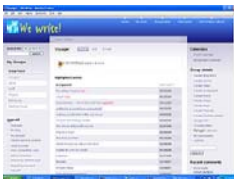




Young Writers Project offers innovative programs that spur students to try harder, learn more and write better. We believe writing is essential for success. Good writing skills help students learn, develop creative ideas and hone critical thinking. Strong writing skills help students express themselves, develop positive self-esteem and connect with the community and world around them.

To connect directly to schools – and reach more students – YWP has developed **We Write!** online writing centers. We provide schools with customized, private Web sites that are integrated into the curriculum of schools and after school programs. We fully support the sites and the teachers efforts with:

- ✓ Teacher training sessions,
- ✓ In-class workshops,
- ✓ Suggested writing exercises and
- ✓ Online feedback and support.



Our latest pilots at a middle and an elementary school with 450 student users have shown that the program changes students' attitudes about writing, about themselves and about their peers. **Early results show that students in this program are enjoying writing more, learning more and are gaining understanding and respect for their fellow students in exciting ways.**

YWP believes these sites could revolutionize the way writing is taught: Students are comfortable with the digital medium; they like the socialization that occurs around the writing; their learning is deepened because they publish to and receive feedback from each other and they are building confidence. In addition, disengaged students are engaging.

WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT WE WRITE! | A sampling from students and teachers:

- “I used to hate to write; now I love it.” – An 8th grade student to her School Board on what she thought of her school's We Write! site.
- “I am amazed at how creative and talented my classmates are. Some of them never say anything in class, and on the site, I get to see their ideas and their work.” – An 8th grade student.
- “I am absolutely amazed by what my kids are doing. They are writing on vacation! The site has helped me get so much more done.” – 5th grade teacher.

ABOUT YOUNG WRITERS PROJECT | Young Writers Project began in 2003 as a feature in *The Burlington Free Press* in partnership with the Vermont chapter of the National Writing Project. The motivation was to affirm student voices by publishing their best work and to help teachers instruct writing. Initially the feature combined best practice teaching techniques with samples of student work. In subsequent years, the project broadened to include tips from professional authors and submissions from students and, eventually, as the volume of submissions mushroomed, a weekly presentation of student work with teaching material posted online.



In September 2006, Young Writers Project became an independent nonprofit and expanded its publishing partners to include **five daily newspapers** as well as Vermont Public Radio, Vermont Public Television and several nonprofit arts organizations which present student work live on stage. Since becoming a nonprofit, we have received over 7,000 submissions as well as 500 submissions of visual art. Our plan is to expand the number of publications and organizations who publish and present students' best work.

WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT THE NEWSPAPER SERIES | A sampling from students, teachers and readers:

- “The students who were published were invited to make a special presentation at the school board meeting. The fact that the student writers published were not just the ‘usual suspects’ – the high-flying, honors-society, sports-playing kids – was significant. The Board knows one of the students and his complicated family background and was stunned by the good writing he did.” – *High school teacher*
- “You feel really good about yourself, like, ‘Oh wow. People really like my work!’” – *High school student, on what it’s like to get published.*
- “It is astounding to realize the depth of thought these school children possess and their amazing ability to transfer their thoughts into the written word.” – *A reader.*



In 2006, YWP also created an interactive Web site where young writers can share work, give and receive feedback and write about school, the news, books and their lives. An estimated 2,500 students have posted an additional 13,000 pieces of writing on this online community of young writers. In addition, YWP developed the College Mentors program in which top college students provide students constructive feedback online.

WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT YOUNGWRITERSPROJECT.ORG | A sampling from students, teachers and readers:

- “Thank you so much for the amazing environment that you have helped to create on YWP. It’s definitely gotten many of us through a lot of hard times and helped us sort out our lives and feelings in ways that we couldn’t have alone.” – *High school senior*
- “Possibly I’ll never be able to thank you enough for all your site has done for me. I realize how sappy this sounds, but it’s nothing short of truth.” – *High school freshman.*

Together these programs help us achieve our mission to engage students to write, help them improve and publish their best work. Our objective is to reach as many students as possible, particularly disinterested or “at risk” students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

FOR MORE | To find out how you can get your school and students participating in these exciting programs, please contact Geoffrey Gevalt, an award-winning writer and editor and founder of the Young Writers Project, at: ggevvalt@youngwritersproject.org or the address below.

Visit youngwritersproject.org/wewrite for examples of student writing from the We Write! sites and a short video of student reaction to the We Write! program.