



Paired Texts Packets

W2Win Paired Texts Packets have become the proven link between the study of paired texts and double-digit growth on Milestones ELA and Writing components.

Teachers and instructional leaders love ...

- ✓ **how seamlessly the packets integrate reading comprehension and the writing process**
- ✓ **double-digit gains on Milestones ELA and writing, grades 3-11**
- ✓ **how students are eager to “do another green packet.”**

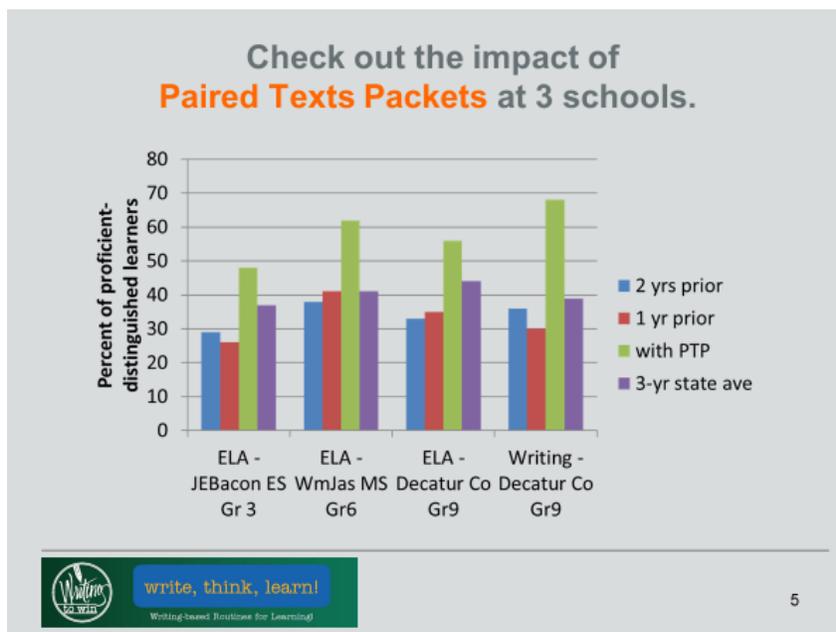
Paired Texts Packets are the preference of the Marzano Academies. Marzanoacademies.org is a growing network of competency-based learning centers and partnership schools that includes W2Win instructional solutions as a defining feature.

The slide presents spring 2019 achievement scores on Georgia *Milestones* assessment ELA (reading comprehension, vocabulary, and open-ended writing tasks). The green bar in Figure 1 presents the percent of students who completed 2 Paired Texts Packets and scored a 3 (proficient learner) or 4 (distinguished writer) on Milestones extended writing.

Data are from JE Bacon ES (Wayne County), William James MS (Bulloch County), and Bainbridge High School (Decatur County). The Paired Texts Packets (green bar) moved student achievement above the state average for the first time in recent years for all 3 schools. Note also how the 38% increase in number of proficient and distinguished writers impacted the double-digit rise for grade 9 students.

Check this – In Gr8, 39 or 93% of remedial students scored 1 (beginning writer) out of 4 points on an end-of-course test. In Gr9 with 4 Paired Texts Packets completed, only 11 or 26% of them scored 1, 16 or 38% scored 2 (developing writer), 11 or 26% scored 3 (proficient writer), and 1 or 2.5% scored 4 (distinguished writer). That’s the kind of data that makes us feel certain that W2Win Paired Texts make a difference with all students.

Paired Texts Packets Boost ELA and Writing Scores



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Classroom action research design

In schools, **action research** refers to evaluative, investigative, or analytical research to diagnose problems or weaknesses – whether organizational, academic, or instructional – and help educators develop practical solutions to address them quickly and efficiently.

Our main purpose is to instill reflective practices in teaching and learning in schools we serve. These proven practices have lessened the problem of integrating reading and writing instruction by emphasizing best practices for students in writing as much as reading.

Action research has a positive effect for many reasons. The most important is that **action research** is always relevant to the participants. Performance data is available to students and teachers in time for them to celebrate their achievement together. At the beginning of the study, the experimental groups of students learn of the performance of students in the 2 years previous to them and the mean score of students statewide over the last 3 years. They are then invited to participate in creating a shared vision of their performance at the end of the course / year with their teachers. Their teachers introduce the Paired Texts Packets as their vehicle for achieving that shared vision.

Question – What is the effect of Paired Texts Packets on student learning as measured by an end-of-year / course texts, Georgia Milestones?

Review of Literature –

We chose the study of pair texts because the focus of study is on concepts instead of the content of a single text or the contents of several unrelated texts.

Conceptual Coherence, Comprehension, and Vocabulary Acquisition: A Knowledge Effect?

Cervetti, Gina N.; Wright, Tanya S.; Hwang, HyeJin

Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal, v29 n4 p761-779 Apr 2016

Research has shown the use of conceptually coherent text sets to be effective in building knowledge and vocabulary, as well as preparing students for new texts on the same topic. Both broad knowledge and topic-specific knowledge are essential for reading comprehension. In turn, background knowledge allows readers to make inferences, which aids in comprehension, thinking, and memory.

Newsela, Readworks, and Achieve the Core all have online text-set resources for educators. They present solid choices of related texts and, for the most part, adequate selected-response items, constructed responses to individual texts, and some extended responses to the paired texts.

Missing and essential ingredients include 1) a pacing guide of strategies for their use, 2) differentiated levels of reading comprehension, 3) systematic support for teachers and students with the written responses.

Methodology –

We chose an experimental-control group design that included the study of paired texts that includes a pacing guide, differentiated levels of writing and systematic support of student writing. The design required the study to fit within the school scheduling to make the data generated as reliable as possible and instructive to the teachers and students involved.

High school students in control groups received 127 hours of instruction with the district adopted textbook series guided by their district curriculum guide. Experimental-group students received the

Paired Texts Packets

same instruction except for 15 hours (12% of the total hours) of study with the Paired Texts Packets embedded in 2 3-week cycles.

Middle and elementary school students in control groups received 235-255 hours of instruction with the district adopted textbook series guided by their district curriculum guide. Experimental group students received the same instruction except for an average of 22 hours (8-9% of the total hours) of study with the Paired Texts Packets embedded in a 3-week cycle each 9-weeks.

Equivalent groups of students – For each study we setup control and experiment groups. All student groups were similar in prior student achievement. For example, we compared the experimental group of students (winter-spring 2019) with control groups of students in winter-spring 2017 and 2018. In each year there were between 17-19% advanced, 55-57% average, and 24-26% basic students.

Georgia Milestones for ELA was the independent measure that generated a mean score for all student groups. The mean scores for the control group at grades 3, 6, and 9 were all significantly lower than the experimental groups. The experimental groups for all 3 grades exceeded the expectations of their shared visions. All 3 envisioned their scores exceeding the state mean score but not to the degree they did.

In all 3 schools, growth in student achievement on the writing subtest of Milestones ELA exceeded that of their overall ELA score. This was most notable in Gr9 where the 38% increase in scores of extended writing lifted the increase in overall ELA score up by 24%.

A noteworthy case study – in advanced planning with new schools, we ask if there are special subgroups of students in need of targeted study. In a high school, the essential requirement for adopting Paired Texts Packets was its demonstrated, significant impact on remedial reading students over a 3-year period of instruction. 2 years prior to our appearance, 36 students qualified as Gr8 students for 2 years of instruction in remedial reading the high school. They followed a published reading curriculum in Gr9 with greater emphasis on reading than writing. In their 2nd year of instruction (Gr10) they met and completed 4 paired Texts Packets throughout the schoolyear. As you can see in this chart, the positive impact of reading instruction in year 1 was significant, but integrated reading-writing instruction delivered even greater impact.

	1 Beginning writing	2 Developing writing	3 Proficient writing	4 Distinguished writing	Mean score
Gr8 – qualifying year	36	3	0	0	1.08
Gr9 – year 1	26	12	1	0	1.38
Gr10 – year 2	12	15	11	1	2.05

This finding led to a decision to use W2Win in Gr9 of remedial instruction and move all students scoring 3-4 on EOC ELA up to the average instructional strand. Instructional leaders share a vision of moving half of the remedial readers in Gr8 up to courses with graduation credit before then get to Gr9.

The essential value of classroom action research is underscored again. The quick turn-around in reliable research data allowed and justified instructional changes for the benefit of students.