



EVALUATION DESCRIPTION

For the past three years, we've engaged MEMconsultants, a respected Seattle-based firm that specializes in process and outcome evaluation and has extensive experience working with arts education programs, to hone and implement our annual WITS program evaluation. Our evaluation tools include: a robust logic model; updated student, teacher, and writer surveys all designed with question alignment across surveys; and a corresponding WITS writer observation form. Based on our learnings each year, with MEM's guidance we continue to refine our evaluation process to better assess our impact and inform our future program decisions.

Evaluation Data Sources

- Program Statistics
- Student, Writer, & Teacher Surveys
- Student Interviews

Guiding Questions

- **Participation Rates:** Who participates in WITS?
- **Participant Experience:** What do students, teachers, writers, and schools experience during a WITS residency?
- **Program Quality:** Do writers deliver a high-quality experience for students?
- **Program Outcomes:**
 - Do students engage more in the writing process, build skills, and increase their writing confidence?
 - Do students practice or develop other 21st century skills as a result of WITS?
 - Do teachers change their teaching practice with new lessons, develop fresh techniques, and/or learn new ways of encouraging students in their writing?



2018/19 PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Participation Rates

- 28 WITS writers in residence worked with:
 - 29 public K-12 schools and Seattle Children's Hospital
 - 5,677 students
 - 215 classrooms taught
 - 156 unique teachers at

Contact Hours

- Writers had over 59,298 writing instruction contact hours with students
- Each student received 10.5 hours of instruction

Closing the Opportunity Gap

- 2 in 5 students served by WITS are in populations with limited access to arts enrichment opportunities, including:
 - 34% were students from low-income families (based on free & reduced meal rates).
 - 572 youth participated during extended hospital stays.

PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

Teacher satisfaction with WITS

- 89% of teachers strongly agree that they enjoyed working with their WITS writer; 5% agree.
- 86% strongly agree that they would like to participate in WITS again; 11% agree.
- 77% strongly agree that WITS met or exceeded their expectations; 14% agree.

“I have never had a more successful co-teaching experience than I had with our WITS writer. She developed strong relationships with students and had engaging lessons.” – WITS classroom teacher

Student satisfaction with WITS

- 4 out of 5 older students agree that their writer listened to them & gave them feedback.
- 2 out of 3 older students indicate that their WITS class created a sense of belonging.

“I really enjoyed having a mentor other than the year-round teacher to get a new perspective and to learn fresh creative lessons.” – Older Youth Participant

PROGRAM IMPACT

Writing Skills Development

- The majority of teachers and students agree that students’ writing skills improved as a result of participation in WITS.
 - Teachers – 88%
 - Younger youth (K – 5th grade) – 70%
 - Older youth (6th – 12th grade) – 63%
- 75% of younger youth and 72% of older youth said they will continue to use the writing skills they learned from WITS.

“I have a lot of students who have difficulty expressing their ideas when writing. With the poetry unit, I saw these students writing pieces that blew me away with how detailed and deep they were.” – WITS Classroom Teacher

“I teach a self-contained special-ed English Language Arts class with many students who are disengaged with school and have strong aversions to anything school related. Writing poetry gave them an outlet to express their feelings while expanding their writing skills in a creative way.” – WITS Classroom Teacher



21st Century Skill Development: Teachers are most likely to report that WITS supports improvement in collaboration and critical thinking.

- 79% of teachers said many or most of their students developed collaboration skills.
- 74% of teachers said many or most of their students developed critical thinking skills.

Student Habits & Attitudes

- 79% of older youth reported that they are proud of the work they put into their WITS writing.
- Over 2 out of 3 younger students reported increased confidence and a desire to write and participate in WITS again in the future.
- 74% of teachers strongly agree that students developed greater enjoyment of writing; 21% agree.
- Writers reported that more than 70% of their students built empathy for their peers.



*“My favorite part of WITS was presenting my work at the end. **I felt confident in my poem and my writing** so I faced my fear of public speaking. It ended up being fun and gave me a boost of confidence.” – **Older Youth Participant***

*“The best thing about WITS was the feeling of making my own poem... I didn’t want to, but in the end I was proud.” – **Younger Youth Participant***

Impact on Teachers:

- 79% of teachers strongly agree they have gained new knowledge, skills, and/or techniques working with their WITS writers; 12% agree.
- 72% of teachers strongly agree that WITS supports them to meet their classroom goals; 21% agree.
- 67% of teachers strongly agree that they have or will apply things they’ve learned through WITS to their teaching practice; 23% agree.
- 93% of teachers agree that the partnership with WITS strengthened their school’s language arts program.

*“The project that the WITS writer created engaged students more than the assignments I typically give, and she reminded me through this project that people like to write about themselves and their experiences. Since my goal is simply to get them to write, her work showed me how to be more flexible in order to get a desired result.” – **WITS Classroom Teacher***