

Academic Efficacy Study

Adventures in Writing Camp

and San Jose Unified School District

MISTER LEMUR'S

**ADVENTURES
IN WRITING
CAMP**



In association with
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Each student provided a writing sample on the first and last days of camp. Two SJUSD teachers evaluated the samples on the district rubric. This is what they found:

- * 17% increase in Writing Focus
- * 28.3% increase in Organization and Plot
- * 24.4% increase in Narrative Skills 1

District Writing Assessment Scores

Each student in the study completed writing samples in the Spring (close to the end of the school year) and again in the Fall (shortly after returning to school after the summer). These samples were graded on a district standard rubric and had the potential of receiving up to 12 points, as per standard district grading procedures. Upon comparison of the Intervention Group (those who attended AIW Camp) and the Control Group (those who did not attend camp), we found that students who attended camp were more likely to have a **significant improvement** than those who did not.

*We define significant improvement as **more than 3 points**.*

26% of students in the study who **attended** camp saw a significant improvement.

7% of students in the study who **did not attend** camp saw a significant improvement.

Students were given a self-assessment survey on the first and last days of camp₃. They reported the following:

“I am a good writer”

23.6% increase

“I enjoy writing”

9.5% increase

“I am excited to write stories at home in my free time”

25.3% increase

“I think I will choose to write stories at home, even if it means less time watching TV or playing video games”

19.3% increase

Understanding the Stats

1. Each camper in the study was asked for a writing sample on the first and last day of camp. Two teachers from San Jose Unified School District then evaluated the writing samples on the district rubric, assigning scores on the traits of Focus, Organization/Plot, and Narrative Technique. Each category was scored on a scale of 1-4, for a possible 12 points. (up to 4 points x 3 traits = up to 12 possible points). We then looked at the average change in each category across all campers in the study. In the category of focus, we found an average increase of 0.27 points on a starting baseline of 1.57 points. For the category of organization, we found a 0.43 point increase on a starting baseline of 1.53 points. For the category of Narrative Technique, we show an increase of 0.33 points on a baseline of 1.37 points.

2. These charts look at the % of campers in the intervention group and the control group that achieved different levels of “progress” between the district standard “WPA” (Writing Proficiency Assessment) administered in the spring of 2015 and the assessment administered in the fall of 2015. For each group, we looked at their WPA score in the fall of 2015, and compared it to their score from the spring of 2015. Scores were out of a possible 12 points. We observed that students who participated in the program (the Intervention Group) were more likely to have seen significant increases in their scores than those in the control group who did not participate in the program. We defined significant increases as greater than 3 points. 7 of the 27 Intervention Group campers (26%) saw such an increase. Just 2 of the 27 Control Group campers (7%) saw increases of over 3 points.

3. Each camper was given a survey on the first and last days of camp, and asked how much they agree with a series of statements on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being completely disagree, and 10 being completely agree. The “first day” and “last day” surveys were identical. The percent changes in this exercise are calculated as: $(\text{last day response} - \text{first day response}) / \text{first day response} = \% \text{ change}$. As an example, if a camper responded with an agreement level of 7 to the question “I am a good writer” at the beginning of camp and a 9 to that same question on the last day of camp, that would be calculated as $(9-7)/7=28.6\%$ increase. The statistics reported are the average across all 37 campers participating in the study. This data is unique to the intervention group, as the control group was not asked to take this questionnaire.