

Image-Making Within The Writing Process Initial Research Findings

Submitted to the Program Effectiveness Panel of the National Diffusion Network

A two-year research study was designed and conducted by Dr. Susan Frankel at the University of New Hampshire from January 1991–January 1993 to document the effect of Image-Making Within The Writing Process on student writing. It involved 377 first- and second-grade students from three New Hampshire school districts. Two hundred and sixteen students (216) in the treatment group were facilitated through the Image-Making process in a step-by-step manner. The remaining 161 children were in demographically matched comparison groups which were not facilitated through the Image-Making process.

Writing samples were collected from all children before the Image-Making experience (pre-test samples) and after the Image-Making experience (post-test samples). Within the treatment group, children's collage books were used as the post-test samples. Comparable writing samples from the comparison groups were collected at corresponding time increments.

In order to conduct a blind study, the written texts from the treatment and comparison groups were extracted from published pieces and retyped in a uniform format. Trained independent raters scored student work using a scoring instrument developed by a team of first- and second-grade experts. The instrument was designed to look at several aspects of story development such as beginning, middle, end, plot development, cohesiveness, and the use of descriptive language as well as the overall quality of the story.

When comparing the writing samples from the treatment group to those of the comparison group, research findings revealed students in the treatment group significantly outperformed students in the comparison group as a result of their participation in Image-Making Within The Writing Process. Improvement was most apparent in the following areas:

- Stories demonstrated a far greater use of descriptive language (adjectives, adverbs, strong verbs, similes, metaphors, and personification)
- Story plots were more highly developed
- Stories had a more literary quality to them including a stronger sense of beginning, middle, and end
- Stories demonstrated a more cohesive quality

The following bar graphs reflect the difference in growth between the treatment and the comparison group at the first and second grade level. For each group this growth occurred over a 3–4 month period.

Image-Making Within The Writing Process

Impact on First Grade Writing/Descriptive Language

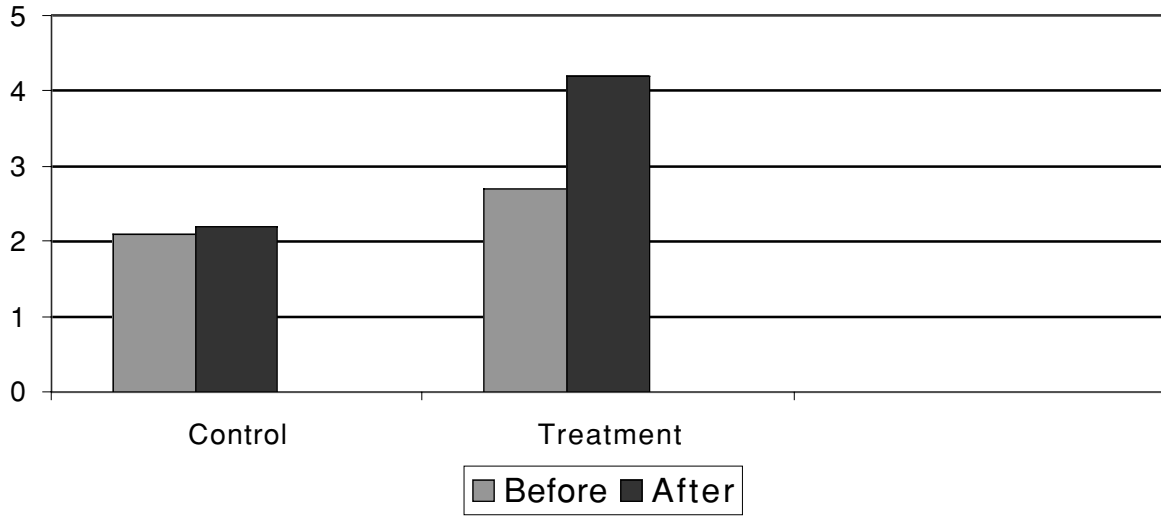
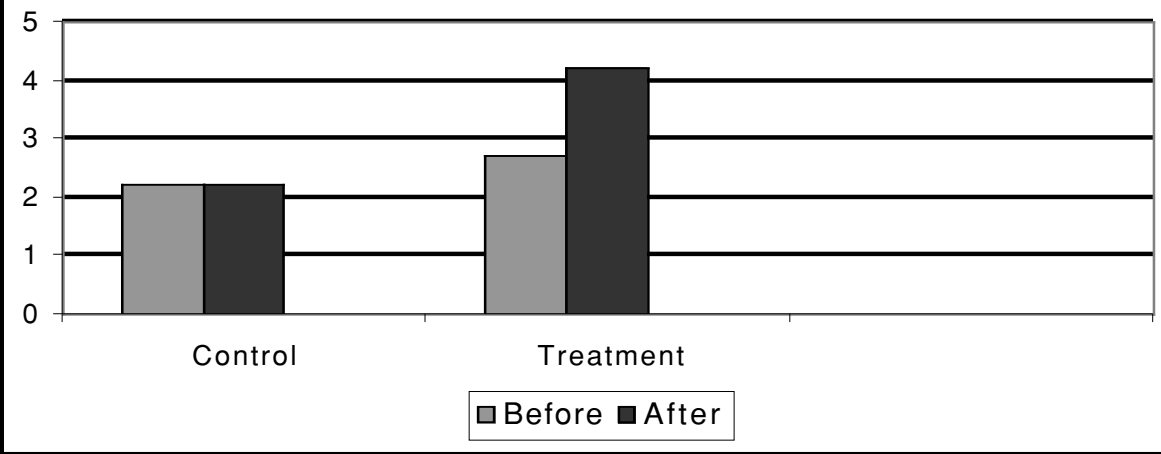
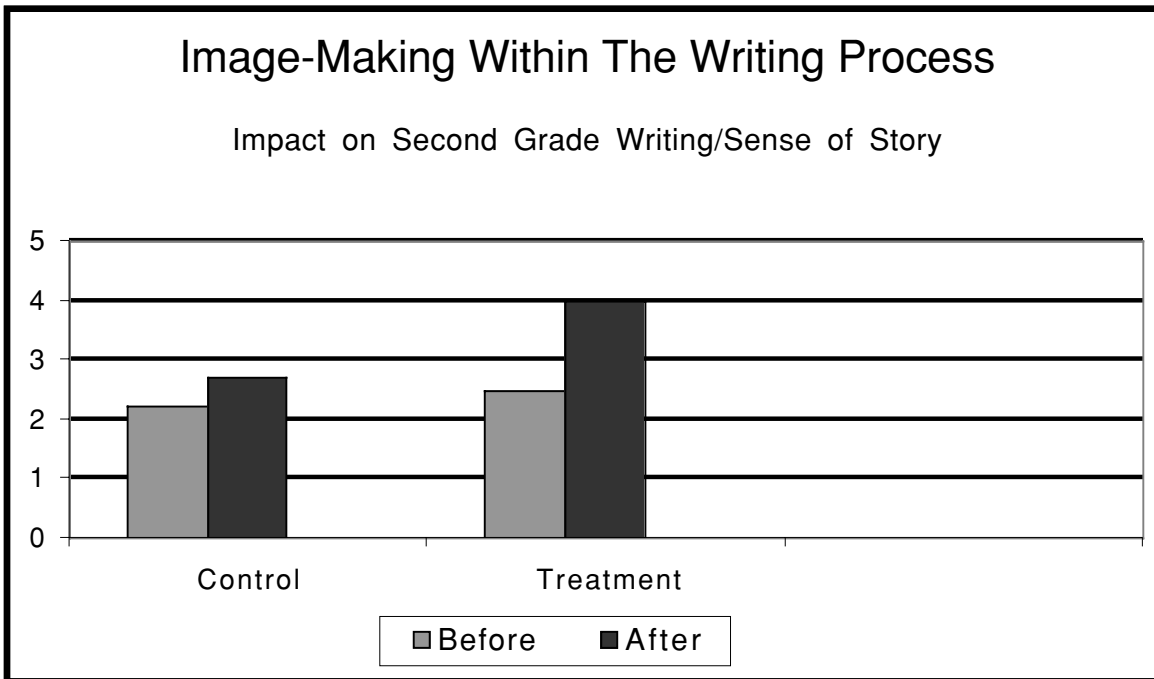
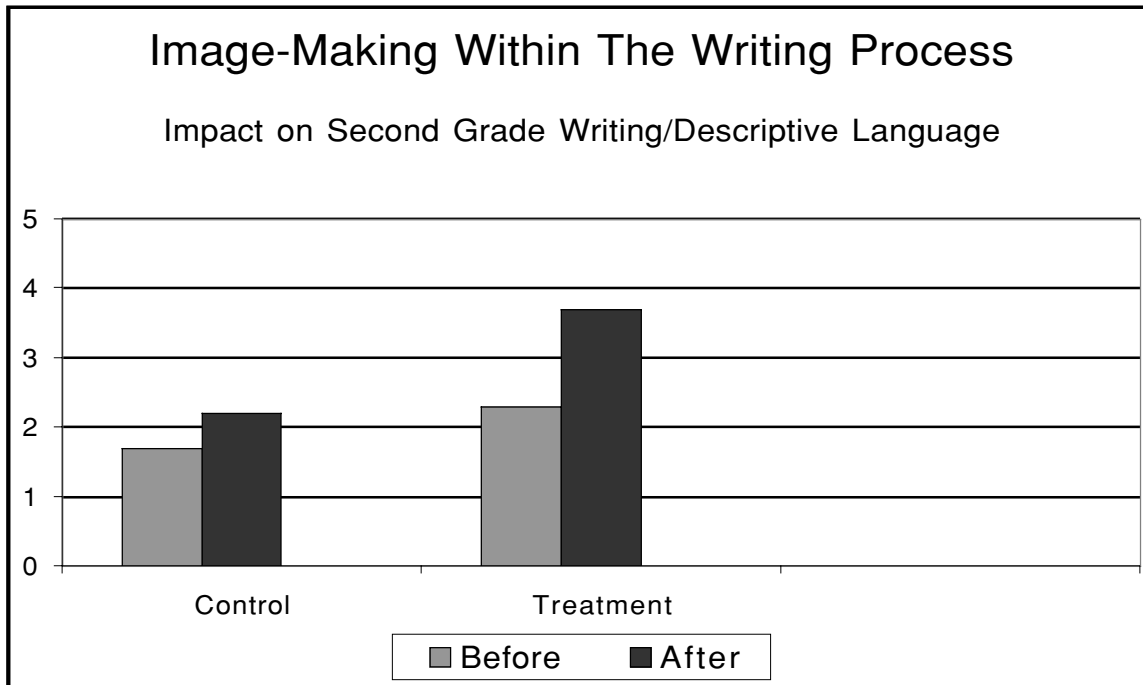


Image-Making Within The Writing Process

Impact on First Grade Writing/Sense of Story





The results of this study were sent to the US Department of Education to be reviewed by their Program Effectiveness Panel of the National Diffusion Network. In March of 1993, Image-Making Within The Writing Process was validated by the National Diffusion Network as an innovative and effective literacy program.