



**The TEACHER CENTER of Broome County**  
**Teacher Study Group Grant Award**  
**2003-2004**

**FINAL REPORT**  
**DOCUMENT PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES**

**STUDY GROUP TOPIC:** How Grammatical Structure Informs a Writer's Style

**GROUP MEMBERS:** Amy Baumes, Roxie Oberg, Nancy Zuwiyya

**The final report must be word-processed and submitted both in print and on disk using this form. Include information under each of the following headings.**

**Describe the initial goal of the group noting any adjustments that had to be made as time passed.**

Our initial goal was to devise lesson plans not only to teach sentence patterns in an effective and meaningful way but also to teach about the relationship between sentence structure and a writer's style. We based our studies on C. Beth Burch's *A Writer's Grammar* and devised lessons plans around her methods and around excerpts from grade-appropriate literature. Along the way, we discovered the complexity of the task and so tried to simplify matters with a repetitive series of exercises that focused around, at first, fine art transparencies, and later around actual text.

**Describe the ACTION PLAN that the group followed.**

1. Read and discussed various chapters for C. Beth Burch's *A Writer's Grammar*.
2. Designed student worksheets around different sentence patterns.
3. Selected appropriate excerpts from literature and designed questions to accompany readings.
4. Designed integrated lesson plans.
5. Met with C. Beth Burch to review our work.

**Describe how the action plan was implemented.**

The group met six times over a month and a half. Study sessions consisted of discussion of the book, discussion of assignments completed outside of the group (worksheets and literary selections), and group work on an integrated lesson plan.

**How has participating in this study group changed you as a teacher? Have any of your teaching practices changed?**

Collaboration, especially around the subject of grammar, has strengthened our resolve to teach this often-unpopular area of skill and knowledge. As well, frequent discussion of sentence patterns and of grammar has enhanced our own understanding of the literature we teach. Finally, we have been able to learn about how we teach in our individual classrooms and to share new methodologies.

**What evidence is there that student achievement is improving as a result of participating in this study group? What kind of differences are you observing in your students?**

Evidence of student achievement is forthcoming. We plan to implement this study in the first marking period of the 2003-2004 academic year (This was a summer study group.). We anticipate seeing greater student aptitude in writing, reading, and understanding literary choice and style.

**What evidence is there that the goals of the study group have/have not been met?**

The development of the lesson plans and study packet is one concrete piece of evidence that the goals have been met. Future evidence will be discovered when the group reconvenes to evaluate the effectiveness of the plans and materials. This will be done sometime in the second marking period.

**Comment on the value of the study group process? Did it work for you?**

The study group process worked very well with this group. Because it is voluntary and the subject matter is under the control of group members, the process meets particular needs of the moment and of the individuals. As well, because the process can be altered, it is particularly effective at meeting the needs of the group.

**How can we make the study group program better?**

At this time, the group does not have any recommendations on this. We are satisfied with the program.