date quickly follows. By critically examining these practices, we came to understand that we were devaluing peer feedback. To demonstrate value in the feedback, we had to push the exchange early in the writing process and pace additional feedback opportunities throughout.

As a result, there were three changes that I, and many other teachers involved in the project, made to my/our practice: 1) embedding more frequent feedback over shorter pieces of writing, 2) creating opportunities to discuss the qualities of effective feedback itself, and 3) assessing and evaluating students' feedback for evidence of growth.

Feedback Frequency

The first issue was frequency of practice. Students needed to move from a stance of "The way to write an argument is..." to a new perspective of "The ways I might write this argument could include..." To do this requires a variety of experiences through which students could build a set of related skills: gathering evidence, developing reasoning, and creating effective appeals. One step in ramping up practice was to embed a variety of low-stakes writing tasks throughout the course writing units. These activities ranged from the straightforward—drafting multiple claims, experimenting with different reasoning using specific pieces of evidence—to abstract, such as exercises in creating a persona to argue points of view. Each of these tasks provided an opportunity for peer review, to see the choices other writers made. These multiple opportunities for practice and observation helped students see the act of composition as a process of choosing from a repertoire of options.

Quality of Feedback

The second shift for my students was to redefine what "effective feedback" really was, moving toward a growth mindset and a discourse of possibility. This meant shifting their responses from error identification and critique to non-judgmental responses and asking reflective questions (Costa & Garmston, 2013). At first, they did not see how these ob-

servations and questions could help them think about revision. Purposeful instruction on effective feedback reframed their thinking about writing choices. Teaching students to identify and respond thoughtfully to strengths in their partners' drafts helped them recognize choices they might have made with their own work. It also gave students authority over their own responses to a piece of writing. When writers read their reviewer comments, they could see how their words had an impact on another person's thinking.

As an equity issue, we noticed a shift in how students understood the connection between peer feedback and writing skills. Students who were not necessarily highly skilled as writers were often very good at making thoughtful, insightful responses to the drafts of their more skilled peers, responses that helped the writers make sound revision choices. Being able to offer supportive reviews that others used validated these writers' identities as members of our classroom writing community, and made them feel connected to our common purpose of improving our writing. When students who struggled with writing learned the skills to be good reviewers, they found themselves learning and working with their peers as equals.

Evaluating Their Feedback

After offering direct instruction on the qualities of effective feedback, I discovered that I had to place a deep, intentional value on the feedback itself—and the writers who provided it. That is, I needed to provide students with our own response to the feedback they were offering others. In addition to coaching them as writers, I was also coaching them as reviewers. And, returning to NCTE's position statement, I knew that I must "regularly tap into students' funds of knowledge" and "[u]se classroom approaches that empower students socially and academically" ("Supporting Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Learners in English Education"). In doing so, I was relaying a message that developing their lens of "reading like a writer," yet doing so *in service to another* mattered. Thus, evaluation was the third and major shift in my practice, and I feel like I would credit this change the most with shifting student mindset. While I might teach students how to give effective feedback, and model and expect them to use those strategies, I realized that they would not actually fully engage unless I showed them how much I really cared about the way they wrote about each other's writing to each other. In student terms, this meant grading their feedback.

The shift to evaluating feedback was a challenge. It was one thing to be able to describe strategies for effective feedback, but very much another to see how they looked when practiced in a classroom. Over the course of the statewide research project, Susan had made observations and had begun to describe a continuum of growth of the types of responses students gave one another. Working from this, my students and I reviewed the feedback they gave each other, talked about the possibilities for revision that different examples of feedback gave to the writer, and worked toward expanding the descriptions of effective moves that reviewers (as writers themselves) might make. This validated a range of responses, and it helped them set goals for how they might become better at helping their peers. Before, everyone had wanted to receive feedback from only someone they perceived as a better writer than themselves. They came to understand that any reader who was attentive and receptive could offer valuable comments.

Finally, there was an accountability piece. We came to a shared understanding that the best feedback was not only respectful of the writer and the writer's purpose, but also that it made use of the discipline-specific language related to literature and composition. In short, peer review and revision activities became the vehicle through which students like Liz could show that they were learning more about the choices writers make, the strategies writers use, and the elements of effective writing.

A Closer Look at Liz's Work

In March 2016, still working on ways to integrate sustained, meaningful feedback processes into my teaching, I was working with the National Writing Project's "College, Career, and Community Writers Program," and we were gearing up toward the AP Synthesis task. Thus, I wanted to shore up my students' ability to gather evidence from source material, as well as to integrate that evidence into their arguments. Based on Liz's rough draft, I could see that she was having trouble identifying specific issues to focus on for her argument. An excerpt from the middle of her essay appears in Table 1A. She seemed to be struggling with her focus on animal cruelty and whether ethics or economics would be the more important issue to address.

Her partner, in his review (1B), made the point that Liz's claim was focused on the entire food industry and cruelty, yet suggested that she look more at economic and, to some extent, nutritional aspects of the argument, in addition to

Teaching Peer Feedback as Ethical Practice

the ethical concerns. Since the review process happened simultaneously, Liz could not have known what her partner was writing. Yet, in her comments to her partner, she, too, had noticed a similar concern about missing the effects of economics (1C), calling specifically for more textual evidence from outside sources. In the process of reviewing her partner's work—as well as in reading the response that she received from him—Liz came to a new understanding about the kinds of evidence she would need to employ in order to advance her claim. Her revision (1D) demonstrates that she had taken the feedback into account, noting the additional costs of free range products. While she still had not (at that point) incorporated specific textual evidence from an outside source to support her claim, she was moving toward a clearer argument, focused on issues that her audience might relate to.

Liz's Original Claim (A)	Feedback from Liz's Partner (B)
<p>... In America, and in several other developed countries as well, we consume widely processed products, meat that was mass produced in a cruel way, and unhealthy foods that are all unnecessary for us to eat every day. It's unfair to claim that we shouldn't eat meat because animals have just as much a right to live as us. Eating meat is not only good for us, in a certain amount, it's how our society functions at this point, drives a part of our economy, and, like cars, it doesn't seem to be going away. However, the way in which we produce these meat products to the public is cruel and can be changed...</p>	<p>I found this to be the author's claim. Our international food system is obviously flawed in several ways.</p> <p>This piece of evidence supports the piece of the author's claim "...meat was processed in a cruel way..." However, it is limited in that it does not state how it is cruel. Perhaps the author could mention factory farms and the startling conditions the animals are forced to endure...</p> <p>The author could extend the impact of this assertion by comparing the prices of different meat products. The author could also analyze the profitability of factory and free range farms.</p>
Feedback Liz Offered to Her Partner (C)	Liz's Revised Claim with Evidence (D)
<p>... [You say that] "We consume a huge amount of food in proportion to our population" This is a good piece of evidence as it backs up the claim, however, it doesn't provide factual evidence to back it, which would be helpful.</p> <p>This shows how Americans can be ignorant as to what we are consuming. It does not, however, recognize the economic factors that go into food production and sales in this country, that may be helpful to add.</p>	<p>Meat is an interesting product, and widely debated whether or not we should eat it. Vegetarians and vegans often argue that it is unethical to kill and eat animals for our own personal gain, a point that has its merit... However, killing animals in a humane way that allows for quality of life is acceptable, in my personal view.</p> <p><She then elaborates on the quality of life idea in a subsequent paragraph></p> <p>... Free range products tend to be a much better choice. In this scenario, animals live a healthy life, and are allowed to roam free. All of the animal is used, and quality of life is certainly present. Unfortunately, because of their circumstances, these products cost more than the average, and many people aren't willing to pay the extra so that animals will receive quality of life.</p>

Figure 1A-D: Liz's Rough Draft, Feedback from Partner, Feedback to Partner, and Revision

This moment of revision—multiplied many times over with all my students—was more than just a single writer fixing her grammar mistakes so that I had fewer to find in and amongst dozens of essays. Liz and her classmates, instead, were using feedback to drive their revision, and they began

to see why it is important to offer—and receive—good feedback. The changes are significant and it's worth noting that several key moves came into play here. First, there was a progression of tasks that focused on specific elements of writing. Students examined and evaluated evidence before they made claims and wrote. Second, the follow-up review task was purposefully constructed for students to focus on evidence and reasoning. Finally, students approached the task with the understanding that they would be revising for these elements. Having a clear set of goals as reviewers and writers gave them the context to make their reviews authentic and supportive.

Seeing how this process was playing out with Liz and her peers, after 20 years of teaching, I finally felt like I was living up to the “teacher as coach” vision of myself to which I had always aspired. My students no longer saw me as the only voice of authority. They valued their own intuition as writers, as well as the significance of one another's voices. This value began with their feedback, though I would like to think it moved beyond that. After all, you cannot give good feedback unless you intrinsically respect the intentions of the writer to whom you are responding. I was teaching writers, not writing. My authority was based not on the secrets I withheld from them about how to make a piece of writing *perfect* (or, at the very least, *better*), but to recognize and employ the qualities of good writing to meet an audience's needs.

Extending the Practices of Peer Review

While I won't say that I've discovered all the answers, my work with the statewide group has been fruitful. I made sure students had frequent opportunities to produce written feedback. Also, face-to-face discussions of a writers' choices were far more frequent. Talk allows students to rehearse writing, both with me and with one another, and a culture of collaboration helps reinforce the importance of making choices that will address an audience's concerns. In the statewide teacher research group, we identified three distinct strategies that can help us as teachers create a culture of feedback in the classroom.

First, when we *provide low-stakes writing tasks*, they can help ease writers into the process. When students first provide feedback to one another, they can practice with prose that positions the writer as an expert on the topic; for instance, writing about personal experience (e.g. memoir). This allows writers to focus on “hearing” peer feedback that focuses

broadly on meaning and emotional impact, not on irrelevant details or grammar errors. Those can come later. Hence, feedback was no longer perceived as being something only useful to the teacher and the grade book, but rather an act of reciprocity amongst peer learners.

Second, we had to *scaffold peer reviewers toward independence*. Through trial and error, our teacher research group learned quickly that just assigning peers to review another's writing, even when the task was explicitly explained, failed more times than not. Guided practice, a strategy many teachers used when teaching an author's move, had not been a practice also applied to peer review. Teachers began to design scaffolding that tapped into the power of peer learning partners. As the teachers began to explore how to best scaffold students through the use of learning partnerships, they discovered a set of critical decision points, depending on task, involving:

- selection (teacher-assigned or peer-selected)
- group size (2, 3, 4, or, rarely, more than 4)
- the writing upon which students were offering reviews (identified classmate, identified student from different class, completely anonymous)
- the type of feedback (Likert-scale, checkbox, written response).

Depending on the classroom context, teachers crafted multiple approaches to designing guided practice with peer review.

Third, we discovered that we needed to help students shift their mindset about writing and revision. We relied upon the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* (Council of Writing Program Administrators, National Council of Teachers of English, & National Writing Project, 2011) to provide us with touchpoints for rethinking what it means to write and to be a writer, with flexibility, persistence, and engagement being the most important among the eight "habits of mind" outlined in the framework. My students began to recognize and acknowledge the value of their own thinking about the choices that they made as writers. From my perspective, this felt, on one hand, like a small shift. They still preferred my "expert" perspective to that of their peers. On the other hand, the power of learning lies in the difficulty of unlearning a thing that experience has shown to be true. The experiences they had with peer review had empowered my students with a sense of authority over the choices they made as writers. Even those writers whose skills were limited could approach a task conscious with a sense of possibilities. Writing's power was within the reach of all.

Conclusion

As the 2017-18 year wound down to summer, I asked Liz again how she felt about peer review and feedback. Did she think she had learned new ways to think about writing? She did. "But," she added, "my favorite way to revise is still to have a teacher look my writing over and tell me what to fix."

If I were going to be as brutally honest with myself—as Liz was with me—I would have to agree. Life would be easier with an omnipotent teacher telling me everything I need to do to make my writing good. But I'm a teacher, and I know it can't work that way. My students need to be able to depend on me to teach them to be independent writers. By focusing on teaching my students how to be fully and deeply engaged in peer review, I was able to foster their sense of identity as writers. My own learning from this process is that, every day, I need to push writers into ethical, equitable practice through classroom community. This is perhaps most important for those writers who come to us with the fewest skills, because it is only through these connections that any of the lessons I teach will have meaning. Building better writers begins with creating the opportunities for feedback, a lesson I will continue to teach well into the future.

References

- Costa, A. L., & Garmston, R. J. (2013). Supporting self-directed learners: Five forms of feedback. *ASCD Express*, 8(18). Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/ascd-express/vol8/818-costa.aspx>
- Council of Writing Program Administrators, National Council of Teachers of English, & National Writing Project. (2011, January). *Framework for success in post secondary writing*. Retrieved from <http://wpaacouncil.org/framework/>
- Duckworth, A. (2016). *Grit: The power of passion and perseverance*. New York: Scribner.
- Dweck, C. S. (2007). *Mindset: The new psychology of success* (Reprint, Updated edition). New York: Ballantine Books.
- Eli Review. (n.d.). Eli Review: Teach writing through student feedback, peer review. Retrieved from <https://elireview.com/>
- Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1), 81–112. <https://doi.org/10.3102/003465430298487>

Teaching Peer Feedback as Ethical Practice

- National Council of Teachers of English. (2005, July 31). Supporting linguistically and culturally diverse learners in English education. Retrieved from <http://www2.ncte.org/statement/diverselearnersinee/>
- Nelson, M. M., & Schunn, C. D. (2009). The nature of feedback: how different types of peer feedback affect writing performance. *Instructional Science*, 37(4), 375–401. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11251-008-9053-x>
- Nieto, S. (2013). *Finding joy in teaching students of diverse backgrounds: Culturally responsive and socially just practices in U.S. classrooms*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Nieto, S. (2015). *Why we teach now*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Sackstein, S. (2017). *Peer feedback in the classroom: Empowering students to be the experts*. Alexandria, Virginia, USA: ASCD.
- Sanchez, C. E., Atkinson, K. M., Koenka, A. C., Moshontz, H., & Cooper, H. (2017). Self-grading and peer-grading for formative and summative assessments in 3rd through 12th grade classrooms: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000190>

Derek Miller teaches English at Royal Oak High School. **Susan Wilson-Golab** is an instructional coach at Bloomfield Hills Schools. **Troy Hicks** is a professor of English and education at Central Michigan University. All three authors are proud to be affiliated with National Writing Project sites in Michigan: Oakland WP at UM-Flint and Chippewa River WP at CMU.