Writers Matter: Giving students a voice...

Writers Matter has helped me with writing instruction by providing me with a means for explicitly linking writing themes to themes present in the students’ lives. It has helped me to forge a connection between the writing assignments provided in the Planning and Scheduling Timelines (PST) and those ideas with which the students are more familiar and more interested in writing about from their own experiences.

Writers Matter has also helped me with writing instruction by exposing me to educators from around the city in a forum in which we are able to collaborate and share ideas with one another. In hearing about the lessons of other teachers, it helps me come up with ideas of my own and keeps me “fresh” in my teaching.

The WM program has helped my students in nearly every facet of their lives. Academically, the program excites them about writing and helps them find a personal link between writing assignments and their day-to-day lives. In becoming interested in the assignments provided, students become more vested overall in their classroom learning, especially in relation to writing. For example, at the beginning of the school year, many students relate that they do not like to write, yet, by the end of the school year, many of them have completely changed their views while also becoming proficient and advanced writers in the process. Students experience success with writing and learn to enjoy the process.

Personally, Writers Matter has helped my students because it enables them to have an outlet for their thoughts and emotions and much of the turmoil experienced by students from their demographic and age range. Through their writing, students are able to highlight the positives in their lives and “work through” many of the more troubling aspects of their lives. Often times, students reveal pieces of their lives that then require the attention of the counselor. In this way, students are able to receive counseling and writing therapy as a result of the Writers Matter program.

Finally, Writers Matter helps my students socially by helping me to forge a safe classroom environment in which students feel valued and free to express and be themselves. By sharing intimate details about themselves and their lives in a forum in which they know that they will be valued and free from ridicule, students are able to build bonds with one another and with me as well. This creates a very positive social fabric within my classroom that allows students to function at higher social levels than their peers.

... and letting that voice be heard.