



Applied Grammar Online – state standards

Writing2Win Applied Grammar Online has become the proven link between language study and double-digit growth on state ELA and writing assessments. Among our clients are the Marzano Academies, a growing network of competency-based learning centers and partnership schools that include Writing2Win Applied Grammar in their curriculum.

Teachers and instructional leaders love ...

- ✓ the significant positive impact on of their state ELA tests
- ✓ the impact on state writing rubrics (traits of conventions and writing style)
- ✓ the online video tutorials that guide students through each new sentence pattern.

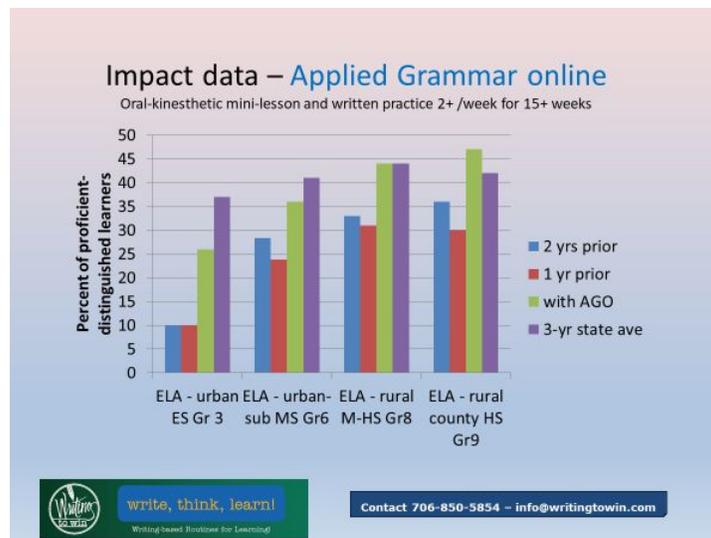
Figure 1 presents recent achievement scores on end-of-year assessment ELA (language, vocabulary, and open-ended writing tasks). The blue and red bars represent the percent of students meeting and exceeding grade-level expectations two years prior to implementing Applied Grammar Online. The green bar represents the percent of students meeting and exceeding grade-level expectations with Applied Grammar Online. Two times a week for 15+ weeks students completed the Applied Grammar Online (*Sentence Building*) lessons and scored a 3 (proficient learner) or 4 (distinguished learner).

This data set includes an urban ES, urban-suburban MS, and rural HS where W2Win Applied Grammar Online boosted students’ overall ELA scores significantly.

- The elementary school with 90% of its students below grade level for two years prior to Applied Grammar Online, posted an increase of 16%, within 11% of the state.
- Middle school students in grade 6 posted scores 18 and 13% below the 3-year state average of 41%. With Applied Grammar online, the gap closed to within 4% of the state average.
- Grade 8 students in a middle-high school met the state average after years of scoring 12-14% below.
- Similar gains occurred among grade 9 students. The group practicing Applied Grammar online posted a 17% increase in ELA scores over the previous year, 5% above the state 3-year average .

Figure 1

Applied Grammar Online boosts scores on ELA tests that include extended writing



Go to www.writingtowin.com for a description of the research design and methodology.



Applied Grammar Online – state standards

Classroom action research design

In schools, **action research** refers to evaluative, investigative, or analytical research to diagnose problems or weaknesses – whether organizational, academic, or instructional – and help educators develop practical solutions to address them quickly and efficiently.

Action research has a positive effect for a number of sound reasons. The most important is that **action research** is always relevant to the participants. Performance data is available to students and teachers in time for them to celebrate their achievement together. At the beginning of the study, the experimental groups of students learn of the performance of students in the two years previous to them and the mean score of students statewide over the last three years. They are then invited to participate in creating a shared vision of their performance at the end of the course / year with their teachers. Their teachers introduce the Applied Grammar Online as their vehicle for achieving that shared vision.

Our purpose is to employ principles of mental chunking to imprint increasingly mature grammatical patterns in the minds of students. As students demonstrate automaticity as they practice combining new grammatical patterns, the patterns start appearing in their independent writing as needed. These proven practices have resolved the problem of teaching language skills with no observable impact on students' independent writing.

Question – What is the effect of Applied Grammar Online on student learning as measured by an end-of-year / course state tests? For the answer see Figure 1.

Review of the Literature

We chose the study of sentence-combining practice online for two reasons: 1) 50+ years of research established a significant positive impact of sentence-combining practice on tests of written expression and reading comprehension and 2) the strategy has yet to be studied in a digital format.

Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve the Writing of Students. A Report to the Carnegie Corporation of New York

Graham, Steven; Perin, Dolores

Graham and Perin's meta-analysis of research of writing instruction identified sentence combining as one of the eleven most effective instructional practices for improving the writing of students in grades 4-12.

“Using Sentence Combining Instruction to Enhance the Writing Skills of Children With Learning Disabilities”

Saddler, Bruce; Ellis-Robinsons, Tammy; Asaro-Saddler, Kristie; University at Albany

Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal 162, 191-202, 2018.

This research team established the effect of systematic sentence-combining practice on K-8 students in a variety of subgroups.

Sentence-combining research to date has used pencil and paper exercises with recent emphasis on the use of PALS (Peer-Assisted Learning System). Applied Grammar Online includes several ingredients new to sentence-combining practice. Online oral-kinesthetic mini-lessons introduce each grammatical pattern practiced. The digital format contributes precision keyboarding practice, immediate positive feedback on every puzzle, and reports for teachers to share with students, parents, and administrators.

Methodology

Applied Grammar Online – state standards

We chose an experimental-control group design that included the study of Applied Grammar Online across 10 levels of sentence-combining practice. The design required the study to fit within the school scheduling to make the data generated as reliable as possible and instructive to the teachers and students involved.

High school students in control groups received 143 hours of instruction with the district adopted textbook series guided by their district curriculum guide. Experimental-group students received the same instruction except for 15 hours (12% of the total hours) of study with Applied Grammar Online of two 30-minute lessons a week.

Middle and elementary school students in control groups received 235-255 hours of instruction with the district adopted ELA textbooks led by their district curriculum guide. Experimental group students received the same instruction except for an average of 22 hours (8-9% of the total hours) of study with Applied Grammar Online.

Equivalent groups of students – For each study we identified control and experiment groups. All student groups were similar in performance on standard measures of student achievement. For example, we compared the experimental group of students in winter-spring 2019 with control groups of students in winter-spring 2017 and 2018. In each year there were between 17-19% advanced, 55-57% average, and 24-26% basic students.

State tests for ELA (including extended writing) were the independent measure that generated a mean score for all student groups. The mean scores for the control group at grades 3, 6, and 9 were all significantly lower than the experimental groups. The experimental groups for all three grades exceeded the expectations of their shared visions. All three envisioned their scores exceeding the state mean score but not the double-digit gains posted.

In all three schools, growth in student achievement on the state writing subtest of the ELA assessment exceeded that of their overall ELA score. This was most notable in grade 9 where the 38% increase in scores of extended writing lifted their increased ELA score of +14% up an additional 5%.