

# Eighth Annual Triad Teacher Researcher Conference



Triad Teacher Researchers  
Wednesday May 3, 2017  
5:30-9:00 pm  
UNC-Greensboro  
School of Education Building

## Empowering Educators, Supporting Students

### Program Schedule

**5:30-6:00 Registration & Program Review**

*School of Education Building Lobby*

Please take this time to register, grab some food, socialize, and review your program. Make a plan for sessions you want to attend.

**6:00-6:25 Welcome & Dinner**

*School of Education Building, Room 120*

Colleen Fairbanks, School of Education

Amy Vetter, Joy Myers, and Holly Wroblewski TTR Co-founders

Opening Speaker: Winston McGregor

**6:30-7:15 Session 1: Paper and Roundtable Sessions**

**7:20-7:40 Session 2: Poster Sessions & Desserts**

**7:45-8:30 Session 3: Paper and Roundtable Sessions**

**8:35-9:00 Closing Remarks & Door Prizes**

*School of Education Building, Room 120*

Holly Wroblewski, TTR Co-founder

### About the Opening Speaker

Winston McGregor is Executive Director at Guilford Education Alliance (GEA). In 2015, GEA was named the Guilford County Non Profit of the Year for their work to align people and resources in support of public schools and for building a county wide collaborative to partner with Say Yes to Education.

### About the Triad Teacher Researchers

The Triad Teacher Researchers is a network of teachers dedicated to thoughtful teaching and learning. We began as a group of four teachers who were looking for a supportive network of teacher researchers in the Triad area with the goal of impacting teacher and student learning through research. Our hope is to increase dialogue in central North Carolina about teacher research, create a community of supportive, passionate teachers, and to contribute to the professional body of knowledge about teaching and learning. Our group is growing, and we are hoping to expand our network of supportive teacher researchers.

To learn more about the Triad Teacher Researchers or if you would like to join our group, visit our website:

[www.triadteacherresearcher.weebly.com](http://www.triadteacherresearcher.weebly.com)

### Audience Level Key

EL-Elementary

MG-Middle Grades

U - University

HS-High School

Door Prize #

Session 1

6:30-7:15

**ROUNDTABLES**

Presenter 1 will present from 6:30-6:45

Presenter 2 will present from 6:45-7:00

Questions from audience 7:00-7:15

Presenters will present their research and engage participants in dialogue about their process. As a courtesy to our presenters, we encourage participants to remain at their table for both presentations.

**Room 212****Audience Level**

Moderator: Dr. Ye He

**Family Stories: A Two-Generation Approach in a Heritage Language Program**

Carlie Abercrombie, Adriana Paschal & Claudia Rodriguez; Stephanie Brabec, Ye He, and Tierney Hinman

MG, U

The presenters will share curriculum design, participant artifacts, and educational insights from a Heritage Language Academy program for Spanish-speaking adolescents and their families. Through interview and memoria projects, middle school Spanish heritage speakers and their families used English and Spanish to document family stories and build communication skills.

**Room 219****Audience Level**

Moderator: Dr. Sam Miller

**Feedback and Self-Regulation**

Jay Simmons

MG, HS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of increasing the opportunity for peer feedback on individual student's ability to self-regulate within a high school English classroom in an urban, Title II, school. After individual writing assignments, students peer edited, following a suggested protocol, which resulted in each student procuring upwards of twenty comments per assignment from their classmates. It was determined that the exposure to the increased amount of peer comments, as opposed to just teacher feedback alone, empowered students to both develop as self-regulated writers and givers of feedback.

**Effects of Independent Research on Testing Achievement**

Wil Zahorodny

HS

The current study examines the effects of teaching students to research questions independently on test score achievement. Participants include four high school honors Biology classes assigned to receive either a traditional study guide (n=59) or a study guide containing reference page numbers (n=47) designed to guide students to answers.

**Room 214****Audience Level**

Moderator: Dr. Sara Heredia

**Bilingual Arabic-English Education: Seeking Information to Enhance Bilingual Education**

Wesam Alqarafi

EL, MG, HS, U

This research focuses on providing more information about bilingual education and curriculum, which will be useful to educators interested in learning about bilingual education in Greensboro. This presentation will also provide information for the Arabic- English families about the effects of neglecting to teach their children Arabic language, especially if they return to their home country.

**Let's Use the Power of Technology: Using Video as an Educational Tool for English Language Learners**

Sumayah Dhahi Aljohani

HS, U

My research focuses on exploring video as an additional tool for teaching English Language Learner (ELLs) to improve their English language acquisition. Educators can use a video to grab the attention of students, increase motivation, and improve learning experiences, so that students are more likely to acquire the English language.

**Room 202****Audience Level**

Moderator: Dr. Colleen Fairbanks

**The Effects of Introversion and Extroversion on Whole Class Discussion**

Lindsay Schneider

MG, HS

Where individual students fall on the introversion-extroversion spectrum directly affects how they prefer to participate and share in class. This research study addresses the question "what are the effects of introversion and extroversion on whole-class discussion?" and provides practical insights to facilitate meaningful discussions while bolstering students' oral communication skills.

**EL Paideia Seminars: Empowering Voices**

Joy Hamm

MG, HS

This qualitative research describes the effects of student-led critical conversations via Paideia Seminars in a middle school EL class. While this study focuses on English Language learners, the Paideia Seminar model is adaptable for engaging any group of students in utilizing interactive discourse to provoke deeper meaning in a text.

**Room 110****Audience Level**

Moderator: Dr. Wayne Journell

**Before and After - Engaging Lessons**

Jordan Holcomb

HS

In this project, I used the Great War Unit in my American History II class to analyze my students' knowledge and understanding. In using both qualitative and quantitative data, I learned more about the ways my students learn and my own teaching effectiveness.

## "What could have been done differently?" High School Learners Think Outside the Box of History

Brandy Hinrichs

HS

In this research, I explore students' understanding of America's Imperialism and its involvement into WWI. By using all types of data (qualitative and quantitative), I better understood how my students learned Imperialism and WWI. I also learned more about how effective I am as a teacher.

### PAPER PRESENTATIONS

Presenters will present for the entire 45-minute session, in which they will share their research and facilitate discussion where applicable. As a courtesy to our presenters, we encourage participants to remain for the entire presentation.

#### Room 206

#### Audience Level

Moderator: Dr. Heidi Carlone

#### Exploring How a "judgment free" Space Supports Black Girls Identity Work as Scientist & Engineers

Faith Freeman

EL, MG, HS, U

This research explores ways in which a "judgment-free", STEM summer camp influences African American (AA) girls to identify themselves as scientists or engineers. This study investigates the "judgment" AA females may face while engaging in STEM and explores how a "judgment-free" space can affect AA females' identity work and agency.

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#### Session 2

7:20-7:40

### POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Participants are invited to peruse the poster session and engage in dialogue with presenters. Brownies and cookies will be provided.

#### Room 102

#### Audience Level

Moderator: Dr. Scott Howerton

#### The Rule of Law: Teaching Today's Youth about the American Court System

Scarlett O'Dell

HS

In this project I have explored my students' understanding of the American Court System and the laws within our society. I will be measuring this not only through qualitative and quantitative data, but through my own personal triumphs, failures, and overall effectiveness of my teaching. I believe that audiences will be intrigued to see how well these students respond to the laws of our society.

### **They Said What!?: The Struggle for Evidence Based Writing in High School**

Roger Williams

HS

This study researchers students' ability to increase their skills to process data and use data effectively to construct arguments using factual evidence. Students are observed through the fact gathering process, analysis stage, and final submission of a written argument. This study hopes to improve understanding of how to craft an informed statement and avoid unfounded claims.

### **The Short and Skinny**

Stephanie Booe

HS

This research focuses on how to assist students through the creative writing process by providing them with examples and guidelines throughout the procedure.

### **How Out of School Suspensions Can Become Productive Spaces for Students**

Souleymane Bah

EL, MS, HS

An early intervention in a young life will make a difference, and a student will learn from that experience. Specifically, the hope is to avoid a future that involves punishment in his or her adult life, such as going to jail or prison. The research I did informed me that peer mediation can be an effective conflict resolution strategy. Effective conflict resolution programs help create safe learning environments where children feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings.

### **SIOP's Perceived Impact on ELL Student Instruction**

Debra L. Boles

HS

The purpose of this research is to understand the perceived impact of the SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) model used in a classroom designed for students who are ELLs (English Language Learners). The research is primarily focused on component 1: lesson preparation. The specific features researched under the lesson preparation component included meaningful adaptations and adaptations through the use of cooperative learning strategies, note-taking (including guided notes, graphic organizers, marginal notes and Cornell notes) and summarizing.

### **High School Students and the Legislative Branch Unit**

Garett Fesperman

HS

As my high school students learn about the Legislative Branch, I recorded their understanding, along with the effectiveness of my teaching through qualitative and quantitative data. This information will be useful to other high school social studies teachers.

### **The Shakespearience: Instructional Strategies for Teaching Romeo and Juliet**

Andrew Bly

HS

The Common Core State Standards Initiative, as well as currently mandated North Carolina curriculum, requires English teachers to incorporate Shakespeare's work in the classroom. Therefore, this research study was designed to assess and enhance a diverse student population's ability to read, analyze, and perform

scenes from a Shakespearean play.

### **“¿Podemos usar Español?”: Translanguaging in an English-Centric High School Classroom**

Amy Koppen

MG, HS

This research focuses on potential translanguaging opportunities in a public high school setting. The research also focuses on the benefits and constraints of translanguaging well as teacher and student perceptions of multilingualism in their communities of practice. This project hopes to encourage the use of translanguaging as both a naturally-occurring practice and as a pedagogical strategy to improve English proficiency and academic achievement in an English-centric classroom.

### **Never a Dull Day: The Art of Students Discovering History**

Mary Moorhouse

HS

Throughout this project, I investigated the learning styles of my students in order to attain substantial growth by the end of Unit Five in American History I. By presenting the data, I hope all attending instructors will understand the benefits of molding their lessons to meet student needs.

Heidi Lynn Watren

### **Effects of Graphic Organizers on ELLs**

HS

Since there is a huge push to increase ELL reading scores, I decided to look into methods that can help ELL students. Graphic organizers seemed like an effective method, since I already know that visual cues help my students already. Incorporation of Venn diagrams and plot charts were used in every lesson for my ELL middle and high school students. An analysis of graphic organizers will be presented and I believe all teachers could benefit from this research.

**Room 104**

**Audience Level**

Moderator: Dr. Vicki Jacobs

### **Student Centered Homework**

Cheryl Reeves

EL

The purpose of this presentation is to take research regarding the usefulness of homework in the elementary school and to provide examples of homework that provides a meaningful academic result.

### **Happily Ever Writing**

Ryan Piper

HS

While creative writing is necessary for critical thinking skills, schools have a stronger focus on academic writing. Meanwhile, college entrance essays focus on a personal voice in students writing. This project closes the gap between academic writing and college entrance essays by focusing on finding students personal voices.

### **"It Just Is" Isn't Good Enough: Working Toward Justification in the Mathematics Classroom**

Barbara Woodcock

HS

The purpose of this study is to see how students develop abstract and quantitative reasoning with a focus on the NC Math III curriculum. The poster will include student work as well as sample progressions of development of reasoning skills. Math teachers can learn pedagogical and assessment designs to lead students toward justification and reasoning.

### **The Power of Persuasion: High School Learners, and Rhetorical Concepts**

Sarah Nareau

HS

This presentation will focus on high school learner's introduction to the American enlightenment period, specifically the use of rhetoric in persuasive essays.

### **The Benefits and Constraints of Using the SIOP Model in an English class in China**

Qina Enen

EL

This study researched the implementation of the SIOP in an English classroom in China. This research focuses on the benefits and constraints of using the SIOP model for sixth grade students to learn content and language and to develop learning habit in English class in China.

### **"Is it Worth the Time to Teach Deep Time?" Looking at Middle School Students' Understanding of Geologic Time**

Danielle Russ

MG

This presentation takes a close look at how middle school students' understanding of deep time impacts their learning of the geologic time scale. My poster will highlight data collected and analyzed on how students' understanding of deep time changes over the course of a two-week 8th grade Earth History Unit.

### **Exploring Student Learning of Circles with Real World Applications**

Christopher Nem

HS

This poster presents findings from an action research project that seeks to understand student learning of secondary mathematics in relation to instruction and research on student mathematical thinking.

### **Learning Through Eclectic Techniques**

Eamon Clarke

HS

This project was dedicated to evaluating student understanding of World War I. Through the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, insight was gained into how students understood World War I, as well as my personal teaching effectiveness. This analysis will be of use to other social studies teachers.

### **"Tall, Dark, and Handsome"**

Hollyn Davis

EL, MG

When reading a text, there is a misconception between what it means to know a character and what it means to understand a character. Hence, this is where characterization plays an important role in conceptualizing the idea of who a character is. The character analysis project scaffolds the students into analyzing a specific character to understand the character.

Moderator: Dr. Holt Wilson

**The Five Love Languages in Middle School**

Lura Tang

MG

The purpose of this research is to discover if there is an impact on a student's relationships and internal motivation after knowing their own and their classmates' Love Language(s). The intention is for the students' voice to be heard through this research.

**"Hopping around on those - what do you call 'em? Oh - legs!" : How a First Grade Class Understands the Process of Metamorphosis**

Melanie Musso

MG

The focus of my project is on the understanding of life cycles from a first grader's perspective. Students will observe metamorphosis first hand by raising tadpoles from a local wetland in a classroom mock habitat. The poster will highlight aspects of students learning before, during, and after the activity.

**Mathematics PD That's Worth Talking About**

F. Paul Wonsavage

HS

Math educators across the state are all familiar with professional development, but how do they interact with state-sponsored PD opportunities around the new NC Mathematics Standards implementation? This project examines math educators' perceptions about new mathematics standards implementation in one suburban school district.

**Carbon Cycle Learning Progression: Moving Towards Environmental Science Literacy by Tracing Matter**

Jennifer Locklear

HS

Research has identified weaknesses in carbon cycle learning progression (CCLP) in secondary science. I will be developing an activity and assessment tool to aid in student cognition of the CCLP. My data will show if and when students are able to scientifically trace matter through the carbon cycle and move closer to environmental science literacy using the developed activity and assessment tool.

**Taking the Guess out of Guesswork: Building Justification & Reasoning Skills in the Mathematics Classroom**

Renee Gibbs

HS

This research focuses on the development of students' justification and reasoning skills. With standards that emphasize students' ability to make connections and reason, teachers need to have some insight into the current reasoning skills of high school math students and effective methods to build these skills over time.

**The Benefits and Constraints of Flipping a 6th Grade Mathematics Classroom as Perceived by Students, Teachers, and Parents**

Renee Tysinger

EL, MS

The purpose of my research is to discover how flipping the classroom affects teachers, students, and parents.

More specifically, I examine the benefits and constraints of the method as perceived by those involved. I want to inform others about the flipped approach to allow them to determine if it's right for them.

### **Effects of Parent-Teacher Communication on Classroom Behavior and Performance**

Jamison Smith

HS

Creating a healthy learning environment for students, and showing them day in and day out that teachers genuinely care about them, are arguably two of the most important factors for classroom success. This study aims to explore what outcome will arrive if the same importance placed on bonding with students is attached to the students' parents and guardians.

### **"Turning Readers Into Fans:" Students Engage With A New Literary Genre While Evaluating and Interpreting Classic Short Stories.**

Cody Morris

HS

The Fan Fiction project was centered on students having the opportunity to be fans and scholars of a short story by exploring theme and central idea in a way that makes the story personal. The project gave creative choice for students while meeting proper standards for the interpretation of text.

### **Just Keep Writing: Engaging Students in the Drafting Process**

Shelby Alexandra Harris

HS

This study is researching the effects of emphasizing a multi-leveled drafting process and conjunctive writing workshop in an English 11 Honors classroom at Northern Guilford High School. I am seeking to increase the amount of time dedicated to writing in the high school English classroom; this study seeks to measure students' growth as writers by implementing lessons that prompt students to collaborate with peers, re-envision each draft, and reflect on their growth over time.

### **"The Power of Pairs:" Motivating Standards Level High School Students through Accountability Pairs**

Desiree Marcano

MS, HS

This study researches the effect of student accountability pairing in standard level classes on student achievement. Students were observed over a three-month period, and their grades were compared before the accountability pairs and after. In the pairs, they checked each other's work, studied together after school, did projects together and occasionally took small assessments together. It was found that utilizing student accountability pairs increases the overall classroom environment in many ways. This study hopes to encourage teachers to utilize pairs and collective student learning in their classrooms.

Session 3

8:10-8:30

### **ROUNDTABLES**

Presenter 1 will present from 7:45-8:00

Presenter 2 will present from 8:00-8:15

Questions from 8:15-8:30

Presenters will present their research and engage participants in dialogue about their process. As a courtesy to our presenters, we encourage participants to remain at their table for both presentations.

Room 108	Audience Level
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Moderator: Dr. Rochelle Brock

### **Project Based Learning Engages the Reluctant Reader**

Marlene Bennett

EL

This presentation will show the affects of project based learning with reluctant readers. The audience for this presentation will learn how they can incorporate inquiry based projects in a literacy environment and make reading engaging, and fun!

### **Reading Strategies that Work to Improve Reading Comprehension**

Chelsey Isler

EL

Do students fully understand what they are reading? Are they able to express verbally or orally what they have read? The demand on teachers to help students reading comprehension is tremendous. Direct instruction of reading strategies that improve comprehension may aid children to become stronger at comprehending text independently. The purposes of this presentation are to ensure that teachers are equipped to teach strategies that improve instruction.

Room 110	Audience Level
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Moderator: Dr. Jeanette Alarcón

### **Teaching the Legislative Branch in a Modern Day Classroom**

Kevin Miller

HS

For this project I assessed student understanding of the Legislative Branch unit in a Civics/Economics classroom. Analyzing data has helped me understand how students learn and how I can become a more effective teacher. I believe my analysis of student progress in this unit will be interesting to other teachers.

### **"Where Did All the Historians Go?" Bringing Historians and Their Works to the High School Classroom**

Josh Faircloth

MG, HS

By incorporating the works of professional historians into the classroom, teachers can help students gain not only a deeper content knowledge, but can provide models for the historical thinking and writing skills that teachers work to develop in their classrooms.

**Room 202****Audience Level**

Moderator: Roxanne Patty

**Complex Thoughts: Expression Beyond Simple Sentences**

Jessica Westmoreland

HS

This research focuses on how to promote the use of varied sentence structures. In this study students will become aware of the effects of different sentence structures, and utilize that knowledge in order to improve upon their own writing.

**"The Razors Edge:" a Focused Approach to Facilitate Grammar and Sentence Structure Learning at the High School Level.**

David Zochol

HS

The broad and sometimes ambiguous field that is English grammar is overwhelming for both the students learning the subject and the educator teaching it. Teachers must adopt a more streamlined approach to grammar instruction in order to provide adequate and in context practice.

**Room 214****Audience Level**

Moderator: Dr. Barbara Levin

**"Do you dance to the beat of your drum"? High School Learners Engage with Hands- On, Creative Multi-Genre Projects**

Michelle Shadroui

HS

During the process of this project, I investigated my students' understanding of [Boom and Bust 1920s/1930s]. By using hands on activities and creative approaches to teaching, along with analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data, I developed a deeper understanding about the various ways students learn [Boom and Bust 1920s/1930s]. In this investigation, I also came to a clearer conclusion as to my own effectiveness of teaching [Boom and Bust 1920s/1930s]. I believe my investigation will be of interest to other professionals seeking to improve their teaching skills.

**Leaps and Bounds: Integrating Character Education in Today's English Curriculum**

Chrystal Rich

HS

I plan to build a sense of moral character while improving reflective writing practices in the classroom. I will share a unit plan for 11th graders on Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* wherein students work through moral dilemma scenarios featuring themes throughout the literature. Students will be assessed on three journals, using a rubric.

**Room 212****Audience Level**

Moderator: Dr. Dale Schunk

**Analysis of Student Performance and Assignment Effectiveness in a U.S. History II Civil Rights Movement Unit**

Caitlin Graham

HS

In this project, I explored my students' understanding of the Civil Rights Movement. I analyzed qualitative and quantitative data to better understand how students learn about this era of U.S. History as well as my pedagogic effectiveness. I believe my procedures will be useful to other teachers and researchers.

**The US Political System**

Steffie King

HS

In my project, I explored my students' understanding of the United States' political system. By analyzing students' work, I learned more about the ways students learned about the political system and about my own teaching effectiveness.

**Room 204****Audience Level**

Moderator: Joan Lindley

**"Some Are More Equal Than Others." High School Learners Engaging with Animal Farm in a Modern Context**

Alex Spainhour

HS

This presentation focuses on George Orwell's novel, *Animal Farm*, and its relevancy to modern high schoolers. The study worked to find a way to connect a novel over seventy years old, about a government long defunct, with modern students and their lives and interests.

**Figuring Out Figurative Language**

Alyson MacDonald

HS

This research focuses on how to familiarize students with figurative language in order to facilitate more in-depth poetry analysis.



## Triad Teacher Researchers

*Empowering Educators, Supporting Students*

### A special "Thank You" to our moderators:

Jeanette Alarcon  
 Rochelle Brock  
 Heidi Carlone  
 Colleen Fairbanks  
 Ye He  
 Scott Howerton  
 Sara Heredia  
 Vicki Jacobs  
 Wayne Journell  
 Barbara Levin  
 Joan Lindley  
 Sam Miller  
 Roxanne Patty  
 Dale Schunk  
 Holt Wilson  
 Melody Zoch

### Event Organizers

Joy Myers, TTR Co-founder  
 Amy Vetter, TTR Co-founder  
 Holly Wroblewski, TTR Co-founder

### Event Sponsors

Teacher Education & Higher Education Department UNCG

### Caterer

TBA