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**Context is Key:
Embedded Instruction within the Reading & Writing Processes**

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Abstract

This qualitative action research study reports the effects of implementing contextualized writing skills instruction on student usage in writing. The study was conducted within a classroom of 22 eighth grade English students at a suburban middle school in Pennsylvania that about 750 students attend. To increase students' achievement, engagement, and motivation concerning writing, model texts and individualized goal-setting were used in the reading and writing processes. Students worked collaboratively with their classmates and instructor to learn writing skills through this contextualized methodology.

Throughout the study, data were collected through surveys, student artifacts, observations, and reflective memos. After analyzing the data, it was concluded that decontextualized instruction lacked relevance to students and resulted in negative attitudes and disengagement while contextualized instruction resulted in metacognition—shown through differentiated goal-setting, which increased student engagement and achievement. Metacognition was also shown in student reflection, which resulted in an increase in positive attitude toward student writing abilities. Finally, peer-to-student and teacher-to-student collaboration caused increased student engagement and motivation when engaging in both the reading and writing processes.