

**LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY**

Teaching Writing in Secondary Schools:  
An Exploratory Study of Lebanese Private Schools

By  
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## Dedication

To my family. You were all adamant on pushing me to get to this place, supporting me throughout and believing in me more than I believed in myself. Getting to this point would have been impossible had you all not given me the love and encouragement that you foster in you as great and outstanding people. Thank you.

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# Teaching Writing in Secondary Schools: An Exploratory Study of Lebanese Private Schools

Najla-Maria Moufarrij

## ABSTRACT

The English teaching of writing at the Secondary level in Second Language classrooms is a prominent issue of research nowadays since learners have found themselves unable to express themselves freely with the academic restraints at their level. There is a decrease in the learners' motivation to write and create writing of their own at this stage as well as a decline in teacher-creativity in the classroom.

This study sought to investigate how the teaching of writing is occurring at two Lebanese private schools. One offers the Lebanese Program and the other offers the American Program. A comparison between both answered the questions of what is being taught with regards to writing, the teaching methods used and the learners' opinions on all these at the grade levels of 10 and 11. The data analyzed were the curricula of each school at the targeted levels, the interviews that were conducted with the teachers and coordinators of these levels, and the answers of learners to the questionnaires administered to them. The results were that the American Program is more of a motivating tool for the learners than the Lebanese Program whereby teachers find themselves free to manipulate the curriculum with innovative methods of teaching and learners find themselves free to express themselves as opposed to teachers and learners that are part of the Lebanese Program.

Keywords: Lebanese Private Schools, Second Language Classrooms, Teaching of Writing, Secondary Level, Teaching Methods, Motivation and Creativity.

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# List of Abbreviations

L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
LB	Lebanese Program
ESL	English as a Second Language

# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Looking into the educational field now, it is evident that researchers have been trying to understand why some learners are interested in writing while others are reluctant about it. The ones who are reluctant are usually more in number, and this sets a de-motivational learning environment within the classroom as certain attitudes are contagious. Cordaro (2007) states that the comprehension of this reluctance and the way learners simplify their urge to write in limiting it to teachers' orders brings forth a question of motivation, whether it is absent or present and how to use it ultimately for the teaching of writing .

#### **1.1.1 Effective Teaching of Writing**

Effective teaching of writing occurs in a range with a focus on the mechanics of writing all the way on to free expression. Writing should occur in a setting where enough time is being allotted for writing assignments, where the teacher works more on a one-to-one basis rather than in a lecturing mode and where learners are able to be evaluated by teacher and other learners to draft, revise and edit (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Snow, 2014; Hawthorne, 2007).

A more recent study, although its main focus was on k-6 grade levels, established an important new basis for change in teaching writing even for secondary levels. Additional

characteristics to the aforementioned ones for effective teaching of writing are concerned with creating a culture that supports writing literacy. The main goal for effective teaching of writing is to encourage writing literacy for both parents and learners. Some stated characteristics for effective teaching of writing include the attention for each learner's individual needs, apprenticeship, appreciation for a variety of cultures within one classroom, especially in Teaching English to Speakers of Second Language (TESOL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, the use of technology for interactive learning and for educating parents, professional development for the staff and a re-evaluation of the curriculum itself by teachers and administrators (Reed, 2009).

### **1.1.2 Motivation and Creativity**

The thought of motivation to create and write is popular among researchers in this field. Without the proper motivation, the learner is not able to be as creative as possible to come up with unique pieces of writing. Motivation and creativity are linked together, where if there is no proper motivation, be it by the teacher and/or the learner, creativity can be compromised (Hennissey & Amabile 2010;Runco, 2005)

Chandler (1999), brought creativity and motivation together in the form of a creative writing program that enhances self-efficacy; which in turn develops intrinsic motivation towards tasks. The more the learner is confident in themselves and their ability to write, the more they are motivated to do so. To help them have this motivation, the stirring of their individual imagination is needed. Chandler, in her own experiment, tried out the WRITE program which is a workshop with a mixture of expressive writing, peer help, learning from others' experiences in writing, and feedback from teachers and

peers. After undertaking this workshop, the learners expressed that they liked writing whatever came to mind because they were encouraged to do so. They also said that with no structure, they were able to include more ideas and thoughts into their writing and pick the genre they would like to follow for it. Chandler classified their responses into self-esteem and self-efficacy. She did so since the feeling that they can write anything boosts the learners' confidence while having no structure for writing boosts their self-efficacy in writing which, in other words, increases their motivation to write and create.

## **1.2 The Statement of the Study**

There is a common realization among educators that there indeed is a need to further look into the teaching and learning of writing because the motivation for it has decreased making the level of creativity in learners decrease with it. Although there have been many studies published on that matter in the past two decades, nothing involving Lebanon and its various educational systems has been published. Not all of the research conducted worldwide can be applicable to our curriculum and culture although the decline in student engagement in writing lessons, especially at the secondary level, is evident in our country too.

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The focus of this exploratory case study is on finding new ways of teaching writing to motivate second language (L2) learners because of previous personal experience in learning and teaching. So, the purpose of this study is to discover where motivation for writing is lacking in private schools in rural Lebanon and the reasons behind it to be able to come up with recommendations that suit both our culture and curricula.

## **1.4 Research Context**

This study concentrates on the teaching of writing in Lebanon; the exploration of ways of teaching writing is restricted to private schools in it and for the grade levels 10 and 11 in classrooms with learners who have English as their second language (L2). Therefore, the focus is based on personal experience at a suburban private school and how the teaching of writing was not motivational for us learners and how this has been going on for some time in many other private schools in Lebanon.

Practically-speaking, the research was conducted in 2 private schools with one offering the Lebanese Program (LB) and the other the American Program. The time needed for the collection of data on the status of teaching writing in both schools including the writing curricula, interviews with teachers and coordinators and questionnaires from the learners of grade 10 and 11 was two weeks for both schools.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

To be precise, the study aims at finding answers for the following questions

1. What are the different teaching methods and activities used in teaching writing in both American and Lebanese programs in L2 English classes at the grade levels 10 and 11?
2. What is being taught with regards to writing at these levels in both programs?
3. What motivates the learners to create and write?

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Findings of this study helped form a perception of the writing strategies used for teaching and learning and for motivation too. They also helped in exposing any lacking

element for teaching of writing creatively and motivationally in the system. Hence, Lebanese teachers could benefit from the findings of research in developing more creative writing strategies that do not just motivate learners to write what is assigned to them, but to develop enough effort to achieve creativity in the sense that they venture into other writing experiences also.

### **1.7 Lebanese Program versus American Program**

There are three different educational programs in Lebanon and they are the Lebanese Baccalaureate, the International Baccalaureate and the American High School (CERD, 2014). For accessibility reasons, my study included the first and last one. The two programs differ from each other: Only learners with the Lebanese nationality can be in the Lebanese program. The latter is divided into four different tracks when the learners reach the secondary level or high school – General Sciences, Life Sciences, Sociology and Economics and Humanities. Most schools no longer offer the Humanities track. These sub-programs include a preset variety of subject-matters that the learners need to take. The learners then sit for an official exam at the level of grade 12 according to their chosen track. The coefficients for each subject-matter differ according to the track, where math and sciences are given more importance in the Life Sciences and General Sciences track, for example, sociology and economics are given more importance than math and sciences in the Sociology and Economics track. The textbooks used are mainly the ones assigned by the Ministry of Education by the representative: Center for Educational Research and Development (UNESCO-IBE, 2006).

Nonetheless, the American Program is for learners who hold a foreign citizenship and offers them diverse courses of subject-matter. They can choose some

elective courses, whereas there are some courses that are core ones that they are obliged to take. There is no official exam; instead, learners get into university as freshmen. The textbooks used and curricula abided by are based on American publications.

## **1.8 Definition of Terms**

Quantitatively, motivation is linked to achievement level due to energy and persistence of the person. Yet, if taken qualitatively and within the realm of this study, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are concerned with the learners' self-efficacy, instigation, beliefs and trust in their surroundings to take initiative and, subsequently, create and perform well (Chowdhury & Shahabuddin, 2007). In an attempt to explain why high school students lack motivation, Ford and Roby (2013), came up with intrinsic and extrinsic sources of motivation that can be directly related to the motivation of learners to write. Dornyei (1994) sums it up and speaks of motivation in L2 and foreign language classrooms by stating what components are needed in this kind of classrooms: He states that motivation is achieved through the system i.e. the curriculum, through teacher incentive, through learners' self-confidence and initiative (intrinsic) and through their need for achievement in performance (extrinsic). In brief, the teacher, the method of teaching they use, the learners' self-confidence and belief along with their intention of good performance, the authentic tasks they carry out that align with their beliefs and interests, and the introduction of new and sometimes unconventional techniques of teaching help motivate learners. In relation to teachers and motivation, the issue of language awareness should be taken into consideration. Teachers ought to look beyond grammar and structure and look into the different opportunities for language use through the usage of various tools to bring this awareness into the classroom. When learners

themselves become aware of these opportunities that teachers provide through metacognitive tasks, they become more motivated to learn, and in this case, write (Van Lier, 1996).

As for the teaching of writing, there is no need to define the latter terms rather than the implication of the act itself. The teaching of writing is paramount because it is what learners carry with them to university and then to work. They have to submit research papers, texts and essays, applications to universities, cover letters, and fieldwork reports etc. One would actually think that this fact alone would be a motivation for writing. Then again, one would think it (Kiuahara, Graham & Hawken, 2009).

Zooming in on teaching it, this ranges from teaching writing of a five-paragraph essay starting in elementary school to teaching the writing of persuasive, descriptive, argumentative and narrative essays starting middle school and mastering them at the secondary level. The teaching of writing aims at the development of technical savvy and professional skills in learners (Gray, 2014). This is an international and very standard process of the teaching of writing, applicable, but not limited to just these four genres, in Lebanon.

However teaching writing in L2 classrooms has its own implications. Hyland (2013), states that there is a difference between L2 learners in the English writing classroom and first language (L1) learners in it. The learners differ in their culture, their proficiencies, their motivations and their expectations. The rich background that they bring to the classroom has to be an incentive for the teachers not to treat them as deficient L1 learners but as independent L2 learners and to give them the tools to extract these rich backgrounds that they come from and use them in their writing.

Finally, the vaguest term of them all, creativity, is simply defined. In all fields, the holistic view of creativity is the ability to produce something unique and purposeful. Elaborately, the requirements for creativity are fabricating new ideas and/or combining ideas in original associations: divergent and convergent thinking, respectively (Kampylis & Valtanen, 2010). The way creativity will be dealt with in this study is through linking it to motivation whether it is the learner's creativity or the teacher's in making writing lessons more interesting for learners.

## **1. 9 Thesis Division**

The thesis is divided into six main chapters. Chapter One is the introduction with the general idea of this study, its rationale and context, the definition of the key terms and the research questions. After that, there is the literature review on the topic which is in chapter Two. It includes the various teaching methods and experiments for writing and the gap discovered in research with regards to Lebanon. Chapter Three includes the method of research that contains details on sampling, participants and setting, the instruments used, data collection techniques, reliability and validity and ethical considerations. Chapter Four consists of the findings in detail after the research was conducted using all three instruments. The fifth chapter comprises the data analysis as part of the discussion of the paper. Finally, the last chapter, Chapter Six holds the conclusion, recommendations with regards to the research itself, and the limitations of the study.

# Chapter Two

## Literature Review

### 2.1 The Importance of Motivation and Creativity in the Learning of Writing

I believe I have already suggested the importance of motivating secondary level L2 learners to write, yet an in-depth look at this need is recommended, and I shall oblige. Going back to the standard teaching of writing there are many claims about the death of creativity in an L2 writing class which results in the reduction of learner motivation leading to no appeal for writing. Most learners of L1 and L2 backgrounds reach a point at the secondary level where they write what their teacher told them to write and in the way that they think gets them the best grade. Moreover, when looking at such statements with an eye for complexity, it has been shown that the methods of teaching, the repetitive types of essays asked of learners to write and the mundane prompts and subjects given them, although sometimes across the curriculum, are some factors for de-motivation (Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009; Smith, 2000; Troia, Harbaugh, Shankland, Wolbers & Lawrence, 2013).

This lack of renewal in the teaching of writing removes the creative factor of writing by/for the teacher and for the learner, and since this is somehow a spiral, removes motivation too. Gray (2014), in her Critical Discourse Analysis of two personal recounts of learning writing experiences at school, reveals how resistant learners are towards writing tasks because of the fear of making mistakes and the need to directly,

and at once, produce a 5-paragraph essay that has to yield good results and appease the teacher's subjective taste in writing. Out of personal experience as a teacher and a learner, I have found that at the secondary level, process writing and peer correction, if they ever existed at lower levels, are no longer included during writing lessons. That is because of the lack of time for one lesson and sometimes as part of the curriculum's requirements.

Otherwise, a lax classroom, with open discussions, workshops, teacher-learner collaboration and group work amount to a motivational atmosphere that help learners write. Furthermore, teachers who let learners choose their topics at times or give them literature and writing prompts that include authentic, real-world and teenage circumstances offer learners with a wide range of ideas and thoughts that in themselves instigate further initiative of writing in learners (Halpin, Goldenberg, and Halpin, 1990). Moreover, teachers who build a writing workplace to help learners understand their identity as writers take part in authentic teaching. Having a defined audience, with a set purpose for their writing that is linked to the outside world and understanding the impact of their writing, makes learners become more serious about what they write and more motivated to write. Learners would feel compelled to apply authentic concepts in their writing, be it academic or self-expressive, making them feel that they are taking part in the community of writers (Cox, Ortmeier-Hooper, & Tirabassi, 2009; Bourelle, 2012).

Therefore, there is a variety of ignored creative techniques to teach writing, even if it is the most technical of writings, that can help motivate secondary L2 learners when they've come to the point where they have seen it all.

## **2.2 Exploration of Diverse Writing Learning Techniques Worldwide**

Starting with the simplest technique used in the teaching of writing, writing across the curriculum is a shy step towards creativity and motivation in the writing classroom but is effective, nonetheless. Realizing that one of the aims for learning writing is to be able to write comprehensibly and professionally, at times, in the field of study of the learner, teaching writing across the curriculum is almost always one of the building stones for a writing program that motivates creatively. The languages used in these technical fields are constructed ones rather than natural ones and so, much of their jargon is hard to learn and include in writing. Consequently, there is a call for a certain kind of grammar and knowledge of sentence structure and writing to become general in the sense that they can be used within any subject matter. This openness to other disciplines encourages L2 learners to develop critical thinking and creative skills for their writings in order to be able to develop a *passe-partout* yet unique style (Faulkner, 2013). In addition, Writing across the curriculum permits the English teacher to partner up with teachers of other subject-matters. Within that procedure, learner feedback is needed as well as their help in developing projects and tasks that are in collaboration with other subject-matter (Blumner, & Childers 2011. This involvement of the learners in the teaching process touches upon their metacognitive skills and encourages them to carry out tasks on a more advanced level of motivation (Hillyard & BothellFollow, 2012).

A much bolder and direct tie with creativity and motivation in the teaching of writing in English as a Second Language classroom (ESL) is writing by using self-expression as a tool. Although some may argue that this is part of the creative writing

genres, Frattaroli, Thomas & Lyubomirsky (2011) argue that it can be used as an initial instrument for the stirring of creativity and motivation in order to inspire any other technical and academic task. Their research is mainly focused on learners who have to take standardized tests and who have performance anxiety. Their findings can benefit any writing teacher who wants to diminish their learners' anxiety for them to be able to produce product essays that are mostly well-written from the start and increase their learners' freedom when fulfilling writing tasks. Self-expression reduces negativity and balances emotion which helps keep learners at peace with the tasks at hand. So, when L2 learners want to write persuasive or argumentative essays etc. their newfound freedom of expression will make them more creative and less repetitive because their fear of writing something the teacher does not expect becomes irrelevant (Peterson, 2014).

In a classroom-based case study of expressive writing in ESL classrooms, the expressive writing technique called for creative tasks that involved the writer and their innermost feelings and thoughts more than usual. Since, it is a very personal form of writing, the feedback for it is very positive resulting in the boost of the learners' confidence and subsequently their growing liking and re-motivation for writing. This is especially efficient for L2 learners who do not have an up-to-the-level command of the language (Bilton & Sivasubramaniam, 2009).

Delving more into the alternative ways of teaching writing for L2 secondary school learners to motivate them to create is to implement ungraded writing processes and use them as academic conversation and writing skills' enhancements. This way of writing shifts the focus of teaching and learning from writing as a lesson on its own to it being just a tool for language learning and conversation. Writing revolves around problem-solving here which in its turn motivates the learner to think critically and

creatively (Tan, 2007). The learners can write about whatever they want as long as their writings conform to the original style of the genre chosen. Yet, the teacher would not grade their writing; rather, they would converse about it in the classroom, get feedback from peers and learn how to better it. For example, Young (1997) suggests letters: He says that this assignment can be an across-the-curriculum assignment whereby two friends write letters to each other as a tool for any subject matter. The learners are not nervous about their writing or the grading and get to enjoy the group work, peer feedback and freedom of writing.

Another technique is the authentic real-world approach towards writing. When L2 learners realize that there are other L2 writers out there producing essays and texts that interest real people, a whole new realization of writing takes form for them. With this realization comes the responsibility for genuine writing on their part: questioning the purpose for their writing, who they are when writing, and who their targeted audience is (Cox, Ortmeier-Hooper, & Tirabassi, 2009; Bourelle, 2012). With all these in mind, a setup for a whole new way of writing and perspective on it takes place, motivating learners to be creative enough to grasp this audience's attention. An example of real-world activities could be holding a debate in class to teach the argumentative essay (Wilson, 2008).

On to unconventional yet even more creative ways to motivate L2 learners to imagine, create and then write, blogging is admittedly a very valid option. I, myself, am a product of Literature teaching through blogging, and I think it was the most experiential learning I have ever undergone. Still, blogs have been used for ESL learning for some time since they provide a safe environment with no direct commentary or even grading except through the web by both teacher and peers. This helps improve the

learners' writing skills. Even more, they help in changing an L2 learner's attitude towards writing since blogging is, though collaborative, quite individualistic and less open to scrutiny (Khampusaen, 2012). As proof to the latter, Kitchakaran (2014) conducted a study whereby the grades of EFL learners, after learning narrative writing through blog collaboration and feedback, were compared to their grades before that. There was a significant rise in grades after the blogging experience.

As for one of the most creative methods of writing that is not just creative itself but demands creativity from L2 learners, storytelling through video-making is an optimal choice. In an experiment carried out on secondary level learners, a discovery was made that video compositions were much more enticing to learners than writing on paper. It was noted that the learners were making a big effort to get their ideas through by using music and images without writing anything. They would have conversations with the rest of the class to discuss their stories and narratives. The writing itself occurs in jotting down the events, taking note of their sequence, explaining on paper the details of every scene, their efforts and their own reflections (Bruce, 2009). Such projects open up more than one opportunity for various writing genres at one time within a fun context for learners. The only downside is the time it takes to do all this, but teachers and administration ought to make more time for writing. However, the collaboration between learners to come up with such projects has a great impact on their engagement and motivation (Kearney & Schuck, 2003; Ryan, 2002). Mostly what learners learn from such projects is envisioning the events of their writing, and this can be transferred as a tool for writing to any other type of writing (Bedard & Fuhrken, 2010).

Finally, there is an impact on the use of comics in an ESL classroom on language acquisition in listening, speaking and writing while taking culture into consideration. Focusing on the writing part, Gomez (2014) provides a set of recommended exercises for writing from comics. She states that finding comics that are culturally suitable for one's learners encourages and motivates them because it gives them a sense of belonging in the educational world they partake in. Then, she suggests a few interactive exercises that ask for the learner's imaginative initiative, like finishing a comic strip through writing or giving a personal description of the character etc. Such an approach to teaching writing is culturally suitable and creatively exciting for L2 learners (Cary, 2004).

### **2.3 Framework for Curricula Analysis**

The first question raised with regards to curricula is the following: What are the bases that hold a curriculum together? A standard TESOL/EFL curriculum is one that designs writing lessons for all levels with a development of skills categorized according to level. On the teacher scale and in lesson planning, teachers should consider 8 elements that are summarized in the following: The quantity of writing that will occur and its division into assessed and non-assessed writing, the timing for the writing done and the decision to have untimed writing, how much of grammar and syntax are involved, how much of reading is involved, and how the assessment will take place (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Snow, 2014).

However, what makes a good curriculum, generally-speaking, was sought to be explored by Stephen Tchudi (1990). He realized that curricula that are structured and organized and include all that is needed for the learners' education after school, are the

most efficient. Still, they need room for flexibility for teachers and learners. The topics and genres of essays for writing should include all possible options for the teachers and learners to choose from and teacher methods and ways ought not to be stated but have a basis for them to develop and be enhanced.

The framework for the analysis of curricula for this study was based on Ivanić's (2004) six discourses of teaching writing (See also, Benesch, 2012; Starfield, 2012). What she means by discourse are all the beliefs of writing, whatever is related to it, how it is taught, how it is perceived and the product of it as a whole. The discourses are the following:

1. Skills Discourse: It is the trend that is mostly based on the learning of the skills of writing from organization of the essay to the details such as the thesis statement formation.
2. Genre Discourse: It is the trend of focusing on genres that serve a certain purpose and therefore, follow a certain tone, include certain corresponding terms etc.
3. Process Discourse: It is when the main way of writing is through a process of writing drafts, editing, revising and then re-editing etc. which frame the creativity discourse
4. Creativity Discourse: This discourse has teachers less focused on language and/or structure rather on style and content where they encourage learners to write how they feel, or choose topics of their own interests.
5. Social Practices Discourse: It is the trend to widen the range of purposes of writing even if the writing is of one genre. The focus is not just on linguistic ability, but on the function of writing itself. Writing becomes a set of patterns

that touch upon a lot of matters and is concerned with more subject-matters than just English.

6. Sociopolitical Discourse: It is similar to the Social Practices Discourse, but also provides learners with the chance for a critical eye towards writing: questioning genres, the patterns, the structure and the purpose etc.

To Ivanic, a proper curriculum has to have all 6 incorporated and adopted by the teachers.

## **2.4 The Lebanese Writing Case and the Gap in Research**

As one notices from the above discussion, research for secondary school writing in ESL classrooms is quite rare in this particularity although the issue of the loss of motivation for writing is quite prominent in the educational field. One cannot deny that there is a problem with regards to the learning of writing and how it is taught and the consequences of all this. This is why it was necessary to go over the still developing new methods of approach towards writing before wanting to conduct further research on that.

Still now, to be able to synthesize and develop my case into a statement, let us go back to the basics and look into some teaching-of-writing givens. Writing tasks help learners expand their writing views and hence, write. So, the way the tasks are created and administered affect the way the learner writes, is motivated to write, and creates. Tasks have to be creative, problem-solving ones that help generate ideas by the learners. For example, learners ought to have writing exercises where they are given a set of words that do not necessarily have any common grounds and are asked to write a short play using these words significantly (Boscolo & Gelati, 2008).

Learning through genre understanding is a requirement, especially for ESL learners since it exposes them to model texts. This encourages text analysis, critical thinking and evaluation in order for the learner to be able to similarly compose a text of their own (Rajamangala, 2010). Yet, this is not a given for motivation or creativity; instead just a basis for teaching writing on which the variety of teaching methods are based.

Last but not least, a teacher should create the optimal level of competence among learners by generally opting for giving feedback and sometimes scoring their products. In a preferred process writing method, scoring should happen at the end, while feedback by teacher and peers is welcome for all stages. This will build both intrinsic and extrinsic basic motivation on which, again, other methods for motivation and creation are built (Boscolo & Gelati, 2008; Runco, 2005).

In addition, I firmly believe in the need to teach writing creatively, to instigate learner motivation. That is because this motivation helps the learners, in turn, create out of their own initiative. Unfortunately, there is no published evidence and studies of how writing is taught in Lebanon at the secondary level making research in this a major necessity for the Lebanese educational and academic field. Such research would take part in the enhancement of the Lebanese L2 learner's experience and writing abilities.

As reviewed in the Literature, writing ought to be taught with an open mind to motivate learners for writing and creativity through a well-processed curriculum that can be manipulated accordingly. The following chapter introduces the methodology and the instruments used to conduct this research.

# Chapter Three

## Methodology

### 3.1 Method

The main aim of the study is to discover how writing is taught at, mainly, the secondary level in both the Lebanese and American programs at two Lebanese private schools and look for possibilities of change and improvement for more learner motivation and creativity. This was done through probing into three main targets for research: the different methods used in teaching writing by English teachers, the genres of writing, thinking and writing skills, different writing activities taught and assigned at the grade levels of 10 and 11, and the learners' points of view of this whole teaching/learning experience which convey their motivation and creativity in writing. Therefore, I adopted the case study approach that looks into an issue and explores its angles to uncover the circumstances of it in a holistic manner (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2011). This type of case study, being exploratory, helps in discovering the different approaches to the teaching of writing in both programs and then in coming up with an enhanced concoction of diverse approaches to the teaching of writing wherever needed through the use and collection of both qualitative and quantitative data as part of a mixed methods approach; though the study has more of a qualitative trait than a quantitative one (Yin, 2013). Out of experience, it was expected that the American program would have a better impact on the learners with regards to the teaching of writing in motivating them to create, while the Lebanese program would be considered a source of frustration to both the learners and teachers because of its mostly technical

nature and forced curriculum. Consequently, I had to gather data from both programs and from teachers and learners.

### **3.2 Sampling**

Since this is an exploratory case study I was convinced that the research that occurs should take into consideration all available perspectives to collect as much data I need in the limited amount of time I have. I wanted the study to be able to reveal the current actuality of the status of teaching writing in both programs as much as possible since this is indeed what exploratory case studies generically aim to achieve in their respective topics of research (Yin, 2013). Hence, I wanted to include learners, teachers/coordinators and the curricula in my study.

Two kinds of samplings occurred in two stages of choosing participants. I purposefully chose suburban private schools and targeted the grade levels of 10 and 11 and not 12 as it is a critical grade level in the Lebanese program where learners have to sit for the official exam at the end of the academic year. In this purposeful sampling, I originally had 5 schools in mind for my research in order to obtain the optimal equal average amount of learners in both the Lebanese programs and American ones, but it is really difficult to attain permission for research at Lebanese, suburban private schools. And so, I had to limit myself to two schools with each following one of the aforementioned academic programs.

Then, I conveniently had to pick a class section from each grade level in the school with an LB program because the other school that has the American Program has only one section for each grade level. I tried to keep an equal number for the amount of participants from each program or at least a close common one. As for the teachers and

coordinators, I wanted to meet with the English teachers of the grade levels taking part in the study as well as the coordinators. Whosoever was available during the day which I had picked to gather my data in, would be interviewed, out of convenience, again.

So, I used purposive sampling as is advised when carrying out an exploratory case study while convenience sampling was used in order to be fair towards both schools and for the validity of the quantitative data collected. For its validity is how accurately an instrument is able to collect measurable data, the start of this process for validity is through having a sample of participants that is conveniently similar in position. The participants from each school have to be in similar circumstances with regards to age, academics and level division. If one decides to have a class of participants from each level, this should apply at all levels in both schools (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2011).

### **3.3 Participants and Setting**

The participants in the study were from both the American and Lebanese program and from two private Lebanese Schools. The participants from the Lebanese program have the Lebanese nationality and Arabic as their first, native language and English as their second. Whereas, the learners from the American program may be Lebanese who possess a foreign citizenship or foreigners who live in Lebanon. Most of them may or may not have Arabic as their second language, but have English as their second or third but not first.

The learners who were included in this study were in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades in both programs. These two grades were purposefully selected because in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade in the Lebanese program teachers must teach a standard curriculum to their students to prepare them for the official exams. I did not want this to come in the way of my

research since I aim at looking into the diverse methods and curricula of teaching writing used by teachers and that are not standardized and appointed to them.

In order to reach maximum validity within my quantitative data among participants in both schools, I included all grade 10 and 11 learners in the American program at the school where it is offered since they have one section for each level, and then chose a section for each grade level at the school where the Lebanese program was offered. I had 10 learners in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and 12 learners in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade (22 in total) as participants from the school with the American program, while I had 30 learners in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and 31 learners in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade (61 in total) from the school with the Lebanese program. This made the total of participants from one school close in number to the other without having to exclude learners from the study within one class when it came to the school with a bigger number of learners in one level.

Moving on to the teachers and coordinators, there were two English teachers interviewed in the school with the American program and two English teachers as well as the English coordinator of the Secondary division from the Lebanese program school. The teachers just mentioned were the teachers of grade levels 10 and 11 in each school.

As for the schools, the two of them are well-known private suburban schools in Lebanon. School A is one that has both the Lebanese and American programs as its adopted academic programs while School B is one that only offers the Lebanese program. At the secondary level, all participants from School A were from the American program. Despite the latter fact, many learners in school A came from French or non-English backgrounds. Both schools cater to learners coming from middle to high socio-economic environments.

### **3.4 Instruments**

For this exploratory case study to be holistic it became evident that the use of more than one instrument to collect the data was pertinent (Merriam, 2009). I did not just want to discover how the teaching of writing occurs, the learners' motivation to create and their points of view and what is being taught in writing lessons but I also wanted to know where these learners' motivation to write and create lie and how present that motivation is. This would result in the possibility of construing suitable recommendations from these discoveries for better teaching too. There are two main aims for this exploratory case study which are to cross-examine the three aspects of teaching writing (what is taught, how it is taught and the learners' feedback on that) and to validate or disprove assumptions made about the teaching of writing based on personal experience and former observation. Therefore, I wanted to form certain theories about the teaching of writing through my own observations and then gather evidence, which is both quantitative and qualitative in this area of the study, to validate them (Robson, 2011). This resulted in choosing the curricula, interviews and questionnaires to be the instruments of research and gathering of data for this case study.

To gather data for each research target, one instrument for each was used and adapted for its respective purpose; helping to form a plethora of information which I could later analyze to come up with new ways, suggestions and additions for the teaching of writing (Table 1).

Questionnaires were distributed to all learners participating in the study to extract a variety of their opinions on their whole experience with writing lessons and their own wants and needs for it. Intrinsically, the questions were formed in a way that could later

on help me get to a conclusion with regards to the learners' ability to create and write and their motivation for it. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the English teachers and coordinators of grades 10 and 11 that were available on the day I went to collect the data from the schools. The interviews helped answer questions that were mainly about the teachers' methods of teaching for the genres of writing they are asked to teach and how they deal with their diverse learners. What I aimed at was seeing if the teachers were able to motivate their learners to create and write or if they were actually taking part in the downfall of writing at that level, regardless of the program. Finally, studying the curriculum for each program at the chosen grade levels provided me with a wide and detailed list of what is taught and/or expected of the targeted participants.

While the questions mentioned are the research questions for the exploration of the teaching of writing at grades 10 and 11, the main purpose for them is to see what new recommendations can be given by myself where there is no learner motivation for writing - be it because of the curriculum and/or the ways of teaching.

Through this trio of instruments, triangulation was achieved to offer data for each research question and also enhance the validity of this study. The data gathered from the curricula, from the teachers and from the learners would give three angles of insight as evidence for my research questions. What one instrument supplies as answers, the rest need to validate. If each set of data brought forth by one instrument is similar to the rest, that means that what this study is trying to prove is true and well supported by evidence coming from three different sources; hence the term, "triangulation" is mentioned and achieved. (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2011).

*Table 1: Summary of Use of Instruments for Data Collection for Each Research Question*

<b>Instruments Used</b>	<b>Data Collected</b>	<b>Main Research Question Answered</b>
Questionnaire	Learners' points of view on the teaching of writing	Motivation to write and create
Interviews	Teachers' ways of teaching writing to L2 learners	Different teaching methods of writing used in Lebanon
Curricula	What is prescribed for the teaching of writing	What is being taught at the levels of 11 and 12 in the Lebanese and American program at Lebanese private schools

### **3.5 Data Collection**

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaires**

Although this exploratory case study is mainly to portray how the teaching of writing is occurring in two different programs in grades 10 and 11, it felt like the attainment of the learners' accounts of their experiences with their teachers' teaching of writing and the curricula allotted for their levels was the most paramount piece of information I could discover and explore. This feeling is immensely unprofessional: Just by the fact that it is a feeling, crosses out any scientific relation with this exploratory case study. Yet, it also is unprofessional because it is brought forth by my very personal experience with the learning of writing at these levels and how I felt I was being stripped of my freedom of expression by the Lebanese program and my teachers.

On a more professional note, the questionnaires are a prominent part of this triangulation of instruments within this study. Generally-speaking, questionnaires are a form of documentation because they constitute the quantitative part of the case study. They offer a look into the variations of writing lessons experiences among both types of

learners (learners in the Lebanese and American programs). They also reveal a firsthand account of what it means to learn the designated curricula and be taught with the stated teaching methods; and who else can account all that as a learner but the learners themselves (Merriam, 2009)?

The questionnaire was administered to L2 learners at both schools, and there was only one questionnaire per participant. It took each learner 5 minutes to fill it up. When administering the questionnaires, I would go into the class irrespective of what subject matter the learners were taking at the given moment, and would explain the importance of their honesty in answering the questions for my research. I also would reveal to them that the topic is about how writing is taught at their levels, but I would not say anything that may or may not affect their replies.

The questionnaire included questions about the learners' views of learning writing, of the teaching of writing by their teacher, of their opinions on how it could be enhanced and developed and of what they feel is lacking in it and in them for learning writing too (Appendix A). Directly, the questions seek out the learners' points of view, and also, indirectly, look for points of strength in the programs and their experience for motivation to create as well as points of weakness.

The questionnaire's possible answers for the first 9 questions were bound by the Likert scale: Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree and no opinion. The remaining 2 questions were multiple choice questions with only one possible answer. There were 4 choices for each question with the last choice being "other" and giving the chance to briefly state an opinion.

Before administering it, the questionnaire was piloted on graduate Lebanese students in an American university in Lebanon. These students possessed more than one

language and were able to pinpoint any errors and confusing points in the questionnaire for me to correct.

### **3.5.2 Interviews**

To investigate what is being taught by the teachers themselves and to be able to cross-examine it with how their learners feel about it, I decided to carry out semi-structured interviews with the teachers and coordinators available on the date appointed for data collection (Appendix B). I found out, after having interviewed teachers from both programs, that their answers were highly contrastable at times and comparable at others and could call for a compare/contrast kind of analysis. Fraenkel, Wallen and Hyun (2011), explain the semi-structured interview in the simplest yet most clarifying of ways:

Structured and semi-structured interviews are verbal questionnaires. Rather formal, they consist of a series of questions designed to elicit specific answers from respondents. Often they are used to obtain information that can later be compared and contrasted (p.415).

The questions in the interviews were mainly to discover the ways of teaching and how teachers dealt with their learners, but they were designed to holistically answer all three angles for my exploratory case study. The more detailed targeted points included in the interview questions are the following:

1. Their views on teaching writing in general
2. Their own ways of doing it
3. Their knowledge of alternative techniques and methods for teaching writing

4. The challenges they face in the classroom- linked to learner motivation and creativity
5. The challenges they face to achieve learner motivation and creativity with regards to curricula's demands
6. How they would implement one of the stated worldwide alternative methods in the literature review in their own L2 classroom.
7. Any other comments they have

At School A (American program), two English teachers were interviewed. One teaches grade 10 (T1) and the other grade 11 (T2) in the American program. At School B (LB program), two English teachers were interviewed along with the English coordinator of the division. Similarly to School A, one of the two taught English to grade 10 (T3) learners and the other to grade 11(T4) learners with the coordinator too.

The interviews were semi-structured because at times I probed further, asking for examples, or I would ask questions as sequels to one of the set questions. For instance, with T1, I could not get her to give me specific or diverse activities that she uses to teach writing, so I had to ask again in different ways to get answers. With the English coordinator, I felt free to ask for her opinion on the teaching experiences of T3 and T4 to get a different less subjective/personal perspective, and so the interview with her took approximately 20 minutes. At other times, the interviews were conducted systematically and took on average 10 minutes with each teacher. All interviews were recorded on my smart phone in order to be later paraphrased and analyzed.

### **3.5.3 Curricula**

The Curricula are also considered documentation since they are the raw notes for the teaching of writing for each school (Merriam, 2009). They were used for the study for the mere purpose of being able to check what the teachers are talking about when they mention teaching some things, and what it is that students are praising or complaining about.

The curriculum for School A was obtained through a sent e-mail by the Academic Advisor of this school. In the e-mail the Advisor revealed that the teaching of English is based on the AERO (American Education Reaches Out) standards and a link to the PDF version was attached (Appendix C). The curriculum is an American one for K-12levels. The set writing standards at the secondary level are the same for grades 9 and 10 together and for grades 11 and 12 together. The standards included the use of internet research, writing for a good amount of time, and varying activities for each genre.

The curriculum for School B was obtained by going to the Academic Advisor there and getting a copy of the standards of English (Appendix D). The writing standards for the secondary division are listed together with a frequent inclusion or exclusion of either grade 10, 11 and/or 12.

Cross-examined with the other data from other instruments, the curricula would also provide me with direct information on what is taught as well as what is expected of students versus or in line with what students want. Moreover, they would provide me with indirect information on whether there is space for motivation which enables learners to write and create or not.

## **3.6 Data Analysis**

Content analysis was used for the examination and analysis of data collected from the semi-structured interviews and the curricula of both schools.

However, Excel was used to count and put in graphs the quantitative information gathered from the questionnaires administered in both schools.

### **3.6.1 Qualitative Analysis**

Qualitative analysis may sound abstract to many at first glance, but it is made concrete and scientific through various techniques used all together. First one should identify their purpose for their study which is the main aim of their study, and then follow it up with statements that have to do with that aim which are the research questions. After having sought for data to answer these questions, one should sort the data out by looking into recurring patterns, differences and gaps that need to be filled by recommendations later on. This analysis leads to the answers for the aforementioned questions and help the researcher formulate recommendations that enhance the original state of the circumstance they are studying (Merriam, 2009).

For this study, the data gathered from each three instruments were initially categorized into three parts for each to answer one main research question and validate the data of the other two research questions. So after the main revelation of answers for one research question, the data was used to be compared with the rest to validate them by ruling out some and supporting others. /mostly, the data were similar from each category and validated the rest.

### **3.7 Reliability and Validity**

As I have previously mentioned, in order to tend to the three angles of my study, three instruments were used for the study. This was also how triangulation took place especially that I used data from one instrument in cross-examination with the other one to make sure of the validity of the data collected and how reliable my study would be from that.

According to Fraenkel, Wallen and Hyun (2011), validity is when the instruments used are indeed effective in their measurement of what is chosen for them to be measured. Reliability is the consistency in which an instrument yields results. In order to achieve all this, triangulation is a must when picking the instruments for measurement, be it for quantitative or qualitative data.

I also, as every researcher, aimed for the closest-to-generalization formula of instrumentation by relating each research question to one main instrument. Keeping in mind that all instruments are to give me similar results for that research question, it is pertinent to have an instrument that can measure this question the most accurately. (Payne & Williams, 2005). Therefore, to know what teaching methods are used, I decided to ask the teachers and coordinators. To know what is taught in writing classes, I decided to look at the curricula of each program. Lastly, to know if these teaching methods and objectives are interesting to the learners and are effective in the way they are motivated to write and create, I decided to ask the learners. Then the cross-examination of all of them would give me the most possible precise answer for each. Consequently, this will help me come up with recommendations according to results that are reliable and valid.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

I had to complete the National Institutes of Health Web-based training course, *Protecting Human Research Participants* since my study included human subjects as part of my research. I obtained a certificate after having answered almost all questions in the comprehensive test of the course on the importance of maintaining the rights of people in research. I became eligible to apply to the Institutional Review Board committee for approval for my thesis. I received the approval along with conditions on how to conduct my research with the targeted subjects. So, letters for parental approval were sent with the learners beforehand to make sure their parents approve of the research. Then, the learners signed letters of participant assent that informed them of the anonymity of the research and their rights. All teachers and coordinators signed similar letters of assent.

The aforementioned are the different ways for the collection of data. They differ with respect to the instruments that are used and with respect to the kind of data to be collected. This merge of types of data helps answer all research questions and therefore, provides this exploratory case study with validity and reliability. The upcoming chapter discusses what this data that I was able to collect is, as brought forth by each instrument.

# Chapter Four

## Findings

Content analysis was used to study the curricula and the interview answers, while excel was used to calculate the percentages of each question in the questionnaire.

### 4.1 Questionnaire

Before delving into each question and the percentages yielded from the calculation of replies and for a better understanding of the findings, the questions in the questionnaire (Appendix A) were categorized. There were questions to help identify what the teaching and learning of writing is to the learners, others that help clarify what motivates or de-motivates the learners, some that help pinpoint their opinion on how they are being taught writing, and a question that asks if there is a need for change (table 2). These classifications are basically the research questions that this study aims to answer, and are mostly needed for the analysis of the data.

*Table 2: Categorization of Questions in Questionnaire*

<b>Question Numbers in Questionnaire</b>	<b>Theme Category</b>
Questions 1, 2 and 10	Perception of the learning of writing
Question 3, 6 and 7	Way of teaching and opinion on that
Questions 4, 5, 8 and 9	Source of motivation/de-motivation and creation
Question 11	Need for change

#### 4.1.1 Results for Question 1

Question 1 resides in the category of the learners' perception of the learning of writing, and it is an introductory question asking the learners to what extent they think the learning of writing at their level is important. Figure 1 and 2 hold the results for School A and School B respectively, whereby it is shown that the majority of both grades at School A strongly agree on the importance of teaching of writing with a 68% for it, 27% agree on the importance of it, and the remaining 5% disagree on it. Similar results were obtained at School B where 51% agree, 31% strongly agree, 15% disagree and 3% strongly disagree on the importance of learning writing at their levels.

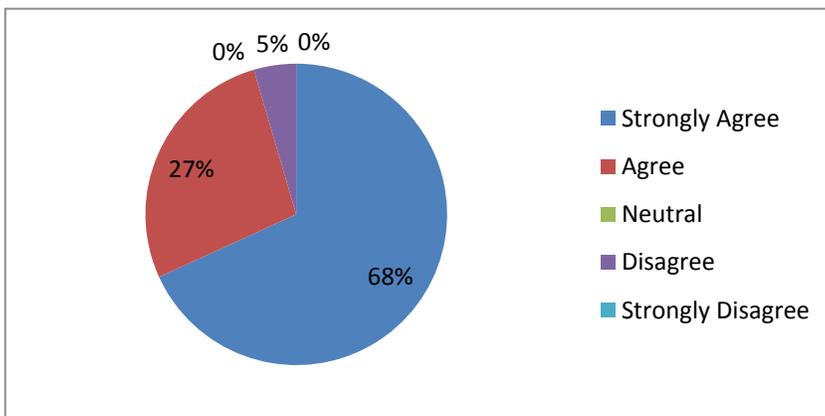


Figure 1: Results of Question 1 by School A

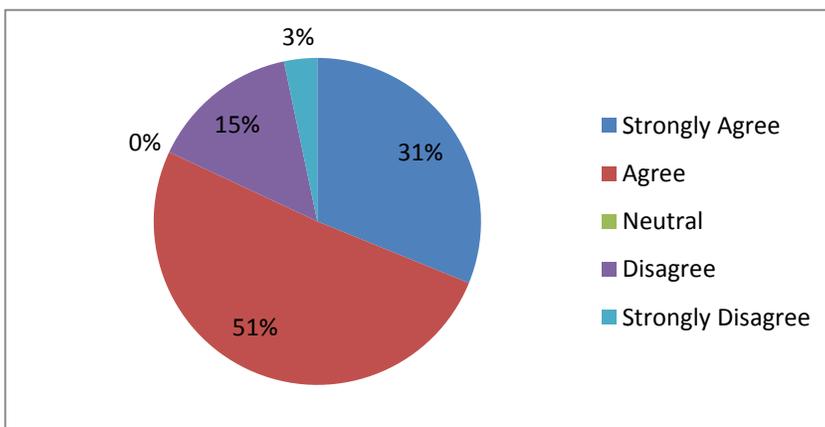


Figure 2: Results of Question 1 by School B

#### 4.1.2 .Results for Question 2

Question 2 is in the same category of question 1 and asks the learners whether what they are taught at their grade levels is different from what they are taught in middle school. Figure 3 and 4 contain the results for this question. Sixty eight percent of the learners in School A agree that what they are taught in secondary school is different from what they were taught in middle school. While 23% strongly agree on that, and only 9% disagree. However, in School B, 43% disagree that there is a difference between what they are taught at secondary school and what they were taught in middle school when it comes to writing. Thirty one percent, though, agree on that, 23% strongly agree and 3% strongly disagree.

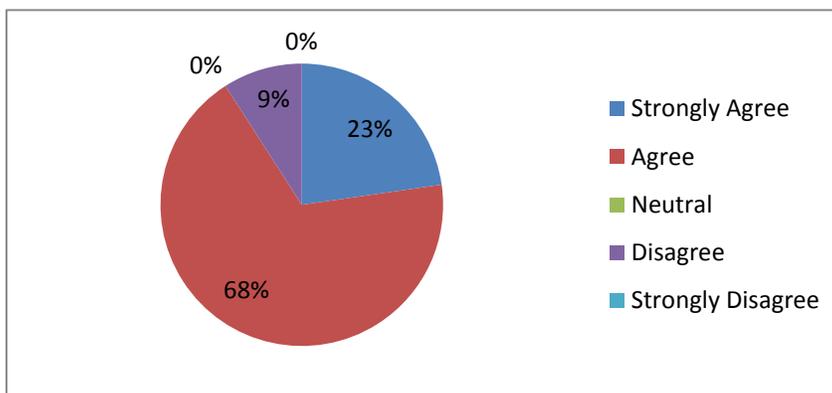


Figure 3: Results of Question 2 by School A

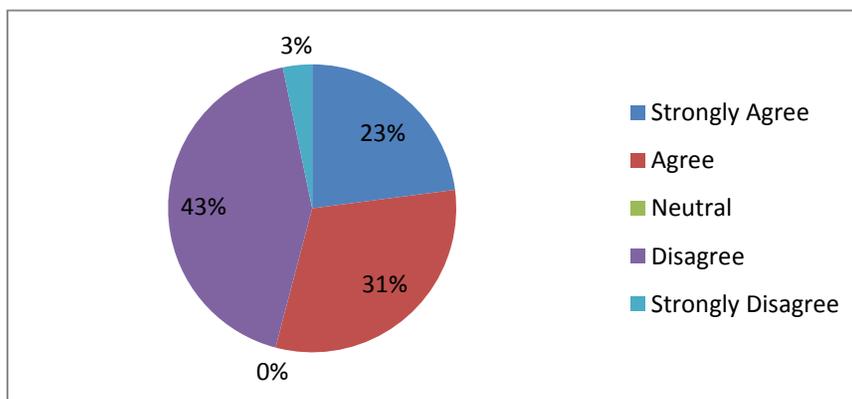


Figure 4: Results of question 2 by School B

### 4.1.3 Results for Question 3

Question 3 is in the group of the learners' view of the teachers' way of teaching and their opinions. It is a general question stating that the way the teacher teaches is interesting. In School A, as shown by Figure 5, the majority are positive about how interesting the way their teacher teaches is: 50% strongly agree on that and 36% agree. The remaining are 14% and they disagree. Figure 6 shows the results of School B with a 31% vote for agree and a close one of 26.43% for disagree. The rest are 10.16% for strongly disagree, 5.8% for strongly agree while 1.2% have no opinion on the matter.

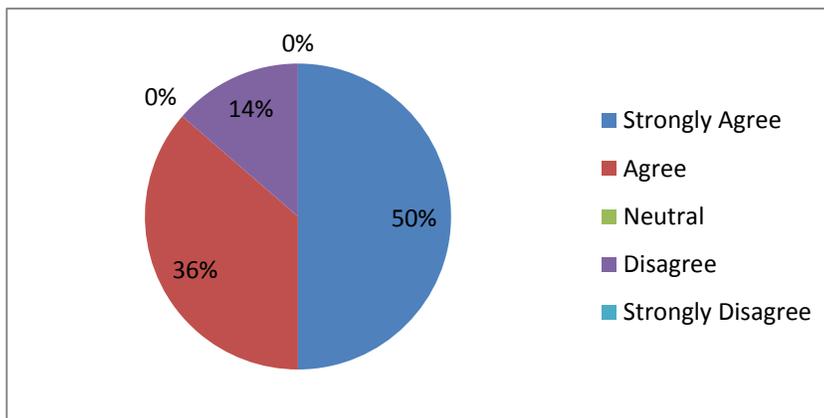


Figure 5: Results of Question 3 by School A

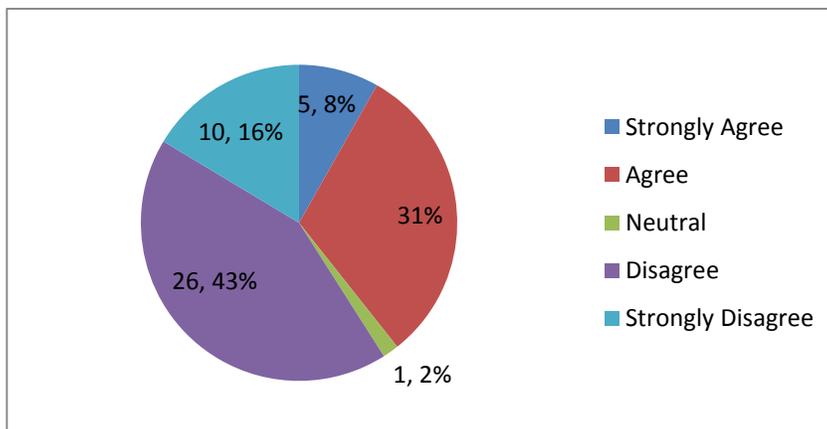


Figure 6: Results of Question 3 by School B

#### 4.1.4 Results for Question 4

Question 4 is a general question of motivation inquiring if students feel motivated to write at their current grade level. In School A (Figure 7), 50% of the learners agree, 23% disagree, 14% strongly disagree, 9% strongly agree and 4% are neutral about it. The majority are positive about it with a 64% as a total for agree and strongly agree. In contrast, School B's learners (Figure 8), as a majority, are negative about their motivation to write with a total of 80% of disagree and strongly disagree responses: 41% disagree and 39% strongly disagree. Only 15% agree, 2 % strongly agree and 3% are neutral.

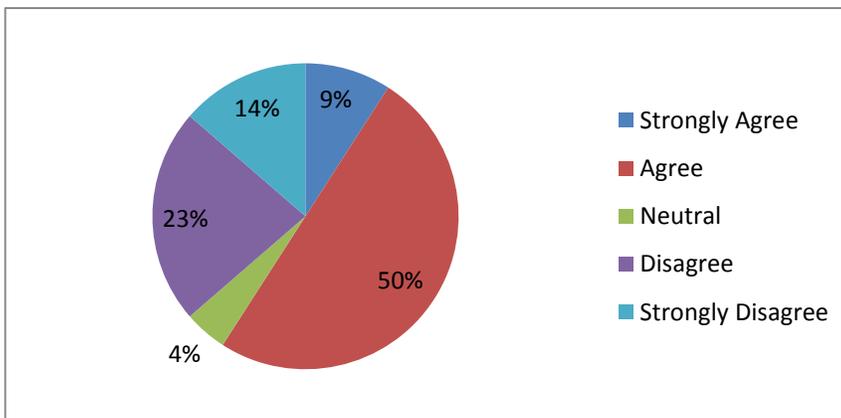


Figure 7: Results for Question 4 by School A

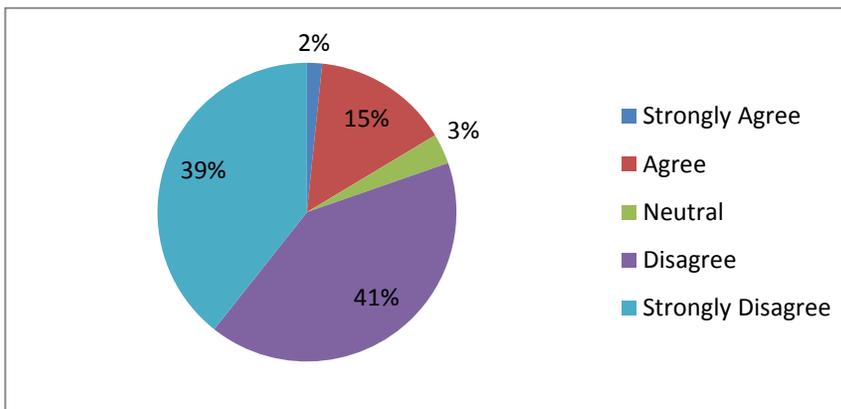


Figure 8: Results for Question 4 by School B

#### 4.1.5 Results for Question 5

Likewise to question 4, question 5 is on the learners' motivation and ability to be creative. It questions their view of the writing tasks given and if they think they help them be creative. Figures 9 and 10 reveal the results: For school A, Most of the learners have good feedbacks on that with 50% agreeing and 27% strongly agreeing. Fourteen percent disagree, 5% strongly disagree and 4% are neutral about the writing tasks helping them be creative. In school B, the opposite is true with the biggest percentage going to the 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' categories with a 39% and 33% for each respectively. Eighteen percent agree and 10% strongly agree.

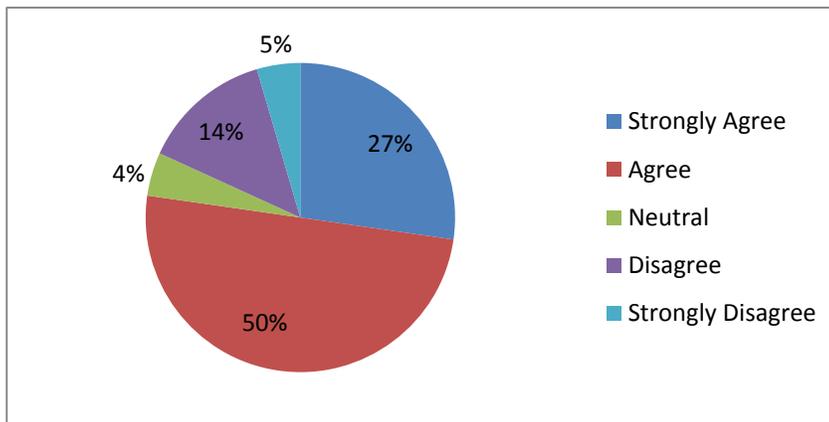


Figure 9: Results for Question 5 by School A

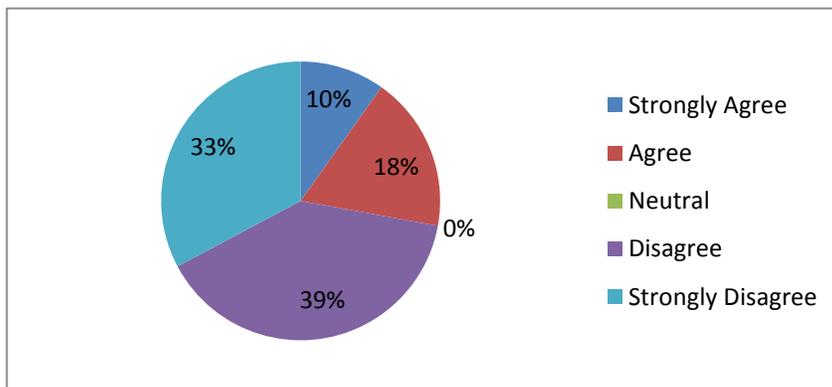


Figure 10: Results for Question 6 by School B

#### 4.1.6 Results for Question 6

Question 6 is about learners getting feedback from their teachers for enhancement purposes. It is in the category of teacher's way of teaching. In School A, learners had only two responses (Figure 11). The majority of them strongly agree that their teacher gives them feedback to help enhance their writing, and 32% agree. There were no negative responses. Also, with School B as seen in Figure 12, 74% in total are positive in their replies with 54% agreeing and 23% strongly agreeing. Twelve percent disagree, 8% strongly disagree and 3% are neutral about the matter.

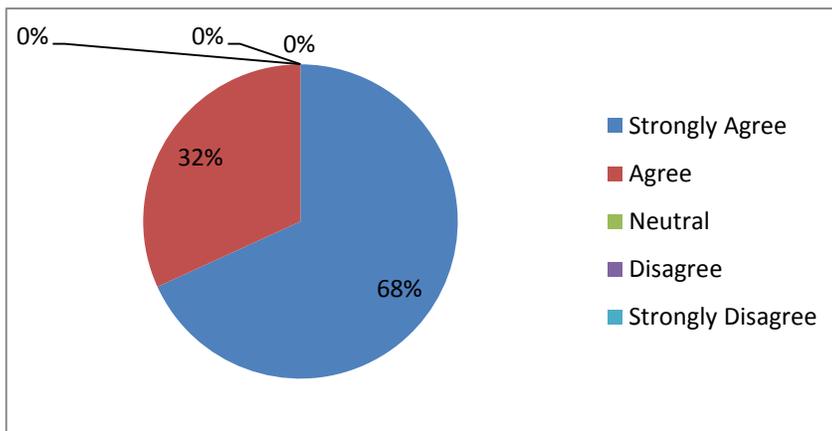


Figure 11: Results for Question 6 by School A

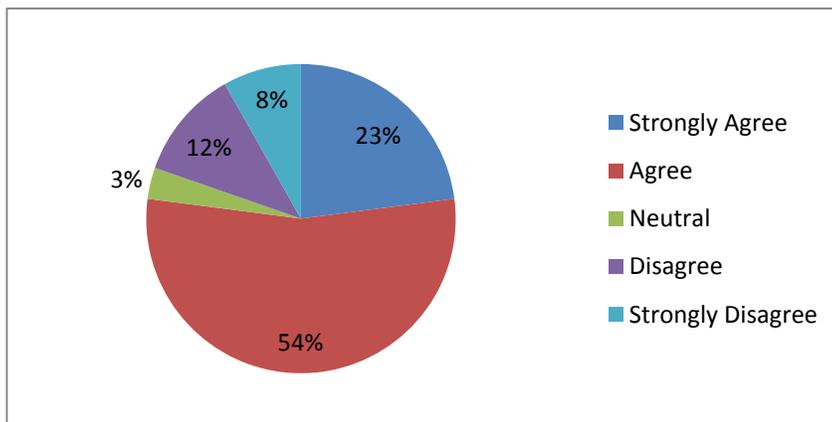


Figure 12: Results for Question 6 by School B

#### 4.1.7 Results for Question 7

Question 7 stands alongside Question 6 in the same category. It asks learners if they get feedback from their friends to be able to enhance their writing to see how effective the group work in the classroom is according to the learners. In School A, most of the learners (59%) do not have a good review of the group work done or peer feedback: 50 % disagree and 9% strongly disagree. Twenty three percent agree and, the rest strongly agree or are neutral with regards to peer feedback helping them with 9% for each reply (Figure 13). In School B (Figure 14) similar results are observed with the majority of learners (65%) having negative feedback: 39% strongly disagree and 26% disagree. Twenty one percent agree, 12% are neutral and only 2% strongly agree.

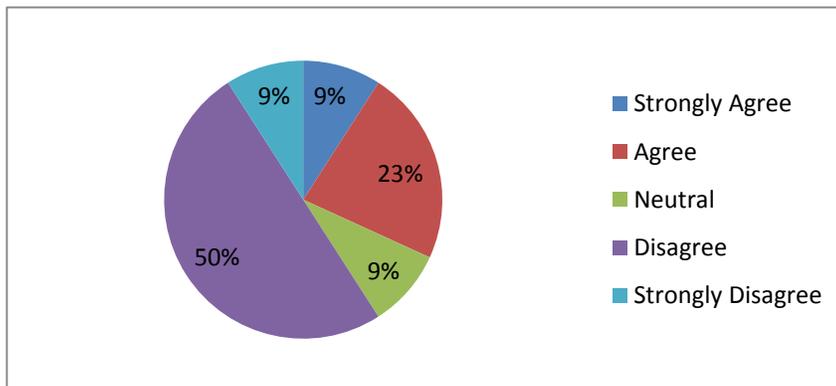


Figure 13: Results for Question 7 by School A

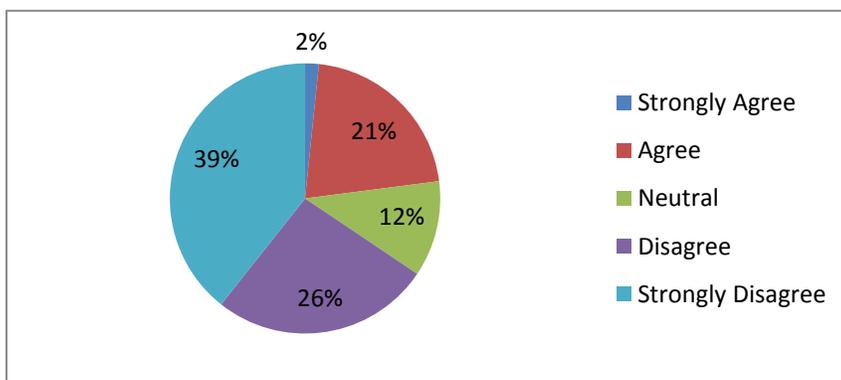


Figure 14: Results for Question 7 by School B

#### 4.1.8 Results for Question 8

Question 8 is part of the motivation/de-motivation grouping and is about whether the teacher uses unique methods of teaching to motivate learners to write. It is in the category of motivation/de-motivation. Eighty one percent of learners of School A in total are positive about this with 41% who agree and 41% who strongly agree (Figure 15). Only 14% disagree and 4% strongly disagree. In contrast, the majority of the Learners of School B unite together in a negative standpoint with a 38% for disagree replies and 33% for strongly disagree replies and a total of 71%. Only 21% agree, 6% are neutral and 2% strongly agree (Figure 16).

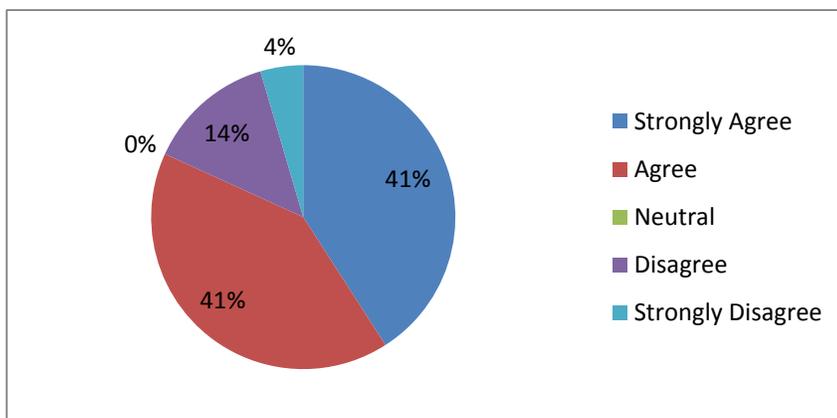


Figure 15: Results for Question 8 by School A

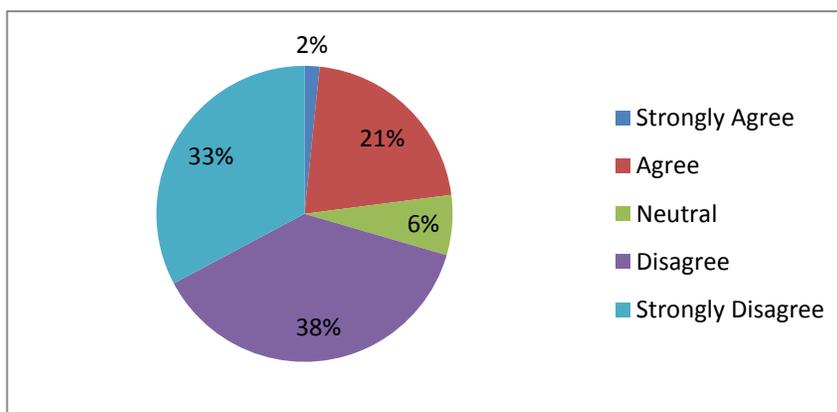


Figure 16: Results for Question 8 by school B

#### 4.1.9 Results for Question 9

Question 9 is in the same category as question 8 and asks if the methods of teaching are fun. The results are shown in Figures 17 and 18. For School A the majority in total are positive about this with a 77%: 54% agree and 23% strongly agree. Only 23% disagree. Nevertheless, in School B the majority are negative with a total of 79% replies: 44% disagree and 35% strongly disagree. Thirteen percent of the learners agree, 5% have no opinion and 3% strongly agree.

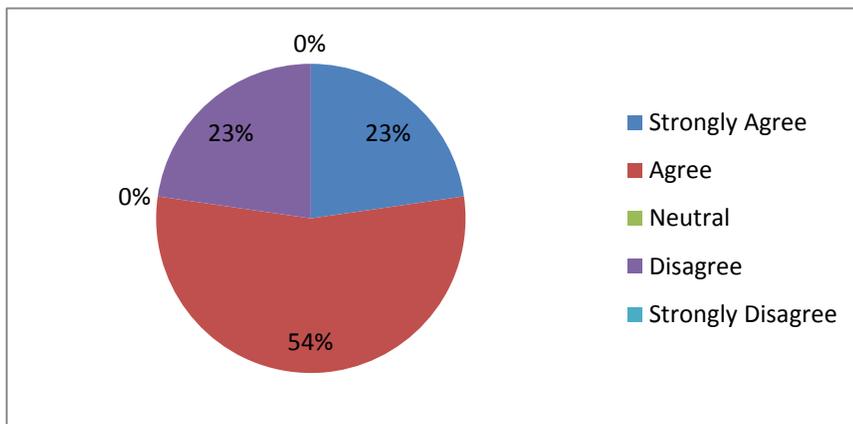


Figure 17: Results for Question 9 by School A

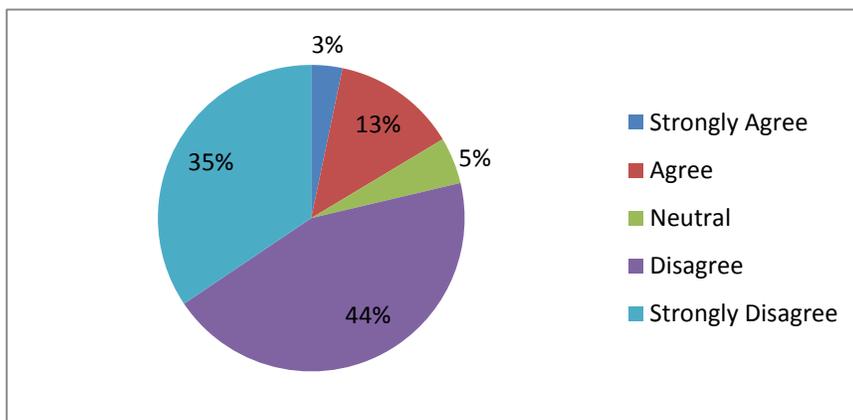
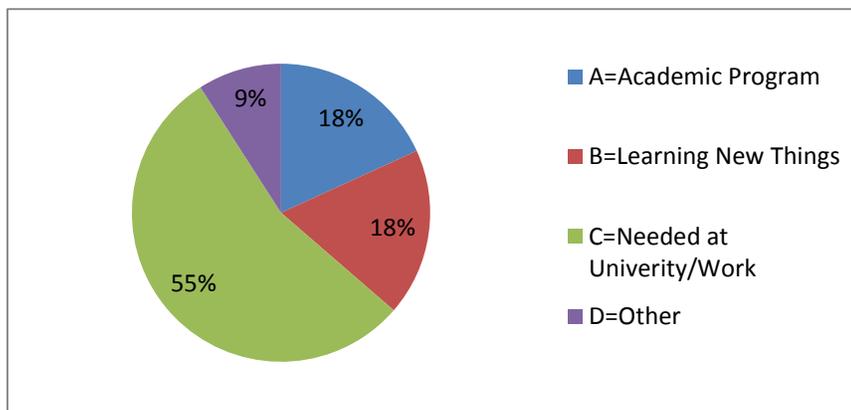


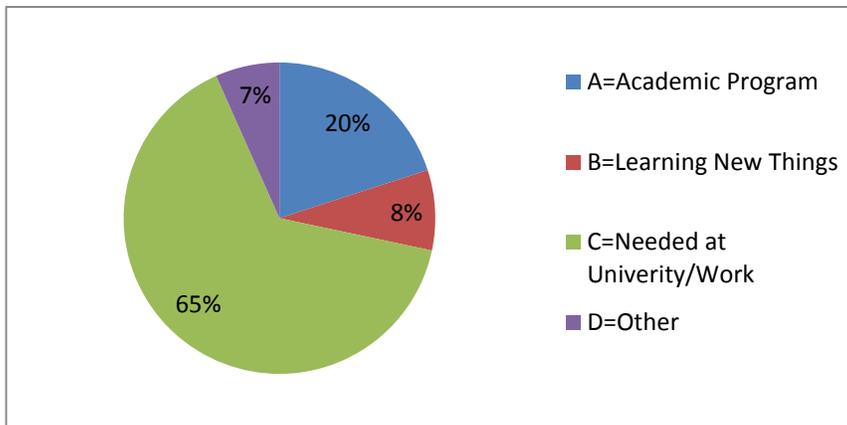
Figure 18: Results for Question 9 by School B

#### 4.1. 10 Results for Question 10

Question 10 is one of the two multiple choice questions asked and is part of the perception-of-writing category whereby learners were asked why they thought they are learning writing. The choices for answers were: Because their academic program obliges them to (designated by A), because they learn new things (B), because they need it at university (C) and for work or other (D). Figure 19 reveals that School A's learners voted mostly for C (university/work) with a 55%, eighteen percent for both A and B and 9% had other replies. The other replies were given by two learners: The need for expression, and writing as a personal must. In school B (Figure 20), learners also mainly said that they learn writing because they need it at university/work with a 65%, 20% for A, 8% for B and 7% for D. The D replies were three in number and all were about the freedom of the expression of the self.



*Figure 19: Results for Question 10 by school A*



*Figure 20: Results for Question 10 by School B*

#### **4.1.11 Results for Question 11**

Question 11 is the last multiple-choice question in the category on its own that asks if there is a need for change. The question specifically asks learners for their opinions on what their teachers should do to motivate them to write and create. The options were a change in the teaching method (A), writing other types of essays (B), more creative writing tasks (C) and other (D). For School A, only two replies were given (Figure 21): 61% of the learners voted for more creative activities (C) while 39% voted for different types of essays (B). Also, in School B the majority votes were for these two replies with 46% for B and 33% for C, 10% for A and 11% other opinions (Figure 22). The learners who picked D were 7 in number with the following responses: (1) freedom of expression through sarcasm and humor, watching movies to inspire writing and creativity, new topics for writing, and no obligatory writing tests; (2) The freedom of expression of what they really think without the teacher's opinion getting in the way; (3) Writing in freestyle should be implemented; (4) More interesting and applicable topics. Three learners answered similarly to the latter.

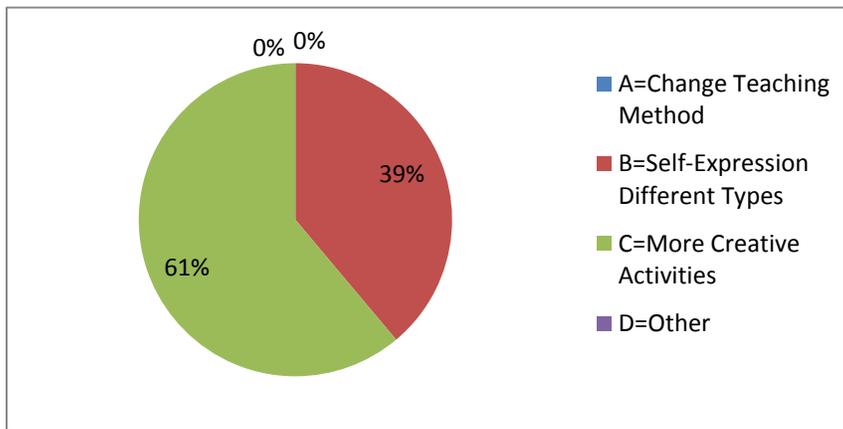


Figure 21: Results for Question 11 by School A

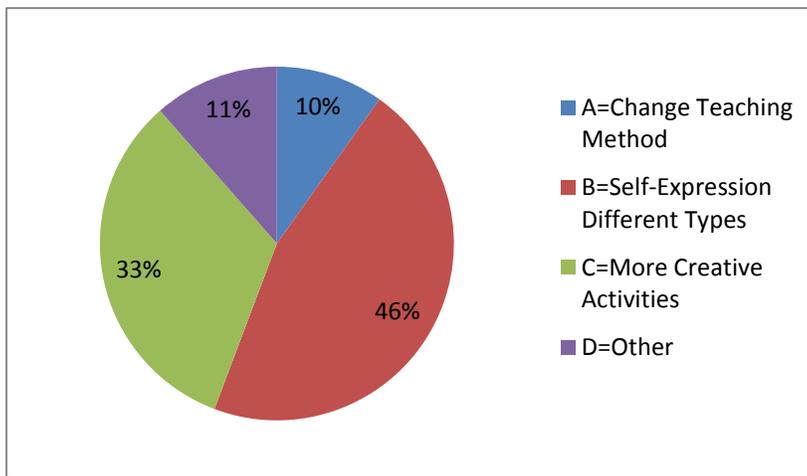


Figure 22: Results for Question 11 by School B

## 4.2 Interviews

The interviews with the teachers and coordinator were mainly conducted to be cross-examined with the learners' responses so as to discover what their points of view were based on.

The interviews were conducted with a total of 4 English teachers, 2 from each school, and one coordinator from School B. T1 and T2 are teachers at School A, one teaches grade 10 and the other grade 11, respectively. In School B, T3 teaches grade 10 and T4 teaches grade 11 while the coordinator teaches a class in grade 11. As I already stated,

the answers given by the teachers reveal disparities at times, and at fewer times, some similarities.

When asked the first question, all teachers along with that one coordinator admitted to not knowing anything about the ways of teaching writing at other schools in Lebanon or around the world. T2 had never taught in Lebanon before this current year. She talked about her experience at an American school in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and how reading and writing were extremely connected to each other. Otherwise, the rest in both schools just told me about their experiences at the schools where they teach.

T1 told me that for her classes there was no fixed period for writing; instead, it was integrated in everything the learners are taught. She starts the year with revision, writing skills, and essay structure for one month, and then writing begins in every lesson they take. For instance, when they are reading something from their literature books, they respond in paragraphs. They also write essays through process writing for her to be able to publish their papers either online or in the school journal. She has writing workshops in class, and she uses technology like iTunes U (a software program that offers a variety of unique course activities and ideas). Finally, she usually does not need to teach writing skills in class but just gives assignments to be reviewed by her and the rest of the learners. What they write ranges from critical essays to research papers all the way to the very expressive stories and poems. T2, though at the same school, had a different approach to teaching writing since her class was one with the weakest learners with regards to the language as a whole. She was still focusing on reading and writing and on the acquisition of skills although, at their levels, learners should not be taught all these. As for her techniques, she has to take everything slowly because she has the weakest class. She writes the essay with them after teaching them the skill and later they

try writing. Her learners have trouble brainstorming and the time given for essay writing is never enough. She has to use up more than one period for one essay. She lets them write a draft which she comments on for them to re-write. As an example for classroom activities, she related that she likes to read to them and ask questions about the passage for them to discuss together. Then, she writes an outline for each response to teach them essay structure. She also feels that she has to pinpoint grammar as well as syntax.

On the other hand, T3, at School B knows that she needs to abide by the Lebanese curriculum and knows that at times, it becomes boring for the learners. What she does is show them pictures and illustrations to help with the narrative and descriptive essays, for example. A typical lesson would include her giving the learners a sample essay and having them take out the backbone of it: what the author used as examples and supporting details etc. Last but not least, she asks them to question the essay and the author's writing - add some points, remove others and evaluate the rest. She has more time than the grade 11 teachers since at the level of grade 10 learners have 4 periods of English per week. When asked about the use of technology for help, all teachers at School B admitted that there were no means for it in the classes; there was just a computer lab that had to be reserved beforehand. T4 told me that she focuses on brainstorming a lot: prioritizing ideas and thoughts and coming up with new ones. She gives sample essays as T3 and focuses on organization for the learners to frame their ideas and write. There is the chance for them to edit their own essays and re-write them. Sometimes, she uses posters and movies for them to write reflections on. Lastly, the coordinator said that she uses the curriculum as an aid but also has her own methods. She said that the learners of grade 11 only have two periods of English per week. They have to fit textual analysis, literary analysis, SAT and writing in these two periods which

causes the teaching of writing to be fast-paced and focused on writing rather than any extra activities. Usually, just the introduction to the type of essay to be taught can be creative but all teachers of grades 10 and 11 have to get to the organization then practice as quick as possible. She did include the fact that with the research essay, for instance, her learners had to go on the web and get information, but they would do that at home and go to 6 links given to them by their teachers. However, the teaching methods used as a whole are “standard teaching methods” and include activities and techniques that are unique when there is time for them. She also believes that writing is more of a thinking skill, and so providing background knowledge and guidance is paramount. If she did not do so, her learners would produce very similar essays.

With the coordinator, I was able to extract more information because she knows more about the program taught at the school. She was straightforward in her disclosure of the lack of creative writing, freedom of expression and diversity of essays taught at the levels in question. When requested for a reason behind this, she said that the learners are going to be sitting for the school and official exams at the grade 12 level where only academic essays are asked of them to be written. Also, standardized tests and university entrance exams require such type of writing. With only two periods per week, the teachers have to stick to this type of writing if they want to prepare their learners for these inevitable tests and exams.

Question number 4 in the interview was about them knowing of alternate methods of teaching that they would like to use in their classrooms. T1 said that there weren't because she had ultimate control of the curriculum she taught, of the periods and of the lessons. She has tried various new techniques and ways including and excluding technology. She has enough time and knowledge about them to use them proficiently.

T2, could only think of one thing which was the possibility of concocting a list of writing processes for each type of essay and putting them on a sheet of paper that learners keep with them to be able to get back to whence writing to feel free to write. She thinks learners with such language weaknesses as hers need visual reminders, that is why she uses the Venn Diagram for Compare/Contrast, and a chart of arguments for argumentative essays. At School B, T3 did not know of alternate ways that she has not read about or used in her classroom, and the same with T4. She said she knew that teachers used charts, structuring and posters which she uses too. The coordinator, though, mentioned storyboards, group writing and chain writing and said that if she had more time and if her learners and the system were not focused on evaluation, she would implement these in class.

Regarding the challenges faced, I asked about challenges faced with de-motivated and uncreative learners and then asked about the challenges that are faced by the restrictions of the curricula used. T1 admitted that there are challenges faced with learners, yet she believes that the topics that she gives them to read and write about are deciding factors for their interest. She said that the more the topics are authentic and close to their lives, the less challenges there are. As an example, they were reading the *Perks of a Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chobsky. It is a coming-of-age novel about teenagers at high school and how they deal with their issues together. She added that she does not face any restriction by the curriculum since she abides by no textbook and has her customized lessons of writing. T2 also finds that the challenge is not from the curriculum but from her learners. They are careless and de-motivated. All she can do is give positive reinforcement on the most minimal of efforts. It has paid up, especially with learners who did not used to write a word. They are currently writing long

paragraphs. T3 talked about how the weak learners feel de-motivated and uncreative and T4 agrees. They give them the chance to write smaller paragraphs and start off with topics they choose. They both give positive reinforcement for minimal effort and recognition to encourage more writing. T4 tries to help them think outside the box and realize their potential: She once chose the word coffee and asked them to suggest any related words and then use them in another context. While T3 does not believe the curriculum is restraining, T4 thinks that there is not enough time for her to fulfill whatever she aspires to do with them. The coordinator spoke more about the de-motivated/uncreative learners by saying that they are bored with the cliché topics that are recurrent because of the official exams. All that they can do is give them a fresh angle on each topic or theme. Also, weak learners feel de-motivated and uncreative and do not elaborate when writing in fear of the many mistakes they may commit. She thinks humorous and encouraging comments can actually help. In addition, the fact that there is a shift in interest towards the sciences and math at this level, a lot of learners lose interest in writing. She feels that there are only 5% of the learners who are genuinely interested in writing, and they contribute to the school journal. The others do not show any care to do so. The learners had a chance for free expression with an extra-curricular activity for the British Council. It was to come up with a comic strip that explains the proxy wars in Lebanon. It took a lot of time for them to make it, and there were only 5 learners who ended up making it. (Figure 23).

The final question was about one of the new, outside-of-the-box teaching methods mentioned in the Literature Review and if the teachers had the chance to use them. I asked them how they'd go along applying them in the classroom. T1 already uses comic strips as part of her teaching methods, as well as technology-related

approaches. To T2 I suggested blog writing, and she had not thought of that before. She felt some might actually go for it because, since language is a barrier for some, writing with no grading or judgment in a blog might be a motivator. T3 wants to implement creative writing techniques but she cannot because of the Lebanese program's constraints. T4 said that movies would be interesting but there is no time. The coordinator mentioned the comic strips which the learners only worked on that one time.

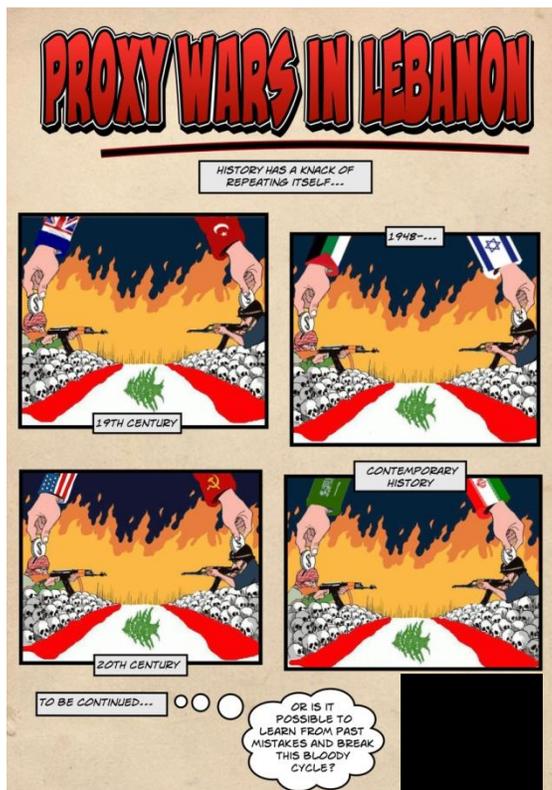


Figure 23: Comic Strip by School B's Grade 11 Learners

### 4.3 Curricula

For the curricula, I looked at the Secondary/high school English writing standards since I needed them to make sure what types of essays the learners are being taught by their teachers. This would help me better understand what essays the learners and teachers are talking about and to be able to come up with recommendations accordingly. School A uses the AERO curriculum (Appendix C). According to their

website, they are a project that is aimed to help schools develop curricula according to their k-12 standards. They are based in the U.S.A and consist of a joint effort by the U.S. State Department's Office of Overseas and the Overseas Schools Advisory Council (Woolsey, 2015). Looking into the PDF document, it is clear that there is great space for choice of implementation, reaching across the curriculum, and freedom of choice of teaching methods: According to the AERO standards, what is important is that learners understand the purpose behind writing in general and then writing a certain type of essay. They also need to know their audience and feel authentic about what they are writing. At the grade levels of 10 and 11, learners no longer are introduced to writing skills unless they have difficulty in a major skill, but are asked to write different essays. They are to write informative, persuasive, argumentative, expository, narrative, and descriptive essays. They also can write opinion, critical and reflective pieces, along with some poetry of their own. The document pushes for the use of visuals and technology. There are also propositions for letting learners choose their topics for writing. They do also propose ways for writing prompts or helping prepare learners to write which are unique. For example, they encourage the teacher to use drama for the development of dialogue in the narrative essay. Moreover, they include the basics of syntax, organization and structuring of the essay, yet ask teachers to merge it with the application of writing through learner-proofreading, commenting, editing and then re-writing.

School A's standards were briefer and based on the teachers', coordinators' and administration's input as well as on the California Language Arts Content and Development Standards (Appendix D). Contrary to the AERO standards, the School B's standards were mainly focused on writing skills such as using graphic organizers, paraphrasing and summarizing, the thesis statement, and essay organization etc. The

learners are expected to write various expository essays such as narrative/descriptive, argumentative, character sketches, compare/contrast, Cause/Effect, term papers, CVs etc. The list is similar to the AERO standards. There is mention of peer correction and self-revision and editing. Still, there are no suggestions for teaching or implementing a skill or writing itself, and there is no encouragement to use any type of media or technology.

With the findings in hand, I am going to use content analysis and cross-examination to be able to come up with answers for my research questions. The upcoming chapter holds this coming-together of data in an analytical approach that reveals the inner-makings of each curriculum, teaching methods in the classroom and the learners' opinions in a comparative discussion.

# Chapter Five

## Discussion

This study aims to answer three questions that were part of an exploratory investigation in two schools in Lebanon with two different programs. The questions are about the lessons or types of essays taught, the teaching methods and ways in which they are taught and the motivation of the L2 learners to create with respect to all of the above in Lebanese private schools for both the American and Lebanese program. As it has been established, each instrument used was able to answer all to be cross-examined with the rest for reliability and validity. Before I go ahead and compare and contrast each instrument's findings to the others', I want to talk about the curriculum of each school and the results of the interviews and questionnaires and compare them to each other. Then, I will take each finding from each school and cross-examine it with the others within the school it belongs to.

Taking each research question alone, it is evident that there are a lot of differences between both programs, but also there are differences between each teacher's approach to teaching writing and accordingly, different reactions of learners to all these.

In the American program, the variety in the types of essays to be taught is much more diverse than the one in the Lebanese program. The fact that the American program accounts for choosing topics, writing prose and poetry that are not expository or technical, and the use of technology in all that when this is not a big option in the

Lebanese one, makes the American program much more appealing to the learner (Rajamangala, 2010).

Going into details by looking at the standards of both programs and by comparing them, the main focus of the American program for the grades 10 and 11 is on the process of writing, the process of creativity and thinking skills rather than the genres themselves. Some basic questions are asked and form the bases for the objectives set.

The questions are the following:

1. Why do writers write?
2. How do good writers express themselves?
3. How do writers develop a well-written product?
4. How does process shape the writer's product?
5. How does each step in the writing process impact your writing?
6. How can writing be evaluated?
7. How can evaluation and reflection be used to improve writing?

In fact, the curriculum does not reveal what writing genres should be taught as is, yet focuses on thinking and analytical skills that learners need to acquire: it emphasizes the need to use logical reasoning, have good organization and structuring, go through process writing, apply new approaches for one type of writing by the teachers, conduct research for broader building of knowledge and use the media and internet for collaboration as well as publishing and expression. From this range of objectives, the curriculum is situated under the writing discourse categories of skills discourse, process discourse and creativity discourse (Ivanic, 2004). However, School B's curriculum is a list of standards for all grades of one academic division (secondary for example) together and touches upon genre and writing skills, mostly. It mainly lies under the

genre and skills discourse, as Ivanic (2004) categorized the types of curricula because it encompasses the structure of the essay according to its type along with the syntax and sentence and paragraph organization. Since almost half of the stated standards, which are also the objectives of writing for the grade levels 10 and 11 at School B, are about topic sentence and thesis statement improvement, introductory and concluding paragraph improvement, chronological organization, spatial organization or order of importance organization, and summarization and paraphrasing, then one of the categories it belongs to is the skills discourse category. While the other part of the standards/objectives start with enlisting a genre to be written by the learners like term papers, scientific reports and documented essays, which makes it belong to the genre discourse category too.

In School A's curriculum, the objectives under the standards mentioned before are detailed and involve all three discourses this curriculum belongs to. They do not restrict the teachers with any teaching method nor do they restrict them with a topic since there is no genre classification. Instead, they include options for writing practice and encourage it as a routine whether through literature, reading, assignments, or workshops in class. This freedom and focus on across-the-curriculum writing practice makes its teaching and implementation pervasive, and therefore, much more of a common practice for the learners. Writing may come naturally to them more evidently with a recurrent application of these objectives, and the feeling that it is a set of lessons that are needed to be taught is not supposed to be sensed by the learners. Instead, they instigate their own writings at times, since the choices to pick their own topics, write prose and poetry, and use media and the internet are permitted. In School B's curriculum, given that the list of what is expected of learners is called "Standards" by

them when clearly, there is no differentiation between objectives and standards, makes this analysis a bit confusing. Still, that list revealed the lack in this curriculum where there is no space for creativity. It has been already established that creativity, or better yet, the motivation to create is essential for learners and starts with a much more liberating curriculum than this (being open for more options for the implementation of writing) (Tchudi, 1990).

The interviews with the teachers revealed more of what is authentically happening in the classroom yet in these teachers' own points of view. In School A, as much as the curriculum proved to be more of an adherence factor for the motivation of learners to write and create on their own, there was an apparent discrepancy between the teacher in the classroom and the curriculum they have to teach. This discrepancy was observed with T2. For it to be fully explained, it is first better to look at T1, from the interview, it seemed T1 was much liberated with her approach to teaching regardless of the de-motivated/uncreative learners in her class. The fact that she had no fixed periods for writing but that she integrated them in reading and other tasks shows her lack of need to focus on the skills but rather on the analytical part in the learning of writing and the evaluation part in its teaching. Furthermore, her relaxed open classroom that caters to a teacher-learner communication, to having the choice of topic-picking and to encountering genuine topics for both literature and writing is an actual factor in the learners' ability to create since this is heavily motivational (Halpin, Goldenberg, and Halpin, 1990). T2, on the other hand, though having to work with a similar curriculum, seemed to find that her learner's weakness in language and therefore, in writing, is the reason behind her very slow progression of teaching. She had only worked on three essays with her learners by the time this study was being conducted. The methods she

was using were very basic since she focused on writing skills, grammar, spelling, and essay organization. The way they are taught to write a type of essay is through sampling, preset prompts and repetition of writing in the classroom, at home and in tests. It seemed that the learners would tackle one type of writing for a big amount of time. T1 claimed that she had to do that since some originally did not want to write, while others wrote briefly and with chat language etc. There was no alternative way that she tried to break the cycle but only used positive reinforcement when a learner reached a milestone (wrote a full paragraph, for example). When asked for any activity or new approach she tried to apply, she spoke of integrating reading and writing. Therefore, it is clear that her approach is redundant and rarely experimental with a chance for openness to alternatives. The only change in her answers was when I asked if she would consider blogs as a chance for expression with no fear of teacher evaluation. She agreed, but it was apparent that she had never tried it or even thought about it. This teacher-limitation is not to be blamed on the system or the curriculum, but on the teacher herself. For lack of openness to new research and unconventional methods of teaching indicates that this teacher may be an affecting factor in the learners' slowness to write and their inability to create on their own (Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009; Gray, 2014). This raises a hypothesis that even though the curriculum may be liberating as a program, the teacher's inability to use this liberation for innovative teaching can be an abolishing factor to their learners' motivation to write and create.

In School B, although T3 and T4 claimed to be teaching different classes, it seemed obvious that their methods were the same: They both focused on organization, on syntax, on the thesis statement, on the genres of essay, and on brainstorming. The coordinator supported this by stating a general list of what is taught in the Secondary

Division to which grade 10 and 11 belong. When asked about alternative teaching methods or any ways that bring some “fun” into their lessons, they all stated a very similar method that sounded redundant and singular: using pictures, posters, or illustrations as an introduction or thought-initiator before introducing the genre of essay to be tackled. That would be the introduction not to the practice of writing but to teaching the writing skills. Organization would be the end of that lesson and then product-writing would occur by the learners. Teaching by samples happens recurrently and the topics used for writing, whether as samples, class work, homework or tests, are repeated yearly by belonging to the same themes: current global nature problems, the economy, politics, and eminent people in history (generally politicians, academics or scientists) etc. Again this repetition in the teaching methods and teaching topics becomes mundane to learners and is a factor in the hindrance of motivation to write and create (Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009; Gray, 2014). Another recurrent obstacle is the teachers’ excuse of having no time to make the teaching of writing more interesting. For, when asked if they use blogs, videos or comic strips as a way to implement writing skills in a more critical manner, the teachers prided themselves in one comic strip that the learners did while saying no to the rest for lack of time. Incidentally, the comic, being an extra-curricular activity, does not render itself as part of their accomplishments in their teaching for only 8 learners participated and not the whole class. I think that the school is to be blamed here for shifting the focus from language towards science and math by raising the coefficient for the latter two and lowering the coefficient for the former in grading. Learners become more interested in the grade and average than the subject-matter. The reason for that may be that the Lebanese curriculum has set rules for these, but they are not really to be followed except during the last year which is the 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

Even more, the fact that there is no technology in the classrooms whatsoever provides a sense in the teachers that implementing it in any lesson is more time-consuming than helpful. This lack of or minimal familiarity with technology because of its absence has led the teachers to believe that the only alternative are these small introductions before the introduction of a new lesson about a genre of essay.

Finally, I found that the questionnaires would either be the deal-makers or the deal-breakers when it comes to verifying both the teachers' claims and the curricula's effects on the teaching of writing. There is a very apparent difference between the Lebanese program and the American program. Generally-speaking, the results showed that the learners in the American program were more motivated and happy with their experience in the writing classroom. The only way to explain the results is through finding their causes in the interviews and curricula and looking for gaps in order to propose any possible corrections.

I shall take each category's results (research questions) to which a number of questions belong to (table 2) and cross-examine it with its respective curriculum and interview answers. The first category is the learners' perception of their current situation with regards to the learning of writing. Most learners in both schools agree that the learning of writing is important, but that it is only important since they will need at university and work mainly. While there were in both schools the unique few (2 in School B and 3 in school A) that said that they liked it because it helped them express themselves. These learners are most probably ones who practice writing as a hobby on their own apart from the writing they are taught. They have an inclination towards writing that the rest does not have that comes as an intrinsic aspect regardless of their motivation or not in the classroom (Cordaro, 2007; Dornyei, 1994; Van Lier, 1996). Yet,

this type of learners is what this study aims to increase in number. Their intrinsic need for writing accounts for an intrinsic motivation that ought to be cultivated in most learners to decrease the number of those who state that they need writing for a career goal and rather for themselves. Seeing writing in this light, makes for a more creative classroom that helps learners achieve greater levels of writing and thinking skills and bigger writing achievements (Chandler, 1999; Frattaroli, Thomas & Lyubomirsky 2011). There was also the question about whether the learners found that what they were taught in middle school is the same as what they are taught in high school; School B's majority learners did not as opposed to School A's. Yet, this question shows only the redundancy in material taught and not the variety of it. It did not feed its purpose while being compared to the rest of the results.

The next category involves three questions that are about the way of teaching that occurs and the learners' opinions of that. In School A, the majority of the learners think that their teachers' way of teaching is interesting while in School B the majority do not think so. This is highly verifiable by the redundancy in the teachers' methods at School B while the variety of T1's methods at School A, and most probably T2's positive reinforcement and acknowledgeable achievements with her weak class. As for the other questions that are about teacher and learner feedback, it is observed that teachers in both schools give feedback that motivates the learners to enhance their writing, but peer feedback is not relevant for School B and is negatively seen at School A. Although T1 was indeed proud to talk about group work and workshops, it seems there is a weak point there which I blame on the no-fixed-periods-for-writing claim. If more time is given for collaboration in the classroom, positive feedback about it can be yielded. That is also correct for T2 and School B in general.

The third category is on the factors of motivation and creativity for the learners. In general, School A's learners are highly motivated to write while School B's learners are not. That is proven by the learners' outlook on their teachers' assigned writing activities and tasks. At School A, learners found their teachers' assignments creative, contradictory to School B's learners. That is seemingly logical, when School A's curriculum encourages the use of media, the internet and learner research and when the teachers usually try various techniques to help out their learners. Whereas, when the very technical curriculum of School B calls for organized essays and expository kinds, the teachers can be limitedly creative especially that no technology is incorporated and the links to whatever research the learners need to conduct are given to them beforehand. Not only is the curriculum restrictive, but the teachers of School B are complacent with it in the classroom to the point that they do just the necessary and blame it on the lack of time.

The last category was for one question which was about the need for change. At School A the majority voted for more creative activities while at School B the majority voted for a change in the genres of essays taught. This goes to prove how the curriculum of School B is of the genre discourse type while the curriculum of School A is lacking with regards to the social and sociopolitical discourse that will ground the learners and make them aware of how currently creative their tasks are and aware of the need to be more practical about their writing (Ivanic, 2004).

This concludes all analyses of the findings for my exploratory case study, and therefore portrays a new insight into both, the Lebanese Program and the American Program with regards to the teaching of writing at the levels of 10 and 11. The last chapter is the next one where I include not just a final statement, but also

recommendations for each program to make the teaching of writing a factor for motivation and creativity to the learners of these levels.

# Chapter Six

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the results produced from this study showed some major differences in the teaching of writing in the Lebanese and American program. It has been revealed in this exploratory case study that this difference is based on three elements which are the curriculum and its restrictions vs. its freedom, the teachers' methods of teaching and approach towards the teaching of writing, and the learners' own initiative and motivation to create. Although the American program is more advanced than the Lebanese one with regards to the teaching of writing and implementing it in a way to motivate learners to write and create, they both require a sharpening of the list of creative tasks used, a deeper openness to alternative ways of teaching, a balance between their types of discourses' focus in teaching writing, and the school's support for the process.

What I recommend are tweaks in the curriculum of School A: including genres in the curriculum along with prose and poetry just for clarity and to touch upon all types of writing, including social practices and sociopolitical discourse aspects in the curriculum so that writing becomes something that the learners can do for different purposes rather than just for evaluation by the teacher or for publication, and unifying a vision of teaching for all grade levels that caters to a just way of teaching for all levels regardless of level of competency in learners; instead adjusting through alternative ways to hasten the process of learning.

What I recommend for School B in addition to the above is a change in the system of the school whereby languages are given higher or even equal importance to sciences and math regardless of how they are graded at the Lebanese official baccalaureate. I suggest that learners be taught writing during all English periods as part of an integration process for them to become a target of practice rather than a target of writing-skill learning. Finally, School B should include an Interactive Board in each classroom that caters to the use of slideshows, movies, and much more within the classroom, and train teachers to use technology and other alternate ways of teaching and still use their time efficiently.

## **6. 2 Limitations**

There were limitations faced while working on this study. The fact that the original sample number was much bigger accounts for the difficulty of attaining permission to conduct research at Lebanese private schools. The results could have been even more reliable and proven to be valid had the sample number been bigger with more schools that taught both programs involved.

## **6.3 Suggestions for further research**

This a preliminary exploratory case study since there is not much research about the teaching of writing at the grade levels of 10 and 11 in private suburban schools in Lebanon. It was mostly exploratory for my lack of knowledge of the topic and the lack of literature about it. Therefore, more research about it and with different schools in mind as targets should be part of further exploration. That is because although most schools either have the Lebanese or American program, many teach them differently and one can come across a school with a Lebanese program but with learners who are more

motivated than the School B and vice versa. Consequently, for generalization-purposes, many more surveys, interviews and collection of curricula should occur for wider comparisons and delving into reasons and occurrences.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Questionnaire Administered to all Learners

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade level: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic program:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Answer the following questions about teaching writing motivationally and creatively. Be as honest as you can in giving your opinion.

Put a check in the box that best describes your opinion.

SA: Strongly Agree

A: Agree

D: Disagree

SD: Strongly Disagree

N/O: No Opinion

### **In my opinion:**

Questions	SA	A	D	SD	N/O
1. The learning of writing is important at my grade level.					
2. What I am taught in writing lessons is different from what I was taught in middle school.					
3. The way my teacher teaches me writing is interesting.					
4. At school, I feel motivated to write.					
5. The writing tasks assigned help me be creative.					
6. I get feedback from my teacher about my writing to be able to enhance it.					
7. I get feedback from my friends about my writing to enhance it.					
8. My teacher uses unique (different ways of teaching a writing task) methods of teaching to motivate me to write.					
9. My teacher uses fun methods of teaching (example: diverse writing activities) to motivate me to write.					

Circle the answer that best reflects your opinion.

### **10. Why do you think you are learning writing?**

a. Because the academic program I am in obliges me to.

b. Because I learn a lot of new things every time.

c. Because I need it at university and work later on.

d. Other      State brief opinion: \_\_\_\_\_

**11. What do you think your teacher should do to make you motivated to write and create?**

a. She should change her whole method of teaching.

b. She should let us express ourselves through writing other types of essays than the ones we always write.

c. She should give us more creative activities for writing.

d. Other      State brief opinion: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix B: Interview Questions for Teachers and Coordinators**

### Interviews with Teachers and Coordinators

1. Could you please state what grade levels you teach, in what program, and for how long you have been teaching?
2. What is your opinion on the teaching of writing in Lebanese classrooms at the level that you teach?
3. How do you teach writing to your learners?
4. What teaching methods, techniques and activities do you implement for each writing genre?
5. Do you know of any alternate ways for teaching writing that are used in Lebanon or worldwide?
6. What are the challenges you face with any de-motivated and/or uncreative learners? What do you do about it?
7. What are the challenges you face with respect to the demands of the curriculum as opposed to any additional ideas you have for teaching writing?
8. If you had the chance to implement blogging, using comic strips and Moviemaker in your classroom, would you and how?
9. Any other comments?

## Appendix C: School A’s Writing Curriculum at the Secondary Level

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Writing</b></p> <p>The fundamental aim of writing is to communicate. However, its purpose, audience, form, and subject matter vary according to the specific writing situation. Good writers can communicate well in a range of situations. They can perform a variety of writing tasks, ranging from business letters to stories, reports, and essays. To become good writers students need expert instruction, frequent practice, and constructive feedback. The National Council of Teachers of English Commission on Composition noted that writing is a powerful instrument of thought. In the act of composing, writers learn about themselves and their world and communicate their insights to others. Writing fosters the power to grow personally and to effect change in the world.</p> <p>Writing objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students will write for a variety of purposes (e.g., narrative, informative, and persuasive).</li><li>• Students will write on a variety of tasks and for many different audiences (e.g., story based on a poem, reporting to a school committee, and a letter to the editor).</li><li>• Students will write from a variety of stimulus materials and within various time constraints. (e.g., respond to photographs, cartoons, charts, letters, and dialogue).</li><li>• Students will generate, draft, revise, and edit ideas and forms of expression in their writing.</li><li>• Students will display effective choices in the organization of their writing. They should include detail to illustrate and elaborate their ideas and use appropriate conventions of written English.</li></ul> <p style="text-align: center;">2007 NAEP Writing Framework <a href="http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/writing/whatmeasure.asp">nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/writing/whatmeasure.asp</a></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:</b></p> <p>Good writers develop and refine their ideas for thinking, learning, communicating, and aesthetic expression. Good writers use a repertoire of strategies that enables them to vary form and style, in order to write for different purposes, audiences, and contexts. Writers have a purpose for writing. Writing is a multi-stage process. Writing is a reflective process.</p>

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**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:**

1. Why do writers write?
2. How do good writers express themselves?
3. How do writers develop a well-written product?
4. How does process shape the writer's product?
5. How does each step in the writing process impact your writing?
6. How can writing be evaluated?
7. How can evaluation and reflection be used to improve writing?

**WRITING-W**

Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

***Text Type and Purpose***

**W.1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.**

6	7	8	9-10	11-12
<p>a. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.</p> <p>b. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</p> <p>c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the</p>	<p>a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</p> <p>b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</p>	<p>a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</p> <p>b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an</p>	<p>a. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</p> <p>b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each</p>	<p>a. Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons and evidence.</p> <p>b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and</p>

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relationships among claim(s) and reasons. d. Establish and maintain a formal style. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.	c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence. d. Establish and maintain a formal style. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.	understanding of the topic or text. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. d. Establish and maintain a formal style. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.	while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims. d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.	thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims. d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
<b>W.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</b>				
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9-10</b>	<b>11-12</b>
a. Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as	a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and	a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and	a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and	a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which

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<p>definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</p> <p>c. Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</p> <p>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</p> <p>e. Establish and maintain a formal style.</p> <p>f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.</p>	<p>information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</p> <p>c. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</p> <p>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</p> <p>e. Establish and maintain a formal style.</p> <p>f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.</p>	<p>information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</p> <p>c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</p> <p>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</p> <p>e. Establish and maintain a formal style.</p> <p>f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.</p>	<p>distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.</p> <p>c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.</p> <p>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.</p> <p>e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.</p> <p>f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or</p>	<p>precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.</p> <p>c. Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.</p> <p>d. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.</p> <p>e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.</p> <p>f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or</p>
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			the significance of the topic).	explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
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**W.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.**

6	7	8	9-10	11-12
<p>a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.</p> <p>b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.</p> <p>c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.</p> <p>d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and</p>	<p>a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.</p> <p>b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.</p> <p>c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.</p> <p>d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and</p>	<p>a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.</p> <p>b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.</p> <p>c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and</p>	<p>a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.</p> <p>b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.</p> <p>c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.</p> <p>d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to</p>	<p>a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.</p> <p>b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.</p> <p>c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone</p>

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<p>sensory language to convey experiences and events.</p> <p>e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.</p>	<p>sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.</p> <p>e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.</p>	<p>events.</p> <p>d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.</p> <p>e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.</p>	<p>convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.</p> <p>e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.</p>	<p>and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).</p> <p>d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.</p> <p>e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.</p>
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***Production and Distribution of Writing***

<b>W.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</b>				
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9-10</b>	<b>11-12</b>
<p>a. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)</p>	<p>a. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)</p>	<p>a. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)</p>	<p>a. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)</p>	<p>a. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)</p>
<b>W.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.</b>				
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9-10</b>	<b>11-12</b>
<p>a. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing,</p>	<p>a. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing,</p>	<p>a. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing,</p>	<p>a. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on</p>	<p>a. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on</p>

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rewriting, or trying a new approach. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language Foundations standards 1-3 up to and including grade 6	rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language Foundations standards 1-3 up to and including grade 7	rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language Foundations standards 1-3 up to and including grade	addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language Foundations standards 1-3 up to and including grades 9-10.)	addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language Foundations standards 1-3 up to and including grades 11-12.)
<b>W.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.</b>				
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9-10</b>	<b>11-12</b>
a. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.	a. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.	a. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.	a. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.	a. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
<b><i>Research to Build and Present Knowledge</i></b>				
<b>W.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.</b>				
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9-10</b>	<b>11-12</b>
a. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.	a. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.	a. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.	a. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject	a. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject

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		under investigation		under investigation
<b>W.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.</b>				
6	7	8	9-10	11-12
a. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources	a. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.	a. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation	a. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.	a. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.
<b>W.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</b>				
6	7	8	9-10	11-12
a. Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics"). b. Apply grade 6 Reading	a. Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history"). b. Apply grade 7 Reading	a. Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new").	a. Apply <i>grades 9–10 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., "Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work [e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare]"). b. Apply <i>grades 9–10 Reading standards</i> to literary	a. Apply <i>grades 11–12 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., "Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics"). b. Apply <i>grades 11–12</i>

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standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not”).	standards to literary nonfiction (e.g. “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims”).	b. Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literary nonfiction e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced”).	nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning”).	<i>Reading standards:</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy [e.g., <i>The Federalist</i> , presidential addresses]”).
<b><i>Range of Writing</i></b>				
<b>W. 10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.</b>				
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9-10</b>	<b>11-12</b>
a. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.	a. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.	a. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.	a. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.	a. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

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## Appendix D: School B's Writing Curriculum at the Secondary Level

### IV. WRITING COMPETENCIES

*By the end of 3S, the learners are expected to do the following:*

1. Use graphic organizers to organize information and plan an essay
2. Quote, paraphrase, and summarize information from different sources
3. Build sound arguments avoiding logical fallacies
4. Improve the thesis statement (topic and parallel controlling ideas)
5. Identify and write different kinds of introductory paragraphs
6. Improve paragraph organization (topic sentence, supporting details, clincher) using different patterns of organization (chronological order- spatial - order of importance)
7. Improve the concluding paragraph (restatement + comment)
8. Improve the organization of the whole essay (lead-in, thesis statement, coherence between controlling ideas and body paragraphs, restatement, final comment)
9. Organize the information in an essay by using common organization strategies: chronological order, spatial order, order of importance, or topical order
10. Vary style and register according to topic, purpose, and audience
11. Write different types of expository and argumentative essays using the appropriate pattern of organization: Narrative-descriptive (1S, 2SE, 3SE), Process (1S), Classification, Character Sketch (3SE), Definition, Response to literature, Compare/Contrast, Cause/Effect, Problem-Solution Argumentative
12. Revise and edit own and peer writing
13. Collect relevant information from reliable sources and use it ethically and effectively
14. Use the appropriate referencing type and style
15. Avoid plagiarism
16. Write an abstract in the first and second secondary
17. Write a term paper (using a minimum of 3 sources) in the 1<sup>st</sup> Secondary
18. Write a scientific report (in collaboration with the Sciences) in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Secondary
19. Write a documented essay (using at least 3 sources)
20. Write a CV and a cover letter in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Secondary