



We invite your participation as we continue to explore the impact of Strategic & Interactive Writing Instruction (SIWI) on teacher knowledge and implementation, as well as on the language and writing development of Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in grades 3-6.

### **What is Strategic and Interactive Writing Instruction (SIWI)?**

SIWI is a writing approach that incorporates cognitive strategy instruction for writing processes, apprenticeship through interactive and guided writing instruction, and strategies for responding to Deaf and Hard of Hearing students' specific language needs (e.g., development of linguistic competence, building meta-linguistic awareness). SIWI is not a scripted curriculum, rather a framework for writing instruction with a set of guiding principles; therefore, writing programs that have been adopted by schools can typically be embedded within SIWI instruction.

Over the last ten years we have been developing and testing SIWI as an approach to writing instruction for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. Research on SIWI in grades 3-8 has demonstrated that it has a positive impact on both teachers and students. Specifically, teachers' SIWI implementation fidelity increases over time, and student language and literacy outcomes improve significantly after SIWI instruction. Our most recent SIWI project, funded by the Institute for Education Sciences (IES), allowed us to fully develop and field test the approach across a range of D/HH students in the later elementary grades (e.g., diverse by hearing loss, language competency, communication method).

If you are interested in knowing more about SIWI, please contact us. We would be pleased to answer your questions or put you in touch with other teachers with whom we have collaborated in the past.

### **What is the focus of this study?**

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) has funded a new study focusing on the impact of SIWI on teacher knowledge and implementation, and student learning in grades 3-6. The proposed study would be inclusive of all school programs for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students (i.e., listening & spoken language, bilingual, TC) and educational settings (e.g., residential, public school self-contained, public school pull out). **We invite third through sixth grade teachers to participate in this randomized controlled trial starting July 2018.**

### **What does participation involve?**

*Teachers in the 'business as usual' (BAU) cohort:* When a classroom teacher is assigned to the comparison group, this means that the participating teachers will proceed without any changes to their regular language and literacy instruction. Throughout the school year, a research team member will collect literacy instruction data from teachers (e.g., instructional practices interviews and surveys) and language and literacy data from students (e.g., writing samples, spelling, writing fluency, motivation). Following the first year of involvement, teachers will have the opportunity to participate for an additional year. If they choose to participate, they will be randomly assigned to continue with BAU *or* to implement SIWI. At the conclusion of BAU participation, teachers may attend the week-long SIWI professional development in Knoxville, Tennessee. The professional development opportunity will be offered at no cost, and includes access to all SIWI materials and travel reimbursement.

*Teachers in the SIWI cohort:* When a classroom teacher is assigned to the experimental group, this means that s/he will attend the summer SIWI professional development workshop in Knoxville, Tennessee. The professional development will be offered at no cost and travel reimbursement will be provided. During the academic year, participating teachers will implement SIWI in their classrooms approximately 2 hours per week. Our research team will provide ongoing support by virtually meeting with the teachers; and if it is the teacher's first year implementing SIWI, a research team member will come to his/her classroom once per semester to provide in-class modeling and support. In order for the research team to more fully support teachers during SIWI implementation, a research team member will schedule with the teacher to remotely videotape his or her

instruction. Consent forms for videotaping will be provided. Throughout the school year, a research team member will collect literacy instruction data from teachers (e.g., instructional practices interviews and surveys) and language and literacy data from students (e.g., writing samples, spelling, writing fluency, motivation).

**What is the project timeline?**

This is a four year project in which teachers with varying experience with SIWI may participate:

- teachers new to SIWI ('first year SIWI cohort' or 'BAU'),
- teachers who have implemented SIWI for one academic year ('second year SIWI cohort'),
- teachers who have implemented SIWI for at least two academic years ('third year SIWI cohort'), and
- teachers who have implemented SIWI for three or more academic years ('sustainability cohort').

Outlined below are the project years in which each cohort of teachers will participate. Please see the table below for a graphic representation of this information.

- *2017-2018*: Teachers in second year SIWI cohort
- *2018-2019*: Teachers in third year SIWI cohort, and first year participants randomly assigned to the first year SIWI cohort or BAU (As the table below shows, you would have the opportunity to participate 1-3 years!)
- *2019-2020*: Teachers in sustainability cohort, teachers in second year SIWI cohort, and first year participants randomly assigned to the first year SIWI cohort or BAU
- *2020-2021*: Teachers in second year SIWI cohort, and teachers in third year SIWI cohort

	<b>Business as Usual Cohort</b>	<b>First Year SIWI Cohort</b>	<b>Second Year SIWI Cohort</b>	<b>Third Year SIWI Cohort</b>	<b>Sustainability Cohort</b>
<b>2017-2018</b>			X↘		
<b>2018-2019</b>	X	X↘		X↘	
<b>2019-2020</b>	X	X↘	X↘		X
<b>2020-2021</b>			X	X	

↘ teachers may continue additional years

**What Incentives are provided for participating?**

Participation comes with a financial incentive for both participating teachers and the school, as well as access to professional development and teacher resources. Both SIWI experimental and BAU comparison groups will have access to the same SIWI professional development and resources by the end of the study, and will be provided with support during the data collection phase. For each year of participation, we will offer teachers a \$1,000-\$2,000 stipend based on years of involvement and type of participation, an additional \$100 per student participant, and reimbursement for all travel expenses incurred by attending SIWI professional development. In addition, we will provide teachers with access to a secure website where they can view and/or download materials, videos, and supports related to the implementation of SIWI. Each participating school will additionally receive \$100 per student participant each year.

**Project Team**

Kimberly Wolbers, Ph.D., PI  
University of Tennessee  
[kwolbers@utk.edu](mailto:kwolbers@utk.edu)

Hannah Dostal, Ph.D., Co-PI  
University of Connecticut  
[hannah.dostal@uconn.edu](mailto:hannah.dostal@uconn.edu)

Steve Graham, Ed.D., Co-PI  
Arizona State University

Thomas Allen, Ph.D., Co-PI  
Gallaudet University