Abstract

This qualitative research study examined the observed and reported experiences of twenty-six fifth grade students in an inclusive classroom when authentic writing experiences were implemented into the writing curriculum. In order to help students demonstrate increased proficiency in writing, as well as an improved attitude towards writing tasks, students were immersed in a balanced curriculum of direct instruction and inquiry based learning. Participating in writing workshops, engaging and motivating writing tasks, utilizing mentor texts, peer editing, and teacher conferences, students began to write more frequently, more independently, and in greater quantity. Data were gathered regularly through the use of student surveys, student writing samples, and formative assessments. Through analyzing these data, it became evident that an increased opportunity to respond, in combination with varied instructional styles and activities led to increased levels of proficiency on writing tasks, student confidence, and student enjoyment.