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Pedagogy and Process: A Case Study of Writing in a Hybrid Learning Model

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PEDAGOGY AND PROCESS: A CASE STUDY OF

WRITING IN A HYBRID LEARNING MODEL

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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Title: Pedagogy and Process: A Case Study of Writing in a Hybrid Learning Model

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This qualitative case study explored the perceived experiences and outcomes of writing in a hybrid model of instruction in a large suburban high school. In particular, the impact of a hybrid model on the writing process and on future writing performance were examined. In addition, teacher expectation and teacher attitude and their impact upon students were areas that emerged as significant during the study. The study incorporated both student and teacher data to give a full picture of the studied case.

This study employed both student and teacher interview, classroom observation, and documentary evidence as its data sources. Data were analyzed through coding of information into emergent themes. Member checking was employed to ensure accuracy of participant responses and data triangulation was achieved through the use of interview, observational, and documentary evidence.

Analysis of study data indicated that people currently associated with this hybrid program had positive perceptions regarding its impact on writing and the writing process while those outside the program had negative perceptions. Former students who had exited the program saw it as detrimental to their development as writers. So did their non-hybrid teachers. Issues related to teacher expectation and writing pedagogy also emerged as important factors.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As the 21ˢᵗ century dawned, e-learning was coming into its own as a potential way to deliver education cheaply, efficiently, and effectively. However, many in the educational field had serious misgivings regarding the erosion of traditional classrooms (brick-and-mortar classrooms that are teacher-led) and all of the perceived benefits they bring. Such individuals worried about the loss of personal relationships, the lack of face-to-face knowledge of students, and the quality of online instruction. At the same time, the implementation of No Child Left Behind was exerting increased pressure on the educational establishment to produce performance results. In response to all of this, hybrid instruction, which is comprised of a blend of online and face-to-face components, gained a foothold in the field of education, and it has grown rapidly since (Watson, Murin, Vashaw, Gemin, & Rapp, 2013).

This rapid growth is likely due to hybrid instruction's perceived ability to combine the most efficacious elements of e-learning with the most desirable elements of the brick-and-mortar classroom. For many, it is seen as a kind of beneficial compromise between the seemingly endless, yet somewhat terrifying, possibilities of technology and the tried-and-true, yet possibly outmoded, methods of traditional education (Moskal, Dziuban, & Hartman, 2013). However, other than the notion that hybrid learning involves at least some online components and some face-to-face components, there is no consensus on exactly what it is comprised of or what it looks like in actual practice. Those who do propose percentages of online and offline activities in their definitions of hybrid learning vary so wildly (Crawford, Barker, & Seyam, 2014) that it is no exaggeration to say that anything from one percent online instruction in a course to one percent face-to-face instruction can be dubbed a hybrid learning model. This lack of consensus

regarding the actual appearance of hybrid learning in application exists at both the institutional and classroom levels, and is one of the challenges hybrid learning faces as it moves forward (Drysdale, Graham, Spring, & Halverson, 2013).

Interestingly, none of this disagreement over what hybrid learning truly looks like in practice has impeded its expansion. As a matter of fact, hybrid learning's growth has exceeded that of any other kind of learning model over the past ten years (Alijani, Kwun, & Yu, 2014). Nationwide, well over half of institutions of higher education report offering hybrid courses (Drysdale, et al., 2013), and actual numbers are probably much greater than that since individual instructors often alter their courses to be blended in nature without officially changing the course description (Graham, Woodfield, & Harrison, 2013). This rapid growth rate shows no signs of slowing (Watson, et al., 2013), and many predict that the growth of hybrid learning will continue to accelerate at least through the end of the decade (Smith & Basham, 2014).

Such marked expansion is hailed as a blessing by those who champion hybrid learning as the perfect blend of technology and tradition for educating the modern student. Many educators see it as a natural evolution of education in the 21st century and as a solution to the problems and inequalities of the traditional educational system (Suprabha & Subramonian, 2015). In support of such assertions, there have been a number of studies that seem to suggest the success of hybrid learning as measured by student achievement (Buzadjija & Tiro, 2012; Glazer, 2011; U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Proponents of hybrid learning also point to a large body of research that indicates the success of hybrid learning in the affective domain. This research often finds that students in hybrid learning models experience higher rates of satisfaction with learning (Chandra & Fisher, 2009; Yapici & Akbayin, 2012) and an overall highly positive perception of the hybrid learning experience when compared to either online-only or face-to-face only classes

(Gyamfi & Gyaase, 2015; Hussein, 2015; Moskal, et al., 2013). Likewise, hybrid learning has been shown to promote student motivation and responsibility (Buzadjija & Tiro, 2012; Jokinen & Mikkonen, 2013; Smyth, Houghton, Cooney, & Casey, 2012) as well as an increased sense of independence (DeGeorge-Walker & Keefe, 2010).

On the other hand, detractors of hybrid learning are quick to point out that many of the studies that champion the benefits of hybrid learning are making too much out of too little. One of the main contentions they put forth is that most studies that seem to show the benefits of hybrid learning are actually reflective of greater planning and more effective pedagogy going into the hybrid instruction rather than the structure of the model itself (Glazer, 2011; Jovanovic, et al., 2015). Likewise, many of the studies that demonstrate student learning in a hybrid model demonstrate the same effect for the traditionally modeled control group (Weber & Lenon, 2007), or they have statistical differences so small as to be insignificant (Figlio, Rush, & Yin, 2013). There has also been some research that suggests that hybrid learning poses too many challenges for the instructor (Jokinen & Mikkonen, 2013) and that these challenges are often exacerbated by weak and confusing institutional policies of implementation that cause confusion and poorly constructed learning experiences for both teachers and students (Graham, et al., 2013).

Seemingly, only two things are clear when it comes to hybrid instruction. The first is that hybrid learning is here to stay for the foreseeable future. The second is that there is a great need for research to provide some clarity regarding the impact of hybrid learning in modern education. This study aims to shed some light into this current darkness.

Statement of the Problem

Thus far, hybrid learning has been used much more in higher education than in K-12 schooling. Hybrid learning and its effects have also been studied to a fair extent in higher education settings. However, hybrid learning continues to expand into the K-12 setting, particularly at the secondary level. The problem with this is that its expansion has not been accompanied by the necessary study of its appropriateness or efficacy. In fact, there is little research on the effectiveness or appropriateness of hybrid learning in a K-12 setting at all (Drysdale, et al., 2013). Even when there have been studies regarding hybrid instruction in a secondary school setting, they tend to focus on organizational experiences and administrative implementation rather than student learning experiences.

At the same time, even though writing is an essential element for student learning and expression, there has been very little research undertaken regarding how learning in a hybrid setting affects student writing. When such research has been undertaken, it has focused on second-language writing (Banditvilai, 2016; Mesh, 2016) or one very specific technological tool for writing and not the effect or experience of writing in a hybrid model itself (Bahce & Taslaci, 2009; Logan, 2012; Petco, Egger, & Graber, 2014; Valeri, 2015). Further, there has been no significant research on how student writers are impacted by a hybrid learning model in a secondary setting. This gap in the research regarding such a vital area of learning in such a rapidly expanding method of educational delivery is the problem.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the ways in which writing instruction occurs in a hybrid learning model and to determine how participation in such a model impacts student

writers. Specifically, this case study will examine the perceptions of both students and teachers regarding the unique circumstances of teaching and producing writing in a hybrid setting.

Research Questions

The research questions that frame this study are:

1. In what ways does writing instruction in a hybrid model differ from that of a traditional model?

2. How do teachers perceive the impact of the hybrid model on student writers?

3. How do students perceive their writing experiences in a hybrid instructional model?

4. What writing outcomes do students perceive as attributable to their participation in a hybrid instructional model?

Significance of the Study

Hybrid learning is a burgeoning phenomenon in the modern educational landscape. Its growth has been explosive, and it shows no signs of slowing (Smith & Basham, 2014). In fact, many have deemed it to be not only a continually growing trend in education, but have further predicted that it will continue to grow until it becomes the dominant method of education in the near future (Halverson, Graham, Spring, & Drysdale, 2012). However, studies of the impact these programs have at the secondary school level are woefully lacking in number and tend to be of limited use in making any kind of inferences regarding their efficacy (Wang, Han, & Yang, 2015). Even worse, there are virtually no studies that examine the potential impact these programs may have in the vital area of writing.

This study aims to shed some light on the current void in this area of research. By studying the writing experiences of students enrolled in a high school hybrid program as well as those of the teachers who instruct them, this study will provide a careful look at how hybrid

instruction influences writing practices and outcomes. If the results indicate that hybrid learning leads to desirable outcomes such as better writing outcomes or increased student satisfaction in the studied program, the educational institution under study may cautiously move forward on hybrid learning's expansion with a bit more confidence. Conversely, should the results indicate that hybrid learning in this setting proves detrimental, perhaps a little more care should be taken when deciding whether or not to expand the hybrid learning program in the school district. Finally, if it is found that there seems to be no difference whatsoever between hybrid and traditional models, then the school district should feel more empowered to choose whether or not to offer or expand hybrid writing courses based upon other factors, such as economics or preference. Additionally, while the findings from this case study are not generalizable and should not be used as if they are in a larger population, these findings may be useful to those involved in the construction and management of other hybrid writing programs.

Theoretical Framework

Although hybrid learning is, in the grand scheme of educational history, a fairly new phenomenon, there have been many models and frameworks promoted as a proposed means of organizing and understanding this educational approach. However, many of these models focus on only one, or, at best, several aspects of blended learning, and blended learning is a complex whole (Wang, et al., 2015). While there have been some attempts to construct models that address the multi-faceted nature of blended learning, these models lack the scope to illuminate the changing and intricate nature of the elements involved in blended learning and do not provide methodology for following the evolution of its disparate parts or its structure as a whole (Halverson, Graham, Spring, Drysdale, & Henrie, 2014).

As a means to overcome the current weaknesses of modeling noted above, this study will use Complex Adaptive Systems as a lens through which blended learning may be more accurately viewed. The idea of Complex Adaptive Systems has its roots in the hard sciences and mathematics, and has been used to study systems in areas ranging from neurology to sociology (Wang, et al., 2015). At its heart, Complex Adaptive Systems is based upon a distinction between systems that are complicated versus those that are complex. In a complicated system, the system's parts are able to maintain some independence from each other, but, in a complex system, the system's parts have important dependencies among one another that dictate that a change in one element causes a ripple effect of changes in the system's other elements as well (Miller & Page, 2007).

Further, Complex Adaptive Systems must be inherently flexible to allow for the natural emergence of new elements within the model as well as the flow and interplay of the foundational elements of the model (Miller & Page, 2007). That is to say that such models must be both organized and somewhat disorganized. Complex systems need to have major structures in place as a guiding framework for the system's parts, but must not be so rigid as to limit the introduction, interplay, or evolution of parts within the system.

Specifically, this study employs a recent application by Wang, et al. (2015) of Complex Adaptive Systems to hybrid learning called the "Complex Adaptive Blended Learning System." Using this model, hybrid learning is viewed as a complex adaptive system comprised of six major elements: Teacher, Learner, Content, Technology, Learning Support, and Institution (Wang, et al., 2015). This study will view the results of qualitative data collection through the lens of this model in order to better understand why this hybrid model succeeds or fails in certain areas and how those areas may or may not impact multiple other facets of the model.

At the same time, this study focuses on the common educational practice of writing as it is manifested in a hybrid model. While the prominent position of writing in the educational landscape has never fallen into question, the best way to shepherd students through its mastery and the best ways to study this phenomenon have. Certainly, the traditional way of viewing the writing process involved seeing writing as a sequence of ordered events to be moved through by the writer. Although writing theorists may have used slightly different names for the components of these processes, they basically boiled down to the three stages of prewriting, writing, and revising, and these theorists placed their primary emphasis on the surface-level, cosmetic areas of grammar and mechanics (Legette, Rutherford, Dunsford, & Costello, 2015). This linear process view of writing colored both instruction and research in writing until a shift began in the early 1970s with Janet Emig's 1971 case study of high school writers (Perl, 2014; Perl et al., 1983; Voss, 1983). Emig's study changed the landscape of composition research by beginning the movement to consider the student composition process as a necessary direction for writing research and by introducing a more precise methodology, particularly the case study methods that were already accepted in other areas of educational research, to the study of composition (Voss, 1983). According to Hairston (1982), this shift was also precipitated by Thomas Kuhns' assertion that scientific objectivity is not stable and that commonly held beliefs and paradigms of inquiry in scientific fields change over time. Because of this, Hairston (1982) asserted that writing research needed to understand how a writing piece came to be produced and what went on in the composer's cognition during the piece's production instead of focusing on the finished product. At the same time, Sondra Perl's (1979) work with unskilled college writers led her to hypothesize that the composing process is nonlinear and that it combines both discovery and the construction of meaning.

It was within this context that Flower and Hayes furthered the shift in the composition studies in the early 1980s and initiated a fresh and very productive approach to writing scholarship (Becker, 2006). Specifically, Flower and Hayes created their "Cognitive Process" model of writing in 1981, and the landscape of writing research and pedagogy shifted dramatically (Tillema, VandenBerg, Rijlaarsdam, & Sanders, 2011).

All in all, the "Cognitive Process Theory" of writing explains the mental processes that are in constant flux during the composition of a piece of writing. Further, the heart of this model lies in its introduction of the monitor and its role in shuttling the writer back and forth between embedded processes as well as its emphasis on the roles working memory and long-term memory play in influencing the monitor to choose between these cognitive processes (Becker, 2006). Specifically, the model of Flower and Hayes (1981) rests upon a foundation composed of four assumptions: the writing process is non-linear and must be viewed as an intertwined composite of cognitive processes which are organized continually as the writer works, the occurring cognitive processes are embedded within one another and influence one another, a network of both long and short-term goals drive the writing process, and these goals exist on two levels, major goals and supporting goals. Built upon these four assumptions is a model that is comprised of three domains: the task environment, the writer's long-term memory, and the writing processes. Again, these domains and their embedded facets interact with one another in a non-linear fashion.

Flower and Hayes' model draws upon the information-processing area of cognitive psychology and Complex Adaptive Systems emerged from the fields of the mathematical sciences, but both are concerned with rigorous scientific inquiry, and both have been applied to understanding some aspect of education. When the analysis of cognitive processes was applied

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to writing by Flower and Hayes (1981) the Cognitive Process Writing Model arose to shed new light on what writers do when they write, and, by extension, added to the conversation regarding good writing instruction. Likewise, when a Complex Adaptive Systems paradigm was applied to hybrid learning, the CABLS model (Wang, et al., 2015) was derived. Despite their apparently different derivations, they are both models that can be used to view some aspect of education as involving the complex interaction of subsystems within larger systems, and their convergence will be used as the theoretical framework that guides this study.

Overview of Methodology

This study was designed as a qualitative case study of a unique case (Lichtman, 2013; Yin, 2009) that examined a hybrid learning program that diverges from the typical offerings of the school district that houses it. The school that housed the studied program is a large high school of approximately 1200 students, in a large, suburban school district. The program itself involves only the ninth and tenth grade years. Upon the completion of tenth grade, students in the program return to the traditional model of teaching in the district. Participants in the study included program students and teachers. Following the procurement of all required permissions and IRB approval, full access to participants and documentary evidence was available to the researcher throughout the process.

Once approvals were secured, data collection began with a series of interviews that were conducted with representative members from each of the following groups: current hybrid students, former hybrid students, the current hybrid English teacher, and the eleventh grade English teachers. These interviews were designed to be semi-structured through use of a flexible protocol (Creswell, 2007). Interviews were conducted on in-service days, before or after school, during study halls and activity periods, and during the summer when school was not in session.

These interviews were carried out face-to-face in a small conference room within the school that provided freedom from interruption. Each teacher interview lasted approximately 30 minutes, and each student interview lasted approximately 20 minutes.

All interviews were recorded, and the researcher also took field notes during the process. Interviews and field notes were then transcribed and coded using both hand-coding and NVivo11. Coding procedure followed the "Codes, Categories, and Concepts" (Lichtman, 2013, p. 252) format. Member checking of transcripts was also employed to verify the accuracy of the information as well as the participants' comfort with what was shared (Creswell, 2008; Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013).

On-site observations were also performed by the researcher to provide deeper understanding of the particulars of the case within its actual, lived parameters (Stake, 1995). Observations were carried out with the researcher in the role of non-participant observer, which allows the observer to interact with participants, but does not directly involve the researcher in any of the educational practices that are ongoing in the observed case (Perrin, 2016). Field notes were composed during the process and coded following the procedures outlined above.

Finally, documentary evidence was examined in order to enhance and validate data gleaned from the other sources of the study (Yin, 2009). Particular attention was paid to documents concerning writing, such as student-produced writings, teacher-produced writing assignments, teacher lesson plans regarding writing, and teacher feedback and instructions pertinent to student writing.

Limitations

An obvious limitation of this study is that it examines only one case, and is therefore limited in its generalizability. While this is true, such a criticism can be leveled at most studies.

Further, this is a case study, and Stake (1995) clearly argues that case study should be concerned with the particular rather than the general. In addition, the current state of hybrid learning programs features a widely varying array of models. Many models that fall under the umbrella of hybrid learning have little in common with one another other than a technological component and a face-to-face component. Such a multifarious assortment of programs hampers the attempt of any study to make generalizations about hybrid learning irrespective of its design or scope because the results may not apply to other models with different components.

A second limitation of this study is that, even though the researcher had no authority over any of the participants or the site of the study, he did have the approval and interest of the district behind him. This also may have exerted some influence over what participants said and did. However, these potential problems were mitigated by the use of member checking to ensure that participants felt comfortable with the researcher's representation of meaning as well as the use of pseudonyms and removal of identifying information to ensure anonymity. Also, it should be noted that the researcher had no previous or subsequent involvement in the studied program and no previous acquaintance with the students in it. Finally, although the knowledge that the school district was interested in the study results may have influenced some participants' responses, this problem occurs in any kind of research in which subjects know they are being studied. Once again, full confidentiality was provided to diminish this potentiality as much as possible.

A final limitation of this study is that it focuses on the art of writing. Because much of the activity of producing writing occurs within the mind and is not observable, some of the conclusions drawn regarding the processes involved may be highly interpretive rather than concretely supported. However, any study involving what goes on below the surface during writing suffers from the same flaw.

Definitions

e-learning- For this study, any type of learning undertaken electronically, but usually referring to internet-based activities.

Hybrid instruction- A term used interchangeably with blended learning, blended instruction, and hybrid instruction. This study uses Smith and Basham's (2014) definition of hybrid learning as any form of instruction involving both an online component and a face-to-face component.

Hybrid model- Refers to hybrid instruction at the program level rather than a single lesson or unit. Again, Smith and Basham's (2014) notion of at least one online and one face-to-face component applies.

Linear model of the writing process- The traditional way of viewing the writing process as being comprised of distinct stages which the writer moves through in order. Often, this process is seen as being composed of three stages: prewriting, writing, and revision.

Traditional model- What is typically thought of when the term school is used. While this model may certainly involve technological components, they are not included in any systematic way or consistent way and are not labeled as hybrid by the institution that houses them. In essence, when technology is used, it is used to support or enhance curriculum rather than as an integral part of the curriculum.

Writing process- The phases that the writer goes through during composition of writing.

Summary

This chapter provides an overview of a qualitative case study that examines perceptions writing in a hybrid learning program. The study is situated in a climate of uncertainty as to the efficacy and appropriateness of hybrid learning for certain contexts and learning outcomes. This uncertainty has been precipitated by hybrid learning's explosive growth and the lack of robust

research to explore the implications of this rapid expansion. At the same time, writing remains an uncontested staple of education, but how hybrid learning may impact writing development has not been studied to a large extent. This study aims to provide some insight in this area.

In order to do so, this study will examine the perceptions of both students and teachers in order to determine how instruction through hybrid methodology affects the composition of student writing. This study's methodology will employ three methods of data collection in order to ensure data triangulation (Yin, 2009). First, interviews will be conducted with both teachers and students associated with the hybrid program as well as teachers who receive these hybrid students upon their exiting the program. Second, on-site observations in the hybrid classroom will be performed. Third, documentary evidence including teaching materials, student writing, and district documents regarding the establishment and oversight of the hybrid program will be examined to corroborate and extend findings from interviews and observations. Member checking will also be employed to enhance the accuracy of collected data. Coding of all data will be accomplished by both hand-coding and the use of NVivo11.

The findings from this data will be filtered through a theoretical lens that includes both the CABLS model of hybrid learning (Wang, et al., 2015) and the Cognitive Process Model of Writing (Flower & Hayes, 1981). Both models are built upon the premise of the complex interplay between the various parts of the models as well as their influence upon one another.

Limitations of this study include its standing as a single case, the use of a site familiar to the researcher, and the difficulties associated with examining the cognitive process of writing through conversations and observed behaviors. However, these limitations are mitigated by the fact that they occur commonly in qualitative studies and by the use of confidentiality procedures and member checking to heighten the reliability of participant responses.

In the forthcoming chapter, a review of the literature is set forth. This literature review begins with an overview of hybrid learning and its situation among the current educational milieu. Then, a discussion of research supporting the salutary effects of hybrid learning in areas ranging from learning outcomes to student attitudes is presented. This is followed by a similar discussion of research that points to possibly detrimental outcomes of hybrid learning. Research regarding teachers and hybrid learning then wraps up the section on empirical studies of hybrid learning. After that, influential hybrid learning models are briefly described and evaluated. The hybrid research section then ends with a look at research exploring writing in hybrid models. Finally, this chapter concludes by delving into the study's theoretical framework through discussion of the Cognitive Process Writing Model and the Complex Adaptive Blended Learning Systems Model.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Seemingly, the only consistent things regarding hybrid learning are variety and flux.

There are so many different ways of conceiving, structuring, and implementing hybrid learning

that any kind of consensus seems, if possible at all, to be in the distant future. In fact, even the

terminology itself for hybrid learning lacks cohesion, as monikers such as blended learning,

technology-mediated teaching, and almost any combination of words including e-learning in

them can all mean basically the same thing. In order to make some sense of this chaotic

landscape, the following literature review will first look at the current landscape of hybrid

learning and its emergence, followed by an examination of the beneficial and detrimental effects

of hybrid instruction. This is followed by an account of some of the more prominent models of

hybrid learning. Finally, the theoretical perspectives on both writing and hybrid learning that

frame this study will be explored.

Hybrid Learning

Hybrid learning is a burgeoning educational delivery model with no accepted definition.

By many, it is seen as a type of intermediary between tradition and technology (Alexander,

Lynch, Rabinovich, & Knutel, 2014; Moskal, et al., 2013). At its heart, it seems to straddle some

sort of middle ground between online learning and traditional face-to-face models (Drysdale, et

al., 2013). However, exactly what this means can differ greatly from institution to institution and

classroom to classroom (Smith & Basham, 2014). As such, no consistent definition of hybrid

learning exists beyond some notion that it must involve some sort of combination of online and

in-person instruction (Futch, deNoyelles, Thompson, & Howard, 2016).   Even the amount of

online and face-to-face instruction necessary to cause the application of the hybrid label is open

to interpretation with percentages needed for each component varying widely (Crawford, et al., 2014). For this study, Smith and Basham's (2014) contention that any model involving both an online component and a face-to-face component should be considered hybrid learning will be used.

The Current State of Hybrid Learning

Hybrid learning has been growing rapidly over the course of the last ten years and continues to do so (Alijani, et al., 2014). It is used prominently, not just in education, but in fields as disparate as business, the armed forces, and many areas of the private sector (Moskal, et al., 2013). In education, its spread has been particularly rapid and expansive. In fact, as of 2013, it was used by almost fifty percent of four-year institutions of higher education, and sixty-six percent of two-year schools of higher learning in the United States (Drysdale, et al., 2013). Graham, et al. (2013) argue that the number of institutions that have hybrid courses on campus is much higher than reported numbers because those numbers reflect adoption at the institutional level. In reality, they maintain, nearly every campus in the country has blended learning courses due to the adoption of such course models by individual faculty members. In the K-12 educational setting, hybrid learning is growing more rapidly than any other form of delivery involving digital content (Siko, 2014). In the last several years, hybrid learning has expanded so quickly that its growth rate has exceeded one hundred percent in many states across the country (Watson, et al, 2013), and Smith and Basham (2014) predict that hybrid learning will continue to experience dramatic growth throughout the rest of the decade.

As a result of hybrid learning's expansion, there has been an accompanying increase in research on hybrid learning. However, in many ways, this research has not kept pace with the realities of hybrid learning, nor has it adequately addressed many aspects of such a model. For

example, among the studies undertaken on hybrid learning over the past ten years, more than seventy-five percent of them were set in higher education (Drysdale, et al., (2013). Likewise, Halverson, et al. (2014), in an analysis of the most influential and most cited hybrid research, discovered that there were major gaps in important areas of scholarship such as achievement, viable pedagogical models of implementation, and teacher perception. The following is what we do know.

Benefits of Hybrid Learning

One prominent area of interest for those studying hybrid learning, and arguably the most important, is whether or not hybrid learning produces higher achievement than face-to-face models. However, viable research in this area is maddeningly difficult to find. Often, completed studies in this field indicate that there is little or no difference between achievement in hybrid models versus traditional learning (Harmon, Alpert, & Lambrinos, 2014), and that pedagogy and good instructional techniques are the actual causes of significant effects, whether these items occur in either a traditional or hybrid model (Aly, 2013). One exception to this is a recent study carried out with university students split into high and low groups based upon past academic performance. The study found that students with low GPAs performed significantly better in the traditional version of the course whereas students in the high group did better in the hybrid version (Asarta & Schmidt, 2017). However, this split in performance does little to answer the question of whether or not hybrid learning leads to increased achievement because one group performed better in a hybrid model and the other group performed better in a traditional model.

While there are some studies that tout higher achievement in their results, most of them do exhibit limitations such as low number of participants, brevity of duration, and narrowness of focus that somewhat undermine their usefulness (Wang, et al., 2015). Take for example a study

done by Kazu and Demirkol (2014) with Biology students at a Turkish high school. After assigning students to a control group of traditional instruction and a treatment group of hybrid instruction and measuring the results with an achievement test, the researchers found that the hybrid group did better on the test. However, the duration of the treatment was only six weeks and comprised a single unit of instruction. Further, the total number of participants in the study was 54, so even though the scores were higher for the hybrid group, the effect size was small. Along the same lines, a recent study of Japanese medical students learning English found that students in the hybrid treatment group performed significantly better than the control group (Ono, 2015). Once again, the total number of 51 students was rather small, which the author of the study discusses as a limitation (Ono, 2015).

Even when hybrid studies do have significant numbers and clear results, their results are often of limited use due to other factors. An excellent example of this is a study done by Buzadjija and Tiro (2012) wherein 188 students in an IT course were studied. Although Buzadjija and Tiro (2012) found a significant positive difference between the treatment and control groups in terms of IT knowledge, it must be remembered that the course content was about computers and likely to be more appealing to its students in a format using more technology-based instruction. Further, the treatment and control groups both received the same face-to-face instruction, but the treatment group also received additional online instruction. This negates the usefulness of the study's results because the experimental group received more instructional time. The same flaw mars the study undertaken by Veneri and Ganotti (2014) in which two cohorts in an undergraduate physical therapy class were compared. The study's result showed a significant difference in favor of a hybrid model over the traditional model when measured by quiz scores throughout the course. While these results seem compelling, they are

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undermined by the fact that the online elements used in the hybrid cohort were in addition to the normal face-to-face instruction that both cohorts received. Thus, although this study indicates that the online modules were useful as a form of supplemental instruction, they do not in any way indicate that hybrid learning produces higher achievement than face-to-face learning.

Such flaws seem to be the norm in research on achievement in hybrid learning (Halverson, et al., 2014), but there is clearer research on other benefits of this learning paradigm. The following represent the most prominently studied and discussed salutary aspects of hybrid learning.

One of the benefits most often discussed in the literature on hybrid leaning is flexibility. This advantageous flexibility encompasses several areas such as the ability to vary location and set-up, the freedom to be more open with scheduling, and the possibility of including various forms of technology (Sana, Fenesi, & Kim, 2011; Suprabha & Subramonian, 2015). Alijani, et al. (2014) have also found these key aspects of flexibility to be major benefits of hybrid learning, and they go on to add the flexibility to use varying time configurations to the list. Such time flexibility includes things such as asynchronous lessons and the possibility of accessing online course materials at any time from multiple locations as well as the potential to allow students to alter the pacing of their learning. Such flexibility is often cited by students as one of the things they like best about hybrid learning models (Istifci, 2017).

Another frequently discussed advantage of hybrid learning is student perception and satisfaction. According to the vast majority of research in this area, students generally report a positive attitude toward hybrid learning and an increased positive perception of both hybrid learning and technology use in education following exposure to hybrid learning (Yapici & Akbayin, 2012). One prime example of this is Chandra and Fisher's (2009) study of secondary

science students in which the most salient result was the overall satisfaction students expressed regarding their hybrid experience. A similar study of 9th grade biology students found through interviewing that students overwhelmingly rated their hybrid learning experience as very positive (Yapici & Akbayin, 2012). In higher education, researchers at The University of Central Florida, found that more students reported satisfaction and the perception of a positive learning environment in hybrid courses than in either online-only or face-to-face traditional courses (Moskal, et al., 2013). A similar study at an Australian university also found that surveyed students indicated a much stronger liking for blended courses over face-to-face or hybrid learning models (Pechenkina & Aeschliman, 2017). In the same vein, a study of senior STEM students at Norwegian universities indicated that they had a strong preference for blended learning over traditionally structured classes (Hussein, 2015). Wichadee (2013), in a study of college freshmen studying English at a Thai university, reported that students indicated a high level of satisfaction with their blended learning experience, and that this satisfaction held true regardless of varying learning styles. Ono (2015) reported similar results in his study of English learners at a Japanese university. Finally, in a year-long study of college freshmen entered in blended learning courses, Gyamfi and Gyaase (2015) found that students who were taught using a variety of online and face-to-face methods exhibited greater satisfaction with course materials than those taught in a traditional model. Specifically, this study indicated that greater satisfaction with the materials promoted cognitive activity, engagement with course materials, and increased interest in topical matter.

A related area in which hybrid learning seems to produce positive effects is student motivation and responsibility (Buzadjija & Tiro, 2012; Jokinen & Mikkonen, 2013). For example, in their study of university nursing students, Smyth, et al. (2012) discovered that the

less teacher-centered nature of hybrid classes encouraged more independence and an increased sense of personal responsibility. Likewise, in a literature review of exclusively Indian research on hybrid learning, Suprabha and Subramonian (2015) reported not only that this model promoted independence and increased responsibility among students, but that there was also an enhanced motivation to learn more. DeGeorge-Walker and Keefe (2010) reported similar results highlighting the increased motivation of college students enrolled in hybrid courses. These results are further supported by a large study of college students in Taiwan who strongly indicated their increased motivation in courses following a hybrid design (Chang & Chen, 2015). Banditvilai (2016) echoed these findings in a case study of Asian university students learning English. According to this study, students in blended environments have a more favorable outlook on online learning when it is combined with face-to-face instruction, and students report increased motivation as well as greater involvement in their own learning progression (Banditvilai, 2016). Jiminez de la Mora (2017) also enumerates the advantages of blended learning for students arguing that they exhibit greater appreciation for learning, see themselves as empowered, take responsibility for their learning, and demonstrate increased proficiency for surmounting challenges. However, while these studies do indicate greater student satisfaction and motivation in hybrid learning, Tang & Chaw (2016) are careful to point out that digital literacy is vital as a prerequisite for students entering a hybrid learning course.

Potential Detriments of Hybrid Learning

Perhaps the most striking thing about the body of research regarding hybrid instruction is how few studies report negative effects. As a matter of fact, in Glazer's (2011) summary of the U.S. Department of Education's sweeping evaluation of hybrid learning studies, it is overwhelmingly clear that the vast majority of studies indicate better results in test scores from

hybrid learning than either online only courses or traditional courses. However, many researchers, including Glazer himself, have been quick to point out that this does not necessarily mean that blended courses are superior to other delivery methods. Rather, as the U.S. Department of Education (2009) points out, and Glazer (2011) is quick to accede, most of the studies that point to the seeming superiority of the hybrid model are actually the result of better planning and more effective pedagogy and not anything inherently more efficacious about hybrid learning.

While most of the research on hybrid learning reports either positive results or, at worst, a neutral effect, there are a handful that hint at potentially detrimental effects. For example, Kwak, Menezes, and Sherwood (2015) in a large study of students in college statistics courses found that, although hybrid learning had little or no effect initially, it did produce a negative impact on quiz and test scores as time went on. Their eventual conclusions in the study suggest that hybrid learning has a negative cumulative effect, and they posit that so many hybrid studies report positive or neutral effects because they are of short duration and do not allow enough time for the detrimental effects to manifest themselves. Figlio, et al. (2013) deduced similar findings in a large, semester-long study involving economics students at a university. Again, this study showed hybrid delivery to be correlated with lower performance on an assessment. However, the negative result was not statistically significant, so this study can hardly be used to sound the death knell of hybrid learning.

Teachers and Hybrid Learning

Up to this point, hybrid learning research has focused almost entirely on student-related themes (Brown, 2016). As a result, there has been little research undertaken regarding the perceptions of teachers related to hybrid learning. In fact, in an analysis of the most impactful

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and frequently cited scholarly research on hybrid learning, Halverson, et al. (2014) argued that there was a great deficiency in the literature when it comes to teacher perception regarding blended learning. In a related study examining hundreds of dissertations and theses on the topic of hybrid learning, Drysdale, Graham, Spring, and Halverson (2013) also determined that there was a noticeable lack of focus on faculty perceptions and dispositions. They further argued that this research gap was particularly evident because, in every topic regarding perception of hybrid instruction that was studied, student data were examined much more frequently and pervasively than teacher data.

This assertion is borne out when we examine what we do know about teachers and hybrid learning because the information is typically buried in articles whose primary focus is student data. The study undertaken by Paechter, Maier, and Macher (2010) serves as a good illustration of this. While the above authors do assert that the teacher needs to be supportive and exhibit expertise for hybrid learning to work properly, this assertion is made by saying that, "students experience the instructor's support and expertise as especially important" (p. 228). Thus, even in this case where hybrid teachers are discussed, it is through the lens of student perception.

One area of teacher-hybrid interaction that has received some attention is the need for teachers of hybrid courses to plan carefully and receive professional development in order to be successful (Graham, et al., 2013). While the principle that good planning and professional development are necessary for good teaching is hardly unique to hybrid instruction, Jokinen and Mikkonen (2013) argue that the online components of hybrid learning require teachers to be more creative, active, purposeful, and careful in their approach and preparation because they are not physically present. Smyth, et al. (2012) echo this assertion, and add to it that teachers must plan more deeply and effectively because they need to act as facilitators of student learning who

must encourage online student collaboration and both individual and group responsibility for learning. Bretz (2017) similarly asserts that teacher training for hybrid learning must be comprehensive and pervasive because blended learning requires teacher roles that are new to many educators and because successfully managing a blended environment requires deep knowledge of unique ways to manage students and their learning. Likewise, Jiminez de la Mora (2017) discusses the intensity of the effort needed to change teacher roles from the traditional to those conducive to hybrid learning practices.

Implementation of Hybrid Learning

When studies look at the implementation of hybrid learning, they tend to examine it at the level of individual classes, courses, or instructors, and not at an institutional level (Graham, Spring, & Drysdale, 2012). As a result there is little information and even less consensus regarding exactly how an institution should go about implementing a hybrid program. However, Graham, et al. (2013), through an examination of six cases of institutions of higher education adopting hybrid learning, have at least determined that the three principal areas that need attention for successful adoption are "strategy, structure, and support" (p. 11). Moskal, et al. (2013) break these general areas into more, and more in-depth, facets necessary for successful institutional adoption. According to their study, these aspects include, "institutional goals and objectives, alignment, organizational capacity, vocabulary and definitions, faculty development and course development support, support for online students and faculty, robust and reliable infrastructure, longitudinal data collection and assessment, proactive policy development, and an effective funding model" (p. 17-18). The authors further assert that, only if all these factors are present, and if they exist in an institutional environment that is responsible and supportive, will the implementation of blended learning go well. While all of this is highly informative, it lacks

concrete specifics of exactly what this might look like in practice. It also involves many elements that would be true of any type of learning model. For example, it seems obvious that an institution that is supportive and responsible would be just as important for face-to-face teaching success as it would for hybrid learning. Clearly, this is an area where hybrid scholarship has much to do and little to currently say.

There is significantly more information on successful implementation at the course level. To begin with, it is clear that professional development is crucial. Specifically, professional development needs to include both the pedagogy and technology pertinent specifically to hybrid learning (Graham, et al., 2013). Jovanovic et al. (2015) found these same two factors to be particularly true when pedagogical and technological supports were provided for university hybrid instructors.

It is also vital for the teacher of hybrid courses to understand how and when it is appropriate to use technology and when it is best to use face-to-face instruction (Jokinen & Mikkonen, 2013). Not every activity or learning objective lends itself equally to each approach, and some activities may be far less effective using one medium or the other. As such, thoughtful planning that is comprised of both what needs to be learned and the best vehicle for facilitating that learning is of particular importance for a successful hybrid course (Jokinen & Mikkonen, 2013). In this vein, Mesh (2016) argues that thoughtful and constant reflection on the part of instructors is vital for determining the optimal integration of online and in-person elements in a blended course. It is also important that the hybrid teacher act as a facilitator rather than the focal point of the learning activities, and that they foster collaboration and interaction among their students (Smyth, Cooney, & Casey, 2012). All in all, the research suggests that it is important for the successful hybrid instructor to carefully design course materials and learning

activities, not simply modify existing courses and materials to accommodate an electronic approach (VanDerLinden, 2014).

Hybrid Learning Models

Research in which some aspects of hybrid learning models are studied comprises a significant portion of the articles written regarding hybrid instruction (Halverson, et al., 2014). Unfortunately, the research thus far does not indicate that any of these models seem to be reliably more efficacious than any other (Moskal, et al., 2013). One of the reasons for this is likely that hybrid learning and its inherent technologies evolve so rapidly that systematic investigation of particular models is challenging. Additionally, most of the models that are applied to hybrid learning or given a moniker that includes the word "hybrid" are really web-based learning models or simply learning frameworks that could be applied to traditional, online, or blended learning. Perhaps because of this, there have been so few hybrid models that have been investigated by both delineating the model and employing rigorous methodology to test its validity (Halverson et al., 2014). However, there have been a handful of models that do meet these criteria, and they will be briefly discussed below.

One of the earliest of these models is Khan's (2001) octagonal model for web-based learning. As its name implies, this model is comprised of eight facets which include valuational, pedagogical, ethical, managerial, technological, resource supportive, interfacial, and institutional. Obviously, this model considers blended learning from many sides and provides a fairly complete framework for its structure. The identification of these facets of blended learning has significantly contributed to the understanding of areas to be considered when building a blended program (Singh, 2003), and it has made a major contribution in guiding our understanding of blended learning over the past fifteen years.

Another influential early model of hybrid learning is the BLESS (blended-learning-systems-structure) model of Derntl and Motsching-Pitrik (2004). At its heart, this model consists of five layers of integration between learning theory and technology use. This framework and its layers can be used to evaluate and implement hybrid learning courses by providing a framework through which complex institutional processes can be chunked into meaningful learning structures. These structures can then be used to design and implement meaningful hybrid learning activities.

Another hybrid learning model that has established itself is the hexagonal e-learning assessment model (HELAM) of Ozkan and Koseler (2009). The six facets of this hexagonal model include: instructor attitudes, content quality, system quality, supportive issues, learner perspective, and service quality. In empirical studies testing this model, Ozkan and Koseler (2009) discovered that all six of the facets in the HELAM model had an effect on the perceived satisfaction of the learners (Halverson et al., 2014). However, the researchers are careful to point out that all six areas of the model tested, including instructor attitudes, were evaluated through the lens of student perception regarding these areas. In addition, it should be noted that this model is technically an e-learning model although it has been applied to hybrid learning in many contexts.

The blended e-learning system (BELS) put forth by Wu, Tennyson, and Hsia (2010) has also achieved some influence in hybrid learning. Much like the HELAM model, BELS was originally developed as an e-learning model with its roots in social cognitive theory. However, BELS also includes the admonition to utilize at least some face-to-face components in e-learning. In their study on BELS, Wu, et al. (2010) found that the three domains that had the greatest effect on learner satisfaction within a blended learning model were the cognitive beliefs

of the learners, the technological milieu in which the model is situated, and social setting of the class. Within these domains, they further found that achievement expectations, self-advocacy, functionality of the technology, and the level of social interaction had the most important cumulative effect upon learners (Halverson et al., 2014).

A final hybrid model that has helped shape the conversation regarding this learning paradigm is the Practical Inquiry Model delineated by Akyol and Garrison (2011). This inquiry model is based upon four phases of cognitive process in a blended learning environment. The first process is called a "triggering event," and it must begin the process of inquiry by utilizing a well constructed initial learning activity. This phase is followed by "exploration," which involves the search for applicable information and relevant explanatory possibilities for the desired learning. The next phase is called "integration," and it calls for a much more elaborate and organized level of meaning-making. The last phase, "resolution," results in the deduction of a solution to the learning activity such as the revelation of an applicable answer or the distillation of the learning into a manageable framework of understanding. All in all, this is more of a cognitive model than it is a truly hybrid learning model. Nevertheless, this model has exerted a sizeable influence as far as the consideration of what lies beneath the cognitive surface is concerned in the construction of hybrid learning experiences and provided a relevant framework for the building of other models (Wang, et al., 2015).

Hybrid Instruction and Writing

Studies that directly examine writing instruction in a hybrid learning environment are nearly nonexistent. This dearth of research in such a vital area is probably somewhat due to the relative newness of this phenomenon. It may also be due to the reality that it is quite difficult to study such a complex task as writing at anything above the grammatical level. An illustrative

example of this is one of the very few studies done in this area. In this study, Camahalan and Ruley (2014) did directly examine writing as influenced by hybrid elements, and they found that the group taught using hybrid methods performed better on all posttests of grammar and usage. This seems to indicate the superiority of hybrid learning for writing instruction. However, there are two important caveats to these findings. First, the hybrid treatment provided to the control group was implemented by ushering the control group to another room and providing access to an online program. Therefore, it was simply the addition of an online component to regular instruction and not a truly hybrid learning paradigm. Second, the level of writing instruction provided and tested was at the surface level of mechanics and usage and not at the level of measuring the results of sustained writing (Camalahan & Ruley, 2014).

Similarly, there have been studies that examine the use or positive impact of technologies frequently associated with hybrid models, but they are not studies of hybrid learning per se. For example, in a study of voluntary online writing workshops attended by graduate student writers, Logan (2012) found that students responded positively to the blend of online materials and felt that this type of presentation aided their writing considerably. Likewise, Valeri (2015) argues for the multiple benefits of screencasting, a method that involves digitally capturing what occurs on the computer screen and adding recorded audio to describe what is occurring, which she delineates as including increased creativity, enhanced socialization between students and the instructor during the writing process, and heightened emphasis on twenty-first century literacy standards.

Blogging, the use of a personal web log to record and frequently update one's thoughts on a subject, is a technological tool often associated with hybrid learning that seems to have received particular attention. Generally, when blogging is studied, it is found to produce positive

outcomes for learning through writing and the development of increased openness to writing

assignments and varied writing perspectives (Bahce & Taslaci, 2009; Petco, et al., 2014).

Interestingly, when Karsak, Fer, and Orhan (2014) examined blogging's effect on writing

performance among fifth graders, they not only discovered that blogging produced increased

scores on the writing evaluation, which was an essay scored with a rubric, but that individual

blogging was far more effective than collaborative blogging in the areas of ideas and content. In

another study of blogging carried out among sixth graders, Paroussi (2014) deduced that the

blogging embedded in the studied hybrid model increased the intrinsic motivation of the students

to be willing to work hard on writing, which, in turn, augmented their writing abilities.

All this is well and good, but blogging, screencasting, and other technological tools are

not blended learning. They are simply elements that might be included in a given hybrid

learning model. They are also elements that might be used in any traditional classroom with

access to such technologies. As such, studies of these elements do little to shed light upon how

writing might appear in a blended learning model or how it might impact students and their

writing.

While there are some studies that have directly examined writing in a hybrid model, they

tend to do so in courses that teach English to non-native English speakers (L2), and they usually

delve into a tertiary technology associated with writing or focus on one simple aspect of the

writing process. One such study conducted with Thai university students by Ferriman (2013)

concluded that blended writing instruction produced larger writing gains in the experimental

(hybrid) group than in the face-to-face group, but the results were not statistically significant.

Also, the treatment focused on use of an online bulletin board to be used for essay planning only,

and the reported positive outcomes, such as higher number of sources and longer essays, reflect

this narrow focus. Another study that examines writing in a hybrid model conducted by So and Lee (2013) reported both that student perceptions of the hybrid writing instruction were highly positive and that the treatment groups scored higher on their writing assignments than the members of the control groups. Tanduklangi, Alberth, and Amri (2014) similarly discovered that L2 university students in a Writing I class performed better on their writings following hybrid instruction than the group that was taught using a traditional model and that students indicated great satisfaction with the hybrid approach. They also linked student satisfaction with the approach to the better results in writing assignments. Finally, in their examination of Persian L2 students and their cognitive processes while writing, Hoomanfard and Meshkat (2015) found that computer-based writing instruction and opportunities like those commonly found in hybrid instructional models produced writers who planned less and revised more. While this is interesting, it must be remembered that this study, like all of the above studies regarding direct examination of writing, takes place in an L2 setting. Whether or not findings occurring in an L2 setting apply equally, or at all, in a native language setting is not currently known.

Theoretical Framework

Given that this case study focuses on writing, an influential model for understanding the processes and decisions made by writers as they respond to assigned composition tasks was chosen as a primary theoretical lens. Likewise, because this study is situated in a hybrid classroom, a current, comprehensive model proposed for the examination of hybrid learning will be utilized. Discussions of these models follow below.

The Cognitive Process Writing Model

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, studies of writing and the act of writing primarily concerned grammar and usage and involved error counts as evidence of better or worse

writing (Hillocks, 1986). In fact, Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer (1963) found in their analysis of 504 composition research studies that there were only two that focused on the process of writing. When process was examined, the writing process was generally seen as a sequence of ordered events to be moved through by the writer. Although writing theorists may have used slightly different names for the components of these processes, the processes themselves basically boiled down to the three stages of prewriting, writing, and revising, and they placed their primary emphasis on grammar and mechanics (Legette, et al., 2015). This linear process view of writing colored both instruction and research in writing until a shift slowly began in the 1950s. This shift emerged, in part, from the work of Noam Chomsky (1957) and its influence the younger generation of linguists. However, as mentioned above in the study of Braddock et al. (1963) the shift was slow-moving. However, things began to change more rapidly beginning in the early 1970s with Janet Emig's 1971 case study of high school writers (Perl, 2014; Perl et al., 1983; Voss, 1983). Emig's study changed the landscape of composition research by beginning the movement to consider the student composition process as a necessary direction for writing research and by introducing a more scientific methodology to the study of composition (Voss, 1983). According to Hairston (1982), this shift was also precipitated by Thomas Kuhns' assertion that scientific objectivity is not stable and that commonly held beliefs and paradigms of inquiry in scientific fields change over time. Because of this, Hairston (1982) asserted that writing research needed to understand how a writing piece came to be produced and what went on cognitively during the piece's production instead of focusing on the finished product. At the same time, Sondra Perl's (1979) work with unskilled writers led her to hypothesize that the composing process is nonlinear and that it combines both discovery and the construction of meaning. It was within this context that Flower and Hayes furthered the shift in the composition

studies in the early 1980s and initiated a fresh and very productive approach to writing scholarship (Becker, 2006). Specifically, Flower and Hayes created their "Cognitive Process" model of writing in 1981, and the landscape of writing research and pedagogy shifted dramatically (Tillema, et al., 2011).

In order to fully comprehend this cognitive process model, it is best to first understand how Flower and Hayes derived their findings. Basically, they based their ideas on five years of intensive study of how writers accomplish their tasks using protocol analysis. Such protocol analysis, which Hayes had already used productively in studies of other cognitive processes, involved assigning a writing task to each study participant and simply having them compose out loud while being recorded (Flower & Hayes, 1981). It is important to note that participants were not instructed to do any special thinking about what they were doing or to specifically analyze their thoughts about writing. Rather, they were simply instructed to think out loud while they responded to the task.

As a result of their analyses of these protocols, Flower and Hayes (1981) arrived at the revelation that writing composition would be better understood by examining cognitive processes going on in a writer's head and not by examining the surface phenomena that had been the focus of much previous writing research. Based upon their studies, Flower and Hayes (1981) posited that stage-driven, linear writing models were problematic since they detail the evolution of the product and do not delve into the mental processes of the entity responsible for the production. They further maintained that while the units to be studied in a stage-based model were presented as well-defined stages that occur in a progression, a more productive approach would be to study the cognitive processes, which are often embedded within one another and may occur in a non-linear fashion. Therefore, they derived their new "Cognitive Process Theory

of Writing." This theory is quite complex, and it contains many disparate parts, but it is primarily based upon four seminal ideas and encompasses three major components derived from the protocol analyses.

To begin with, the model espouses four key ideas that serve as its foundation. First, the writing process should be seen as an intertwined collection of cognitive processes which are organized as the writer composes. Second, these cognitive processes do not exist in isolation and are frequently embedded in each other. Third, goals are what drive every part of the writing process, and these goals, much like the cognitive processes, exist in a network. Fourth, the goals comprise two levels, major goals, such as the end product, and supporting goals, which are lesser goals that aid in achieving the major goals. These key ideas provide the underpinning for the process model.

The model itself is organized into three primary domains, which are derived from what they saw as the three seminal elements inherent in composing writing. These domains are: the task environment, the writer's long-term memory, and the writing processes (Flower & Hayes, 1981). However, while these three distinct domains may give the initial illusion of simplicity, and possibly linearity, two important facts must be considered. First, each of these domains has multiple facets embedded within. Second, there is frequent two-way interaction between the domains wherein the writer's cognition moves between areas in give-and-take fashion and information migrates back and forth between domains.

TASK ENVIRONMENT

THE RHETORICAL PROBLEM

Topic
Audience
Exigency

TEXT

PRODUCED

SO FAR

THE WRITER'S LONG-TERM MEMORY

Knowledge of Topic,
Audience,
and Writing
Plans

WRITING PROCESSES

GENERATING

PLANNING

ORGANIZING

GOAL SETTING

TRANSLATING

REVIEWING

EVALUATING

REVISING

MONITOR
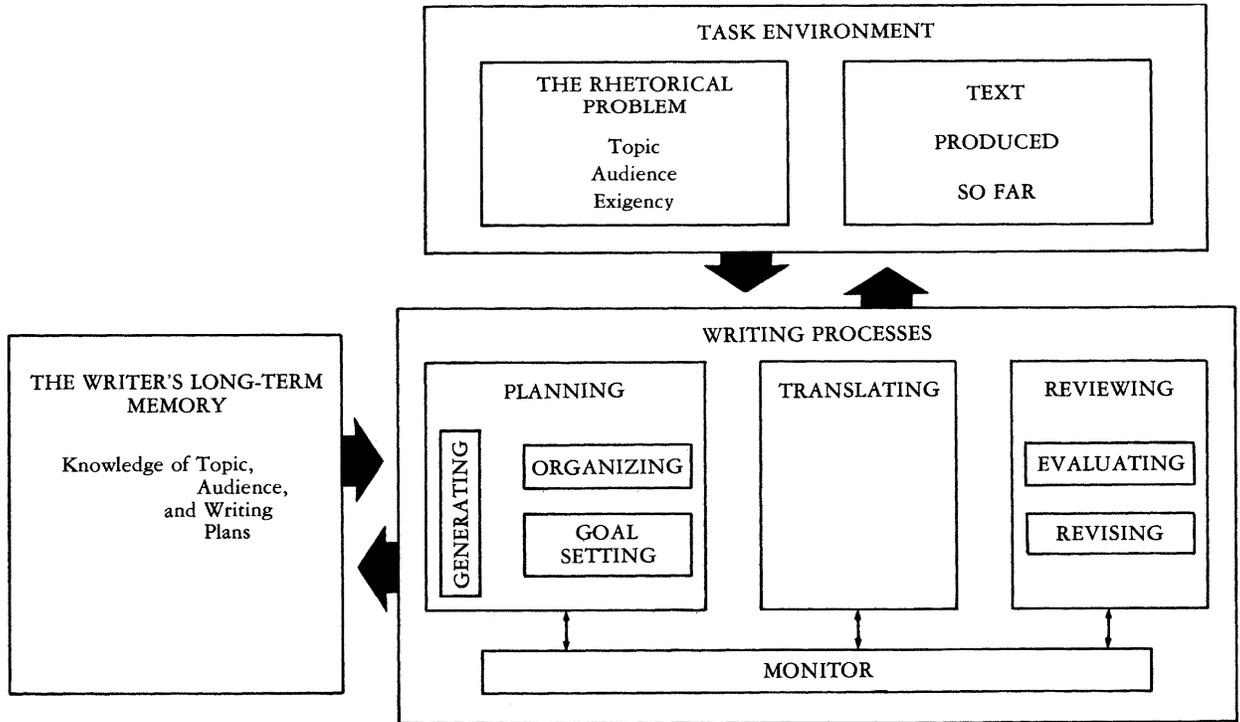
Figure 1. The Cognitive Process Writing Model (Flower & Hayes, 1981). Copyright 1981 by the National Council of Teachers of English. Reprinted with permission.

The first primary domain in the model is referred to as "The Task Environment." Embedded within this domain are both "the rhetorical problem" and "the written text." In a sense, the rhetorical problem may be viewed as the actual writing assignment, perhaps simply what the teacher has set forth. However, individual writers may redefine the assignment in their own thoughts, and so the same given assignment from the teacher may actually translate to a wide variety of rhetorical problems among members of the class. The other element embedded within the task environment is the written text, which signifies the writing produced so far by the writer. As this text grows, it increasingly constrains and taxes the writer since what is to come must make sense with what has already been produced.

The second major domain of this model is "The Long-Term Memory." This domain includes stored information gleaned from past experiences that may be pertinent to the task at

hand, as well as information relevant to writing plans or topical information that is stored in books, websites, or other resources accessible during writing. Items such as topical knowledge, awareness of audience, and internalized templates for various types of writing are all lodged within this long-term memory.

The third major domain of this model is called "Writing Processes," and it includes the areas of "Planning" "Translating," Reviewing," and "Monitor." The first area, "Planning," is further subdivided into "Generating," Organizing," and "Goal Setting." These three subdivisions work together to, "form an internal *representation* of the knowledge that will be used in writing" (Flower & Hayes, 1981, p. 372). In other words, "Planning" is a somewhat abstract form of what the writer intends to do, not the simple mapping out of how to accomplish a task that the word generally calls to mind. The second area, "Translating," involves the distillation of intended ideas into written text. The third area, "Reviewing," is composed of two sub-processes called "Evaluating" and "Revising." While "Revising" can be a volitional process wherein a writer deliberately evaluates and changes the written text, it can also be a spontaneous action brought on by the writer's thoughts and can involve any portion of the text or the unwritten mental plans for the text. The final aspect of the "Writing Processes" domain is known as "The Monitor." The monitor works like a manager that keeps tabs on the writing taking place and the processes being used. In this capacity, it controls which processes are to be used at any given time.

While the monitor's role in writing composition may seem like just a small part of the third domain, in some ways it is the most important part of the model, and its task of coordinating the individual processes is seminal to the production of text. A good example to illustrate this is the study undertaken by Quinlan, Loncke, Leijten, and VanWaes (2012). In this

study, the authors had participants complete two kinds of tasks: error completion within a fully written sentence and completion of an unfinished sentence. Because sentence completion is more cognitively taxing than simple error correction, the researchers wanted to see how the monitor would decide to order tasks under varying weights of cognitive load. What they discovered was that participants overwhelmingly worked on the sentence completion first, and they were even more likely to do so when the cognitive load for the sentence was high. This demonstrates how the monitor coordinates writing tasks in response to conditions occurring during the writing process.

Overall, the "Cognitive Process Theory" of writing is about the mental processes that are in constant flux during the composition of writing. Further, the heart of this model lies in its introduction of the monitor and its role in shuttling the writer back and forth between embedded processes as well as its emphasis on the roles working memory and long-term memory play in influencing the monitor to choose cognitive processes (Becker, 2006). These aspects of the model, its break with traditional, linear models based upon distinct stages of the composition process, and its usefulness in both research and educational pedagogy have made it both highly influential and widely accepted (Legette, et al., 2015).

However, it should be noted that although Flower and Hayes' model is highly regarded, it represents only one way of looking at the composition process. Further, Flower and Hayes' model falls into a faction of writing theories that are characterized by being inner-directed in that they seek to uncover the cognitive processes at work while writing and attempt to find universal patterns among good writers (Bizzell, 1982). In opposition to these inner-directed cognitive theorists are theorists who are considered to be outer-directed or sociocultural. Such sociocultural theorists focus on how the social constructs present in the writing setting and the

interactions of the writers with the people and environment around them impact the cognitive aspects of writing (Macarthur, 2006). As such, although Flower and Hayes' model has been highly influential in the field of composition studies (Becker, 2006; Legette, et al., 2015) its use as a theoretical lens is, by its very nature, somewhat limiting.

The Complex Adaptive Blended Learning System

In 2015, Wang, et al., issued a call for a new model of hybrid learning. This call was based upon their contention that the existing studies of blended learning and the models they produced were lacking in validity and completion. In order to remedy this situation, the authors turned to complex adaptive systems, a strand of theory that has its roots in the hard sciences and is used to achieve insight into the connectivity and complexity of fluctuating systems such as ecosystems and galactic networks (Miller & Page, 2007). At the heart of the success of such systems is their ability to maintain equilibrium between stability and flux, which enables them to be infinitely innovative and creative while maintaining the integrity of the system (Waldrop, 1992).

In light of this, Wang, et al. (2015) proposed a Complex Adaptive Blended Learning System. This system is composed of six subsystems: the learner, the technology, the teacher, the institution, the content, and the learning support. These subsystems, like all complex adaptive systems, "act within themselves and upon one another in dynamic and non-linear fashion" (Wang, et al., 2015, p. 383). In addition, each subsystem has its own embedded subsystems. These embedded subsystems interact with one another to produce a continual bubbling up of change within the subsystem. At the same time, the six major subsystems interact with one another "in a dynamic and non-linear fashion" (p. 383).
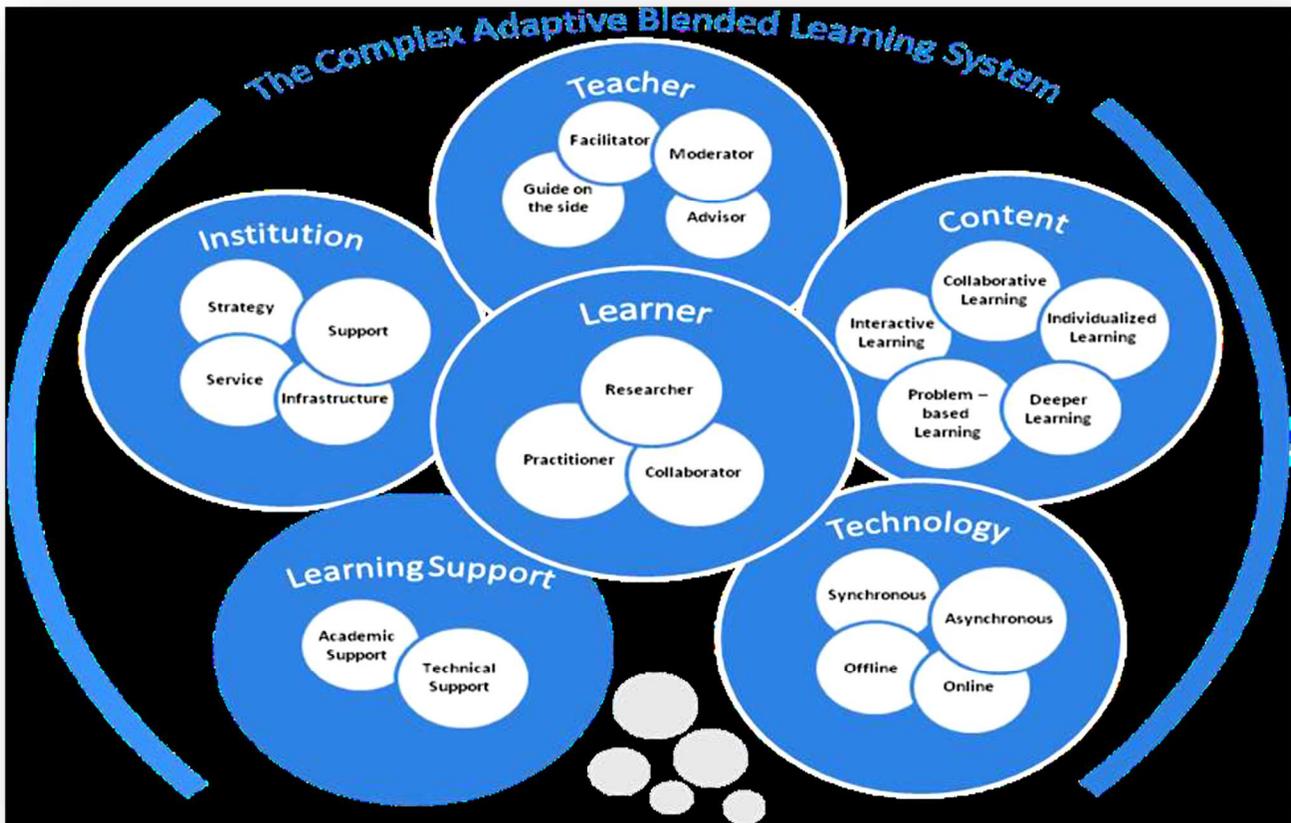
Figure 2. The Complex Adaptive Blended Learning System Model (Wang, Han, & Yang, 2015). Reprinted with permission.

Looking at each subsystem, it is clear that constant evolution within the subsystem and modification based upon the influence of other subsystems are the constants across all subsystems. Thus, the subsystems co-evolve as they constantly alter internally, affect the other subsystems and their growth, and are affected in their own growth by the other subsystems. For example, the subsystem of learner in this model involves an internal evolution from passive learner to active learner. It also involves the learner shuttling back and forth among roles such as researcher, practitioner, and collaborator. At the same time, the subsystem of content is burgeoning and bubbling up with areas such as collaborative learning, deeper learning,

interactive learning, individualized learning, and problem-based learning. In a similar fashion, the subsystem of technology is churning through areas like offline, online, synchronous, and asynchronous. Meanwhile, the subsystem of learning support is providing both academic support to aid learners in developing and choosing the right learning strategies at the right times and technical support to help with selecting the right technological tools for the right tasks and increasing fluency of their use. The subsystem of teacher has the instructor co-evolving much like the learners and moving among roles such as facilitator, moderator, advisor, and learner. Finally, for all of this to truly work properly, the subsystem of institution must co-evolve along with the other subsystems to provide ever-changing strategy, support, service, and infrastructure.

Overall, "the interdependency and dynamic interaction between the subsystems clearly marks the difference between the CABLS framework and the existing blended learning models" (Wang, et al., 2015). This model presents a comprehensive, systems-based look at hybrid learning that promotes the viewing of each subsystem in light of its interactions with all other subsystems. Such a view necessitates the conception of hybrid learning as an organic whole and prohibits any narrow views of isolated subsystems or single pathways of causation.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provides an organized look at what is known about hybrid learning and its educational impact. While no solid, widely accepted definition of hybrid learning exists, it is agreed that it must, at the minimum, involve some face-to-face aspects and some online aspects. One area of hybrid learning that there is clear consensus on is that it has grown considerably over the past decade, and that it will continue to grow in the coming years.

Research on achievement in hybrid learning is spotty at best. There are very few studies that clearly show increased achievement. Most studies show no significant difference between

hybrid and face-to-face or hybrid and online-only models relative to achievement. When studies do show a significant difference in achievement, they are generally marred by selection bias, brevity of duration, or other threats to internal validity. While there has been some promising research regarding hybrid learning's positive effect on writing, these studies have generally been carried out in an L2 setting, which calls into question whether or not they are applicable to L1 settings.

However, there does seem to be clear evidence of the salutary effects of hybrid learning in areas of the affective domain. As a rule, studies of hybrid learning report that both teachers and students indicate that they enjoy the increased flexibility engendered by hybrid learning. When polled, students who have been exposed to hybrid treatments overwhelmingly rate them positively and indicate their preference for this style of learning. Multiple studies have also shown students to report that hybrid learning leads to increased motivation, independence, and responsibility.

Research on the implementation of hybrid learning tends to be somewhat lacking at the institutional level although there is some agreement that institutions need to provide support, parameters, and vision for successful adoption. Research on implementation at the course level is a bit myopic in its focus as it zeroes in on the teachers' planning, preparation, and attitudes as well as professional development. While there are many proposed models of hybrid learning in the literature, most provide ways to view hybrid learning rather than specifics about its daily functioning. Also, most of these models have undergone limited or no empirical testing.

Theoretically, this chapter provides an overview of the Cognitive Process Writing Model and the CABLS model of hybrid learning. While they hail from disparate areas of education, both models are about the complex interaction of systems and subsystems. Both realize that

there is far more going on during learning than what is observable on the surface. Both will be

used as a lens through which the results of this study will be interpreted.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This research study employed qualitative methodology to provide an in-depth look at how writing instruction and student experiences with writing occur in a hybrid learning setting. As a qualitative study, this endeavor was predicated upon what Lichtman (2013) argues is at the heart of qualitative research: examining visual and verbal discourse in order to answer pertinent questions. This study also adhered to the seminal characteristics of qualitative inquiry as described by Creswell (2014). To begin, the study was conducted in the *natural setting* in which the participants normally function. Such work in the field allowed direct interaction with the participants and a more accurate representation of their behavior (Creswell, 2014). Likewise, the researcher functioned as the *key instrument* in data collection and interpretation. In addition, the study employed multiple data sources that were organized and interpreted to reveal themes that were manifested across multiple sources. Finally, the study was designed with several safeguards in place to control for researcher bias. First, the researcher maintained an openness to contradictory findings and was careful to clearly articulate them whenever they appeared, which, according to Yin (2009) is an important test for non-biased research. Further, this case study methodology included member checking to focus on the meanings conveyed by the participants rather than those inherent in the researcher's biases and to provide a holistic portrait of the studied subject to preserve its complexity and integrity (Lichtman, 2013). Finally, this study included data triangulation from multiple sources to further validate that finding were based on the research at hand and not on researcher biases (Lichtman, 2013). Creswell (2014) asserted that following these basic premises aligns a study with mainstream standards for qualitative studies and provides legitimacy for the research endeavor.

Case Study Rationale

According to Yin (2009), when a researcher wants to answer "how" or "why" questions, case study is the appropriate method of research. Yin (2009) also asserts that, "case study is preferred in examining contemporary events, but when the relevant behaviors cannot be manipulated" (p. 10). Since this study examined current, ongoing writing practices in an existing hybrid learning program, and because the primary aim of the researcher was to determine how writing occurs in this program, case study was a natural fit. In a similar manner, Miles (2015) has argued that case study is particularly adept at exploring both utilized practices and actual activities being used in educational settings. Both of these facets of case study are directly relevant to the research topic of the current study. Miles (2015) also asserted that case study is uniquely appropriate when the research topic involves the analysis of educational practices studied in their real-world context. Again, this study aimed at doing just that. Finally, as the central thrust of the current study was to examine and describe the experiences of the people involved in one hybrid learning classroom in one high school, it fits nicely with Stake's (1995) contention that qualitative case study is meant to make an attempt to understand the experiences of the participants rather than establish any correlation or causality, and his belief that case study excels when its goal is to "catch the complexity of a single case" (Stake, 1995, p. xi).

Rationale for the Study

Hybrid learning, also called hybrid instruction or blended instruction, rests snugly on the middle of a continuum that pits no online activities at one extremity against no face-to-face activity at the other end (VanDerLinden, 2014). Simply defined, hybrid learning is a model of instruction that involves both face-to-face instruction in a brick-and-mortar setting and an online instructional component (Smith & Basham, 2014). Unfortunately, hybrid learning's simple

definition is far more complicated in actual application. In fact, there are a great variety of ways by which hybrid learning is implemented as well as a host of theoretical models available to serve as its underpinning (Wang, et al., 2015). For example, in an analysis of the most frequently cited research on hybrid learning over the past decade, Halverson, et al. (2014) discovered that research studies regarding the multiplicity of design, modeling, and implementation options of hybrid learning were by far most often used and cited. Clearly, this demonstrates the vast and varied landscape of the hybrid learning models being used currently in education. Rather than become overwhelmed by all this, perhaps it is best to remember that, at its heart, hybrid learning seeks to combine the most salutary features of traditional learning models with the most efficacious facets of online learning models.

As such, hybrid instruction has been seen as a potentially powerful way to revolutionize education for the better. For example, Suprabha and Subramonian (2015) praise hybrid instruction as a "logical and natural evolution" (p.1) of education and refer to it as "an elegant solution" (p.1) to the problems of modern education. Likewise, many studies have found that hybrid learning has great potential to increase student learning (Glazer, 2011; U.S. Department of Education, 2009), and VanDerLinden (2014) argues that hybrid learning has the ability to not only transform student learning, but to transform organizations that employ it in the bargain. In addition, hybrid learning has been promoted as superior to traditional instruction because it enables flexibility in the delivery of content and encourages learning as a deeper, more extended process due to its ability to transcend the time constraints of traditional instruction (Sana, Fensi, & Kim, 2011).

However, hybrid learning is not without its drawbacks and potential pitfalls. One of the most commonly cited of these potential problems is the myriad of challenges facing instructors

when implementing hybrid learning (Jokinien & Mikkonen, 2013). There are also many institutional impediments to adoption of hybrid instruction, and institutions without clearly defined policies and procedures will engender confusion and may even negatively impact staff and students (Graham, et al., 2013). At the very least, many of hybrid learning's detractors point to the fact that students seem to achieve equally regardless of format (Weber & Lenon, 2007), or they maintain that, even studies that appear to indicate the efficacy of hybrid learning actually result from other factors such as more instructional time or smaller class sizes in the hybrid groups (Jovanovic et al., 2015).

It is within this context of uncertainty that writing, a truly vital aspect of learning, needs to be examined in a secondary hybrid setting. That writing is a learning activity worth doing is accepted in both traditional and hybrid models. However, what that writing looks like in a hybrid setting, and what potential effects a hybrid model may have on the writing practices of those immersed in it have been the subject of only minimal study. Further, when writing in hybrid models is studied, it tends to be studied at the college level. Studies looking at writing in a hybrid learning model at the secondary level are so scant as to be nearly nonexistent and typically study writing in only in some highly specific context, such as science class lab reports or blogging to learn (Camahalan & Ruley, 2014; Petco, et al., 2014). In this context, a study examining the perceptions of secondary education writing instructors and students regarding hybrid model writing practices is ideally situated to shed some light on this area of academic darkness.

Research Design

This study was designed as a qualitative case study under the classification of a *unique or unusual case* (Lichtman, 2013; Yin, 2009) because it was singled out by the school district as a

program using unusual materials or approaches that vary from the typical. While the unique nature of this program may, by its very nature raise questions regarding the generalizability of such a study, it must be remembered that Stake (1995) has vehemently asserted that, "the real business of case study is particularization, not generalization" (p. 8). In the same vein, Miles (2015) argued that those who criticize case study because they see it as lacking in its ability to generalize not only misunderstand the value of the depth of knowledge and information case study can provide to the studied entity, but also forget that the inductive reasoning inherent in methods considered more generalizable is subject to similar limitations as well. Finally, Lichtman (2013) contended that case studies are known for the richness of the information they provide and should not be judged for their perceived ability to generalize.

Stake (1995) also exhorted researchers to study cases wherein the stakeholders are open to being studied and genuinely interested in the findings of the study. In the case of this particular study, the researcher was invited to examine the studied hybrid program by district administration and was provided with easy and open access to materials. Such accessibility and cooperation provides for a more comprehensive look at the case in question (Stake, 1995).

Research Questions

The research questions that frame this study are:

1. In what ways does writing instruction in a hybrid model differ from that of a traditional model?

2. How do teachers perceive the impact of the hybrid model upon student writers?

3. How do students perceive their writing experiences in a hybrid instructional model?

4. What writing outcomes do students perceive as attributable to their participation in a hybrid instructional model?

Setting of the Study

The school district housing the hybrid program is a large suburban district with 18% of students receiving free or reduced meals and less than 5% of the student population identifying as non-white. The district's high school, which houses the hybrid program, has an enrollment which fluctuates between 1100-1200 total students in grades 9-12.

The program itself was established in 2012 for 9th and 10th graders at the high school. Enrollment in the program is achieved through an identification and invitation process. Potential students are identified by the district during the summer between their 8th and 9th grade years. The type of students sought are those who score proficient or advanced on state mandated, standardized tests, but who fail or do not perform well in their academic classes. As such, the program operates under the assumption that traditional schooling may somehow be the factor that negatively influences their school performance as measured by grades, and the hybrid program is offered as an alternative. It is important to note that these students are not considered at-risk although they may fail some classes. Rather, they are considered to be underperforming in their academics based upon their apparent intelligence and test results. Students who are chosen according to these criteria, along with their parents, are invited to attend an information session about the program. Following this, students, with the permission of their parents, are then given the choice to participate in the hybrid program of instruction or stay in the traditional model used by the majority of the school.

This site was chosen for two important reasons. First, the administration of both the high school and the school district housing this hybrid program expressed a desire to have some aspect of their hybrid program studied and specifically invited the researcher to do so. Because such access and invitation are advocated by Stake (1995) as important factors in research site

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choice, the invitation to study this site was accepted. The second reason this site was chosen is that it presented a unique opportunity for study because of the program's construction. Since this hybrid program encompasses only the 9th and 10th grades and then releases the students back into the traditional program for grades 11 and 12, it enabled the researcher to garner rich student data regarding the perceptions of students who had two years of each kind of instruction to compare. Likewise, such a dichotomous set-up allowed the researcher the opportunity to solicit the perspectives of the 11th grade English teachers who were teaching students from both the hybrid and traditional models within the same classes.

Participants

Participants for this study were chosen by evaluating which stakeholders in the school district could provide the most valuable insight into writing in the hybrid program and from which the most insight could be gained. Application of this sampling method, which Merriam (1998) refers to as purposeful sampling, led naturally to the delineation of four types of participants. The first type is simply the English teacher who serves as the instructor for both years of the hybrid program. As such, he is ideally situated to shed light on the facets of writing relevant to this study. The second type of participant is the two 11th grade English instructors. Since the studied hybrid program ends with the 10th grade year, these teachers have both former hybrid students and students who have followed the traditional pathway. Because no distinction is provided by the district as to which track students have followed, the perspective of the 11th grade English teachers on what differences there may or may not between student writers from each track may be illuminating. The third type of participant is the students who have passed through the two years of hybrid instruction and two years (11th and 12th grades) of traditional English education. In this, a conscious decision was made to select students who had just

graduated from high school so that they would have the complete high school experience to draw upon. These former student participants were three males and three females ranging in age from 18 to 19. All of the participants were white and middle class. The final type of participant is the students who are currently in the studied hybrid program and can speak with the most immediacy regarding writing in the hybrid program. These student participants were three females and four males. Again, all participants were white, middle class.

Procedures

Upon the obtainment of IRB approval and site approval from the building principal and district superintendent, informed consent was procured from study participants via signed letters and permission forms. Although it is not feasible to know exactly which direction a qualitative study may eventually take, full effort was made to anticipate and communicate the probable thrust of the research (Lichtman, 2013). Similarly, it is expected that qualitative researchers will maintain confidentiality of information and retain the anonymity of participants (Lichtman, 2013; Yin, 2009), and this was accomplished by utilization of pseudonyms for the district, school, teachers, and students involved in the study.

Once on site, a series of interviews was initiated to begin data collection. The choice of interview was appropriate because, according to Lichtman (2013), interviewing is the most prominent and productive way for qualitative researchers to gather data. This is certainly true for case study. In fact, Yin called interviews, "essential sources of case study information" (2009, p. 106), and Stake (1995) argued that interviews are the best way to achieve understanding of the multiple perspectives of those researched in a case study.

The interviews for this study were conducted as face-to-face, semi-structured interviews as described by Creswell (2007). An interview protocol was used to ensure that interview

questions provided specific information related to answering the research questions (Brereton, Kitchenham, Budgen, & Li, 2008). Care was also taken to make sure that the interview protocol questions adhered to Creswell's (2007) admonition for protocol questions to winnow down the broader issues at the heart of the study's research questions. The interviews with the teachers in the study took place in their respective empty classrooms during days and times that did not coincide with their regular instructional duties (in-service days, before or after school, and during the summer). The interviews with students took place in a designated conference room situated in the school's guidance area. For current students of the school, the interviews took place during non-instructional times such as study halls and activity periods.   For graduates of the school, the interviews took place over the summer. The school conference room was still utilized because it offered a comfortable, quiet place in a geographically central setting. Both interview sites were free from interruption and provided confidentiality for participants as described by Creswell (2007).

Each interview lasted approximately thirty minutes. The interviews were recorded with two digital devices to ensure the reliability of the recordings, and the researcher constructed field notes during and immediately following each interview (Stake, 1995). Interview recordings were also transcribed into typed versions of the interviews. This transcription was done directly by the researcher in order to ensure accuracy (Hammersley, 2010) and to allow immersion in the details and expedite further judgments regarding the interview contents (Bailey, 2008).   Once the interview transcripts and field notes were prepared, copies of each respondent's transcript and field notes were shared with the respondents, and they were asked to comment upon the accuracy of the information and their comfort with the material. Such member checking helps

establish credibility by involving participants in the verification of the data's accuracy (Creswell, 2008; Houghton, et al., 2013).

Transcripts and field notes were then coded following Marilyn Lichtman's (2013) coding model, the "Three Cs of Data Analysis: Codes, Categories, Concepts" (p. 252). As such, the coding process moved "from coding initial data through identification of categories to the recognition of important concepts or themes" (Lichtman, 2013, p. 254). This coding process was accomplished using both hand coding of interview transcripts and NVivo 11 as an organizational tool and coding platform.

A series of eight on-site observations, ranging from partial period to entire class period segments, were also performed by the researcher. Observation is an important type of case study evidence because it provides understanding of the issues within a case in a real-world setting (Stake, 1995). For this case study's observations, the researcher observed as a non-participant in the hybrid classroom. Detailed notes that focused on several key issues relevant to the study were taken during the observations as suggested by Stake (1995). As per Stake's (1995) recommendation, observational notes were informal in nature and were used to record the events of the observation in natural language as well as the researcher's impressions regarding events relevant to the primary questions of the study. Observation notes were then coded following Lichtman's (2013) "Codes, Categories, Concepts" format.

According to Yin (2009), evidence contained in documents is pertinent to nearly all case studies. As such, this case study also examined documents in the form of student writing assignments. These documents included both the teacher-produced prompts and instructions and the various forms of writings students produced in response to these assignments. Particular attention was paid to documents, such as prewriting, drafts, and editing sheets, that shed light

upon the writing process. The researcher also examined documents pertaining to the establishment and oversight of the district's hybrid program. These documents included school board meeting minutes, the school district's comprehensive plan, and the school district's quarterly community report. Since Yin (2009) asserted that the main purpose of documentary evidence is to "corroborate and augment evidence from other sources" (p. 103), the researcher analyzed the documentary evidence following the coding of the interview and observation evidence.

Validity

Creswell (2014) advocates the use of several strategies that promote validity in qualitative research. This study satisfied these criteria by using three of the recommended strategies. First, this study employed data triangulation by examining multiple kinds of evidence (interview, observation, and documentary) to support the findings of the study (Yin, 2009). Such use of disparate sources of evidence to triangulate data provides stability and reliability for qualitative studies (Creswell, 2014) and increases the likelihood of accuracy (Houghton, et al., 2013). Second, this study made use of member checking, which provides increased rigor and credibility for case study research (Houghton, et al., 2013), and, according to Stake (1995) is both necessary and highly likely to lead to an improved study. Finally, this study used thick description (Geertz, 1973) to capture the true essence of the participants' perceptions (Stake, 1995) and to truly understand their experience in terms of the larger context (Lichtman, 2013). According to Creswell (2014) such thick description makes the results of a study more robust and more valid.

Summary

This chapter delineated the methodology employed in this qualitative case study examining writing in a high school hybrid program. As a case study, this research aims to explore the "how" and "why" of writing practices in this particular setting. The setting for this study was a large suburban high school and its hybrid learning program. Within this setting, participants included both teachers and students involved in some way with the program. Participants were chosen through purposeful sampling in order to ensure their ability to speak knowledgeably regarding the studied program.

The data gathering for this study involved three different types of data to provide triangulation and ensure accuracy. The three types of data used were interview, observation, and documentation. Analysis of this data occurred using both hand coding and coding through NVivo 11 as well as member checking. Validity was provided through data triangulation, member checking, and thick description.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the ways in which writing instruction occurs in a hybrid learning model and to determine how participation in such a model impacts student writers. Specifically, this case study examined the perceptions of both students and teachers regarding the unique circumstances of teaching and producing writing in a hybrid setting. In order to achieve the purpose of this study, the following research questions were used:

1. In what ways does writing instruction in a hybrid model differ from that of a traditional model?

2. How do teachers perceive the impact of the hybrid model on student writers?

3. How do students perceive their writing experiences in a hybrid instructional model?

4. What writing outcomes do students perceive as attributable to their participation in a hybrid instructional model?

Data collection aimed at exploring these research questions was accomplished using three main methods: document analysis, observation, and interview. Document analysis included the collection and exploration of documents related to the inception, aims, and implementation of the hybrid program as well as materials related directly to writing instruction and student writing production in the hybrid classroom. Observational data were obtained through direct classroom observation of teacher and student behaviors in the hybrid classroom and the composition of field notes during observation. Interview data were gathered through face-to-face interviews with the hybrid teacher, the 11th grade teachers at the same district that houses the hybrid program, former students who had matriculated through the hybrid program, and students

currently in the hybrid program. Interviews were recorded, and the interviewer composed field notes during each interview.

All qualitative data were coded using the "Codes, Categories, and Concepts" (Lichtman, 2013, p. 252) system to establish emergent themes. All interviews were transcribed. Following transcription, member checking was used to further ensure the veracity of the interview information as well as the participants' comfort with interview content (Creswell, 2008; Houghton, et al., 2013).

Setting and Participants

The school district housing the hybrid program is a large suburban district with 18% of students receiving free or reduced meals and less than 5% of the student population identifying as non-white. The district's high school, which houses the hybrid program, has an enrollment which fluctuates between 1100-1200 total students in grades 9-12. The high school performs well on standardized tests and has earned high ratings on the state rating system.

The studied hybrid program was conceived and mapped out during the 2011-2012 school year by a team of district stakeholders in an effort to better serve every segment of the student population. Initially, the idea of housing a hybrid program was a response to one of the district's goals in its "Comprehensive Plan." That goal was to infuse 21st century skills and technology into the district's curricula. As the district began looking into ways to meet this goal, hybrid learning became part of the conversation. At the same time, the district had sent out several thousand surveys to district stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, and community members) regarding perceptions of all aspects of the district. The results of these surveys indicated that there was a segment of the student population that was not satisfied with the currently offered

programs in the district. Creating a hybrid program became one of the ways the district tried to remedy this need.

According to the school district's official, quarterly community report, the need for programs such as this hybrid program were clear because the presence of technology and customization in the changing educational landscape, "means more infusion of technology into our daily instruction. It also means students need to learn how to communicate effectively and solve problems creatively." However, even though technology was highlighted as a need in the report, a completely online program was not offered as the solution because, according to the same report, "We also know that at the end of the day, the teacher in the classroom is still one of the most powerful educational forces at our disposal. The presence of a caring adult in the educational setting is one of the most important hallmarks of a [district housing the study] education." Based on this philosophy, the district settled upon a hybrid program as a way to meet these needs by offering a hybrid experience in math, English, and Social Studies. Their choice of hybrid makes sense in this context because they constructed a hybrid program with three stations that correspond to the three facets of the above stated philosophy. The individual station is completely technological, the collaborative station is geared toward communication, and the teacher-led station features interaction with a caring adult. In fact, the hybrid teacher stated during interview that one of the main reasons he was approached about being the hybrid instructor was that the district perceived him as caring and relatable for the students. Student interviews indicated this as well. Every student mentioned at some point during interview that they loved Mr. Walsh. In addition, one of the reasons the program was designed to involve "looping" wherein the students would have the same teacher for both 9th and 10th grades was the notion that the closer relationship with the teacher would be beneficial.

Although the exact composition of the program was developed by a committee of administrators and teachers, observations of several hybrid programs at other local high schools were conducted first to provide ideas and direction for the committee. The program was implemented beginning in the 2012-2013 school year to serve 9th and 10th graders at the high school. In its initial year, only 9th graders were enrolled in the hybrid program. The following year, those 9th graders moved on to a 10th grade hybrid class while a new cohort of freshmen took their place in the 9th grade hybrid class. Following their 10th grade year, students enrolled in the hybrid program return to the regular English courses offered by the district. There are no hybrid offerings for 11th or 12th grade English. Each cohort that enters the program has between 12 and 16 members.

Enrollment in the program is achieved through an identification and invitation process. Potential students are identified by the district during the spring of their 8th grade year. The type of students sought are those who score proficient or advanced on state-mandated tests and have scored well on measures of intelligence, but who fail or do not perform well in their academic classes. As such, the program operates under the assumption that traditional schooling may somehow be the factor that negatively influences the students' school performance, and the hybrid program is offered as an alternative. It is important to note that these students are not considered at-risk by the school district although they may fail some classes. Rather, they are considered to be underperforming in their academics based upon their apparent intelligence and skill. It should be noted that the district has made an assumption that it is something about the school itself that has caused the disconnect evidenced by their low course grades for these students. It is further assumed that the different nature of hybrid learning, particularly the frequent use of technology and the longer-term relationship with the hybrid teacher, will be more

in-tune with these students' needs. Additionally, the middle school guidance counselors offer

their input regarding which students may be a good fit for the hybrid program. Students who are

chosen according to these criteria, along with their parents, are invited to attend an information

session about the program. Following this, students, with the permission of their parents, are then

given the choice to participate in the hybrid program of instruction or stay in the traditional

model used by the majority of the school.

The goals for the hybrid program are somewhat nebulous. The overarching goal, and the

one this researcher saw repeatedly in documentary evidence and heard in interview, is to better

serve disconnected students. It should be noted that no available evidence for this study

provided any clarification as to what the district means by the label of "disconnected." Within

the overall goal of serving the disconnected students, there is the goal of raising student

performance. Since these students already perform well on standardized tests, performance on

the state-mandated tests is not a program goal (at least not any more so than for the general

student population). Rather, because the students chosen for the program have struggled

academically in their courses, the goal seems to be for them to simply do better in the hybrid

program. Since grades are the primary way in which the school measures student performance,

higher grades seem to also be the way in which progress toward this program goal is being made.

A tertiary goal seems to be providing these students with a better experience in the affective

domain through teacher relationship, peer relationships, and a more appealing learning model.

The hybrid classroom is located in the high school in a hallway that houses regular

classes. From the hallway, there is nothing visible to distinguish the hybrid classroom from any

other classroom. The hybrid classroom itself is similar in overall appearance to the other

classrooms in the high school. In fact, the hybrid classroom is used as a hybrid classroom for

only two periods of the eight period school day. During the other periods, the room is used for regular English classes as well as a mentoring group and the hybrid teacher's planning period. The room is rectangular with a neutral paint scheme, tile floor, ceiling of acoustic drop panels, and is approximately 22 feet by 36 feet in size. Large windows take up most of the far wall, which is opposite the door to the hallway. The windows provide a view outside of a sloping, grassy lawn, which gives way to a small parking lot and then a softball field. In the distance, is a tree line through which glimpses of a busy road can be seen. The other three walls are peppered with posters containing writing concepts and bulletin boards featuring announcements and district policies. The room has only a few traditional student desks with attached seats placed against the wall. Instead, the room is predominantly furnished with large, round tables and a few rectangular ones. There are four chairs at each of the round tables. The large teacher's desk sits to the right of the door to the hallway. The room's temperature is comfortably climate controlled and generally hovers near 73 degrees. Overall, the classroom is typical for this school.

On a typical day, the hybrid teacher stands outside his classroom door and greets students as they arrive. Much of what he has to say is humorous, and the students seem to respond well to it. A rapport of respect and comfort is evident in each interaction, and Mr. Walsh misses no one on their way into the room. After each of the 12 students has finished interacting with Mr. Walsh at the door, he or she walks into the room and sits at one of the chairs at the round tables. Then, they remove their district-issued laptops from their district-issued laptop cases, open them, and log on to CANVAS, the course management system used by this program. Several of the students typically leave to use the restroom and then return to their seats upon reentry. There is very little milling around or gathering in groups other than the groupings mandated by the tables. However, there is light chatter as about half of the students talk with one

another. Several students are also typically on their phones texting or listening to music with earbuds. Usually, one or two students simply sit and wait without any interaction or engagement with any devices. Once the bell to start class rings, Mr. Walsh typically waits around one minute for what he calls "bathroom stragglers" and then enters his room and shuts the door. When he does this, the students generally quit talking, put away their devices, and listen to the teacher. Mr. Walsh then gives a general description of the day's goals and directs students to check CANVAS for their assignments.

From an instructional standpoint, the hybrid classroom operates using three different stations. One of the stations is called "individual." At this station, students work individually to complete learning activities on their laptops. For example, students might watch a brief video performance of a Shakespeare soliloquy and then answer multiple choice questions on its content. While the learning activities have been created and sequenced ahead of time by the instructor, it is up to each student to work through the provided materials at his or her own pace. Another station is named "collaborative," and it encourages interaction between students. Collaborative work in this model often involves brainstorming ideas or working together to solve higher order tasks. Often, it involves students discussing their ideas while filling out a graphic organizer. Finally, there is a station known as "direct instruction" (although most of the students refer to it as "teacher"). At this station, the teacher works directly with a small group of students to impart content, correct misconceptions, or alleviate confusion regarding either assignments or learning concepts.

With the exception of occasional instructions written on the classroom whiteboard, the hybrid class's content is exclusively online. However, students are expected to complete this work during the hybrid class in the hybrid classroom. They do not work on the online

components outside of the normal school day unless they are completing homework. The vehicle for this content is CANVAS, a learning management system published by Instructure. While CANVAS provides the platform for the hybrid course's content, the content itself is selected by the teacher within the parameters of the district's English curricula (see appendix I). The online content is generally set up with each day following a lesson progression. Once students log in to CANVAS, their home screens feature a list of units and modules within those units. Each module then has smaller lessons under its umbrella. While each lesson is somewhat different, frequent features include short video lessons, links to written resources, quizzes, discussion threads, writing prompts, and assignment descriptions.

The academic level of the hybrid course is college preparatory and is designed to be aligned to the same standards and level of rigor as the traditional college preparatory track available at the school. Students in the hybrid program enter the traditional track of English classes upon exiting the hybrid program, and, as such, the learning goals are the same for both tracks. Thus, in theory, the instructional outcomes and level of challenge are the same in the hybrid courses as they are in the traditional courses. Only the method of instruction and some of the course materials are different. Any difference in course materials lies mainly in how content is delivered. For example, where the students in the traditional track may get taught rhetorical devices via teacher lecture and class discussion of some rhetorical examples, the hybrid students might be taught using an online video and an online discussion thread.

<div style="text-align:center">Analysis</div>

Organization of this study's data for analysis was begun by coding all interview transcripts, observational field notes, and documentary evidence. Then, these three sources of data and their codes were compared. Through this process, common themes emerged, and these

themes were then linked to the relevant research questions. In order to present the analysis of

this data in a coherent manner, each research question is listed below followed by emergent

themes related to each research question. The data presented following each theme reflect a

synthesis of all available (interview, observational, and documentary) and pertinent types of data

gathered during the study. When multiple data sources are relevant to a research question or

emergent theme, these sources are first discussed separately and then synthesized. All data

sources for this study are displayed in figure 3.

Data Source	Type	Description
Mr. Walsh	hybrid English teacher	15 years' experience
Mrs. Miller	11th grade English teacher	20 years' experience
Mr. Stine	11th grade English teacher	12 years' experience
student A	current hybrid student	10th grade
student B	current hybrid student	10th grade
student C	current hybrid student	10th grade
student D	current hybrid student	10th grade
student E	current hybrid student	9th grade
student F	current hybrid student	9th grade
student G	current hybrid student	9th grade
student H	former hybrid student	high school graduate
student I	former hybrid student	high school graduate
student J	former hybrid student	high school graduate
student K	former hybrid student	high school graduate
student L	former hybrid student	high school graduate
student M	former hybrid student	high school graduate
observation #1	10th grade hybrid	full period
observation #2	9th grade hybrid	full period
observation #3	10th grade hybrid	full period
observation #4	10th grade hybrid	first 20 minutes of class
observation #5	10th grade hybrid	full period
observation #6	9th grade hybrid	full period
observation #7	9th grade hybrid	full period
Observation #8	10th grade hybrid	full period
documentary type 1	comprehensive plan	full state-mandated report
documentary type 2	school quarterly reports	stakeholder newsletters
documentary type 3	board minutes	transcripts of meetings
documentary type 4	hybrid writing materials	Prompts & student pieces

Figure 3. Data sources.

Research Question # 1

      This research question, "*In what ways does writing instruction in a hybrid model differ from that of a traditional model?*" engendered the richest data collection as all but one type of data source contributed. All data sources used for research question 1 are displayed in figure 4.

Themes	Data Source					
	hybrid teacher	11th gr. Eng. teachers	former students	current students	observation	documents
RQ1:Theme #1	X		X	X	X	
RQ1:Theme #2	X		X	X	X	
RQ1:Theme #3	X		X	X	X	X
RQ1:Theme #4	X		X	X	X	X
RQ1 Theme #5	X		X	X	X	X
RQ1:Theme #6	X		X	X	X	X

Figure 4. Data sources and themes for Research Question 1.

Theme #1: Hybrid writing instruction is highly segmented. The hybrid learning program explored through this case study employed the use of three distinct learning stations as an integral part of its learning model. This use of stations, and its tendency to break the writing process up into several parts, was mentioned prominently by every interviewed participant who was directly involved in the hybrid program and was readily apparent during classroom observations by the researcher. In fact, splitting writing work up across the three stations was the first thing the hybrid teacher, Mr. Walsh, mentioned when asked how writing instruction was different in hybrid English. He shared: "Instead of assigning a whole essay for each kid to work on on their own, we break it down so that while they're doing the station work they work on different parts of it. Whereas with my regular CP students I just give them the whole assignment and cut them loose, I don't do that with hybrid. With hybrid, it's definitely more segmented. It just seems to work better with the hybrid kids to do it piecemeal and to make each part, each thing they do at a station, a little more focused."

When asked to describe more fully what happens at each station for a typical writing assignment, Mr. Walsh said, "I can give you an example. We read a story that is supposed to

provide suspense to the reader. For the collaborative assignment, they're focusing on how an author creates suspense, words used, language, etc. They're collaboratively filling out a graphic organizer that's getting them ready to write an essay about the story where they have to describe how the author creates suspense. So the collaborative work of filling out the graphic organizer is like their prewriting. For the direct instruction part, I'm giving them ideas and examples of how to use details from the story to support assertions made in an essay. For the individual station in this case, they type their essays into CANVAS."

When asked by the researcher if this example was fairly standard for the hybrid class, Mr. Walsh replied, "With some of the longer essays we do, we give them a chance to do a graphic organizer or an outline collaboratively. It's nice to help them organize. And when we do bigger assignments, we'll break up the process into smaller increments to keep them focused. But, with the average assignment, we don't really go through any process because it's mostly just responses to what they've read so there's much less handholding."

Current and former student participants also mentioned the segmented nature of writing in the hybrid program with great frequency. Common responses given by nearly all student and former student participants with only slight variation in wording included: "When we write in hybrid, it's split up a lot more than in other classes because of the stations," "we never do anything for too long at a time when we write in hybrid because we only do a station for like 15 minutes," and "writing in hybrid was chopped up, way more chopped up than in the other English classes I've had." Perhaps one former student summed it up best when she said, "When I think about how we wrote in hybrid, and how I've had to write in the past two years in regular English classes, I can see how different they were. Like, in regular classes, we usually work kind of on everything at once. I mean, we go through a process, and like, the teacher will have

you turn in your thesis for approval, maybe you'll peer edit at some point, things like that, but you kind of know what the whole thing is. You know where you're going, I guess. It's got different parts, but they're all part of one big thing. But, in hybrid, you're just doing work at these different stations, and, it's like, like, you don't really see how it all fits together. It's so short, so short at one time, you know? It's in pieces. It doesn't feel like you're working on one big thing."

Classroom observation also indicated the segmented nature of writing in this hybrid program. For example, the researcher observed two consecutive lessons during which students worked on writing an essay on a short story geared at character analysis. Following a brief introduction by Mr. Walsh, students began work at one of three stations. The collaborative station featured group brainstorming to fill out an online graphic organizer regarding characters in the story, the direct instruction station featured Mr. Walsh more explicitly delineating what he was expecting and encouraging students to use text support and to use five paragraphs, and the individual station had students typing their essays as word documents and uploading them to CANVAS upon completion. However, depending upon which group a student started in, they received instruction in varying orders. For example, some of the students did not get to hear Mr. Walsh's more detailed instructions until after they had already worked on their essays for 15 minutes at the individual station, and some students tried writing for 15 minutes before they experienced the brainstorming and graphic organizer work at the collaborative station.

All in all, there was pervasive and consistent agreement across interview and observational data that writing in the studied hybrid program is segmented. This segmentation is dual in that it involved both the breaking up of assignments into smaller chunks and the physical splitting of the writing into work at three different stations.

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Theme #2: Hybrid writing instruction uses technology nearly exclusively. While the very nature of a hybrid model necessitates technology use, this particular hybrid model manifests a high degree of technology use for writing instruction. According to Mr. Walsh, "Basically, all their writing is done on the laptops. The writing assignments are on CANVAS, they type their responses in word docs and upload them to CANVAS, I give my feedback using CANVAS editing, I grade their pieces on CANVAS, even the graphic organizers they work on collaboratively are on CANVAS."

Current and former student participant responses agreed with Mr. Walsh's assertions. One former student said, "When you wrote in hybrid it was all computers all the time. Everything was online and on the laptop." Another former student stated, "I've had English teachers, like Mr. _____, who do most of their writing and things on the laptops, but not like in hybrid. With hybrid, it was literally everything we wrote, and it was every part of what we wrote." One current student shared, "When we write, we use the laptops for all of it. That's really different from English classes I've had before." Another current student said, "Writing in hybrid is cool because you don't have to hand-write anything. You just do everything on the laptops and on CANVAS."

Observational evidence also indicated a high degree of technology use while writing. The researcher observed multiple lessons centered on writing and also observed parts of other lessons where journaling or other forms of brief writings were required, and in every single instance, students used their laptops for all writing activities including planning, generation of the written product, submission of the assignment, and receipt of the grade on the assignment. On occasion, a few students did jot things down on paper, but examination of those papers revealed that they were tertiary items such as short notes or questions to oneself or a listing of

potential options for inclusion in group-produced graphic organizers during the collaborative station.

Theme #3: Hybrid writing is less analytical/logical and more expressive/exploratory.
When asked to describe the average hybrid writing assignment, Mr. Walsh replied, "For the average assignment, it's mostly responses to what they've read, whereas with the regular CP kids, a writing assignment on the same story (we read mostly the same things) would involve some kind of analysis or logical explanation. I'll give you an example: with 'Like the Sun' I give the hybrid kids a prompt that's just 'do you ever think there's a time when it's better not to tell the truth?' but with the regular CP kids, I might have a straightforward, but still logical question like, 'What is the main conflict in the story?'" Mr. Walsh's tendency to give writing prompts that are responses or reactions to his hybrid students was also borne out in his assignment of journal prompts. Mr. Walsh shared, "When I give journal entries in hybrid, they're pretty much just personal opinion. You know, 'Do you think this?' or 'how do you feel about that?'" Mr. Walsh's thoughts on the personal nature of these prompts was corroborated by an examination of the online prompts posted for his hybrid classes so far this year, which were all aimed at personal thoughts. He then compared such writings to what he does in the traditional CP English classes, "I don't do journals per se in regular CP. We do sometimes do shorter, journal style prompts, but even then they're more analytical, more academic. They're kind of the opposite in that I stress that I'm looking for a text-based answer and not an opinion or a description of feelings. In a way, I think what it boils down to is that my hybrid kids are better at sharing their feelings, while my CP kids are better at undertaking truly academic tasks."

Mr. Walsh's thoughts on hybrid writing instruction favoring the reactive and emotive was also borne out in interviews with both former and current students. All former student

participants mentioned this same trend, and most compared it to their traditional English classroom experience as well. For example, one former student said, "In hybrid, the only way we were really taught to write at all was about how we felt or what we thought about some story. We'd read these online stories and do these touchy-feely online writing responses. Boy, was it different in 11th and 12th grade English when we did real writing, like analyzed and stuff. We hardly ever did any feelings stuff then." Another former student said, "In hybrid it was all writing about your reaction to things, but after hybrid we never did any of that." Several current students also mentioned the difference between the emotive writing of hybrid and their experiences with Middle School English. One current student summed it up well by sharing, "When I was in Middle School, the teachers made us write a bunch of stuff that was hard, stuff where we had to find text details to build a case or prove a point. In hybrid so far, we really don't do much of that. We mostly write about how we feel."

Documentary and observational evidence also suggested that writing in the hybrid program was very focused on emotive and reactionary prompts. Of the eight observations conducted, only one exhibited a writing activity directed at analysis. On the other hand, the researcher observed four class sessions that contained writing prompts directed at eliciting personal response or opinion. Examination of student journals on CANVAS also revealed that all of the prompts used for journaling were personal in nature. Likewise, perusal of the writing assignments Mr. Walsh has posted on CANVAS so far this year show that nearly all of the writing undertaken in the hybrid class is emotive or reactive.

Theme #4: Hybrid writing is less formal. Closely related to theme #3 was the idea that writing in the hybrid program was generally informal in nature. For the purposes of this study, informal will be understood to mean writing that has a personal, conversational tone, employs

colloquial language, resembles spoken English, and is not considered scholarly. Conversely, formal writing will represent writing that is formal in tone, complies with the standard conventions of written English, and is aimed at forming a scholarly argument.

This theme emerged openly in the discourse of the hybrid teacher. He shared, "usually, with the hybrid group, the pieces aren't as robust as they are in a regular CP class. By robust, I mean the difficulty of the question, how much analysis it takes. The regular CP writing assignments will have more components. Maybe the best way to put it is to say that the hybrid writing assignments aren't as formal. I'll give you an example, for summer reading, I'll have the regular CP kids do a five paragraph analytical essay during the first week of school. They'll have to analyze something, some aspect of *The Alchemist*. For hybrid, they'll still write about *The Alchemist*, but the assignment will be like 'what's the main conflict in the story?' or 'which character do you identify with?' And I'll be happy with a good paragraph, maybe two. See, not only is it shorter, but it doesn't have the structural formality of the regular CP assignment. The hybrid kids aren't going to get to a five paragraph structure on their assignment." Mr. Walsh then elaborated, "Type of writing assignment is where I see the biggest difference in instruction between a hybrid kid and a CP kid. Even though they're both labeled as CP, with the hybrid kids it's really tough to get them to do anything formal or analytical. A normal CP kid is much better at analyzing formally. So, with the CP kids I'll do an essay or a paper that explains or analyzes something, where with hybrid it'll just be something more relaxed, more open. And with the CP kids, we'll do a lot of things that involve research, but with hybrid, we won't do too much of that. Even when do use assignments that have a research component in hybrid, it's a lot less research, less sources, less rigorous sources than in CP. It's also generally not a formal paper, but maybe a project with a writing component. So, yeah, CP writing is much different."

This perception of difference in the formality of writing assignments between traditional college preparatory classes and hybrid English was also reported by current students. As one current student saw it, "In hybrid we do a lot of writing, but it's cool because it's like, not a bunch of research or anything. It's not like, a like, you know, a bunch of analysis. Like, I always hated English because you'd always be writing these things where you had to come up with these boring thesis ideas to analyze, and then you'd have to, like put in text support or maybe even research or something. Hybrid's a lot better because we can be creative. We can just say what we think in like a paragraph." Another current student simply said, "hybrid's better because we get to express ourselves instead of writing boring papers." One student described writing in hybrid as, "an opportunity to write without the pressure of being right (giggles). I didn't mean for that to come out so funny, but it's true. We get credit for saying what we think in a paragraph or so, and we don't have to worry about some certain way of writing. We don't have to have five paragraphs or an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion like for Mrs. _____. She was my 8th grade English teacher."

Former students also noted the less formal nature of writing in hybrid English, and many of them compared it to their subsequent experiences in 11th and 12th grade English. For example, one student said, "It's totally different how you write in hybrid from how you do it in the upper classes. For one thing, there's no sitting around pretending to work on writing in groups like we did in hybrid. We used to sit around in collaborative and just mess around. Then we'd just type something up quick on the computer and send it in. You'd get credit just for putting forth some kind of effort and sharing your feelings. It ain't like that in 11th or 12 grade." Another student proffered a similar response: "Hybrid was just journal entries and basic paragraphs. It was about kiddie stuff like how you felt, and if you filled up enough space, you got decent credit. The last

two years though, we were supposed to use certain structures when we wrote, and the papers had specific things you had to do, and they had to be in a certain order. It wasn't the same thing at all, let me tell ya." One student simply said, "I wouldn't call what we did in hybrid writing exactly, not writing like we've done the past two years. Hybrid is more like you're just putting your thoughts down on paper. Writing in other English classes is specific."

Observational and documentary evidence also indicated that the majority of writing in the hybrid English class was informal. The most frequently observed writing activity was journaling, and all of the observed journaling prompts were informal and directed toward feelings and opinions. Documentary evidence in the form of collected writing prompts used by the hybrid teacher did include two writing assessment activities that were analytical in nature, but neither assignment necessitated a formal response from students.

Theme #5: Hybrid writing instruction engenders shorter writing pieces. The notion that writing pieces produced for hybrid were markedly shorter than those produced in a traditional English class cropped up often throughout this study. This was evident in the statements of the hybrid teacher throughout the study. Mr. Walsh directly addressed this issue early in the study when he described the differences between similar assignments in hybrid and his traditional college preparatory classes this way: "Even when I do the same pieces with the same assignments in CP and hybrid, the CP assignment requires more writing. The way it's set up, what I ask for, you have to write more in CP to get there than you would in hybrid. Even if the prompt were identical, I'd expect more length from the CP kids. I wouldn't hold the hybrid kids to the same standards with length. And for their part, they wouldn't give it to me. They simply will not write at length." He went on to say, "Take for example a basic question about the conflict in a story. With hybrid, I might be happy to get a good paragraph or two from those

kids, whereas, from my CP kids, I would require a full five paragraphs." Mr. Walsh also specifically discussed the length of assignments that he considered longer in duration. He said, "With bigger writing assignments, I definitely try to limit the length with hybrid. The CP kids will continue to work on a longer assignment, but the hybrid kids, they have a hard time following through on long assignments. There just comes a point where, if I don't cut it off, they will. They'll become disengaged and won't finish. I have the CP kids write five page papers. For a hybrid kid to do that—they wouldn't, that's the point. I have to give them something they can handle. So, yeah, hybrid kids write less and I ask them for less lengthwise."

Once again, this theme was also prominent in interviews with former and current students. One former student felt that, "The stuff we did in hybrid wasn't what I'd really call writing. I mean, I guess it was *writing* in the sense of like sentences, but it wasn't *writing* like I mean what my 11th and 12th grade teachers would call writing. It was so short. It was just a few sentences at a time." Another former student said, "Everything we wrote was really, really short. I'm talking like the assignment itself was super short, like maybe what we'll call a 'paragraph.' So, what you were asked to do was already a super short thing, but then, on top of that, everybody knew they could get away with just a little something, so what you did, what you wrote, was really, really short." Another former student agreed that, "The writing in hybrid was all short. Literally all of the assignments were short. They were so short that you couldn't really form your thoughts or be creative. You didn't have to really write. I thought it was pretty great until I got to 11th grade and was expected to write long things. That didn't go so great." One student focused on the model itself as leading to shorter writings: "In hybrid, you didn't write anything that was long at all. I think it was because of the way class was set up. I mean, if you started with the individual, you didn't really know what you were doing, so you couldn't write

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much. Then you'd go through the other two stations, and maybe then you knew what you were doing, but nobody went back and worked on their writing they already did at the individual station. The collaborative station was a joke, so that didn't help anybody. Even if you started with the teacher station where you actually learned something, by the time you went through collaborative or you got around to actually writing the assignment, it just all felt kind of disconnected. You didn't know what to do and you had no motivation, so you just cranked out a quick, short response."

Current students echoed the former students' thoughts on the brevity of hybrid writing. Every current student participant mentioned this theme with similar statements, such as, "I like writing in hybrid because it's short," "I write better in hybrid 'cause what we write is short," "in hybrid, the writing assignments are a lot shorter than they were in my other English classes," "I didn't do very good on writing in middle school. You had to write things that were too long, but we do short stuff in hybrid so I do better," "when I write in hybrid it's way shorter than what I wrote in other English classes," and "the stuff we write in hybrid isn't very long."

Observational and documentary evidence also indicated that writing in the hybrid program was geared toward and elicited shorter pieces. During an observation of an essay assessment on a short story the class had read, the researcher observed that most students were finished writing after the ten-minute mark, and all were finished by the twenty-minute mark. Upon examination of the prompt, which was, "Based upon your reading of the text, what three lessons from the story can you apply to your own life?" the researcher expected to see student work that averaged five paragraphs and one or two typed pages. However, upon examination of the essays submitted by the students, the researcher noted that none of the responses was over two paragraphs, and only one response exceeded one page. The researcher also observed

students writing during several other lessons, but none of the writings were more than a paragraph. Many of the writings were journal responses that averaged five or six sentences.

Theme #6: Hybrid writing is more frequent but less sustained and less difficult.

While the above theme may seem to be several different themes, they were mentioned together so frequently that they became inextricably linked and should be seen as components of one larger theme. Certainly, the hybrid teacher saw them as such. Mr. Walsh discussed this issue at length. He said, "We definitely write more in hybrid even though it's smaller pieces, even if it's journal entries or quick responses from the previous day's discussion. So I would definitely say there's more writing in hybrid—we'll write about things that I wouldn't really take the time to write about with regular CP—but the writing is very short, it's not sustained by any stretch. When hybrid and CP do the same writing assignments, hybrid's are all split up. They're chunked. So, even if the hybrid kids wound up writing the same size assignment as CP, and they won't, but let's just say they did, it would be all split up into small increments to help them out, get them to do it. It's almost just a bunch of short, related writing pieces that we sort of then put together. It's not the same as a long, sustained writing piece. Does that make sense? It's different. It's also less rigorous. I ask less of the hybrid kids intellectually on their writing. The standard is lower, and the writing is easier, even if it's just in how I grade it. So, yeah, we write way more often in hybrid, but it adds up to a lot less writing overall than CP if you were to say total up the number of pages or something."

This theme was one where the former and current hybrid students diverged somewhat. While both groups expressed nearly identical sentiments regarding the brevity of hybrid writing assignments, their thoughts on writing frequency were seemingly different. The former students repeatedly expressed the idea that they didn't do any writing in the hybrid class. However,

generally in the same breath, they would comment on the length of what they wrote in hybrid. This seeming contradiction is easily resolved by the realization that the short writings the former students did while in hybrid did not count as "writing" in their estimation. One example of this attitude from interviews with former students was, "We didn't do any writing in hybrid. All we did was some childish responses to what we read on the computer." Another similar example was, "We didn't write anything in hybrid. We did a bunch of stupid things where we said how we felt or what our opinion on some story was, but it was just a couple sentences. There wasn't anything I'd call actual writing."

On the other hand, the current students all expressed the idea that they write more frequently in hybrid than in traditional English classes, but this thought was usually accompanied by a qualifying statement regarding the brevity of these writings. For example, one current student said, "We write pretty much every day for Mr. Walsh. We write short responses to what we read and how we think a character feels, that kind of thing. In my other English classes, we only wrote like maybe once a week, but when we did, it was always long stuff, like a full essay or something." Another said, "We use our journals a lot in hybrid to write about all the stories we read. We also do little paragraphs all the time. I feel like it's a lot more often than what we did in middle school." One current student shared, "I like that we write almost every day in hybrid, and that it's just a little bit at a time. I used to get sick of writing. I'd get bored. But in hybrid, I don't because you only have to write long enough to get your thoughts out about what you read." Another current student said, "Writing in hybrid is easy 'cause it's short. I mean, we write a lot, but not a lot at one time, you know? Like, it's easy because you don't have to come up with some thesis or some analysis topic like in my old English classes."

Observational and documentary evidence also corroborated the interview data gathered on this theme. The researcher observed frequent writing in the hybrid program. All but one observation included some form of writing assignment for students to complete. These writing assignments were generally quite short, with only one leading to students writing for more than five minutes. This one assignment was the previously mentioned assessment essay that lasted 10-20 minutes. Likewise, in looking at the student-produced responses to the assigned writings, none of the journal entries exceeded eight sentences, none of the in-class prompts exceeded a single paragraph, and only the essay assessment featured student responses of longer than one paragraph. Because the scope of this study did not include access to traditional college preparatory classrooms, comparisons with the amount of writing generated by students in the traditional track were not possible. However, former hybrid students did indicate during interview that the length of their writings in hybrid was significantly shorter than their traditional college preparatory track writings.

Research Question #2

The richest data for this question, "*How do teachers perceive the impact of the hybrid model on student writers?*" came from the 11th grade teachers who have former hybrid students in their English classes the first year they leave the hybrid program. Figure 5 displays the data sources used for research question 2.

Themes	Data Source					
	hybrid teacher	11th gr. Eng. teachers	former students	current students	observations	documents
RQ2: Theme #1		X				
RQ2: Theme #2	X	X				
RQ2: Theme #3		X				
RQ2: Theme #4	X	X				

Figure 5. Data sources and themes for Research Question 2.

Theme #1: 11th grade teachers perceive only negative effects. The 11th grade teachers interviewed for this study had an overwhelmingly and exclusively negative perception of the impact of the hybrid program on student writers. Because many of the perceived negative impacts were so pervasive that they emerged as themes themselves, discussion of this first theme will remain limited to general comments on the program's negative impact. When asked if she could tell whether or not a student came through the hybrid track, and if so, how, one of the 11th grade English teachers, Mrs. Miller (pseudonym), chuckled and replied, "Oh yeah, I can definitely tell. I can always tell because I see them struggling—with everything." She then elaborated, "Writing is their biggest weakness. They're just not coming with the skills, basic skills that the other kids seem to have. And when I see a kid with all these deficiencies, and I have a conversation with them, there's always that ah-ha moment when they tell me they were in hybrid."

The other 11th grade English teacher, Mr. Stine (pseudonym) had much the same reaction to being asked if he could tell which students had been in the hybrid program. "I can tell almost immediately," he said. When asked how he was able tell so quickly, he replied, "There are these red flags that pop up right away. For example, I have the kids write an in-class essay on their summer reading novel during the first week of school, and when I grade those that first weekend,

there are always a few that stand out, and not in a good way. They're shorter. They're not

developed, they slide into opinion instead of analysis. And I know right then those kids probably

came through hybrid."

When asked if there were any strengths regarding writing manifested in the students who

had come through the hybrid track, both 11th grade teachers were again in agreement that there

were none perceived. In fact, Mrs. Miller told me, "I see no benefits whatsoever when I look at

students who have been through the hybrid program." Mr. Stine's thoughts on this issue were

nearly the same. His opinion was, "Personally, I haven't seen anything that I could point to in a

student and say 'this or that skill is remarkable' if that student came through hybrid. I can pick

out deficiencies readily enough, but I don't see any strengths."

Theme #2: The inability or lack of stamina to write longer pieces. By far the most

salient theme to emerge from interviewing teachers for this study was the notion that the hybrid

students could not or would not compose long pieces of writing. In fact, it was the first specific

area mentioned by both of the 11th grade English teachers when asked about the hybrid model's

impact on student writers. Mrs. Miller described student stamina while engaging in work on

longer writing pieces as the detail that first identifies a former hybrid student. She stated, **"**I see

them struggling to continue working, to continue with the writing process. I can see that certain

students don't seem to have the work ethic to stick with a piece of writing over an extended

period of time. It's the first way I can tell that they probably came from hybrid." Mr. Stine

expressed a very similar viewpoint on this issue. Again, he denoted the inability or

unwillingness to finish extended writing assignments as the most prominent feature of former

hybrid students. He, like Mrs. Miller, asserted that the former hybrid students lacked the stamina

to continue working on longer pieces, but he focused more on the actual physical length of what

former hybrid students write. Mr. Stine asserted, "It's not just that they can't keep up an extended effort, like for a weeks long research paper or a critical analysis, it's even more that they can't write enough to make a full argument. Take even a simple in class essay. My average college prep student will write like a five paragraph essay that's about two, two and a half pages. But then there'll be these couple of kids that will turn in like a half of a page. One paragraph! As soon as I see that, I figure those kids came through hybrid."

Mr. Walsh, the English teacher for the hybrid program, also expressed his thoughts on this issue during our interview. He quite clearly articulated his awareness that the students in his hybrid classes were writing shorter pieces and working on writing assignments that extended over a shorter time period than average. At one point he candidly remarked, "Sometimes I worry that I'm doing these kids a disservice with allowing them to turn in shorter essays. I worry that I don't make them do long, research-based projects. I worry that it may set them back when they hit the regular classroom." However, Mr. Walsh seems to see this issue as more a matter of what students bring to the program rather than something that the program engenders. Following his thoughts on allowing his hybrid students to produce shorter pieces over shorter durations, he was quick to point out, "But these kids don't have the stamina for long projects. I've seen them try it. They shut down. They won't turn in anything. At least with the shorter stuff they'll give me something."

Theme #3: Troubles with the writing process. Another perceived impact of matriculation through the hybrid program was student struggles with the writing process. Both 11th grade teachers discussed this issue at length during their interviews, and both squarely placed the responsibility for student difficulties with the writing process on the hybrid program. In the words of Mr. Stine: "The hybrid kids have a huge problem with navigation of the writing

process. I mean, they don't really even have a process." Mrs. Miller had much the same view, but even went so far as to consider process problems as the key issue for hybrid students. She posited, "I think maybe the biggest problem these hybrid kids have is going through the writing process. I think the lack of any kind of structured process is the key. I think that's probably why they have such a problem writing long pieces and fleshing out arguments."

When asked for specifically observed behaviors or trends that led them to conclude that writing process was a problem for the former hybrid students, both 11th grade teachers again provided very similar answers. Mr. Stine replied, "Well, for one thing, they seem to think there is no process. They'll just sort of start right away, on trying to write the assignment, not on any prewriting or anything. Then, I'll notice as a few days go by that they aren't doing anything at all, and when you ask them about it, they'll tell you they're finished. When I try to explain to them that they need to revisit what they wrote to make it better or that they've only written half the length of the assignment and they need to deepen their argument or something, they'll look at me like I'm crazy." Mrs. Miller agreed that, "these hybrid kids seem to have no conception of how to go through the process." She pointed out, "These kids start right away, but they shut down. And just, the specific parts of the process, they have no clue. Editing might be the worst one. First of all, if it's on paper, forget it. But even when they're using the computers for a formal paper, they don't understand what editing means. They don't respond properly to teacher comments or conversations. They basically just peck around until Microsoft Word's grammar marks go away." Mrs. Miller also specifically mentioned drafting as a noticeable process problem. She maintained, "They really have no skill set when it comes to drafting, and exhibit no recognition that it is part of the writing process. They really think they're done when they finish typing the first time. I remember the first year I got some hybrid kids, and being so

stunned when they thought my comments on their drafts were the end of the process. They

thought they were done, and it was just meaningless feedback. One asked me if he could throw

it away! He didn't get that it was a *first draft*, that it was just the beginning of the process!" Mr.

Stine mentioned editing as well saying, "Editing is a completely foreign concept for kids who

came through hybrid."

Mrs. Miller also shared her perception of a different process deficiency she attributes to

the hybrid program. She explained, "Even though I just told you how editing was their biggest

process struggle, there's something I think is probably even bigger, it's just, it's hard to explain,

hard to put your finger on what to call it. It's just, at its heart, it's that these kids don't seem able

to do that going back and forth, that sort of bouncing around in the process, or even on the page

they're working on. Does that make sense?" Once the researcher assured her that it did, in fact,

make sense, she elaborated, "The kids who come straight through the CP track, not hybrid CP,

they're much more able to, I guess, see the forest from the trees, but then also be able to zoom in

and examine individual trees or sections of the forest, then zoom back out and check it with the

whole forest again . . . they see the big picture, but they can also see how each part of the

process fits with it. The hybrid kids seem to see only the one or the other, if that makes sense."

Theme #4: Difficulty developing an argument and supporting it. Once again, both

11th grade English teachers expressed similar sentiments on this theme. Mrs. Miller repeatedly

returned to the theme of her perception that former hybrid students have difficulty developing

arguments in their writing. The first time, she asserted that, "they just seem to be missing the

basic building blocks of forming an argument." Later, she elaborated, "They just don't seem to

be able to develop any kind of a discussion or argument in their writing. Everything they write is

just at a surface level. I think a big part of it is that you have to know what you're going to write

about before you start writing. You have to have a thesis that will allow for depth of argument. These kids start at the surface level. So much of what they try to use as a thesis, or a thesis sentence, is just reactionary or personal, that there's nowhere for them to go with it." The final time Mrs. Miller brought up former hybrid students' struggles with crafting an argument, she talked mainly about support. She mused, "These kids, they definitely can't form a viable argument, but they struggle just as much with supporting whatever argument they do come up with. And that's such a large part of making a good argument too. You can't be convincing if you have no support, or, even worse, support that actively contradicts what you're trying to prove, but I see these things all the time from the hybrid kids." Mr. Stine's opinions on this issue were quite similar. He felt that, "These hybrid kids, they're in the weeds when it comes to supporting themselves. They basically can't do it." He went on to hypothesize, "Maybe the support issue goes back to the fact that they don't seem to be able to come up with a good idea or a good thesis. I really go around with them about their theses. They always seem to operate at the opinion level, and it's like they won't believe me that you can't make a good argument out of that. Then, when it comes time to support themselves, I guess, I mean, what is there to support, you know? It's not like you can do a really good job of supporting a bad idea."

The hybrid teacher, Mr. Walsh, also brought up the issue of making solid arguments and supporting them in writing. He worried that students leaving the hybrid program for 11th grade would have a hard time in these areas. He specifically mentioned, "I know these kids have a hard time in 11th grade with the depth of argument required. They have a hard time with coming up with writing topics that are deep enough. That's hard work. So is supporting yourself in writing, and I know these kids have a hard time with that. Hybrid probably doesn't help them in that area because we require less in the way of working hard to come up with a solid, difficult to

argue idea." He also discussed supporting ideas in argument: "In hybrid, we require less support than for regular CP. Even if I give the same assignment, the hybrid kids need fewer sources and they're going to spend less time actually using those sources to bolster their opinion." However, Mr. Walsh sees this issue as more a matter of the type of student in the program rather than an impact of the program itself. He mused, "With the kind of kid who agrees to enter the hybrid program, when it comes to working hard on an argument in a writing piece, there's just a cap as to what they can do . . . actually, it's more like a cap on what they *will* do, what they're *willing* to do." In his opinion, these students enter hybrid unwilling to put in the effort needed to formulate and defend intricate argument in writing, and they leave the same way.

Research Question #3

Since this research question, "*How do students perceive their writing experiences in a hybrid instructional model?*" pertained to student perception, no teachers contributed directly. Figure 6 displays all data sources used for this research question.

Themes	Data Source					
	hybrid teacher	11th gr. Eng. teachers	former students	current students	observations	documents
RQ3: Theme #1			**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
RQ3: Theme #2			**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
RQ3: Theme #3			**X**	**X**	**X**	

Figure 6. Data sources and themes for Research Question 3.

The data gathered for this research question manifested a major division between former hybrid students and current hybrid students. Overwhelmingly, the former students viewed their hybrid writing experiences as negative, and the current students viewed theirs as positive. In order to preserve the integrity of this dichotomy, information presented under each theme has

been split into that pertaining to the former students followed by that pertaining to the current students.

Theme #1: The content of the hybrid English course is less academic. During interviews with the former hybrid students regarding their hybrid writing experiences, the word "childish" cropped up a surprising number of times. In fact, all of the interviewed former students criticized the nature of their hybrid writing assignments as being simple or childish in some way. They overwhelmingly expressed their discontent with the types of writing they composed in the hybrid program. Not only did they all agree on the nature of the hybrid content, but the majority of the former students exhibited a strong contempt, in many cases a vehement anger, regarding the content of their hybrid writing assignments. For example, one former student responded, "What we did wasn't 'writing' at all. It was sooooo childish! They tried to make it interesting, I guess, but what they did was make it childish. It wasn't writing for highschoolers going to college, that's for sure. It was more like, 'oh, you're seven, do you want a lollipop?'" Another described the writing content in hybrid as, "a bunch of Mickey Mouse bullcrap." He went on to say, "The writing assignments were all touchy-feely and stuff. They were all the same, all like 'how do you feel about this? How does the character feel about this?' That kind of bull. It wasn't anything a teenager should be doing in a 'College Prep' class." Another former student agreed, "Almost everything we wrote was just responses to what we read where we would say how we felt or how we think the characters felt, or what life was like for them or people living in that setting. It wasn't good at all. I guess that kind of thing is OK sometimes, but that can't be all you do." One of the former students said that she "thought the things we wrote in hybrid were pretty cool at the time because they were easy and more interesting," but she continued, "once I got out of hybrid, I found out that all that creative 'how

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do you feel junk' was a waste of time. I couldn't analyze anything. The little kid writing assignments we did in hybrid really hurt me in the long run."

The current students' interview responses completely agreed with that of the former students regarding the content of the writing in the hybrid program, but they differed greatly on their perception of its value and appropriateness. As for content, several current students described assignments that involved reactions to their reading. For example, one student explained, "We usually read something and then have to write some kind of a response to it. It will be something like, 'do you agree with the main character's decision, why or why not,' or 'if you were the main character, what would you do?' you know, we write about what we think." Another student described writing in hybrid as, "An opportunity to say what you think. A lot of times, we'll write about how we think a character in the story felt, or why they did what they did. Sometimes, we'll write about how the story might have changes if something different had happened, or we'll have to come up with an alternate ending to the story." One student explained, "When we write in hybrid, we usually have to do something with how we feel or we have to explain something about what we've read in like a letter to someone else or something. We also write in our journals a lot."

These journals came up during every interview with a current student and were typically described as involving a short paragraph of six to eight sentences. The content of these journal entries covers many of the above topics mentioned by the current students. As one current student described the journaling in hybrid, "We just have to write a little bit about how we feel or what we think. I mean, Mr. Walsh gives us a prompt, like 'do you think so and so did the right thing?' or 'what do you think is going to happen next?' but it all really boils down to your own thoughts."

Overall, the current students had an unfailingly positive attitude toward the content of their writing assignments in hybrid English. They expressed an enjoyment of being allowed to explore their feelings and saw value in writing about their reactions to things. As one current student put it: "Writing in hybrid isn't as boring as it used to be in English class. I don't feel as lost either. I usually know what I want to say, and I don't have any trouble saying it." Another student shared, "I don't like to write, but it's better in hybrid. I have a chance to be creative and a chance to say what I think." One current student opined, "I like that what we write is about telling what I personally think. As long as I answer the question and use some details from the story, I can tell what I think."

Observational and documentary evidence corroborate what both the current and former students shared regarding writing content in the hybrid program. In multiple observations of the hybrid classroom, the researcher noted frequent use of student journals. The student journals are online and housed in the CANVAS program. Mr. Walsh, the hybrid English teacher, allowed the researcher full access to the journal prompts he uses, and they were, indeed, generally about student reactions and feelings. Two representative examples were: "In the story, the father has to decide whether or not it is right to tell the truth. Do you ever think there's a time when it's right to lie instead of tell the truth?" and "How do you feel about the way in which the story ends?" Likewise, during two different class observations of times when Mr. Walsh directed students to complete essay assignments that would be graded as assessments, the essay prompts were directed toward student opinions or feelings. One of the essays was, "Why do you think Mrs. Drover screams at the end of 'The Demon Lover' and the other was "What do you think is behind the door, a lady or a tiger? Explain your answer using details from the text." While these

two prompts do require supporting details to justify the students' responses, they are still informal, opinion questions and not formal, analytical prompts.

Overall, both former and current student interview data demonstrated the perception that hybrid program writing content primarily contains items that are directed at eliciting student responses that are about their feelings or reactions to course literature. Observational and documentary evidence corroborated this perception. However, student perception of content differed dramatically regarding whether or not the content was to be viewed as positive or negative. Former students universally saw the hybrid course's writing content as juvenile and lacking academic merit, whereas current students expressed appreciation for the writing content and indicated no negativity.

Theme #2: Writing is broken up into small segments. Just as with the previous theme, current and former hybrid students agreed on the fact that writing in hybrid English is done in increments, but they disagreed on whether or not this is a positive or negative thing. The smaller segments of writing that students discussed as part of the hybrid content fell into two different types of writing. The first type was simply writings that are brief in nature. The second way in which hybrid writing was viewed as being segmented was in how longer assignments were handled.

When former students discussed writing in hybrid, they all mentioned the brief nature of many of their assignments. According to one former student, "We wrote mostly really short things." Another commented, "We'd only write for like five minutes at a time. Even when Mr. Walsh told us to take 10 or 15 minutes to write something, nobody ever took more than five minutes to do it."

The former hybrid students viewed this brevity as a detriment, which they clearly expressed during their interviews. The most vocal of them complained, "All we ever did was write this really short stuff. Like, I get that we were journaling, but I've had to do journals for other classes, and we still had to write more than a few lines. We had to put some thought into it. And, when we would read a book or something, there were just these different little writing things we'd do as we went, but none of it was connected. It wasn't good." Another former student saw the nature of the shorter hybrid writing assignments as, "a disconnected series of meaningless little paragraphs—not even paragraphs, just little writing things."

On the other hand, the current students perceive the brevity of their writings as a positive. They indicate a preference for these writings and see no detriments in them whatsoever. A common opinion on these writings was expressed by one current student who said, "One of the things I like about writing in hybrid much more than my middle school English classes is that we write a lot shorter stuff. I don't get sick of it when it's short, and I think I write better stuff because of that." Another current student mused, "Most of the writing we do in hybrid is really short, which is good because I do good on those." This sentiment was echoed by another current student who said, "When I see the writing prompts in hybrid, I can see that it's not going to take me that long, so I actually try to do it. It's also usually only one thing, like one part, so I don't get overwhelmed like I do with questions that have like a million parts."

The second area of this theme, longer writings being divided into segments, also divided the student participants. Although both former and current students agreed that longer assignments were approached in a segmented manner, the current students were, once again, highly critical of this practice while the former students perceived it favorably.

For the former students, the language they used to describe the segmenting of their writing assignments was characterized by phrases with negative connotations such as "chopped up," "all broken up," "diced up," and "busted into tiny little pieces." Much of the criticism in this area focused on the nature of the hybrid model itself. As one student described it, "There were these three stations we were supposed to go through to help us, but they just made writing harder. Like, I might get some thoughts going in the collaborative rotation, but then I'd have to move to the teacher led one, and he'd be teaching us some writing concept, and I'd lose whatever thoughts I had. Then when the teacher stuff started to make sense, I'd have to move on to the individual, and I'd be pretty lost as to what to do, but even if I did get something going, the period would be over in a few minutes. It was just so confusing and split up." Another former student described trying to write a longer piece as, "One of the most frustrating things I've ever had to do in school. It was so broken up. I mean, I'm no writer, but it shouldn't take like a week to write a stupid little essay about some stupid story. But we never worked on anything for very long at one time. Yeah, the stations were a problem, they busted things up, but on top of that, we only actually worked on the thing we were writing a little bit at a time. It took forever." One former student complained, "It was no good. We only ever did writing stuff in portions. Like, say you were writing something. Instead of writing for the whole class period, you'd work for maybe 15 minutes then have to keep stopping to do other things. After only 15 minutes you'd have to quit writing and move on to some other dumb station. It was like forced ADHD. How could you write anything coherent like that?" Another former student echoed this description and then pensively added, "I think the chopped way they tried to have us write was so bad because a lot of times the order of the stations didn't make any sense. It just doesn't work. If you didn't start with the teacher part, you didn't know what to do. The collaborative part never

worked 'cause nobody knew what to do and just goofed around. And the individual part was like, you didn't do much because you didn't know what to do, and you had no motivation to do it. It was all just so split up that you couldn't make any sense of it. In hindsight, knowing what I know now, I would have just kept writing at all three stations instead of trying to follow whatever useless thing we were supposed to do."

However, the perception of the current students concerning the segmentation of writing work in the hybrid classroom stands in stark contrast to that of the former students. Overall, the current students demonstrated a very positive view of the way writing is broken up in the hybrid program. For example, one current student enthusiastically said, "One thing about hybrid that I really like is how we do writing. In my middle school English classes, I had a hard time with writing, but in hybrid it's a lot easier for me because Mr. Walsh splits it all up. We never have to work on writing a whole lot at a time, and that keeps me from getting bored or frustrated." Another current student felt that, "Writing in hybrid is better because you don't have to keep at it for long stretches. Instead, you only work on it for about 15 minutes at a stretch, so you don't give up, you don't get so sick of it. I like it a whole lot more than any other writing class I ever had before." Yet another current student expressed similar thoughts and added, "For me, I'm the kind of person who gets really easily overwhelmed, and the way we write in hybrid stops that from happening. When I know I'm only going to have to try and write for a couple minutes, I don't shut down. I know I can do it."

This idea of "not shutting down" or "not giving up" when writing tasks were segmented into a series of very small increments of short duration was pervasive in current student interviews, and it was also corroborated by observational data. The researcher observed several lessons in which the students rotated through the three stations while working toward the goal of

completing a writing task. With very few exceptions, it was observed that the students at the "individual" station appeared to be working on their writing task for the entire duration of their allotted time (approximately 15 minutes on average). It should be noted that the word "appeared" has been used because it is impossible to tell with certainty exactly what a student is doing on a laptop computer except for those moments when the observer is directly behind the student. Nevertheless, the students did appear to be writing for the full 15 minutes. Examination of documentary evidence further supported this conclusion in that every observed student did produce at least some writing. Again, it should be noted that it is impossible to know how much writing one of these students would produce during 15 minutes of total engagement, but the amount produced seemed indicative of at least some engagement.

In addition to these observations, the researcher also observed a lesson in which the hybrid teacher attempted to have students write a more in-depth essay as a culminating assessment for their work on the short story, "The Monkey's Paw." Following Mr. Walsh's directions and advice regarding how to address the prompt, students were told they had the whole period to work on the prompt but were to move on to the next activity on CANVAS if they finished early. Of the 12 students present during this observation, 11 finished in under 20 minutes, with 8 of those 11 finishing within one minute of the 15-minute mark. Only one student worked past the 20-minute mark, and she worked for the entire period. None of the students exceeded two paragraphs in length, and the girl who appeared to be working all period actually produced only a single paragraph. Based on this observation, it seems that, with one exception, the current hybrid students tend to have about 15 minutes of stamina for writing at one sitting regardless of the proposed or allowed duration of the assignment.

Theme #3: Technology use is pervasive. Just as with the previous themes under this research question, the pervasive use of technology in the hybrid course engendered opposing perceptions in the former and current students. Once again, the current students saw use of laptops and the use of CANVAS as an online course management system as positives whereas the former students held negative views of what they saw as an overuse of technology.

Perhaps one former student summed up the former student perception of the hybrid program's technology use best when she said, "No one liked all the computer parts. No one got anything out of them." She went on to say, "When it came to writing on the computer, we just went ahead and wrote whatever dumb thing we were supposed to write as fast as possible to get it submitted online. We did all our writing online, which turned me off. It just, it didn't even seem like you were really writing. It was no good at all." Another student responded by contrasting hybrid computer use with that of his regular classes. He said, "Unfortunately, in hybrid we used the computers for *everything*. In regular classes, we used computers sometimes, even often, but in hybrid we used the computers *all the time*. In hybrid, we wrote everything on the computers no matter how short or how simple. Not only is that bad because it was boring, but it was really bad because, on the computer, I always had autocorrect to help me. Now, when I don't, I make a crap load of spelling mistakes." A very similar opinion was expressed by another student who said, "Doing all our writing on the computer in hybrid was bad. For one thing, on the computer, I always had autocorrect. Because of that, I didn't really have to think a whole lot about what I was writing. I also had grammar check. Same thing there. I could just type what I thought and then go back and take care of whatever the computer marked. Now though, when I have to actually examine my own writing, I can't do it."

One student proffered a very different response to this issue by admitting, "I hated writing on the computer, but I loved that I could pretend I was doing my work and just play games instead. I'd blow through whatever I was supposed to write in a couple minutes and then just make sure the teacher couldn't see my screen. Then I could play games all period. That was cool, but as far as being good for writing—not." Finally, one former student summed up his thoughts on computer use in hybrid this way: "I know part of the hybrid program is computer use, and I knew that we would use them a lot when I signed up for the program, but did we have to use them for every little thing?"

On the other hand, the current hybrid students expressed positive perceptions of technology use in the hybrid program. As a matter of fact, the phrase, "I like that we use the computers all the time," or some very close derivative, was uttered by every current student interviewed. One current student said, "I don't like to write, but I like it a lot better on the laptop than I do on paper. In hybrid, we do everything on the computer. That makes it easier." Another current student said, "Writing on the computer is easier for me. It goes a lot faster. Also, when I type, my hand doesn't get tired like it does with writing with a pen or pencil or something." Along the same lines, a different student shared that he, "knew hybrid used computers all the time. That's why I signed up for it. Now, it's the thing I like best about hybrid. I feel like writing goes a lot faster when I'm using the laptop. I can scroll around and move things around on the screen. You can't do that on paper. You have to erase or cross out. I don't like that. I like having everything on the screen. I like having a bunch of things open at one time so I can look at them all."

Research Question #4

Data for this research question, "*What writing outcomes do students perceive as attributable to their participation in a hybrid instructional model?*" came entirely from student participants. Figure 7 displays these data sources.

Themes	Data Source					
	hybrid teacher	11th gr. Eng. teachers	former students	current students	observations	documents
RQ4: Theme #1			**X**	**X**		
RQ4: Theme #2			**X**			
RQ4: Theme #3			**X**	**X**		

Figure 7. Data sources and themes for Research Question 4.

Theme # 1: Former hybrid students exhibit poor writing performance in 11th grade and beyond. By far the most salient strand of response reported by former hybrid students regarding writing outcomes was a lack of success in 11th grade writing. One of the former students summed it up this way: "When I went to 11th grade, there were these big writing assignments, and all these steps in the process, and I had no idea what to do. I immediately started to get failing grades on my writing, and I was like, wow, this is really, really hard." Another former student described the first few weeks of 11th grade English as, "like an initiation." He then elaborated, "I failed, and I failed hard during the first marking period. I was lost. I remember the teacher asking me to talk to her after my first essay, and she was like 'I want to help you,' but I was so far in the hole, you know? Like, I didn't even know what I needed help with." Another former student opined, "I could tell I was behind from the day I set foot in 11th grade. It surprised me, you know, because I did great in hybrid on my writing. But I

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was not ready for 11th grade—the workload, the extended process of getting writing done, writing things that were long—I wasn't used to that, and it did not go well."

Many participants who blamed their lackluster performance on writing in 11th grade English on their participation in the hybrid program also expanded that blame into 12th grade and beyond. For example, one participant maintained, "Trying to write in 11th grade English blew my mind with how hard it was, but I was like, OK, it's an adjustment. I'll learn. And I did learn—some. And I learned in 12th grade too. But being in hybrid made me fall behind, and to this day I'm catching up." Another participant likewise opined, "The struggles I had in 11th grade never really got better. I mean, I actually failed 11th grade English, so, as a senior, I had to take both 11th and 12th grade English. Now, because I was in hybrid for two years, I don't exactly light it up when I turn in writing, and now I'm trying to do two English classes. If I hadn't dropped down to a lower level of English class, I never would have graduated."

However, students currently in the hybrid program did not share the former students' nearly universal outlook on hybrid participation's negative impact on 11th grade performance. Obviously, the current students' perceptions of this theme came from a very different perspective because they are in 9th and 10th grades and would need to project forward to examine this issue, but, when asked to do so, they had little to say regarding upcoming struggles in 11th grade writing. Many of the current students expressed confidence that they would do well in 11th grade English, with one student's comment of "Why would I have any problems? I'm doing great in English this year, and I did great in 9th grade too," seeming to sum up the average response gleaned from interviewing current students.

There were a few current students who expressed concerns for their success in 11th grade English, but these concerns were less focused on overall success and were more targeted toward

specific skills or assignments. For example, one respondent expected to do well in 11th grade

English but admitted, "I'm a little worried about having to do things on paper. We do all our

stuff in hybrid right on the computer, so I'm not used to writing anything by hand. I might have

trouble with that." Another participant likewise expressed concern that he "might have a hard

time with writing essays with a pen or pencil since I'm so used to typing." In addition, some

respondents referred specifically to longer writing assignments, like research papers, as a

potential area of concern. As one current student confided, "I have a friend who's a year ahead

of me, and who went through hybrid, and she said they have to do a critical analysis paper that's

8-10 pages! She said they've been working on it for weeks now. She told me she's way behind

and doesn't think she can write that much. I know I can't, so I don't know what I'm going to do

when we get to that next year."

       **Theme #2: Students produce shorter writings and may lack the stamina to produce
longer pieces.** Another prominent theme regarding student perception of hybrid model writing

outcomes was the idea that matriculation through the hybrid program led to students who were

unable or unwilling to produce longer writing pieces. This idea itself seemed to split into two

branches. The first branch was that students reported being unable to persevere through both the

process and the extended time needed to produce longer written works, such as research papers

or analytical writing projects. The second branch was the notion that students who had

participated in the hybrid program became less able to produce a substantial amount of writing

on shorter projects and one-sitting pieces, such as in-class essays.

       For the first branch of this theme regarding a lack of success with long-term writings, it

was the former students who had already graduated from high school who had the most to say.

In fact, all of the graduated students mentioned this issue prominently during interviews, and it

was often the first item they mentioned when queried regarding writing outcomes. As a group, they indicated that they struggled significantly when it came to even conceiving what the undertaking of a large writing project might entail. As one former student said, "I wasn't prepared for the critical analysis paper at all. It was just waaaaaay bigger than anything we ever did in hybrid." Another former student likewise shared, "I felt completely overwhelmed. I was like, eight pages!? How the heck do you write something that's eight pages? I don't think I wrote anything in hybrid that was more than a page, two tops. I couldn't wrap my mind around something like eight pages." Yet another former student said, "In hybrid I was used to writing assignments being so short. Like a five paragraph essay was a major assignment that seemed like such a big deal in hybrid. We'd spend a couple days working on something like that. But in 11th grade, a five paragraph essay was something you were expected to be able to pump out in a single class period. It was just too much."

These former students also asserted that sustaining the effort necessary to complete longer writings over an extended period of time was a challenge. According to these participants, it seems that, having only written short pieces through two years of the hybrid program, they became less capable of seeing an extended project through. One former student described her attempt to do the first major paper in 11th grade English this way: "We got the assignment, and there was this big process we had to go through, and all these different parts to do before it was all finished. I think I made a pretty good start. I did the first couple of things, but then I lost focus. I didn't turn in one thing, and then that led to me procrastinating the next thing. Pretty soon, I gave up and just didn't do it." Another student candidly admitted, "I'm lazy, and the assignments in hybrid made me lazier. It basically let me slide for two years 'cause I didn't have to do anything that took more than twenty minutes' worth of effort. When I saw

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how much effort the stuff in 11th grade English was gonna take, I just shut down and didn't do it." Even the former students who seemed able to adapt and take on the challenge of sustaining effort over a long period of time expressed how difficult it was for them. For example, one participant confided, "If it wasn't for Mrs. _____, I wouldn't be sitting here as a graduate today. I started to shut down a few weeks into working on the critical analysis paper because it just seemed like I had been working on it forever, but she, well, she basically kicked my butt. She would not leave me alone. She made me come down during my study halls, and she made me keep working. Once she pushed me through that first big assignment, I was able to do the rest because I really wanted to do well." While being pushed by her teacher led to sustained effort for this student, most participants who commented on being pushed by their 11th grade teacher ended their narrative by admitting that they succumbed to the struggle and still did not complete the assignment.

The second branch of the theme of brevity and lack of stamina that emerged from interviews was the production of markedly short pieces from hybrid students even on brief assignments. In fact, every former hybrid student perceived a lack of perseverance in themselves when writing, even on items as brief as in-class essays, as an outcome of hybrid English. Many of them concurred with one participant's contention that, "In hybrid, I basically got credit just for working. It didn't really matter how much I ended up with when I turned it in." Another participant shared that, "I knew when I submitted an essay in hybrid that I'd lose a few points if it was short, but I also knew that I'd still pass, so I didn't really care. Imagine my surprise when I got that first 11th grade essay back with a big fat failure." Yet another participant shared, "In hybrid, since we always had those collaborative sessions, I never really had to think much for myself about what to write. I'd just wait for the collaborative station, listen to what everyone

said, and then use that in my essay. But when I got to junior year, we didn't have collaborative stations, so I was on my own. How could I write much when I didn't know anything?"

While many of the former hybrid students echoed these sentiments regarding difficulties producing substantial essays in 11th grade as a result of hybrid, a few also discussed this trend while they were still in the hybrid program. One participant noted, "because a lot of the assignments were just opinions or reactions to stories, we never had to really write a whole real lot." Another made the assertion that, "The hybrid writing assignments weren't in-depth questions, so you didn't need to write a lot. I wrote next to nothing, but I still answered the whole question every time. Why would I write a lot? Just for fun? No way. But, you know what's really not fun? Being able to get away with being lazy for two years and winding up programmed to write next to nothing. That's not good." Finally, one former student quipped, "I went into hybrid as a person who gave up easily on trying to write stuff, and I only got worse during hybrid. It allowed me to write things that I knew were too short, but I could still pass, so that's what I did."

Theme #3: Trouble navigating the writing process. Another perceived writing outcome mentioned by most of the former students was struggling with the writing process. Similarly to theme two, the former students' thoughts on this issue fell into two basic categories: trouble going through a coherent process during actual writing and trouble working through an extended writing process on longer projects. For both themes, participants not only discussed their challenges with writing process, but clearly pointed to hybrid as the source of their problems in this area.

When it came to their thoughts on using a writing process during one-sitting writings, many former students indicated that they did not use a process. Many of their thoughts were

slight variations of the assertion that these students just read the prompt or question and then begin writing immediately. For example, one former student said, "What process? The process works like this: I read the question, then I just go." Another participant responded, "If there's a process, it's this: read the question, write till you're tired, and turn the thing in." The same participant also said, "When I'm done writing, I know I should probably read it over, I mean, I usually only take up like half the time they give us, but I don't really feel like it, so I usually don't."

When asked why they write by just going straight through instead of using some kind of process, most former students brought their time in hybrid into the discussion. For example, one participant asserted, "the reason I write like that on in-class stuff, you know by just going for it right away, is because I got used to it in hybrid. I got away with it in hybrid." Another former student was quiet and pensive for quite some time before she haltingly offered, "I think hybrid conditioned me to just write without thinking a whole lot about what I was going to write or how I was doing as I went along. I think this happened because so many of the things we wrote were just our opinion or a reaction. I'm pretty smart, so I didn't have to go through any kind of process to write for two whole years. Now it's hard to remember not to write that way."

The former students were even more emphatic when it came to discussing their struggles with navigating the writing process for longer assignments. One summed up her experiences with writing process this way: "When I went to 11th grade, like there was this big process that we were expected to go through, expected to *know* how to go through, and I had no idea what to do. The other kids, the kids not from hybrid, they knew what to do, but I sure didn't." Another participant put it this way: "When I went to 11th grade, they worked a lot with process, and it was hard because I wasn't used to doing that. It made it really hard to write for the long projects

because I had no experience of using the process because I never used any process in hybrid." In the same vein, one of the former students maintained that, "Using the writing process, you know like prewriting, editing, proofreading and all that, that's something that has been a real problem for me throughout high school. We didn't do any of that in hybrid, and I kind of went through the motions with it in 11th and 12th grades, but I never really got the hang of it." Another former student specifically discussed her difficulties with process by focusing on mandatory process components during longer projects. She said, "Process was a killer for me when I came out of hybrid. There were all these things we had to do like prewriting graphic organizers, and drafts, and peer editing, and going over a draft with the teacher. And you'd get points for all those things, which is great, but I had a hard time working with the same thing I wrote over and over again. In hybrid it was always one and done."

It should be noted that, while the former students overwhelmingly cited struggles with the writing process as an outcome of hybrid English, the current students had little to say regarding their perception of future outcomes in this area, but there were a few who discussed process outcomes up to this point in their hybrid experience. One current student said, "I think hybrid has made me better at getting through a writing assignment because the process is split up into these small chunks." Another felt that, "The stations help me get through what I have to write because I get told what to do for each station. I can usually get finished with my writing in hybrid because of how it's set up for us to do different things at different stations." Finally, one current student said, "Because of hybrid I at least think now before I write. I plan a little bit because of the collaborative station where we brainstorm." While none of the above student statements are directly about the traditional writing process, they are about the process of

writing, and they do each indicate some awareness of process-related outcomes on the part of these current students.

Chapter Summary

This chapter began with a restatement of the study's research questions and an overview of data collection methods. This overview was followed by information regarding the setting and participants for this case study. Presentation of the gathered data from this study was then accomplished by displaying emergent themes under each research question along with pertinent interview, observational, and documentary evidence. In the forthcoming chapter, the study's results will be discussed along with implications and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This qualitative case study examined the perceptions of both students and teachers regarding the ways in which writing instruction occurs in a hybrid learning model. This study also examined student and teacher perceptions of the impact and outcomes of a hybrid learning model on student writers.

The first section of this chapter will present a brief summary of the study up to this point. Following this summary is a discussion of the study's findings based upon the data presented in chapter four. These findings will be segmented by research question and theme. Then, a discussion of implications relevant to the study will be delineated. This is followed by recommendations for future research and a summation of the study's limitations. Finally, a brief summary of the entire study is presented.

Summary of the Study

This study arose from the tension between the rapid increase of hybrid learning and the lack of a corresponding increase in research regarding hybrid learning. In particular, this study sought to examine student and teacher perceptions of how writing occurs in a hybrid learning model as well as perceptions of how hybrid learning may affect writing outcomes. To this end, the following four research questions were employed:

1. In what ways does writing instruction in a hybrid model differ from that of a traditional model?

2. How do teachers perceive the impact of the hybrid model on student writers?

3. How do students perceive their writing experiences in a hybrid instructional model?

4. What writing outcomes do students perceive as attributable to their participation in a hybrid instructional model?

In order to explore these research questions, this qualitative case study used teacher and student interviews, classroom observation, and analysis of documents. The findings derived from the data garnered through these methods are discussed below.

<div align="center">

Findings

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Overall, this study demonstrated that writing instruction in the studied hybrid case was significantly different from writing instruction in a traditional model. All forms of gathered data (interview, observation, and documentary) indicated a stark difference between the hybrid and traditional models, as did all participants (hybrid teacher, 11th grade teachers, former students, and current students).

Research Question #1

The following themes emerged from this research question: hybrid writing instruction is highly segmented, hybrid writing instruction uses technology nearly exclusively, hybrid writing is less analytical/logical and more reactive/emotive, hybrid writing is less formal, hybrid writing engenders shorter writing pieces, and hybrid writing is more frequent, but less sustained and less difficult.

Theme #1: Hybrid writing instruction is highly segmented. All interview respondents who had direct hybrid experience as either a teacher or a student talked about the highly segmented nature of writing in the hybrid classroom. Their responses made it clear that this segmentation was dual, in that the assignments themselves were designed to be undertaken in small increments and that those increments were further split into work at the three stations in the hybrid classroom. In practice, this model led to writing instruction that featured students directly

working on their writings for no more than 20 minutes at one time and often less than15 minutes at one time out of a 42 minute class period.

Student perceptions regarding this segmentation varied widely between the former and current students. Current students mentioned the segmentation simply as the way things were done without attaching any evaluative commentary to it or using any wording with evaluative connotations. However, former students universally described the hybrid model's segmentation of writing instruction negatively by saying it was "too split up to make any sense" and couched their thoughts about the segmentation in words connoting negativity such as "all chopped up" and "busted up into tiny little pieces."

The hybrid teacher's thoughts on the segmentation of writing instruction in the hybrid model were primarily neutral and confined to delineating the practices he employed. He did, however, indicate a negative view of this segmentation by referring to the station process as "handholding" and emphasizing that he does things very differently with his "'regular" college preparatory students as well as clarifying that it is the nature of the hybrid student that necessitated the segmented approach.

Theme #2: Hybrid writing instruction uses technology nearly exclusively. This emergent theme was very straightforward and very prominent among participants. Most participants simply reported the pervasive use of technology for writing in the hybrid program although one current student did refer to the hybrid model's consistent use of technology as "cool." Classroom observations of writing instruction demonstrated that technology was used 100% of the time as did interview data gathered from the hybrid teacher.

Theme #3: Hybrid writing is less analytical/logical and more expressive/exploratory. An analysis of the writing assignments for hybrid English posted on CANVAS throughout the

school year showed that nearly all writing assignments were geared toward personal response. Classroom observation also indicated this trend with only one observed instance of an analytical writing assignment (the assignment was: "choose one theme your group came up with during brainstorming and explain how it impacts the main character"). The hybrid teacher also indicated that he does far more personal writing with his hybrid students than his traditional students. He shared that he does so because he feels that the hybrid students are more successful with sharing their feelings than what he described as "truly academic tasks."

Likewise, both current and former hybrid students indicated that their typical hybrid writing assignments were expressive/exploratory. Current students often drew a comparison between the more analytical writing they did in middle school and the much more reactive/emotive writing they were working on in the hybrid model. Although the current students often classified their middle school writing assignments as "hard," "detailed," and "needing support," none of them disparaged their hybrid writing assignments when comparing them to their middle school experiences. On the other hand, the former students, who compared their hybrid writing experiences to their subsequent experiences in 11th and 12th grades, were highly critical of the hybrid classroom's penchant for reactive/emotive writing. The former students universally felt underserved and unprepared for their post-hybrid writing assignments and indicated apprehension regarding their upcoming experiences with college writing.

Theme #4: Hybrid writing is less formal. Very closely related to the previous theme was the slightly different idea that the writing assignments in the hybrid model were informal when compared to the assignments given in the traditional model. This lack of formality was primarily due to the assigned structural parameters for the hybrid assignments. The hybrid teacher gave many examples of this theme in practice during his interview. Often, the examples

involved differences in format, such as requiring a five paragraph, formally structured essay for the regular college preparatory classes but only asking the hybrid students to do "a paragraph or two."

Student participants also held forth on this theme. Several of the current students compared their hybrid experiences to their middle school experiences by pointing out that the hybrid assignments were structured less formally and did not require formal formatting parameters. One current student's comment of "We don't have to have five paragraphs, or an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion" in hybrid accurately sums up the current student data gathered on this theme. Former students also echoed these sentiments, but they compared their hybrid writing experiences to their subsequent experiences in 11th and 12th grades. These former students described their hybrid experiences as unstructured and informal and characterized their subsequent writing experiences as specific, structured, and ordered.

Theme #5: Hybrid writing instruction engenders shorter writing pieces. The hybrid teacher directly stated that the assignments he uses with his hybrid students require shorter writings than those used with his traditional model students. Further, he shared that, even when he occasionally uses the same prompt with both models, the length requirement is less for the students in the hybrid model. He bases these practices upon his assertion that his hybrid students will not persevere though a longer assignment. He maintains that they become disengaged, give up, and do not finish when given lengthier assignments. In his opinion, giving them shorter assignments that they will complete in their entirety is more efficacious.

Former and current students also upheld this theme during their interviews. Current students not only noted the brevity of their hybrid writing assignments, but also often saw this brevity as a positive. In fact, many of them expressed that they felt more successful writing in

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hybrid specifically because the assignments were shorter and more manageable. Conversely, the former students maligned the short nature of their hybrid writing assignments and cited this brevity as a reason for their writing struggles throughout the remainder of high school. One former student participant even addressed both sides of her hybrid experience by stating that, when she was in the hybrid English class, she thought that writing such short pieces was "pretty cool," but that when she tried to write longer pieces in 11th grade, she "didn't think it was cool anymore."

Theme #6: Writing is more frequent, but less sustained and less difficult. According to the hybrid teacher, because his assignments for the hybrid students are less difficult and less sustained, he makes sure to write on a more regular basis with his hybrid students. In addition, the frequency in which he engages his students in writing activities is further increased because he purposely splits longer assignments into shorter, more manageable increments. These smaller chunks, in turn, necessitate a greater number of class periods in which some form of writing activity takes place. At the same time, the hybrid teacher indicated that his assignments for his hybrid students are also less rigorous. Again, because the prompts are less intellectually demanding, they do not require lengthy writings in order to make a full argument. Thus, the hybrid students write more frequently than their peers, but produce a lesser volume of writing overall. The hybrid teacher summed this up best himself when he told me, "The amount of writing they do seems like a lot to them, but it doesn't add up to that much, really, in total pages." The researcher's observations and documentary analysis supported the hybrid teacher's assertions. Students in the hybrid classroom wrote often, but never for more than 20 minutes, and they rarely produced more than a single paragraph.

Student participants were very aware of this theme, but they differed greatly in their assessments of their hybrid writing assignments. Current students universally mentioned that they wrote more frequently in hybrid and usually accompanied this observation with a comment regarding the brevity of these writing assignments. They also exhibited overwhelmingly positive feelings toward these shorter writing assignments. The former students agreed that their writing assignments in hybrid were short, but most of them also indicated during interviews that they rarely wrote anything at all during their hybrid years. This seeming contradiction lies in the former students' negative feelings toward their hybrid writing experiences and their understanding of what writing is. In their estimation, the term "writing" should not be applied to the brief, easy things they did in the hybrid program.

Research Question #2

Much like the dichotomy present in the perceptions of the former and current students regarding the first research question, there was a major divide between the attitudes of the 11th grade English teachers and the hybrid model English teacher. Overwhelmingly, the 11th grade teachers, who are the first traditional model English teachers to work with the former hybrid students as they leave the two-year program, perceive the hybrid model's impact as negative. On the other hand, the hybrid model English teacher exhibited a mostly favorable perception of the hybrid program's impact on students. While he and the 11th grade English teachers did point out many of the same perceived deficiencies in student writing skills, and the hybrid English teacher did occasionally wonder if some of the hybrid practices were doing his students "a disservice," the hybrid teacher tended to attribute most student writing deficiencies to the nature of the hybrid students themselves. The themes that emerged from this research question were: the 11th grade English teachers perceive only negative effects, the inability or lack of stamina to write longer

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pieces, troubles with the writing process, and difficulty developing an argument and supporting it.

Theme #1: 11th grade English teachers perceive only negative effects. Both of the 11th grade English teachers interviewed for this study demonstrated entirely negative perceptions of the impact of the hybrid model on student writing. They also both agreed that students who had come through the hybrid program were easily identifiable, even though the school district did not, in any way, provide information to the teachers regarding which track students had come through. However, both 11th grade English teachers expressed that, not only were they able to pick out the hybrid students unerringly, but that recognition of those hybrid students happened very quickly. In the words of Mr. Stine, one of the 11th grade English teachers, identification of a former hybrid student would occur, "almost immediately," and be based upon "red flags that pop up right away." Mrs. Miller, another 11th grade English teacher, similarly shared that she, "can definitely tell." Both 11th grade English teachers further agreed that, not only could they find no benefits attributable to the hybrid program, but also that the hybrid program produced only compounded deficiencies in students.

Given that many of the perceived hybrid program impacts discussed by the 11th grade teachers emerged as themes in their own right, they will be further explored below. For theme one, it is enough to say that the 11th grade teachers were emphatic in their derision of the hybrid program's negative impact on students and adamant regarding its lack of any positive effect whatsoever.

Theme #2: The inability or lack of stamina to write longer pieces. Both 11th grade English teachers highlighted their perception that the former hybrid students seemed unable or unwilling to persevere through extended writing assignments. Both teachers indicated that this

lack of stamina held true for both the actual length of a one-period assignment (such as an in-class essay test) and for extended assignments (such as a research paper). However, although the two 11th grade teachers did agree that stamina was the most prominent detrimental attribute of former hybrid students, and they did both lay the blame squarely upon the hybrid program, they did differ slightly in their perception of the way in which this issue manifested itself in their classes. Mrs. Miller focused on work ethic and saw the lack of former hybrid student stamina as an issue resulting from a sort of learned laziness engendered by the hybrid program. While Mr. Stine also mentioned work ethic, he focused more on the notion that the former hybrid students lacked the skills and practice necessary to enable them to compose an argument intricate and well-supported enough to require length. In Mr. Stine's words, "Let's just say for the hybrid kids, lengthy production is not in their wheelhouse."

The hybrid teacher, Mr. Walsh, touched upon the same perceptions during his interview. He was keenly aware that his hybrid assignments were shorter in length and extended over a shorter period of time than the assignments given to students in the traditional track. He also expressed that this is an issue he wrestles with as he tries to do what's best for his hybrid students. He also articulated that he sometimes worries that the brevity of his hybrid writing assignments may impact his students negatively when they move on to 11th grade. However, Mr. Walsh clearly traced the root of this issue to the nature of the students that enter the hybrid program. While he did worry about the impact of his shorter assignments, he also opined that having them write short pieces that they would actually complete was preferable to having them shut down in the middle of longer assignments.

Theme #3: Troubles with the writing process. Another perceived impact of the hybrid program that featured prominently in the thoughts of both 11th grade English teachers was that

former hybrid students struggle with the writing process itself. Both 11th grade teachers maintained that the troubles begin at the outset of a writing assignment when the former hybrid students simply jump right in and begin to write without any planning. They further agreed that, even though these students begin immediately, they do not keep at it for very long before they are finished. This behavior is especially pronounced on assignments such as formal papers. On such assignments, these students "finish" soon after the assignments are given and, according to the 11th grade teachers, express bewilderment when encouraged to edit, elaborate, or in any way work to improve their writing piece.

Mrs. Miller posited that trouble with the writing process might be the key issue that exacerbated all of the other problems she saw in the former hybrid students. She felt that the lack of process hampered these students from being able to extend arguments, which, in turn, would limit length. Both 11th grade teachers specifically mentioned drafting and editing as the most troublesome parts of the writing process for these students. They described these students as, "thinking they're done the first time they finish typing," "simply pecking around until the squiggly lines go away and calling that editing," and "having no concept of multiple drafts whatsoever."

Interestingly, after she had finished discussing editing as the biggest process problem for former hybrid students, Mrs. Miller hesitated and then expressed that she thought there was actually a more important process problem for these students. She said she was not sure exactly how to describe this problem, but that it had to do with the hybrid students barreling through their writing in a linear fashion rather than being able to "go back and forth or bounce around in the process or on the page they're working on." She also described it as "not being able to see both the big picture and how each small part of the process fits into it."

The hybrid teacher, Mr. Walsh, did not mention writing process as an area of impact on his hybrid students. This fact is telling, and seems to support the 11th grade teachers' assertion that former hybrid students seem lost regarding the writing process.

Theme # 4: Difficulty developing an argument and supporting it. The hybrid teacher and the 11th grade teachers all expressed similar sentiments regarding the impact of hybrid English on students' ability to develop and support arguments in writing. One of the specific areas of this theme that came up repeatedly was the idea that hybrid students' ideas and arguments operate at the surface level. Both 11th grade teachers emphasized that the former hybrid students struggled with developing convincing arguments, and both posited that part of the problem was that their initial ideas were weak. In other words, they set themselves up for a weak argument by having a simple or mundane idea. This, in turn, hampered their chances of developing an in-depth argument because a simple idea requires little convincing or evidence.

The hybrid teacher, Mr. Walsh, basically delineated this problem in these terms as well when he was sharing some of his concerns for how his students might fare in 11th and 12th grades. He said, "Hybrid probably doesn't help them in that area because hybrid requires less in the way of working hard to come up with a solid, difficult to argue idea." However, as with several other themes, Mr. Walsh traced the root of these problems back to the type of student enrolled in the hybrid program. While Mr. Walsh was very candid regarding his assigning of easier writing assignments to the hybrid students and requiring less argument and support from them, he was careful to point out that, in his opinion there's "a cap on what they *will* do, what they're *willing* to do." In other words, Mr. Walsh's assignments are based upon what he perceives as student attributes as they enter the program, and these assignments serve to reinforce these attributes throughout the two years of the hybrid program.

Research Question #3

Overwhelmingly, the current hybrid students perceived their hybrid writing experiences as positive, but the former hybrid students perceived their writing experiences as extremely negative. This dichotomy was particularly interesting because both groups of students agreed on the other aspects of their perception. In other words, all students in the study expressed the same perception of the ways in which writing occurred in the hybrid model, but they differed greatly on whether or not those writing experiences were beneficial. Themes that emerged from this research question were: the content of the hybrid English course is less academic, writing is broken up into small segments, and technology use is pervasive.

Theme #1: The content of the hybrid English course is less academic. All student participants agreed on the writing content of the hybrid English course, and their perception was corroborated by observational and documentary evidence. Of the reported content, the perception that the average writing assignment in hybrid English was geared toward personal response rather than academic analysis was the most prominent. This type of assignment took on several frequently used forms. Of these forms, journaling was most common and occurred on an almost daily basis. Another frequently used assignment was the eliciting of a short paragraph aimed at exploration of student feelings or opinion. Occasionally, creative prompts, such as extending the ending of a story or imagining a character's internal monologue were employed. Overall, the content of the writing instruction in the hybrid course was aimed at exploratory or expressive writing.

The current students perceived this content very favorably. Many of them expressed their opinion that writing in hybrid was much more enjoyable than in other English classes specifically because they enjoyed the self-expression inherent in the assignments. It was

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apparent from their commentary during interviews that the current hybrid students took a certain amount of pride in having their opinions so highly valued. They appreciated being able to draw more on their own thoughts and less on the text or other sources in their writings.

Directly opposed to this perception was that of the former students. They perceived the content of hybrid English in an extremely negative manner. Words such as "childish," "Mickey Mouse," little kid" and "babyish" were frequently employed by the former hybrid students to characterize their hybrid writing experience as beneath them and beneath the academic level of high school English. They decried the frequent use of feelings-based responses as non-academic, insulting, and a waste of their time. They also blamed the writing content of the hybrid course for their struggles with writing in general as well as their specific struggles in 11th and 12th grade English classes.

Theme #2: Writing is broken up into small segments. As with the previous theme, current and former students agreed that short assignments and the breaking of the process into small increments characterized hybrid writing, but they disagreed whether this was a positive or a negative. Both groups repeatedly emphasized that writing in hybrid English never lasted over 15 minutes and that it rarely involved more than a single paragraph. When hybrid writing did involve an assignment that required several paragraphs or something more analytical, both groups of students again agreed that the process was highly segmented. A major cause of this segmentation was the nature of the hybrid model in this setting. Writing assignments funneled through the three stations of individual, collaborative, and teacher-led. This design naturally lends itself to short work segments before moving on to the next station.

The current students saw both the brevity of their hybrid writing assignments and the short, station-driven work segments as positive. They viewed the short writings as manageable

and much more appealing than traditional writing assignments. They also felt breaking the process up into work at each station helped to prevent tedium and allowed them more chances to express themselves.

Conversely, the former students viewed the brevity of their hybrid writing experiences as a major detriment to their development as writers. They expressed the notion that the two years they spent doing only short writings in hybrid hurt them throughout the remainder of their high school experience. They further felt apprehension regarding their future performance in college writing, which they felt would involve much lengthier assignments. In fact, the former hybrid students disparaged the brevity of their hybrid writing assignments so much that they often opined that they did not even consider these assignments as writing. The former students also felt that the splitting of writing assignments into small increments led to confusion and poor performance. They felt that this was because such splitting did not allow them any sense of flow and did not allow them to see the bigger picture of what they were attempting to do with their writing. They further expressed that, because they never wrote at any length during their hybrid experience, that they had neither the skills nor the stamina to perform well in 11th and 12th grade writing. One former student summed this attitude up best when he said, "the short writing I did for hybrid short-changed me."

Theme #3: Technology use is pervasive. All student participants indicated that the hybrid English program used technology pervasively. All writing assignments, from start to finish, were carried out entirely using laptops. Even parts of writing assignments such as graphic organizers were completed on computers.

Once again, the current students viewed the constant use of technology positively. They often maintained that writing was easier for them on the computer and that they liked being able

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to scroll around and move pieces of their assignments around on the screen. Most of the current hybrid students saw the heavy use of technology as one the things they liked best about the hybrid program. As one current student said, "Using the computers for everything makes it easy for me because I don't lose all my papers."

On the other hand, the former students resented the fact that the hybrid program used technology for everything. While they understood that heavy technology use was a major part of the program, they felt that it was used in excess, particularly with writing assignments. They felt that some of their writings should have been handwritten. They further felt the constant technology use for writing in hybrid hurt them when they had to write in 11th and 12th grades. They expressed that their reliance on grammar and spell check on the computer made them inept at using correct spelling and grammar on pencil and paper assignments. One former student's comment, "computers are great, but I don't want to use them for everything all the time in school" encapsulates the way the former students felt about their technology use in hybrid.

Research Question #4

The former students' responses dominated this portion of the study. They had much to say regarding the perceived impacts of their tenure in the hybrid program. The current students seemed to struggle to guess what impact their participation in the program had or may have on their writing. The themes that emerged from this research question were: former hybrid students exhibit poor writing performance in 11th grade and beyond, students produce shorter writings and may lack the stamina to produce longer pieces, and trouble navigating the writing process.

Theme #1: Former hybrid students exhibit poor writing performance in 11th grade and beyond. The former hybrid students' perception that their participation in the hybrid program hurt them greatly in the area of writing was pervasive and emphatic. All former students

interviewed shared that they struggled mightily with writing immediately upon entrance to 11th grade. One former student's assertion that 11th grade writing was "like an initiation" was echoed by the similar comments of many participants. Many of the former students shared that they failed the first quarter of 11th grade English, and several shared that they failed the course for the year. Those who did fail all or part of the course laid the blame for their performance squarely upon their hybrid experience.

When it came to clarifying exactly what about their hybrid experience caused their troubles with 11th grade writing, the most common response from the former students was simply that hybrid writing was too easy. Many of the former students mentioned the disconnect they felt when they went from getting straight As on their hybrid writing assignments to getting failing grades in 11th grade writing. They also frequently mentioned the much greater workload in 11th grade when compared to hybrid. Along the same lines, many former students discussed their difficulties with trying to write longer assignments over extended periods of time and the closely related struggles they had with navigating the writing process. In fact, these two issues were so prevalent that they emerged as themes themselves, and they will be discussed later in the chapter.

Many of the former students also expressed that, while their struggles with writing were most intense in 11th grade, they continued to have writing problems throughout 12th grade, and they attributed these problems to hybrid English. Often, they espoused the belief that they had been slowly improving their writing throughout 11th and 12th grades, but they felt they were still behind their peers who had not been in the hybrid program. However, a few former students did assert that they believed hybrid English had put them so far behind that they were never going to catch up.

Overall, the current hybrid students had little to say regarding this theme because they have not yet experienced 11th grade. When asked if they had any concerns about eventually entering traditional English classes in 11th grade, the average current student response boiled down to the perception that they were doing well in English now, so they would continue to do well in the future. There were a few current students who mentioned that older friends of theirs who had taken the hybrid program were struggling in 11th grade English, and this made these students wonder if they would also have problems. However, the current students, for the most part, were highly confident regarding their future success in 11th grade writing.

Theme #2: Students produce shorter writings and may lack the stamina to produce longer pieces. The former students had much to say regarding the hybrid program's impact on their struggles with sustained writings in 11th and 12th grades. Former student responses relevant to this theme fell into two closely related categories: 1. the inability to produce substantial amounts of writing on short assignments and 2. The inability to persevere through longer writing pieces.

Every former student interviewed for this study discussed their struggles with producing substantive writing responses after being in the hybrid program. Every former student also blamed this lack of productivity on hybrid English, and they couched their responses in highly negative language. Respondents made many assertions regarding what hybrid English let them "get away with" and how it allowed them to "be lazy." In their perception, because the assignments in hybrid English only required small amounts of writing at one time, these former students became trained to write that way. Further, these students felt that even on these short assignments they were able to do less than the stated requirement and still score well. This exacerbated the problem and further trained them to produce short writing pieces. According to

all former student respondents, when the expectation in 11th grade was for longer, more fully developed responses, and they were then held accountable, they floundered.

The former hybrid students' perception that the hybrid program led to a lack of perseverance on longer writing assignments was also discussed by every respondent. They described being completely overwhelmed simply by the concept of trying to write things like formal papers that were multiple pages in length. Many of them described being able to overcome their initial shock at the expected length of their 11th grade assignments only to flounder somewhere in the middle of the process. As one former student put it, "I'd just get lost in the middle. I'd lose sight of the point or I'd have said all I needed to say in just a few paragraphs." Again, they blamed their years in hybrid English for not only failing to teach them the skills and process necessary to carry out longer projects, but for allowing their laziness to flourish. Overall, these former students claimed an overwhelming lack of success with extended writings following their hybrid years, and they were adamant and angry in placing the blame for their failures on the hybrid program.

Many current hybrid students mentioned the fact that they produced short writing for hybrid, but none of them speculated on how that might impact them or their writing in the future. Likewise, none of them brought up any potential future struggles in this area.

Theme #3: Trouble navigating the writing process. As with the previous theme, student perceptions of their struggles with the writing process upon exiting the hybrid program were twofold. They reported both trouble going through any kind of writing process when trying to compose any writing piece as well as trouble navigating the writing process over time on longer projects. Again, as with the previous theme, former students blamed the hybrid English program for these process problems. As one former student saw it, "Hybrid really messed me up

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with the writing process. Those stations and all those short writing things we did, they messed me up for 11th grade."

Often, the former students responded to questions about their navigation of the writing process with the assertion that they had no process. Most of them indicated that they simply began writing as soon as they were finished reading the assignment and then simply stopped when they felt finished. They shared that they spent little to no time planning and no time editing. When explaining why they exhibited this perceived lack of process in their writing, most of them pointed to their two years in hybrid as the reason. Specifically, many former students cited the personal nature of the prompts, the ease of the assignments, and the fact that they were not held accountable as reasons why they were deficient in the writing process.

The former students were even more emphatic in their perception that hybrid English had negatively impacted their ability to negotiate the writing process on extended assignments. They described a sense of bewilderment upon reaching 11th grade English and being expected to know what steps they were to go through during extended writing assignments. They expounded upon how lost they felt, and how they felt that everyone who had taken the traditional English track seemed to know what they were expected to do while the former hybrid students were confused. Again, the former hybrid students blamed their 11th grade bewilderment on their time in the hybrid program. They maintained that they were never expected to use any process and never did use any process while writing in hybrid English. They described their hybrid assignments as "one and done," and felt that these kinds of assignments did them a great disservice as writers.

While the current students had little to say when asked about the impact of hybrid English on the writing process, there were a few who did, and these current students had only

positive perceptions. These positive perceptions included an appreciation for how the collaborative station made them more conscious of planning and how the breaking of assignments into small chunks at different stations made them manageable.

Discussion

Overall, the most salient trend to emerge from this study was that those participants currently involved in the hybrid program had highly positive perceptions of the program while those not currently in the program had overwhelmingly negative perceptions. This held true for both teacher and student participants.

For the teacher participants, there was a clear divide between the 11th grade teachers and the hybrid teacher. The 11th grade teachers, without exception, saw the hybrid model as a detriment to students and a problem for those teachers receiving former hybrid students into their classrooms. They laid a variety of ills at the feet of the hybrid program and expressed bewilderment regarding its continued existence. Conversely, the hybrid teacher exhibited very positive perceptions regarding the hybrid model based upon his experiences with it. While he occasionally expressed some misgivings about how certain aspects of the model might impact his students and their writing performance in the future, he always followed such speculations with statements about the problem residing in the qualities of his hybrid students and not in the model itself. The 11th grade teachers also exhibited this attitude regarding the hybrid students' lack of merit as students. However, the 11th grade teachers' consistently targeted the hybrid model as the source of student deficiencies and expressed no ambivalence whatsoever regarding their perception that these students had acquired no salutary skills as a result of their time in hybrid. They did not, for example, mention that the hybrid students were better, or even good, at

expressive or exploratory writing, which are the areas these students practiced most during their hybrid years, and were areas of strength as reported by Mr. Walsh.

For student participants, the current students were unfailingly positive in their perception. This makes sense in light of the current literature regarding hybrid learning. In studies that examined student perception and satisfaction with hybrid learning, the overwhelming majority found that hybrid students report very positive attitudes toward their hybrid experience (Chandra & Fisher, 2009; Ono, 2015; Yapici & Akbayin, 2012). Further, many students in blended environments report greater overall satisfaction with learning materials and learning environment (Hussein, 2015; Wichadee, 2013). Often, hybrid students in these studies indicate not only their satisfaction with the hybrid format, but also their preference for this format over their previous experiences in traditional classes (Gyamfi & Gyasse, 2015). This was certainly the case for the current hybrid students in this study who often compared their hybrid experience to their middle school experience, and they always named hybrid as the better of the two.

The former students did just the opposite. Even more so, the former students often exhibited a vitriolic anger when discussing their hybrid experiences. They blamed hybrid for their failings as 11th and 12th grade students and anticipated future struggles with writing because of their time in hybrid. How they had felt about hybrid during the two years they were in the program was difficult to ascertain because the students' perceptions were obviously colored by their current feelings. Although most of the former students expressed that they had been dissatisfied with the hybrid program during their time in it, this perception must be viewed through the lens of their current dissatisfaction with the program's perceived results. No research available at the time of this study followed students after their hybrid experience was

over or asked former hybrid students to evaluate their hybrid experience years later, so the current body of knowledge cannot contextualize this finding.

This wide array of perceptions from participants makes sense when viewed from a model-based perspective. According to the Complex Adaptive Blended Learning Systems (Wang, et al., 2015) model, the studied hybrid program was, for the most part, solidly constructed. To begin with, the teacher fulfilled his prescribed roles as facilitator and advisor and the content was both collaborative and interactive. The hybrid model also made heavy use of technology in both a synchronous and asynchronous manner. The institution was supportive and provided the proper infrastructure and support. There was also ample support for learners in both the academic and technological realms.

However, there seemed to be a disconnect between the areas of learner and content that led to many of the perception variations. The CABLS model calls for content that is considered "deeper learning" and learners who are "researchers" and "practitioners" (Wang, et al., 2015). The studied hybrid program, as represented through the gathered data, did not do these things. Instead, the program simply used technology and collaboration as a means to present the traditional curriculum in a different format. Further, because of the segmented set-up of the program into learning stations and the perceived qualities of the students, the traditional curriculum was presented in a less stringent form. In other words, writing assignments were basically the same as in the traditional curriculum in that they involved responding to a teacher-derived prompt and ultimately submitting the writing piece to the teacher for grading. However, writing assignments were different in that they were much shorter and much more geared toward personal reaction. For example, when the 11th grade teachers discussed writing assignments in

their classes, they mentioned research papers, argumentative essays, critical analysis papers, and literary analysis essays.

So, while the students in the traditional track were primarily writing lengthy, research-based pieces for their 9th and 10th grade English classes, the hybrid students were writing short, personal pieces. It is no wonder then that, upon entering 11th grade, the former hybrid students felt overwhelmed and confused. Not only were these students thrust right back into the traditional methods and academic writing assignments of the traditional classroom, but they were competing with students who had been practicing getting better at these things for the past two years while the hybrid students had been practicing short, personal pieces in response to readings. These former hybrid students then spent the next two years trying to adjust to the traditional model and trying to catch up to the students that did not need to adjust because they had never experienced anything else. Unsurprisingly, this led to the perception that the hybrid program had hurt these students as academic writers. This perception was shared by the 11th grade teachers who saw these students struggling with what the teachers perceived as routine assignments.

In that sense, the perception shared by everyone outside the hybrid program that it was harmful may be primarily based upon expectation. It may be that the studied model's hybrid writing instruction produces better overall writers, but that the kinds of writing these hybrid students produce is not valued throughout the remainder of their high school experience, which is traditional. However, while this may provide some explanation regarding these negative perceptions, it is also quite possible that the often reported "easiness" and brevity of this hybrid program's writing assignments did lead to poorer academic writers. At the very least, the lower overall volume of pages produced provides less practice, and the lack of research and analytical

thinking in the assignments could certainly produce less capable writers. The fact that current students seem to experience shorter, easier assignments positively and report their perceptions accordingly, makes sense in this context. In this case, it would not be until matriculation to 11th grade and its accompanying struggles that negative perceptions would begin to burgeon.

At this point, it is also essential to understand that at least some of the perceived differences between writing in the studied hybrid model and writing in the traditional track at this school are due to pedagogical differences. The structure of the hybrid writing assignments adheres to an expressivist writing pedagogy, which is student-focused, aimed at self-discovery, and assists students in developing a personal voice (Elbow, 1998). While this approach to writing certainly has its adherents in academia, it clearly does not match with the pedagogy espoused by the 11th grade teachers based upon their interview data. Further, when the former student interview data regarding their experiences in 11th and 12th grades and the current student data regarding their experiences before the hybrid program are considered, it is clear that the hybrid model's pedagogy does not match with the overall writing pedagogy of the school district. The writing valued by the district is formal, informative, and argumentative. It is not expressive. This disconnect added to the struggles of hybrid students upon leaving the hybrid program.

A second major trend to emerge from this study was the former hybrid students' struggles with the writing process. All of the former hybrid students discussed their troubles with navigating the writing process, and both 11th grade teachers gave problems with process prominence in their explanations of the hybrid program's negative impact. What seems to have occurred is that the hybrid program's extremely chopped up style of writing process served to train students to write following a process that was neither conducive to the academic writing

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they experienced in 11th and 12th grades nor seen as a viable writing process by the 11th and 12th grade teachers.

This issue can best be seen by considering how it violates the cognitive process model of Flower and Hayes (1981). One of the hallmark assumptions of the Flower and Hayes (1981) model is that the writing process involves an intertwining of cognitive processes that are embedded within one another and that influence each other as writing occurs. However, the highly segmented nature of writing in this hybrid program prevents that. Because students do their work in short segments at specific stations with specifically assigned tasks, their cognitive processes can neither intertwine nor influence one another. In the Flower and Hayes model, when a writing obstacle confronts successful writers, they frequently move backward to earlier parts of the process, figure out and fix their problem, and then work their way back to where the problem occurred (Legette et al., 2015). However, the three station hybrid style of instruction does not allow for the shuttling back and forth between processes that is so important for good writers according to the Flower and Hayes (1981) model.

Further, the segmented nature of this hybrid program's writing instruction does not allow for the interplay between major goals and supporting goals that drives the writing process according to Flower & Hayes (1981). Because the hybrid assignments are brief and the work at each station defines the goals for each segment, there is no opportunity for the necessary interaction of long and short-term goals, and the students struggle to conceive how the disparate activities they are engaging in fit together to compose a meaningful process. In addition, because students have to switch tasks and positions in the three station hybrid model, they are interrupted during their attempts to coherently navigate process. According to Chenoweth and Hayes (2003), disruptors that interfere with the continuity of a writer's internal flow of ideas and

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processes impedes successful writing. Likewise, Kaufer, Hayes, and Flower (1986) have found that more successful writers produce longer strings of writing at one time. As such, limiting students to short bursts of writing as the studied hybrid model does may exert an adverse influence of its student writers.

Finally, the highly collaborative nature of the station work in the process, combined with the lack of opportunity to set goals, seems to stunt student growth as independent writers. In a sense, they seem to become less capable of generating their own ideas without help. Likewise, the verbal interactions of each writer's own collaborative group, as well of the ambient noise of the groups around them, may make writing more difficult (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2003).

Recommendations

Because this research was a qualitative case study of a unique case, its generalizability is limited (Lichtman, 2013; Yin, 2009). Further, because this study focuses on students matriculating through an educational program, it is impossible to say for certain whether or not the results of this study were truly because of the studied program. The student participants may very well have experienced the same struggles with writing no matter what track of schooling they navigated. It is also possible that these students would have experienced far worse problems with writing than they reported if they had taken the traditional English courses at their school. After all, these students were chosen for the program based upon their apparent disconnect from the school environment.   However, given the increasing growth of hybrid programs in the educational landscape, this study may provide usable information for high schools in the process of designing their own hybrid programs. Likewise, the perceptions from a variety of stakeholders that are presented in this study may serve as a touchstone for both new programs and those in existence that may need to examine their practices and outcomes.

Recommendations for Further Research

Much of the most useful data for this study came from the former hybrid students who were able to compare their hybrid experiences with their subsequent experiences in high school. However, because the first group of students to pass through this program had just graduated high school at the time of the study, no information was garnered pertaining to their college experiences. Future research in this area would do well to follow a cohort of hybrid students all the way through high school and then college to see if their perspectives change and how their college writing experiences may be impacted by their hybrid writing experiences. Further comparing such a cohort to a cohort from the same school that matriculated through the traditional program would further enhance future research studies.

A second area of potential study would be to examine writing in a hybrid program composed of a more diverse group of students. The students in this study's hybrid program were identified by the school district as students who did not seem to be flourishing in traditional schooling. A study of a hybrid program in which enrollment is open or based upon other criteria may yield different and enlightening results.

Finally, a study of a high school hybrid program that encompasses all four years of high school instead of just the 9th and 10th grade years would provide a different perspective on this phenomenon. Two additional years of such a program should intensify student outcomes, and the greater length of time spent in such a program may lead to different, more deeply felt perceptions for student participants.

Finally, a quantitative study measuring student achievement in writing would serve to add valuable insight in this area. While a study such as this provides interesting perceptions of how student writers are impacted by their participation in a hybrid program, it does not provide

quantifiable measures of achievement. Comparing the resulting quantitative achievement data

with studies of student perception to see if perceived achievement matches quantifiable measures

of achievement would further enhance understanding of the influence of hybrid instruction on

writing.

Recommendations for Administrators

School administrators in the process of constructing a hybrid English program, or those

who are considering doing so, can benefit from this study in a variety of ways. First,

administrators will want to exercise caution when making decisions regarding student

admissions criteria for hybrid programs. For example, although the studied program had the

well-meaning aim of serving students who seemed disenfranchised despite their intellectual

abilities and standardized test performance, the selection of only this type of student for the

program seems to have backfired. What seemed to make good theoretical and ethical sense

actually seems to have created a homogeneous group of learners who fed off each other's similar

attributes. The homogeneity of this group also affected the way the teacher perceived the class

and led to a watering-down of expectations. Some of this perception of the negative qualities of

hybrid students also followed these students as they left the program and were evident in the

attitudes of the 11th grade English teachers. Because research suggests that teacher perception of

pupils impacts student growth and achievement (Davis, 2003; Huan, Quek, Yeo, Ang, & Chong,

2012) any of the negative outcomes reported by the former hybrid students may have been a

result of these shared student attitudes and lowered expectations.

Further, the teachers in this study exhibited a certain set of expectations that often crop up

in research on this phenomenon, and these expectations were based upon the hybrid status of

these students. For example, one of the most prominent factors involved in teacher expectation

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and its impact on students is the beliefs teachers hold regarding student ability (Alderman, 2004).

Throughout the interviews conducted in this study, the teachers indicated a belief that there were

some fundamental attitudes and abilities inherent in the hybrid students that lessened their

abilities. Research has shown that such teacher attitudes can lead to teaching practices that

negatively influence student learning (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2010). As such, it is plausible

that part of the reason why writing assignments were less stringent in the hybrid model was due

to the subtly influence of teacher expectation on pedagogical decisions.

In addition, some of the perceived shortcomings of former hybrid students reported by

the 11th grade teachers could be the result of teacher expectations influencing perception once the

11th grade teachers have identified students as hybrid. The fact that many of the former hybrid

students reported little improvement in their writing success even after two years in the

traditional 11th and 12th grade program may have been caused by a self-fulfilling prophecy based

upon teacher expectation (Rosenthal & Jacobsen, 1968).

Another consideration for administrators is to make certain that the pedagogy of a hybrid

program is carefully chosen based upon desired outcomes. Specific, measurable goals for the

studied hybrid program were nonexistent in the data gathered for this study. The only apparent

goal was to "meet the needs of all students." While this is a noble thought, it lacks practical

value in providing program direction. When the three station model employed by the studied

program was chosen, there was no consideration given to how the model might impact specific

learning outcomes. Rather, the model was chosen with the aim of meeting student needs in the

affective domain. In that regard, the hybrid program was an overwhelming success. Every

student, both former and current, shared how much they liked Mr. Walsh and how he made them

feel comfortable and valued. In fact, several former students, after criticizing the hybrid

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program, specifically stated that it was the fault of the program and not Mr. Walsh, who they described with words such as "awesome," "caring," and the best teacher ever." Nevertheless, while the program seems to be successful in the area of the affective domain given the positive feelings students had for the hybrid teacher, the positive perceptions current students had regarding their hyrid experience, and student body language and interactions with peers and the teacher during observed hybrid classroom lessons, this success in the affective domain seems to have come at the expense of successful writing instruction.

Finally, administrators should give careful thought to the duration of their hybrid programs. The initial reasoning behind the studied program lasting two years was to provide a more comfortable experience for students during the transitional early years of high school. However, the two years spent in the hybrid program seem only to have delayed the transition until the outset of 11th grade. Further, the time spent in the hybrid program intensified the disconnect between these students and "traditional" schooling by allowing them to exist in a vacuum while their peers in the regular track became increasingly comfortable with the increasing expectations of their high school English teachers. Once again, administrators should beware unintended consequences and carefully vet all options before settling upon the details of their hybrid programs.

Recommendations for Teachers

This study also offers some insight for teachers who are or will be involved with a hybrid English program. Those instructors who teach in a hybrid English program should be careful to remember to respond to the needs of students and not to stick to a pedagogical model that may not be working as planned. While the hybrid teacher in this study had limited autonomy to alter the basic three station model of the program, he did have latitude within that model to make

changes such as lengthening or shortening time spent at certain stations for certain learning activities, such as writing. A learning model centered on a blend between technology and brick-and-mortar classroom practices may technically count as a hybrid program, but much thought needs to be put into how to handle this blend on both the macro and micro levels. The CABLS model (Wang, et al., 2015) holds that the best hybrid programs are in constant flux, not highly static like the three stages model employed in the studied hybrid program. The studied hybrid program appeared nearly identical during observations, and sounded nearly identical, according to current student interviews, to how the program worked from its inception as reported by former students. It is obviously good advice for all teachers to strive for dynamism in adapting to student needs, and this certainly holds true for hybrid teachers. Likewise, an openness to change and a desire to keep updated on current research into writing pedagogy is advisable for all teachers of writing.

In the same vein, educators involved, either directly or indirectly, in a high school hybrid English program need to give thought to how students will transition when leaving the program. For teachers in a program such as the one studied where the students matriculate to a traditional educational track for the remainder of their high school experience, the hybrid teacher should develop a transition plan to assist matriculating students. Likewise, teachers receiving students who have left the hybrid program should plan how to aid these students in the early days of their transition back to traditional schooling. Ideally, the hybrid program teachers and the traditional track teachers would craft such plans collaboratively. In such a case, stakeholder perceptions, such as those contained within this study, provide vital information.

Finally, teachers will want to examine their own inherent biases in order to ensure that their treatment of students is not affected in subtle ways. A significant amount of research has

shown that teachers' attitudes toward students, and the effect these attitudes have on student well-being, influence student engagement (Davis, 2003; Huan, et al., 2012). In particular, low teacher expectation for pupil performance can negatively impact this performance (Haynes, Tikly, & Caballero, 2006). During this study, the teacher participants had a habit of referring to the former and current students of the hybrid program as "hybrid kids." Although this hardly seems like a pejorative, there were subtle cues in the body language, tone of voice, and word choice of the teacher participants that led the researcher to conclude that there was a stigma attached to being a "hybrid kid." Such negative group labeling can lead to subtle shifts in attitude and expectation and should be avoided (Chang, 2011; Haynes, et al., 2006).

Likewise, the teacher participants in this study frequently indicated during interviews that the hybrid students manifested primarily weaknesses as students. In this, the teacher participants seemed to transcend simply viewing the hybrid students' skills as deficient, but, instead, manifested attitudes that transferred the deficiencies to the students themselves. Since teacher expectation is an accepted factor in student success (Jiminez & Lopez-Zafra, 2013), and judgments of students can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy of lowered expectations and lowered performance (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968), teachers should be careful to ensure that their attitudes do not lead to a lowering of academic rigor.

Recommendations for Students

Many of the former students interviewed for this study expressed regret that they had enrolled in the hybrid program. Among these students, phrases along the lines of "If I had thought ahead . . ." and "If I knew how it would affect me later . . ." were quite common. The lesson here is for students who are considering enrollment in a hybrid program to carefully examine the program and its context in order to make an informed choice. Students need to look

ahead and consider what such a decision now might mean for the future. Parents should assist

their children in this, but students need to take responsibility as well by seeking input from their

guidance counsellors.

Likewise, many of the student participants in this study cited the perceived ease of the

hybrid program, obtained from talking to older students, as a primary reason for choosing it.

Perceiving something as being easy is never a good reason to justify an educational choice.

Many of the former students lamented the fact that the two easy years they spent in hybrid made

their remaining two years of high school monumentally harder. Students need to make

educational choices based upon many criteria, but ease should not be among them.

Recommendations for Parents

Ideally, all parents would take care to make well-informed choices when it comes to

educating their children. This is doubly true when faced with the opportunity to enroll in a

program that exists outside the norm. Many of the students interviewed for this study expressed

that their parents had attended an informational session about the hybrid program, come home,

and told their children they thought it was a good idea. While attending an information session is

a good first step, parents should also take the time to find out as much as they can regarding the

placement of their children. Searching the internet for articles about hybrid learning, seeking out

other parents who may have experience with such programs, and asking the school district

informed questions about the program's rigor, objectives, and practices are all advisable.

Parents should also listen to their children and communicate with the school and its

representatives regarding how their child is growing and progressing in their placement. Several

former students shared that they had told their parents they were dissatisfied with the hybrid

program only to be told to "stick it out." While students certainly can be prone to complain

about school, parents would do well to find out whether or not there may be a valid basis for complaint.

Limitations

The most obvious limitation of this study is that it examines only one case, and is therefore limited in its generalizability. The plethora of models employed under the name of hybrid learning, basically including anything with a technology component and a face-to-face component, further limits this study in its implications for a broader application.

Another limitation of this study is that it focused on writing. Because much of the activity of producing writing occurs within the mind and is not observable, some of the conclusions drawn regarding the processes involved may be highly interpretive rather than concretely supported.

One final limitation that emerged during the course of the study was the unique nature of the hybrid students in this program. Because the students in this program were specifically identified by the district as learners who did not achieve at the level their standardized test scores seemed to indicate they should, and because they were invited to participate in the hybrid model based upon this factor, their unique nature further limited the generalizability of this study.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the ways in which writing instruction occurs in a hybrid learning model and to determine how participation in such a model impacts student writers. Specifically, this case study examined the perceptions of both students and teachers regarding the unique circumstances of teaching and producing writing in a hybrid setting. Interview, observational, and documentary evidence gathered during the study indicated that perceptions of whether or not the program was positive or negative depended greatly upon

whether or an individual was currently part of the hybrid program. Although this research was a

case study of a unique case and never meant to be generalizable to a larger population, it does

provide those who are involved, or will become involved, in a hybrid program with much

material for rumination.

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Appendix A

Letter of Informed Consent: Teacher

You are invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided in order to help you make an informed decision whether or not to participate. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask the researcher. You are eligible because you are an English teacher at _____ High School.

The purpose of this study is to investigate writing instruction and outcomes in a hybrid learning model. The information gained from this study may help to increase our understanding of the differences between hybrid writing instruction and traditional writing instruction and the perceived outcomes of writing in a hybrid learning model.

Participation Requirements
Participation in this study will require that you participate in at least one, but possibly two, audio-recorded interviews of approximately 45 minutes each. The purpose of the interviews is to determine your experiences and perceptions of teaching writing and of how students engage in the writing process, and to determine if you see differences between the writing of students who have been in the hybrid program versus those who have not. In addition to these interviews, you may be asked to allow one or more observations of your English classroom by the researcher. During these observations, the researcher will remain unobtrusive and will compose field notes about the experience. Finally, following transcription of interview and field notes content, and prior to any written account of this material, you will have the opportunity to review this content to ensure its accuracy.

Benefits and Risks
There will be no compensation, financial or otherwise for participation in this study. If you choose to participate, you will be contributing to the professional community's understanding of writing in a hybrid learning setting. There are no anticipated risks, discomforts, or potential harm to participants associated with this study. Choosing not to participate will have no effect on your employment situation.

Voluntary Participation
Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are free to decline participation or to withdraw from the study at any time without any effect upon your relationship with the researcher or your employment status with the school district. If you choose to participate, all information regarding you will be held in the strictest confidence and will not have any bearing on your position with the district. Should you choose to withdraw from the study at any time, you may do so by notifying the researcher or your immediate supervisor. Upon your request to withdraw, all information pertaining to you and provided by you will be destroyed.

Additionally, during the course of the study, the researcher will impart to you any new information that may arise and influence your willingness to continue participation in this study. If such new information arises, the researcher will answer any and all questions you may have regarding this new information and afford you the opportunity to end your participation in this study.

Confidentiality

The information obtained in this study may be published in peer-reviewed journals or presented at academic conferences, but your identity will remain confidential at all times through use of pseudonym. All documents related to the study, including but not limited to audio recordings, field notes, and transcripts will be housed in the researcher's home office in a locked cabinet for three years as per federal regulations and the request of your district superintendent. The identity of your school and school district will also be kept confidential through use of pseudonym and the withholding of any specific identifying information. Participants may receive a copy of the results of this study by contacting the researcher.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the statement below. Keep the extra, unsigned copy for your records. If you choose not to participate, please simply dispose of this document.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free contact me. My email address and phone number are listed below.

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VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM

I have read and understand the information contained in the informed consent letter, and I consent to volunteer my participation in this study of writing in a hybrid program. I have been made aware of the nature and purpose of this study and that I will be participating in interviews and observations of my classroom. I also understand that field notes will be taken by the researcher and that I will be given the opportunity to review field notes and transcripts before their use in the results of the study. I understand that both my identity and that of the school will be kept completely confidential and that I may withdraw from the study at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this form for my records.

Name: _____
(**Please Print**)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher Signature: _____
Date: _____

This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).

Appendix B

Letter of Informed Consent: Former Student

You are invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided in order to help you make an informed decision whether or not to participate. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask the researcher. You are eligible because you were a student of _____ High School who was enrolled in the hybrid learning program.

The purpose of this study is to investigate writing instruction and outcomes in a hybrid learning model. The information gained from this study may help to increase our understanding of the differences between hybrid writing instruction and traditional writing instruction and the perceived outcomes of writing in a hybrid learning model.

Participation Requirements
Participation in this study will require that you participate in one audio-recorded interview of approximately 20-30 minutes in length. The purpose of the interview is to determine your experiences and perceptions of writing and of how you engage in the writing process, and to determine if you see differences between these experiences and perceptions in the hybrid program versus the regular classroom. Following transcription of interview content, and prior to any written account of this material, you will have the opportunity to review this content to ensure its accuracy.

Benefits and Risks
There will be no compensation, financial or otherwise, for participation in this study. If you choose to participate, you will be contributing to the professional community's understanding of writing in a hybrid learning setting. There are no anticipated risks, discomforts, or potential harm to participants associated with this study.

Voluntary Participation
Participation in this study is <u>entirely voluntary</u>. You are free to decline participation or to withdraw from the study at any time without any effect upon your relationship with the researcher. If you choose to participate, all information regarding you will be held in the strictest confidence. Should you choose to withdraw from the study at any time, you may do so by notifying the researcher. Upon your request to withdraw, all information pertaining to you and provided by you will be destroyed.

Additionally, during the course of the study, the researcher will impart to you any new information that may arise and influence your willingness to continue participation in this study. If such new information arises, the researcher will answer any and all questions you may have regarding this new information and afford you the opportunity to end your participation in this study.

Confidentiality

The information obtained in this study may be published in peer-reviewed journals or presented at academic conferences, but your identity will remain confidential at all times through use of pseudonym. All documents related to the study, including but not limited to audio recordings, field notes, and transcripts will be housed in the researcher's home office in a locked cabinet for three years as per federal regulations and the request of your district superintendent. The identity of your school and school district will also be kept confidential through use of pseudonym and the withholding of any specific identifying information. Participants may receive a copy of the results of this study by contacting the researcher.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the statement below. Keep the extra, unsigned copy for your records. If you choose not to participate, please simply dispose of this document.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free contact me. My email address and phone number are listed below.

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VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM

I have read and understand the information contained in the informed consent letter and I consent to volunteer my participation in this study of writing in a hybrid program. I have been made aware of the nature and purpose of this study and that I will be participating in interviews. I also understand that I will be given the opportunity to review transcripts before their use in the results of the study. I understand that both my identity and that of the school will be kept completely confidential and that I may withdraw from the study at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this form for my records.

Name: _____

(Please Print)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher Signature: _____

Date: _____

This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).

Appendix C

Letter of Informed Consent: Current Student

You are invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided in order to help you make an informed decision whether or not to participate. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask the researcher. You are eligible because you are a student of _____ High School who is enrolled in the hybrid learning program.

The purpose of this study is to investigate writing instruction and outcomes in a hybrid learning model. The information gained from this study may help to increase our understanding of the differences between hybrid writing instruction and traditional writing instruction and the perceived outcomes of writing in a hybrid learning model.

Participation Requirements
Participation in this study will require nothing more than that you allow information gathered by the researcher during classroom observation to be used and that you allow the researched to examine some of the writings that you generate as part of your normal work for the class. The purpose of the observation and examination of writing pieces is to determine how writing occurs in a hybrid setting.

Benefits and Risks
There will be no compensation, financial or otherwise, for participation in this study. If you choose to participate, you will be contributing to the professional community's understanding of writing in a hybrid learning setting. There are no anticipated risks, discomforts, or potential harm to participants associated with this study.

Voluntary Participation
Participation in this study is <u>entirely voluntary</u>. You are free to decline participation or to withdraw from the study at any time without any effect upon your relationship with the researcher. If you choose to participate, all information regarding you will be held in the strictest confidence. Should you choose to withdraw from the study at any time, you may do so by notifying the researcher. Upon your request to withdraw, all information pertaining to you and provided by you will be destroyed.

Additionally, during the course of the study, the researcher will impart to you any new information that may arise and influence your willingness to continue participation in this study. If such new information arises, the researcher will answer any and all questions you may have regarding this new information and afford you the opportunity to end your participation in this study.

Confidentiality

The information obtained in this study may be published in peer-reviewed journals or presented at academic conferences, but your identity will remain confidential at all times through use of pseudonym. All documents related to the study, including but not limited to audio recordings, field notes, and transcripts will be housed in the researcher's home office in a locked cabinet for three years as per federal regulations and the request of your district superintendent. The identity of your school and school district will also be kept confidential through use of pseudonym and the withholding of any specific identifying information. Participants may receive a copy of the results of this study by contacting the researcher.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the statement below. Keep the extra, unsigned copy for your records. If you choose not to participate, please simply dispose of this document.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free contact me. My email address and phone number are listed below.

Primary Researcher	**Faculty Sponsor:**
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Email: j.f.keiner@iup.edu	

VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM

I have read and understand the information contained in the informed consent letter and I consent to volunteer my participation in this study of writing in a hybrid program. I have been made aware of the nature and purpose of this study and that I will be in a class being observed by the researcher. I also understand that I may be asked to allow the researcher to examine writing I have composed for the class. I understand that both my identity and that of the school will be kept completely confidential and that I may withdraw from the study at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this form for my records.

Name: _____
                                                (Please Print)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher Signature: _____

Date: _____

This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).

Appendix D

Letter of Informed Consent: Parent

Greetings, and allow me to introduce myself. I am Jason Keiner, and I am an English teacher who works for the _____School District but who does not work in the hybrid English program in which your son or daughter is enrolled. I am currently working on a dissertation research study in order to fulfill the requirements for a doctoral degree in education. Your son or daughter has been invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided in order to help you make an informed decision whether or not to allow your son/daughter to participate. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask the researcher. Your son/daughter is eligible because he or she is a student of _____High School who is currently enrolled in the district's hybrid program.

The purpose of this study is to investigate writing instruction and outcomes in a hybrid learning model. The information gained from this study may help to increase our understanding of the differences between hybrid writing instruction and traditional writing instruction and the perceived outcomes of writing in a hybrid learning model.

Participation Requirements
Participation in this study will require nothing from your son/daughter other than normal participation in regular classroom activities. The researcher will be observing your son or daughter's class and composing field notes regarding observable information regarding writing practices. The researcher may also ask to examine writing your child has generated as part of normal course work.

Benefits and Risks
There will be no compensation, financial or otherwise, for participation in this study. If you choose to allow your son/daughter to participate, you will be contributing to the professional community's understanding of writing in a hybrid learning setting. There are no anticipated risks, discomforts, or potential harm to participants associated with this study. Choosing not to participate will have no effect on your child's grades or any other aspect of his or her status as a student.

Voluntary Participation
Participation in this study is <u>entirely voluntary</u>. You are free to decline participation on behalf of your child or to withdraw your child from the study at any time without any effect upon your child's relationship with the researcher or your child's student status with the school district. If you choose to allow your child to participate, all information regarding your child will be held in the strictest confidence and will not have any bearing on your child's student status with the district. Should you choose to withdraw your child from the study at any time, you may do so by

notifying the researcher, your child's classroom teacher, or the building principal. Upon your request to withdraw, all information pertaining to your child and provided by your child will be destroyed.

Additionally, during the course of the study, the researcher will impart to you any new information that may arise and influence your willingness to allow your child's continued participation in this study. If such new information arises, the researcher will answer any and all questions you may have regarding this new information and afford you the opportunity to end your child's participation in this study.

Confidentiality
The information obtained in this study may be published in peer-reviewed journals or presented at academic conferences, but your child's identity will remain confidential at all times through use of pseudonym. All documents related to the study, including but not limited to audio recordings, field notes, and transcripts will be housed in the researcher's home office in a locked cabinet for three years as per federal regulations and the request of the district superintendent. The identity of your child's school and school district will also be kept confidential through use of pseudonym and the withholding of any specific identifying information. Participants and the parents of participants may receive a copy of the results of this study by contacting the researcher.

If you are willing to allow your child to participate in this study, please sign the statement below and return it to the school either with your child or by mailing it to the school. Keep the extra, unsigned copy for your records. If you choose not to allow your child to participate, please simply dispose of this document.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me. My email address and phone number are listed below.

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VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM

I have read and understand the information contained in the informed consent letter and I consent to volunteer my child's participation in this study of writing in a hybrid program. I have been made aware of the nature and purpose of this study and that my child will be in a classroom being observed. I also understand that my child may be asked to allow examination of writings he or she has generated as part of regular classroom work. I understand that my identity, my child's identity, and that of the school will be kept completely confidential and that I may withdraw my child from the study at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this form for my records.

Child's Name: _____
(Please Print)

Parent/Guardian Name: _____
(Please Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

_____Yes, my child can participate in this study.

Date: _____

Researcher Signature: _____
Date: _____

This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).

Appendix E

Teacher Interview Protocol (Hybrid Teacher)

1. How long have you been teaching? How many years at this school and in what grades?

2. Let's talk about your hybrid experience. How would you say it compares to a regular classroom?

3. Regarding writing, what would you say is different regarding your approach in the hybrid classroom?

4. Can you give me some specific examples of writing assignments from the program?

How are they different from what you would do in a traditional setting?

5. Describe the writing process you would expect students to engage in for the average assignment in your hybrid classes.

6. How do you provide feedback during drafting and editing?

7. How do you provide feedback following final submission of an assignment?

8. What do you think are the biggest advantages to the instruction of writing in the hybrid setting?

9. What do you think are the biggest weaknesses associated with the instruction of writing in the hybrid setting?

10. What are your concerns with how students grow as writers in the hybrid setting?

11. As students leave the hybrid setting and reenter regular classes in 11th grade, what struggles do you anticipate for them?

In what areas do you feel confident they will do well?

12. What did I miss that I should know?

Appendix F

Teacher Interview Protocol (Regular Classroom)

1. How long have you been teaching? How many years at this school and in what grades?

2. Do you receive any notation as to which track (traditional or hybrid) students have gone through before entering your class?

3. Would you say you can tell which students come to you from the hybrid program versus the traditional program? If so, how?

4. What do you see as the biggest differences between students that come to you from the hybrid program as opposed to those who come from the traditional track?

5. In what ways are students the same from both tracks?

6. Describe the writing process you expect students to engage in for the average assignment in your classes.

7. How do you provide feedback during drafting and editing?

8. How do you provide feedback following final submission of an assignment?

9. What do you think are the biggest strengths of writing instruction in the hybrid setting based upon the students you receive from the hybrid model?

10. What are the biggest weaknesses of writing instruction in the hybrid setting based upon the students you receive from this model?

11. What are your observations regarding how students grow as writers in the hybrid setting?

12. As students leave the hybrid setting and reenter regular classes in 11th grade, what unique struggles, if any, do they face?

13. In what areas do you feel confident they will do well in their development as writers?

14. What did I miss that I should know?

Appendix G

Former Student Interview Protocol

1. What are your plans for next year?

2. What factors made you decide to enroll in the hybrid program?

3. When you think specifically about writing, how were your experiences in the hybrid program different or the same as your experiences in regular classes?

4. Can you give me some specific examples of writing assignments you did for your hybrid class?
    How did they differ from writing assignments in your regular classes?

5. Describe the typical process you went through as you wrote your hybrid assignments.
    If it was different for different kinds of assignments, please describe the differences.

6. What do you think are the biggest strengths of writing in a hybrid setting?

7. What do you think are the biggest weaknesses of writing in a hybrid setting?

8. What do you think you do well when writing as a direct result of being in the hybrid program?

9. Are there any things about writing you think you struggled with when you went back to regular classes upon exiting the hybrid program?

10. Are there any areas of writing you think you were particularly good at as a result of your hybrid experience when you went back to regular classes?

11. What did I miss that I should know?

Appendix H

Student Interview Protocol (Students Currently in the Program)

1. What grade are you in? How long have you been in the hybrid program?

2. What factors made you decide to enroll in the hybrid program?

3. When you think specifically about writing, how have your experiences in the hybrid program been different or the same as your experiences in regular classes?

4. Can you give me some specific examples of writing assignments you have done for your hybrid class?
        How did they differ from writing assignments in your regular classes?

5. Describe the typical process you go through as you write your hybrid assignments.
        If it is different for different kinds of assignments, please describe the differences.

6. What do you think are the biggest strengths of writing in a hybrid setting?

7. What do you think are the biggest weaknesses of writing in a hybrid setting?

8. What do you think you do well when writing as a direct result of being in the hybrid program?

9. Are there any things about writing you think you will struggle with or do well when you go back to regular classes upon exiting the hybrid program?

10. What did I miss that I should know?

Appendix I

10th Grade English Curriculum

Assumptions for 9th grade prior knowledge- They will know:
- **determine and identify theme**
- **an understanding of setting (Freytag's Pyramid, etc)**
- **Informational text structure - cause/effect; problem/solution; chronological/sequence/spatial order; description; compare/contrast**
- **Levels 1 & 2 from DOK**

Unit One: Seeking Identity

Focus Standards:

CC.1.3.9-10-A - Analyzing theme and its development
CC.1.3.9-10-E- Analyze how text is structured
CC.1.3.9-10-I - Clarifying meaning/vocabulary
CC.1.3.9-10-K – Read and comprehend literary fiction with complex text

Instructional Tools:

The Alchemist-910 L

Unit Essential Question:

How can identity be explored in literature?

Concept:

(CC.1.3.9-10A)

Concept:

(CC.1.3.9-10E)

Lesson EQ:

How do the details and techniques used in a given literary piece reveal or develop the theme of the selection?

Lesson EQ:

In what ways can author's structural choices affect a piece of literature?

Concept:

(CC.1.3.9-10K)

Lesson EQ:

What strategies can be utilized to help students read independently and comprehend appropriate, grade-level selections?

Vocabulary:
(CC.1.3.9-10A)
Effective use of active reading strategies to synthesize text:
- text coding
-annotation
 -double-entry journal

_____
_____
_____
_____

Vocabulary:
(CC.1.3.9-10E)
-Diction's effect on theme
-How the tone creates effect
-Analyze impact of organizational patterns:
*parallelism
*repetition
*frame story
*flashback
*chronology

_____
_____
_____

Vocabulary:
(CC.1.3.9-10K)
-Journaling
-Synthesize and evaluate text and thinking
-Inferential thinking
-Making connections to text
-Connect background knowledge to text

Assumptions for 9th grade prior knowledge- They will know:

- **what labeled points of view look like (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc)**
- **definition of tone and identify tonal words**
- **finding evidence written directly in text/explicit text support**
- **how points of view affect understanding**
- **identify how words and phrases shape meaning and tone**
- **argumentative/rhetorical writing techniques (so it can transfer to reading)**
    - **cause/effect; problem/solution; chronological/sequence/spatial order; description; compare/contrast**

Unit Two: Taking Perspective

Focus Standard:

CC.1.3.9-10-B – Cite textual evidence, inferences, conclusions for literature
CC.1.2.9.10-B –Cite textual evidence, inferences, conclusions for informational text
CC.1.2.9.10-D - Analyze perspective in informational text
CC.1.3.9-10-F – Analyze tone and how it affects the work
CC.1.2.9.10-F – Analyze how words and phrases shape meaning and tone
CC.1.2.9.10-C – Ethos, pathos – rhetorical device terms, sequencing, overall text structure and organizational patterns

Instructional Tools:

Pericles' Funeral Oration - 1470L

Unit Essential Question:

How do readers determine perspective?

Concept:

1.3.9-10-B

1.2.9.10-B

Concept:

1.2.9-10-D

Lesson EQ:

What kind of textual evidence can be cited to distinguish an author's assumptions and beliefs in both fiction and nonfiction selections?

Lesson EQ:

How do authors utilize rhetorical strategies to construct point of view in text?

Concept:

(CC.1.2.9-10C)

Lesson EQ:

How do readers apply appropriate strategies to analyze how text structure supports the author's purpose?

Vocabulary:
1.3.9-10-B
1.2.9.10-B
Cite evidence to:
-draw conclusions regarding explicit assumptions and beliefs
-develop a logical argument based on text evidence
-make logical inferences

Vocabulary:
1.2.9-10-D
Identify various rhetorical strategies and their impact:
-point
-counterpoint
-cause/effect
-problem/solution -
inductive/deductive reasoning
propaganda techniques
emotional appeal
-circular argument

Vocabulary:
1.2.9-10 C
How structure supports purpose:
-order of events
-text features (headings, subheadings, lists, graphs, charts)
-text structures:
Cause/effect, chronological order, compare/contrast, list, order of importance, spatial order

Assumptions for 9th grade prior knowledge- They will know:
- **3 methods of characterization and types of characters**
- **how points of view affect understanding**

Instructional Tools:

Oedipus –not available
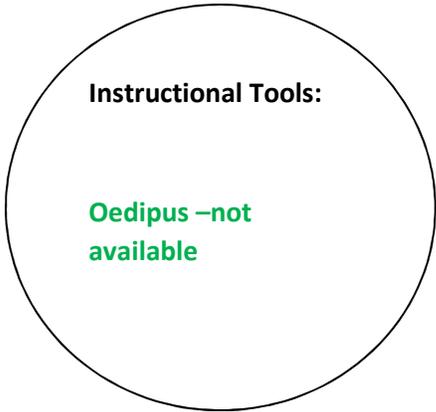
Unit: Reality versus Truth

Focus Standard:

> **CC.1.3.9-10-C – Analyze how complex characters develop**
>
> **CC.1.3.9-10-D – Analyze perspective in text and its impact**

Unit Essential Question:

> How do readers differentiate between reality and truth?

(CC.1.3.9-10D)	(CC.1.3.9-10C)

Lesson EQ:

How do readers analyze the impact of point of view on the meaning of the text?	How do characters advance plot and develop the theme of a selection?

Vocabulary:
(CC.1.3.9-10D)
Determine the effect of the author's point of view:

First person

Second person

Third person
Limited
omniscient

Vocabulary:
(CC.1.3.9-10C)
Development of characters in text: dynamic

Identify author's use:
direct characterization
indirect characterization

Internal thought
Words and deeds

Instructional Tools:

Hiroshima-1190 L

Assumptions for 9th grade prior knowledge- They will know:
- **how to compare and contrast**

Unit: Social Responsibility

Focus Standards:

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CC.1.3.9-10-G – Analyze from two different mediums

CC.1.3.9-10-H – Analyzing how an author integrates elements from source material

CC.1.2.9.10-H – Assessing the validity of reasoning and relevance of evidence

CC.1.2.9.10-E – Analyze author's ideas or claims

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Unit Essential Question:

How is social responsibility manifested in text?

Concept:

1.3.9-10-G

Lesson EQ:

How can the reader compare/contrast or differentiate the treatment of the same topic in two separate mediums?

Concept:

1.3.9-10-H

Lesson EQ:

How can readers analyze how an author integrates elements from source material?

Concept:

1.2.10 E

Lesson EQ:

How do author's use structure to refine their ideas or claims in text?

Vocabulary: **Vocabulary:**

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1.3.9-10-G
Identify connections/differences
between texts:
Differentiate, compare, connect

_____

_____

_____

_____

1.3.9-10-H
Interpret and analyze of literary
and cultural significance:
- allusion
-primary vs. secondary sources

_____

_____

_____

_____

Vocabulary:
1.2.9.10 E
Textual structure, features, and organization inform meaning