



– *The National Commission on Writing in America's Schools and Colleges*

Writing is critical to success. Every day, for everything from taking class notes to creating reports and answering essay questions, students need good writing skills.

Forty-nine of the 50 states require a measure of writing competency for high school students to graduate or include writing assessments as part of statewide testing. The SATs added a writing component in 2005 that accounts for one-third of a student's total score.

Beyond school, the workplace demands ever-increasing skills in writing. Many jobs require writing reports, taking notes related to job activities, and communicating through e-mail with colleagues and other parties. More than 90 percent of midcareer professionals recently cited the "need to write effectively" as a skill of "great importance" in their day-to-day work.

Students become good writers only when they can independently function as both author and secretary and apply the skills of both roles with little conscious





As the tables below show, English Language Learners made educationally significant improvements in all three measures of the writing areas for Evaluations I and II. While more research with a larger sample group needs to be completed, these results are encouraging.

Evaluations showed teachers were generally pleased with the preliminary versions of *Language for Writing*. They liked the sequencing of the skills and saw students improve. However, in Evaluation I, teachers clearly indicated that the lessons were taking too long. Authors revised lesson lengths based on this input. In Evaluation II, teachers saw *Language for Writing* as an excellent program.

The primary purpose of the evaluation of *Language for Writing* prior to publication was to provide feedback to the program authors and refine the program on the basis of data gathered during the field test of the program. Results from Evaluations I and II found educationally significant improvements in every area of writing across all classrooms that provided pretest and posttest results. Clearly, this is a first step in validating the *Language for Writing* program. Although there were constraints in the experimental design, the importance of these findings cannot be understated. The field-test research demonstrates that the direct and explicit teaching incorporated in *Language for Writing* can improve the



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