Efficacy Report

Vantage Learning
110 Terry Drive Suite 100
Newtown, PA 18940
www.vantagelearning.com

VANTAGE LEARNING
Measuring Success One Student at a Time

MY Access!® Efficacy Report

Overview

This report details the efficacy of MY Access!®, a web-based instructional writing product developed by Vantage Learning. The report begins with an overview of the MY Access!® program and a sampling of the research that was used as a basis for the development of the program. Next, the report describes how IntelliMetric® works and provides data regarding its scoring reliability and validity. Lastly, case studies and feedback provided by school districts across the globe are provided as examples of the typical experience using MY Access!®.

Description of MY Access!®

MY Access!® is a web-based instructional writing product that provides students enrolled in grade 4 through higher education with the opportunity to develop their writing skills within an electronic portfolio-based environment. Teachers can create a writing assignment from a large pool of over 700 unique prompts covering grades 4 through higher education, including narrative, persuasive, informative, literary, and expository genres. In order to provide an integrated writing instruction tool, the prompts are aligned to major textbook series, are aligned to state standards, and provide cross-curricular writing opportunities in areas such as science, math, and social studies. In addition to the prompts available in MY Access!®, teachers may create their own prompts for use in the system.

Teachers may guide the students through pre-writing activities and review exemplar papers for the prompts available within MY Access!®. Students can receive feedback from the system during the writing process as well as upon submission for a score based on the MY Access!® rubric. After submitting an essay, the student receives immediate feedback from IntelliMetric® and can also receive feedback from his/her teacher.

MY Access!® provides both a holistic (overall) score and analytical scores in the areas of Focus and Meaning; Content and Development; Organization; Language, Use and Style; and Mechanics and Conventions. For students who are native Spanish or Chinese speakers, the feedback can be provided in the native language at the teacher's discretion.
An online portfolio is maintained for every student using MY Access!®. All original drafts, scores, revisions, comments from teachers, reflective journal entries, and IntelliMetric® feedback are accessible at any time. Teachers and administrators are also able to view these portfolios at the individual, class, school, or higher aggregate level.

In addition to the online portfolio of student responses, scores, comments, journals, and teacher comments, MY Access!® provides additional writing instruction materials and tools.

Students have access to a variety of tools:
1. Writer's Checklist to help guide the student through the writing process
2. Scoring rubrics so the students can self-assess their writing through the process
3. MY Editor to provide grammatical comments, suggestions, and explanations of rules. This tool is available at multiple levels of difficulty and language in order to be most effective for the student.

4   Word counter to keep track of essay length
5   Word banks to assist in the selection of appropriate words for use in an essay of a particular genre
6   Spell checker to assist in the proper spelling of words used in the essay
7   Venn diagrams and other graphical pre-writing tools to assist in the formulation and organization of ideas to be included in the essay

Teachers have access to a variety of reports to view the students' writing and feedback in almost any manner. In addition, the teacher has ultimate control over the tools available to the students while writing essays. For example, if it is important that the students do not receive any help with spelling, the spell checker can be turned off for any particular assignment. Also, the teacher has final control over the scores provided to the student. If the teacher wishes to adjust a score provided by MY Access!®, the teacher can enter in the final score in addition to specific feedback.

Administrators also have access to customized reporting to obtain frequency distributions, historical summaries, and roster reports.

Summary of Writing Instruction Research

> "The research is crystal clear: schools that do well insist that their students write every day and [are] provided regular and timely feedback." (National Commission on Writing 2003)

Students need to have multiple opportunities to practice writing.

Students learn to write by writing. Studies have shown that the amount of writing that students complete is positively related to tests of writing ability (Chircop 2005, Coe et al. 1999, Boersma et al. 1997, Cotton 1988). Writing intensive programs, requiring multiple drafts and a high volume of written work, such as those using writing portfolios or software to leverage success in writing, have been particularly effective in increasing writing aptitude across a wide range of students of varying abilities (Chircop 2005, Boersma et al. 1997). Douglas Reeves, founder of The Leadership and Learning Center, states that "when students write more frequently, their ability to think, reason, analyze, communicate, and perform on tests will improve. Writing is critical to student achievement." The best schools have frequent assessments and multiple opportunities for students to succeed. The most common characteristic of these high performing schools is that they have an ongoing writing performance assessment program (Reeves 2003, 2007). *MY Access!® provides the opportunity for students to write and receive feedback much more frequently than using traditional methods of writing instruction.* Combined with a comprehensive curriculum, the ongoing assessment opportunity that MY Access!® provides maximizes student achievement.

Writing should be cross-curricular.

Writing is critical to all academic subject areas. Studies show that as emphasis on classroom writing grows, student achievement improves. When a portfolio program is instituted, requiring

     2

students to write frequently across all subject areas, students will perform significantly better on statewide assessment tests. Evidence exists not only of reading and writing score improvement but of score improvements in math, science, and social studies. Writing must be effectively integrated with classroom instruction in order to produce the largest gains (Coe et al. 1999, Quesenberry et al. 2000, National Commission on Writing 2003). Through the complex cognitive processes involved in writing, students are able to process information in a much clearer way. They "write to think" and, thus, gain the opportunity to clarify their own thought processes, demonstrating vital critical thinking and reasoning skills (Reeves 2007). *MY Access!® offers over 700 unique prompts aligned to major textbook series and state standards, providing cross-curricular writing opportunities in areas such as science, math, and social studies.*

Feedback regarding writing performance must be timely.

Research has also shown that timely feedback is essential in increasing writing ability. Studies have indicated that when feedback is received often and in the early stages of writing, it is more likely to be judged by the student as valuable. This feedback will have a positive effect on the quality of the writing (Cowie 1995). This feedback on how to improve their writing is significant because of what Douglas Reeves refers to as "The Nintendo Effect": Kids respond to feedback from electronic games because it is immediate, accurate, and incremental. When students receive a 2 on their electronically scored essay, they are as eager to submit a revised essay as they would be to get to the next level of a videogame. This feedback is crucial in allowing student to discover what constitutes quality writing. Without this immediate feedback, testing becomes nothing more than an "academic autopsy" which only details, after the fact, the level of student achievement, with no opportunity for remediation (Reeves 2007). *MY Access!® provides the timely and appropriate feedback needed to increase student writing proficiency.*

Writing instruction and assessment should incorporate clear learning objectives.

Dr. Robert Marzano (2001) has widely published a set of key research-based factors for successful instruction. In addition to timely feedback as noted above, another one of these critical components is the use of clear learning objectives. *MY Access!® provides the detailed scoring rubrics as well as commentaries on exemplar papers so that students are aware of what is required to meet each learning objective.* Teachers can set clear instructional goals for a student, such as: "Submit at least four drafts to the prompt and earn a score of at least 4 out of 6 on the final submission."

In order to provide immediate feedback to students, MY Access!® utilizes IntelliMetric®, Vantage Learning's proprietary automated essay scoring system. Students are able to revise essays based on the feedback received and re-submit for a new evaluation of the essay. This process of writing, receiving feedback, continuing to revise, and receiving more feedback has been repeatedly shown to be a necessary process for writing proficiency improvement. The value of MY Access!® would be limited without the implementation of this immediate and accurate IntelliMetric® feedback.

Overview of IntelliMetric®

IntelliMetric® is an intelligent scoring system that emulates the process carried out by human scorers and is theoretically grounded in the traditions of Cognitive Processing, Computational Linguistics, and Classification. The system must be "trained" with a set of previously scored responses containing "known score" marker papers for each score point. These papers are used as a basis for the system to infer the rubric and the pooled judgments of the human scorers. Relying on Vantage Learning's proprietary CogniSearch™ and Quantum Reasoning™ Technologies, the IntelliMetric® system internalizes the characteristics of the responses associated with each score point and applies this intelligence in subsequent scoring.

IntelliMetric® is based on a blend of artificial intelligence, natural language processing and statistical technologies. It is essentially a learning engine that internalizes the characteristics of the score scale through an iterative learning process. In essence, IntelliMetric® internalizes the pooled wisdom of many expert scorers. It is important to note that artificial intelligence is widely believed to better handle "noisy" data and develop a more sophisticated internalization of complex relationships among features than human scorers.

IntelliMetric® is trained to score essays much the same way as expert human raters are trained. Experts are provided anchor papers specific to the prompt, are given scores to those papers, and are taught why each paper should receive a certain score. The human raters are given additional scored papers for training and are ultimately asked to score some papers on their own. If the human scoring is acceptable with regards to the standard, the human rater is then allowed to score new essays for that particular prompt. Similarly, IntelliMetric® is trained using a set of essays which have already been scored. This training allows the scoring engine to recognize what discourse elements of an essay written to a specific prompt are desirable. The IntelliMetric® engine learns what it means to be an essay earning each score point on the rubric. As a result of this training, a prompt-specific model is created. This model can be used to score essays submitted to that prompt.

Every IntelliMetric® model in MY Access has gone through this rigorous process, starting with expert human scoring, training, and validation. If the new model meets the criteria of acceptable performance data (measured in terms of agreement with experts), the model is available for use to provide immediate scoring in MY Access!®.

Summary of IntelliMetric® Research

Hundreds of studies evaluating IntelliMetric® performance data have been conducted. Typically, when evaluating the quality of an IntelliMetric® model, the means of the humans compared to the IntelliMetric® model are compared, the agreement rates are calculated, and the Pearson correlation between the scores is calculated. If the means are not significantly different, the agreement rates meet a benchmark of acceptance, and the Pearson correlations are strong, the model is considered acceptable for use. A description of the major types of studies conducted and a summary of results are provided below.

Comparison of IntelliMetric® and Expert Scores on Validation Sets

The scores assigned by IntelliMetric® and the scores assigned by human experts for the same set of essays have been compared. In these cases, the set of essays used for validation purposes were not used in the training set for IntelliMetric®. This provides a true comparison of blind scoring by IntelliMetric® compared to scores provided by an expert(s).

A sampling of IntelliMetric® agreement data is shown in Figure 1. For fifteen recently developed prompts, the percentage of exact agreement and percentage of adjacent agreement (within 1 point) on a 6 point scale are shown. While this sampling of model data has all models showing 100% agreement within one point, the larger pool of data indicates that *IntelliMetric® agrees with a final expert score within 1 point typically between 97 to 100% of the time.* For models used in MY Access!®, the typical standard of agreement is at least 70% exact agreement and 100% agreement within one point. Models that show more than 2% discrepancies (more than one point difference from the expert) are not approved for use in MY Access!®.
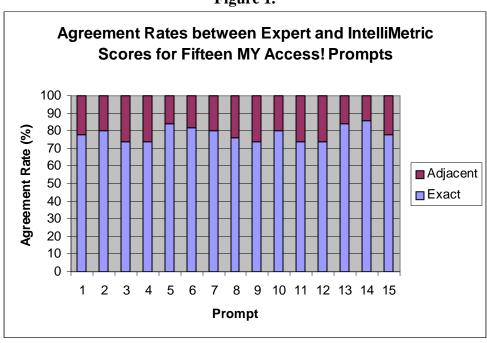
Figure 1.

The Pearson correlations for these same fifteen prompts are shown in Table 1. The higher the positive correlation (which can range from 0 to 1), the more associated the data values are with each other. The Pearson correlations are all extremely high, ranging from 0.91 to 0.96. This indicates that there is a very strong positive relationship between IntelliMetric® scores and human scores for every prompt. For models used in MY Access!®, the typical minimum Pearson correlation is 0.80. Any model not achieving this benchmark will not be approved for use in MY Access!®.

Table 1.

Prompt	Pearson Correlation
Essential Job Skills	0.94
Mandatory Recycling	0.95
Marlowe & Raleigh	0.91
Principal for a Week	0.92
A Visit to the Rainforest	0.96
After-School Job	0.95
Backpacks	0.95
A Dinner Menu	0.94
Emphasis on Sports	0.94
An Empty Room	0.95
Life Without Electricity	0.93
Soda Machines	0.92
A Special Day	0.96
Sports Teams	0.96
Student Leader	0.95

Comparisons between Expert Agreement and IntelliMetric® / Expert Agreement
We have also investigated how often two experts agreed on what score to assign an essay and compared that to how often IntelliMetric® agreed with the experts. We have compared IntelliMetric® to the experts in studies looking at K-12 students, college admissions candidates, higher education students, and graduate school admissions candidates, to name a few. In most cases, IntelliMetric® was more likely to agree with either expert than two experts were to agree with each other. For example, when we looked at student responses to an eighth grade writing test, IntelliMetric® scores agreed with the experts about 98% of the time; the two experts agreed with each other 96% of the time. These findings vary somewhat from study to study, but all in all, we typically have found that IntelliMetric® agrees with experts about 95% to 100% of the time—about as often as or more often than experts agree with each other. *IntelliMetric® agrees with expert scores as often as or more often than two experts agree with each other.*

"True Score" Study
Another way we verified that IntelliMetric® works was to compare the scores assigned by IntelliMetric® to the average score across many experts. We assumed that the average score of about 8-10 experts was a good estimate of the "real" score for an essay. We looked at how often IntelliMetric® agreed with the average expert score and found that the scores assigned by IntelliMetric® agreed with the average scores significantly more often than any individual expert's score agreed with the average score. In fact, not one of the individual experts did as well as IntelliMetric® in comparison to this average score. *IntelliMetric® was found to more closely match a "true score" than any single expert rater's score.*

External Correlation Studies
The fourth major way we have looked at IntelliMetric® is in comparison to other ways of measuring writing and language skills. In other words, we asked: Does IntelliMetric® tend to agree with the evaluations of student skills offered by other measures such as multiple choice tests, independent teacher judgments, etc.?   We found that IntelliMetric® agreed with teachers'

judgments of student writing, student SAT scores, multiple choice writing tests and several other instruments as well if not better than the scores assigned by experts agreed with these measures. *IntelliMetric® scores correlate with other measures of the writing construct.*

The studies of IntelliMetric® scoring accuracy have shown that IntelliMetric®:

1. *Agrees with expert scoring, often exceeding the performance of expert scorers*
2. *Accurately scores open-ended responses across a variety of grade levels, subject areas and contexts*
3. *Shows a strong relationship with other measures of the same writing construct*
4. *Shows stable results across samples*

Independent Research Confirms the Accuracy of IntelliMetric®
In addition to the research initiatives led by Vantage Learning to ensure that the IntelliMetric® models are of highest quality for use in MY Access!® and for other programs, independent research has been conducted. Unfortunately, much of that research is considered confidential and cannot be disseminated.

A research study published in the Journal of Technology, Learning, and Assessment that was led by Larry Rudner of the Graduate Management Admission Council recently confirmed the accuracy of the IntelliMetric® engine (Rudner, Garcia & Welch 2005). Using essays drawn from over 100 different prompts, results indicated that IntelliMetric® agreed within one point on a six-point scale with human raters on average over 97% of the time. This agreement rate was found to be slightly higher than the agreement rate between two human raters. As a result, the researchers concluded that IntelliMetric® replicates the scores provided by human raters, providing superior agreement rates. IntelliMetric® has been implemented for use in scoring GMAT® essays in conjunction with an expert rater.

MY Access!® Case Study Highlights

Students in school districts that have implemented MY Access!® have often attained substantial increases in writing ability. These increases are evident in higher scores achieved on state-mandated standardized tests as well as increased scores within MY Access!® throughout the school year. Students and teachers alike agree that the features and tools that MY Access!® offers, such as instant holistic and domain scoring, and informative personalized feedback, allow students to continuously improve the quality of their writing.

There has been a multitude of success stories in school districts throughout the United States that have implemented MY Access!® as part of an instructional writing program.

**Students Using MY Access!® Show Increases in State and National
Test Performance**

Many school districts and schools have found that students using MY Access!® have improved performance on state assessments. The following is a sampling of information submitted from school districts.

- In Alhambra Unified School District in California, middle school students used MY Access!® as part of an educational grant. Across 13 different middle schools, over 1,300 7th grade students used MY Access!® to help improve their writing proficiency, as measured by scores on the writing portion of the state-mandated STAR test. The 7th grade students using MY Access!® achieved 70% proficiency in 2007, compared to just 22% proficiency only a year ago.

- At Red Clay Consolidated School District in Delaware, selected students in elementary and middle schools have used MY Access!® across multiple years. During the first year of use, students using MY Access!® showed significantly higher levels of writing proficiency as measured by the DSTP Writing Performance Levels. 86% of fifth-grade students who used MY Access!® two or three times a week scored at Performance Level (PL) 3 or 4 on the DSTP; 67% of fifth-grade students who used MY Access!® a total of five times or less scored at PL 3 or 4; whereas only 43% of fifth-grade students who had no exposure to MY Access!® scored at PL 3 or 4. At PL levels 4 and 5, of eighth-grade students using MY Access!®, 27% achieved PL 4 and 5% achieved PL 5; for students not using MY Access!®, the differences are notable – these figures were 16% and 1%, respectively. During the 2006-2007 school year, schools at Red Clay have had continued success using MY Access!®. Across three middle schools, at the beginning of the year, 55% of students were deemed "At Risk" based on performance in MY Access!® while only 45% were "Proficient" or better in terms of their writing proficiency. By the end of the year, the percentage of "At Risk" students was reduced to 23%, a decrease of 22 percentage points. More importantly, the number of students that were writing at an "Mastery" level, who received the top possible scores on their essays, increased from less than 1% to 16%. Students also took advantage of the immediate feedback provided by MY Access!®, revising their writing until it was proficient. Students often revised their essays five or more times. On average, these students scored a five on a six-point scale. Students revising their essays ten or more times were often able to receive a score of six, the highest possible score.

- At the Oasis School in Escambia County, Florida, an alternative school designed for students who are two or more years behind in core subject areas, students using MY Access!® had a dramatic increase in writing proficiency. Beginning in 2005, MY Access!® was adopted to aid students in writing ability. Throughout the year, students at this school used MY Access!® several times a week, with many submitting over 50 essays to up to 20 different prompts. Initially, the majority of students were very poor writers, receiving scores of 1 or 2 on their essays. After using MY Access!®, most of these students were writing essays that received scores of 4 or 5. After the first year of use, 89% of students scored proficient on the writing portion of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). For the 2006-2007 school year, this academy was the only school in the panhandle of Florida in which 100% of students achieved proficiency on the writing portion of the FCAT.

- At the A.J. Moore Academy, a magnet school in the Waco (TX) Independent School District, the passing rate of students at all grade levels on the writing portion of the Texas

8

Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) rose dramatically after only three months of using MY Access!®. Compared with the previous year, passing scores increased between 10% and 22% across grades and groups of students. Gains were particularly large among African-American students, who improved greatly over 2006 scores, and special education students, who as a group, achieved a 100% passing rate.

- Marion Junior High School in Marion, Arkansas, extensively used MY Access!® during the 2006-2007 school year, with over 12,000 student submissions. At the beginning of the school year, 40% of the students were classified by MY Access!® to be "At Risk" in terms of their writing proficiency, with only 1% of students designated as "Mastery". By the end of the school year, the number of "At Risk" students decreased to just 13%, while 87% of students had achieved either "Mastery" or "Proficiency" by the end of the school year. These same students also achieved measurable gains on the Arkansas State Literary Test. Initially, 38% of the 8th grade class at Marion Junior High had scored proficient or advanced on this assessment. After using MY Access!®, 69% of this same student group scored proficient or advanced, an increase of 31 percentage points.

- At Birmingham High School, an economically disadvantaged school in the Los Angeles Unified School District, school-wide, 81% of students who used MY Access!® passed the California High School Exit Examination, while only 46% of the students who did not use MY Access!® passed the exam. The passing rate for the school as a whole was approximately 70%.

- At Edna Brewer Middle School, a school of primarily low-income students in the Oakland Unified School District, MY Access!® was piloted in an attempt to increase scores on the California STAR Assessment. After only four months of use, the students' average holistic score on their essays rose one full point, increasing from a 3 to a 4. Initially, 55% of the students using MY Access!® were deemed to be "At Risk" in terms of their writing proficiency. By the end of the program, this number had decreased by 16 percentage points to 37%. The percentage of students who were classified as attaining a "Mastery" level of writing increased from 3% to 9% by the end of the program. The percent of students rated as "Proficient" writers also increased, from 42% to 54%.

- School districts in Carbon and Lehigh Counties in Pennsylvania selected MY Access!® in an attempt to improve the writing scores of students on the annual high stakes examination, the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). Students were given a pre- and post-test similar to the PSSA to gauge writing achievement. Of the 9th graders that were not proficient on the pre-test, 40% improved to proficient by the end of the study. Of those who did not have the benefit of using MY Access!®, only 22% improved to proficient. One school in the study saw over 75% of below proficient students increase to proficient when using MY Access!®. The study also showed that levels of proficiency increased the more students used MY Access!® On average, low proficiency students with high MY Access!® usage levels improved their post-test scores by 23%, with medium usage levels 18% and low usage levels 19%.

- At Bluff Ridge Elementary School in the Davis School District in Utah, three 5th grade classes incorporated MY Access!® into their curriculum, while one class opted to solely use traditional instruction. Of the three classes using MY Access!®, the average scores on the Stanford 9 standardized assessment ranged from 75.3% to 80.5%. The comparable class that did not use MY Access!® achieved an average score of only 61.7%.

- At Corcoran High School in New York, students piloted MY Access!®. The scores received on the writing assigned within MY Access!® were compared to the scores given on the New York State English/Language Arts Exam. As the year progressed, performance growth was evident. On a four-point scale, 75% of students scoring a 1 on their 8th grade assessment improved their writing by at least 2 points. 92% of students scoring a 2 on their 8th grade assessment improved their writing by at least 1 point. 47% of students scoring a 3 on their 8th grade assessment improved their writing improved their scores to a level of 4, the highest possible score.

Students Using MY Access!® Show Writing Proficiency Increases Throughout the School Year

Schools utilizing MY Access!® throughout the school year show increases from the beginning of the school year through to the end. Those schools that are successful ensure that the students are actively engaged in MY Access!® and are provided many opportunities to write and revise.

- Community High School, part of the Milwaukee Public School system, utilized MY Access!® to increase the writing proficiency of their students. In just six months, students increased their scores from a 3.7 to a 4.3 on a six-point scale. Most students used MY Access!® frequently, submitting, on average, over 20 essays throughout this time period. For three specific prompts, through revision, most students were able to increase their final score to a 5 from an initial score of 3, which indicates that these students possessed the ability to write at a very high level, with in-depth and well-developed essays.

- At Porter Middle School, in the Los Angeles Unified School District, during the 2006-2007 school year, students who used MY Access!® increased their writing scores by a point after less than four months of use. Scores on first drafts submitted to MY Access!® increased from a 2.4 to a 3.4 on a 6-point scale. Students who used the program the most often had the most gains. Those who submitted five or more different essays throughout the school year increased their average score from a 3 to a 5 on a 6-point scale.

- At John Marshall High School, in the Los Angeles Unified School District, during the 2006-2007 school year, students using MY Access!® achieved substantial gains in writing ability. Over 1,500 students utilized the program to submit multiple drafts of essays, using feedback to improve the quality of their writing sample. Comparing scores for final drafts submitted in MY Access!® at the beginning and end of the year, students on average gained nearly two points on a six-point scale, from an average score of 2.5 to an average score of 4.3. Students who revised their essays only once typically increased

their score by one or more points on a six-point scale.

- Students in the South East Educational Technology Consortium (SEETC), consisting of 8 large school districts in Southern California, implemented MY Access!® as part of a grant which focused on the increase in use of technology in the classroom. Approximately 33,000 students had the ability to utilize MY Access!®. Students completed a writing assessment at the beginning and end of the school year. As the table below shows, of the 6 districts that completed assessments using this pre-post test design, students in every district achieved sizeable gains in writing achievement, with scores typically increasing one point on a six-point holistic scale. This data is summarized in the following chart.
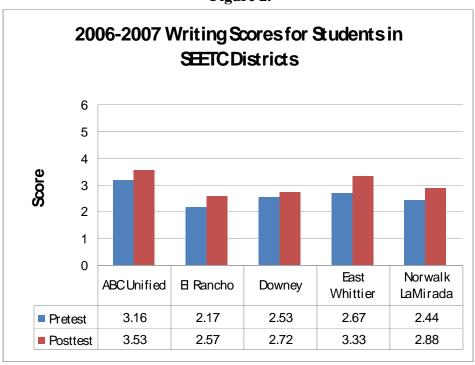
Figure 2.

2006-2007 Writing Scores for Students in SEETC Districts

	ABC Unified	El Rancho	Downey	East Whittier	Norwalk LaMirada
Pretest	3.16	2.17	2.53	2.67	2.44
Posttest	3.53	2.57	2.72	3.33	2.88

These are just a few examples of school districts with successful implementations of MY Access!®. In every case, it is the teachers and administrators who make the program a success.

Teachers and Students Agree that MY Access!® Improves the Quality of Student Writing

Numerous studies have shown that students and teachers agree that MY Access!® is valuable for assisting students in writing. The combination of writing tools, such as MY Editor, along with instant scoring and personalized feedback, are cited as useful features for improving the quality of student writing.

1   A study conducted by Vantage Learning shows that 91 percent of educators using MY

Access!® would advise others to purchase this program as an instructional classroom tool. Also, 85 percent of users view MY Access!® as an effective tool for preparing for state-mandated assessments and 82 percent of users are satisfied with key features of MY Access!®. In particular, the reporting tools were cited as an effective component of the program.

2   A study conducted by Hoon (2006) indicated that students felt very positively about the use of MY Access!®. Nearly 80 percent of the students felt that MY Access!® had helped them improve their writing, and more than 90 percent indicated that they used the feedback provided to improve their writing. They found the online writing resources such as the user and writer guides, writer's model catalogue, quick reference guide, and instructional units useful. The feedback provided by My Tutor had helped them identify their weaknesses as it explained with examples. The teachers agreed that the most valuable features of MY Access!® were the immediate feedback with scores and the potential to improve student writing through the use of various writing support tools.

3   A study by Yang (2004) also finds that students enjoy using the features of MY Access!®. Nearly 90 percent of students agreed that they liked the program because it allowed them to go back and revise their essay, with about 85 percent of students reporting that they liked receiving a score instantly after submitting an essay. About 80 percent of students liked having their own portfolio and the personalized feedback which told them what they needed to do to get a better score. The teachers in this study found MY Access!® to be very easy to use. They were confident that practicing writing using MY Access!® would be helpful to improving students' writing.

Summary

There is no question that writing proficiency is a skill that every student must possess. MY Access!® has been developed based on years of research regarding best practices for writing instruction. MY Access!® has been shown to significantly increase the quality of writing for students of varying ability. Case studies confirm that students that use MY Access!®, even for a short period of time, have demonstrated substantial gains within MY Access!® as well as on state-mandated standardized tests of writing. In addition, both students and teachers alike agree that MY Access!® is user-friendly. They report being satisfied with the high quality of individualized feedback, the ability to maintain student portfolios, and the ease of revision. The rich writing instructional features coupled with the immediate feedback provided by IntelliMetric® make MY Access!® a very effective tool for use by teachers and students to drive writing proficiency improvement.

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