OVERVIEW

In the CDWP Institute for Writing Argument Across the Content Areas, teachers participate in intensive, collaborative study of the teaching of source-based argument writing, close reading for critical thinking, and student inquiry for deep engagement. Participating teachers delve into experiences of argument writing instruction, their own writing, and conversations about meaningful teaching and learning.

RESULTS

A three-year national study found that this program had statistically significant effect on four attributes of student argument writing — content, structure, stance, and conventions. The study also found that students exhibited particular proficiency in the quality of reasoning and use of evidence in their writing.

"By opening the conversation about the teaching of writing, the National Writing Project tapped into the resources we already possessed and provided professional development to enable us to grow as individuals, as teachers, and as leaders. All teachers should be afforded the same opportunity if we truly want to see change in our schools."

—Lisa Sue Trembley,
English teacher at Fort Plain Junior/Senior High School

PART 1: THE SUMMER INTENSIVE*

Across four days in June, teachers inquire into critical issues in the teaching of argument

Teachers consider how to help students...

- Assess the credibility and perspective of diverse texts
- Build claims from vetted source material
- Explore and synthesize a variety of evidence to arrive at informed beliefs
- Write to build voice and agency

Teachers will experience, study, and apply:

- Mini-lessons and units targeted to model specific skills in argument
- The selection of professional and student mentor texts to highlight writing moves
- Individualized instruction through manageable feedback
- Approaches to targeted assessment
- Creating a culture of source-based inquiry into high-interest and critical societal conversations

* Available as a stand-alone course

PART 2: THE COHORT EXPERIENCE**

In 2018-19, teachers collaboratively implement and reflect on argument writing instruction

Teachers have students engaging in...

- Writing arguments routinely, informally and formally
- Drafting, responding, and revising
- Building stamina in longer arguments
- "Going public" with their writing by publishing in meaningful contexts

Teachers will build, implement, & refine:

- Common language for instruction in writing across the content areas
- Scaffolded argument writing curriculum
- Customized text sets to meet diverse learning needs
- Peer feedback systems that push beyond superficial editing
- Collaborative approaches to assessment that impel student growth

** Open only to teachers who complete Part I.
"Engaging students in argument is one way to ensure we are always listening to what they have to say."

Christina Pepe  
Teacher, Shenendowa High School  
CDWP Argument Institute Participant

Contact Us

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The Capital District Writing Project is a dynamic community of K-College educators working to enhance the teaching of writing in the Capital Region’s schools. The Capital District Writing Project is a site of the National Writing Project (NWP). The NWP envisions a future where every person is an accomplished writer, engaged learner, and active participant in a digital, interconnected world.

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PART I: SUMMER INTENSIVE  
June 25-28, 2018  
30 CTLE

PART II: THE COHORT EXPERIENCE  
Seven meetings in 2018-19  
45 CTLE