

## IMPACT OF NWP ON TEACHERS' CLASSROOM PRACTICE: Results of a teacher survey Inverness Research Associates - NWP annual meeting 2001

**Comments for each slide:** This presentation was prepared for a general, non-technical audience of NWP site directors and TCs. Later this year we plan to write a more formal, in-depth article about this study. We will notify you when it is available. In the meantime, if you decide to share this presentation, please be sure that others understand its original purpose and audience.

Page 1: Each year at this meeting we give you a summary of key findings from our evaluation work. Usually we tell you how many teachers you've reached and programs you've offered, and in other ways assess the capacity of the NWP model and network to serve the nation's teachers. This year we're doing something a little different—we're reporting on a survey where we asked summer institute participants tell us what impact the National Writing Project has had on their teaching.

Page 2: During the 2000 summer institute, we asked participants in all sites to rate the quality and potential value of the institute for their teaching. Then one year later, we asked those same teachers to report on some details about their classroom practice and the impact of the institute on their teaching. Today, we're focusing mostly on this follow-up survey.

Page 3: Here is where we started—with summer institute participants' satisfaction with the program. The US Department of Education specified that 75% of the teachers should be satisfied, but you can see here that the NWP exceeded that standard by a great deal. Close to 100% of participants found the summer institute to be of high quality and helpful to them as teachers.

Page 4: Furthermore, over 90% of teachers believed the institute experience would be applicable to their teaching and beneficial to their students.

Page 5: So the question is—what do these participants say, after a year of teaching, about what they gained from the NWP institute?

Page 6: This is a summary of all participants' responses, from kindergarten through college. In very high proportions, teachers reported making 6 kinds of gains from the institute—here are three.

- Note that teachers gained concrete teaching strategies, and the latest research and practice—this suggests the NWP supports research-based practice.
- Also, teachers were motivated to seek more professional development—suggesting the NWP fosters ongoing teacher learning

Page 7: Here are three more ways teachers say they gain from the institute. They are better able to assess students effectively, to reach diverse students, and to help students reach standards.

Together, these reports suggest that the NWP institutes contribute to teachers continuously improving their practice and being responsive both to their students and to standards.

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Page 8: We asked the teachers to tell us how the benefits to them might translate into benefits for their students.

Page 9: Again, these are percentage of all participants, K-college. These are three ways the very great majority of teachers think their students benefit from what they have gained—students understand what makes writing good, they understand the value for both discovery and communication, and they are more proud of their writing.

Page 10: Here are three more ways teachers believe students benefit—between 80 and 90% of teachers say their students can write more and longer pieces, they can use writing in all subjects, and they have a better grasp of the conventions.

These findings suggest that teachers see benefits coming to their students in all areas of the curriculum, not in just the writing classroom per se.

Page 11: Now we want to look at how teachers' experiences in the institute affected how they teach their students.

Page 12: This is an overview of several practices that teachers say they do more of now than they did before, as a result of their experience in the NWP.

Increases in these particular practices suggest that there are important values that NWP teachers hold about the development of young writers—that students talk about writing in a classroom community, they plan and revise drafts, that they develop authority through choice, they write to communicate and to learn.

Page 13: So far we've asked how teachers changed their practices because of the NWP. We can also ask another question--how do the practices of NWP teachers compare to practices of other teachers across the nation? For this we use data from a national survey.

Page 14: The National Assessment of Educational Progress is what policy-makers refer to as the Nation's Report Card. The Report Card for Writing includes student performance assessments in grades 4, 8, and 12, as well as surveys that ask both teachers and students about classroom practices. We used data from the NAEP 1998 Writing Report Card to compare the practices of NWP teachers to the teachers in the national NAEP sample. We also used NAEP reports about which teaching practices correlate with higher student scores on that assessment.

Page 15: The first set of comparisons looks at classroom practices that NWP teachers use very frequently—that is, practices these teachers believe are especially important to the development of young writers. We compare their use of these practices to what teachers in the NAEP survey say, at the upper elementary and middle grades.

Page 16: One practice common to NWP teachers is to ask students to explain their reasoning through written responses, rather than fill in the blanks.

NWP percentages are in red—so on the right hand side, you can see that 65% of NWP teachers in upper elementary say they ask students to do this every day. Other teachers do this less frequently.

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**Comments for each slide:** Continued...

Page 17: At the middle grades, NWP teachers—again in red—are twice as likely than other teachers to ask students to explain their answers in writing every day.

Page 18: Asking students to write in journals or logs is a common way of asking students to think, discover, and learn through writing.

At the elementary level, you can see that NWP teachers are more likely to have students write in journals every day.

Page 19: The two right-hand columns show that more than 80% of NWP teachers in the middle grades ask their students to write in logs or journals daily or weekly. Only 53% of other 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers emphasize these writing experiences.

Taken together, these last several slides suggest that NWP teachers are more likely than other teachers to have their students use writing every day for purposes of learning and explaining their reasoning. Note also that these are practices that serve all curriculum areas.

Page 20: Another common practice is to teach matters of technical correctness. At the elementary grades, non NWP teachers are a bit more likely to teach the conventions every day. Still, 91% of NWP elementary teachers say they teach the conventions daily or weekly.

Page 21: Similarly at the middle grades, NWP teachers spend less time every day on the conventions. Altogether, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of NWP middle grades teachers say they teach the conventions daily or weekly.

Page 22: Asking students to choose their own topics is one way teachers help students develop their voice and authority as writers. You see notable differences here: NWP elementary teachers are almost 7 times more likely than other elementary teachers to ask students to choose their own topics every day.

Page 23: At the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level, NWP teachers are 3 times more likely to ask students to choose their own topics all the time, although 89% of other teachers say they invite choice sometimes.

Page 24: On the 1998 NAEP writing assessment, there were some classroom experiences reported by students that turned out to be statistically correlated with higher scores on the writing samples. In these next comparisons, we look at how NWP teachers compare to the nation's teachers on these specific practices.

Page 25: For elementary students, those who said their teachers ask them to plan their writing either 1-2x/week OR 1-2x/month got the highest scores. Also, 4<sup>th</sup> graders who showed evidence of planning right on the NAEP testing materials scored higher—suggesting that planning is important on timed tests.

This slide shows there is not a great deal of difference between NWP and other teachers, though NWP teachers are more likely to ask students to plan at least once a week.

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**Comments for each slide:** Continued...

- Page 26: The correlation for 8<sup>th</sup> graders is interesting: 8<sup>th</sup> graders whose teachers ask them to plan sometimes score higher on the NAEP writing samples than 8<sup>th</sup> graders whose teachers ask them to plan always. Also: 8<sup>th</sup> graders who plan when they take timed tests score higher. Here we see quite small differences between NWP teachers and others.
- Page 27: There is long-standing evidence that higher achievement is associated with classroom practices that emphasize the composing processes of pre-writing and revision. More than half of elementary NWP teachers ask students to write multiple drafts once a week or more—somewhat more frequently than other teachers.
- Page 28: At the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students whose teachers ask them to produce multiple drafts scored higher. There is little difference between teachers here.
- Page 29: Students who talk about their writing at home have higher writing scores than those who do not. NWP teachers ask their students to talk about writing with their families somewhat more often than other teachers. What's interesting on this slide is that more than a third of the nation's teachers never ask students to talk about writing at home.
- Page 30: Similarly, at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, NWP teachers are more likely to have students discuss writing at home.
- Page 31: There is an interesting relationship between computer use and higher writing scores. At the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, students who use computers less often score higher than 4<sup>th</sup> graders who use them once a week or more. Here we see that NWP teachers have their elementary students use computers a bit more often than other teachers, though usually once a month or less.
- Page 32: For 8<sup>th</sup> graders, the story is different. 8<sup>th</sup> graders who use computers to produce drafts at least once or twice a month have higher achievement on writing tests than students who never use computers. On this slide you can see that 57% of NWP teachers have students use computers at this frequency, which is more than other teachers.
- Page 33: These results give us quite a bit of food for thought. Here are just a couple of reflections that we have as researchers.
- Page 34: Our survey shows that teachers change their practices as a result of NWP institutes, and it also shows that student achievement on "the nation's report card" is correlated with some of those practices. Thus, we can create a statistical link between NWP professional development, the classroom practices of participating teachers, and students' higher achievement in writing. It is important to remember that we do not have sufficient data to make a causal link.

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**Comments for each slide:** Continued...

Page 35: We can also make some more qualitative inferences about the collective stance that NWP teachers have toward teaching and learning, and show how that stance is distinguishable from that of their peers across the nation. For example, when NWP teachers have their students answer questions in writing and write in journals every day, they are serving students' learning in all curriculum areas. When NWP teachers give students choice in their topics nearly every day, and have them plan and revise drafts routinely, they are emphasizing the development of voice, verbal fluency, and authority. NWP teachers also teach grammar and punctuation frequently—but those skills are not the cart leading the horse. Also, NWP teachers' most frequent practices are those that help students develop their versatility in writing for different purposes—for communicating, for thinking, for learning.

Taken altogether then, this study portrays the NWP as a community of practice that has distinctive beliefs and approaches to teaching and learning writing, and suggests that these approaches may translate into student achievement.

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*NWP annual meeting 2001*

# Two Inverness Surveys of NWP Teachers

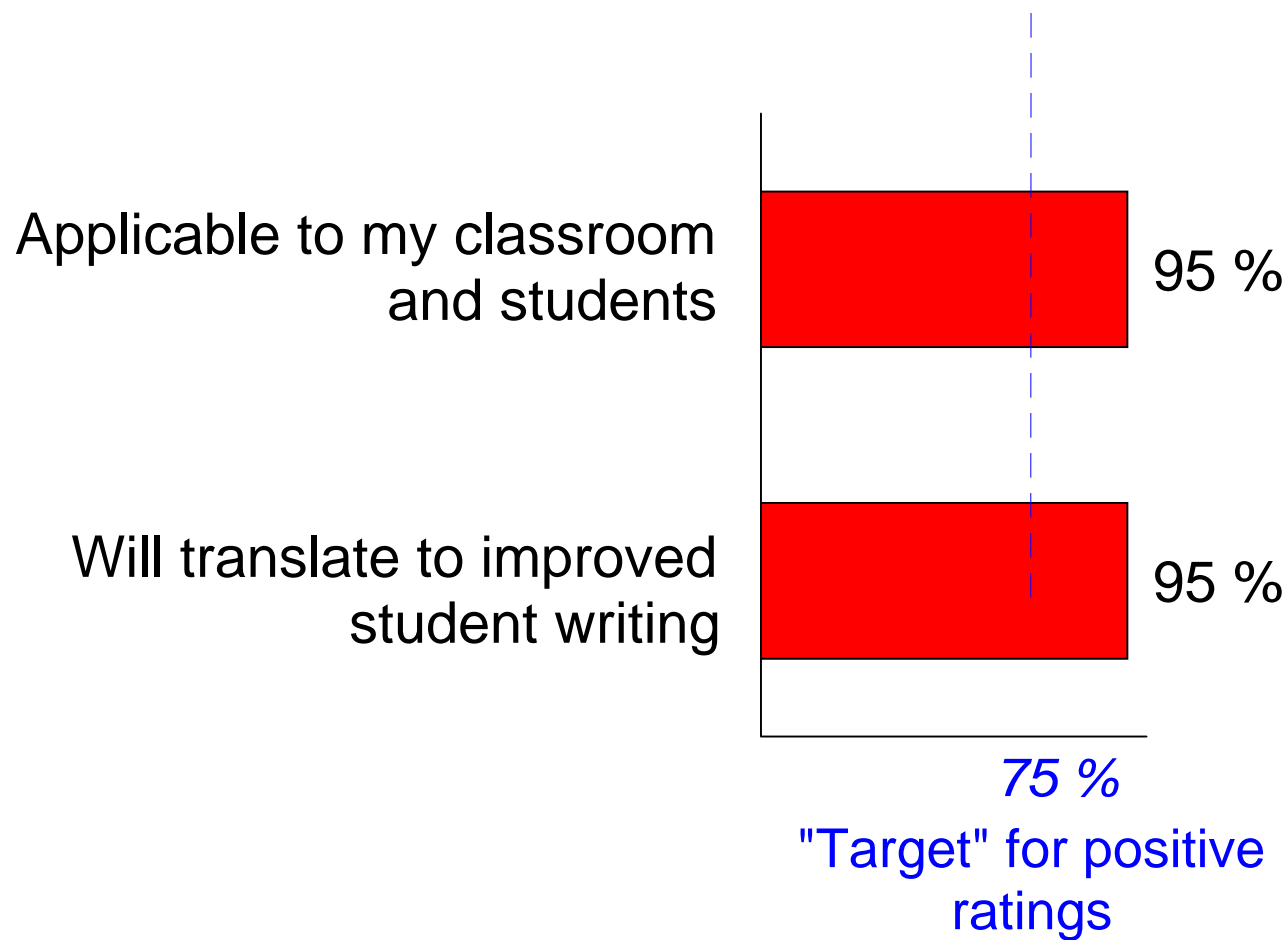
- Survey 1: Value of the Summer 2000 invitational institute (2,731 teachers)
- Survey 2: Impact on classroom practices one year later (424 teachers)

# Where we started in summer 2000: Teachers' satisfaction with NWP Institutes





# More on teachers' satisfaction with NWP Summer Institutes



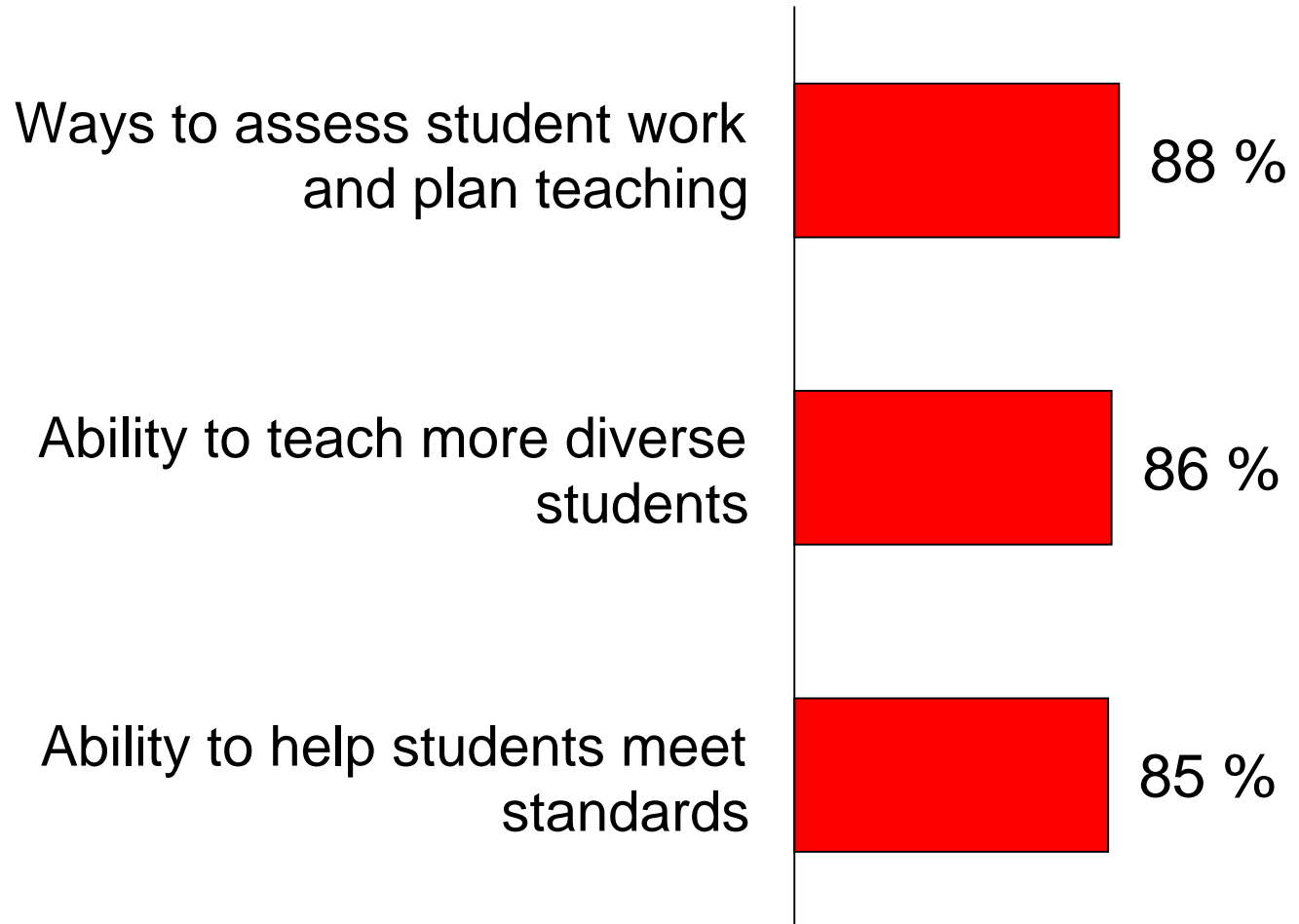
**One year later —**

**What have these teachers  
gained from the NWP  
Summer Institute?**

# What teachers say they gain from NWP institutes—

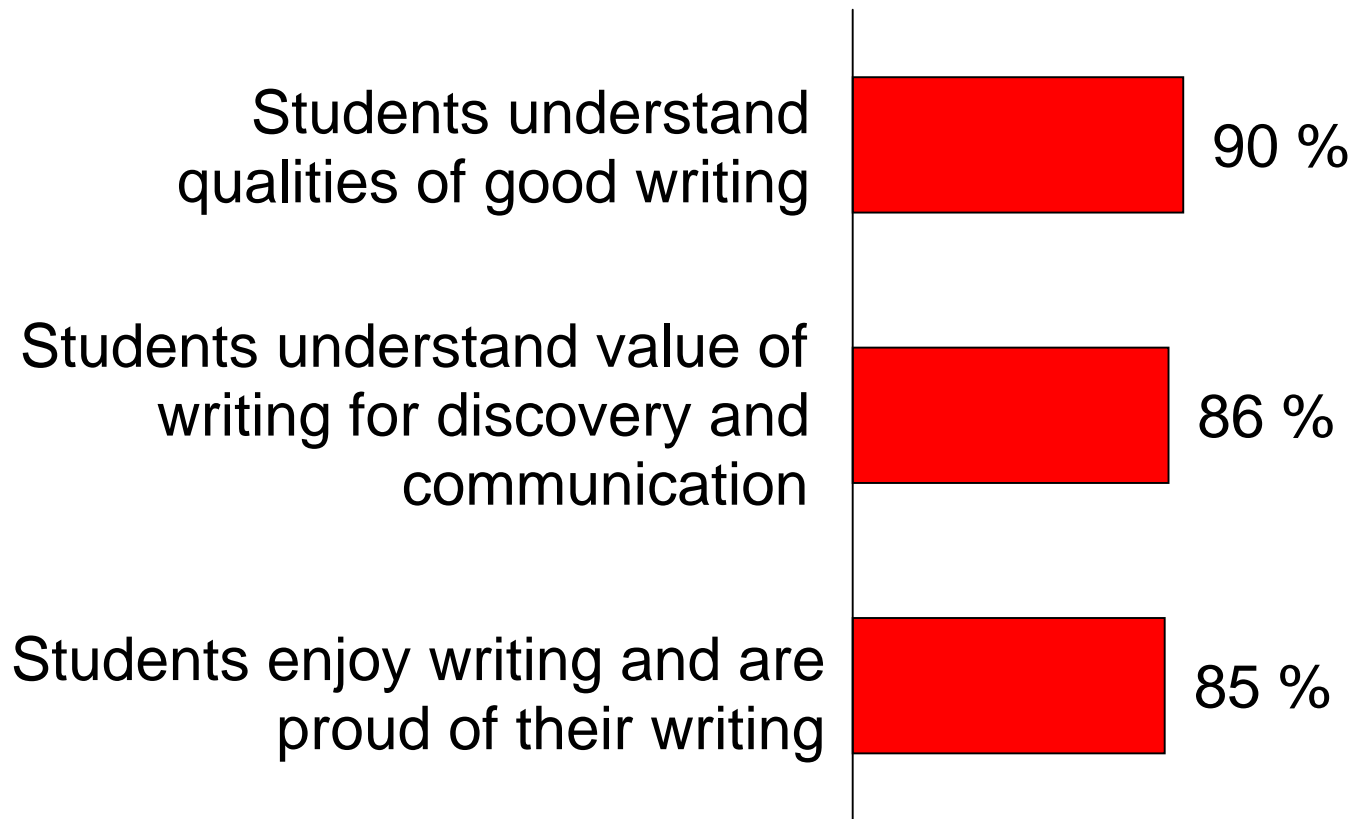


# More of what teachers gain...

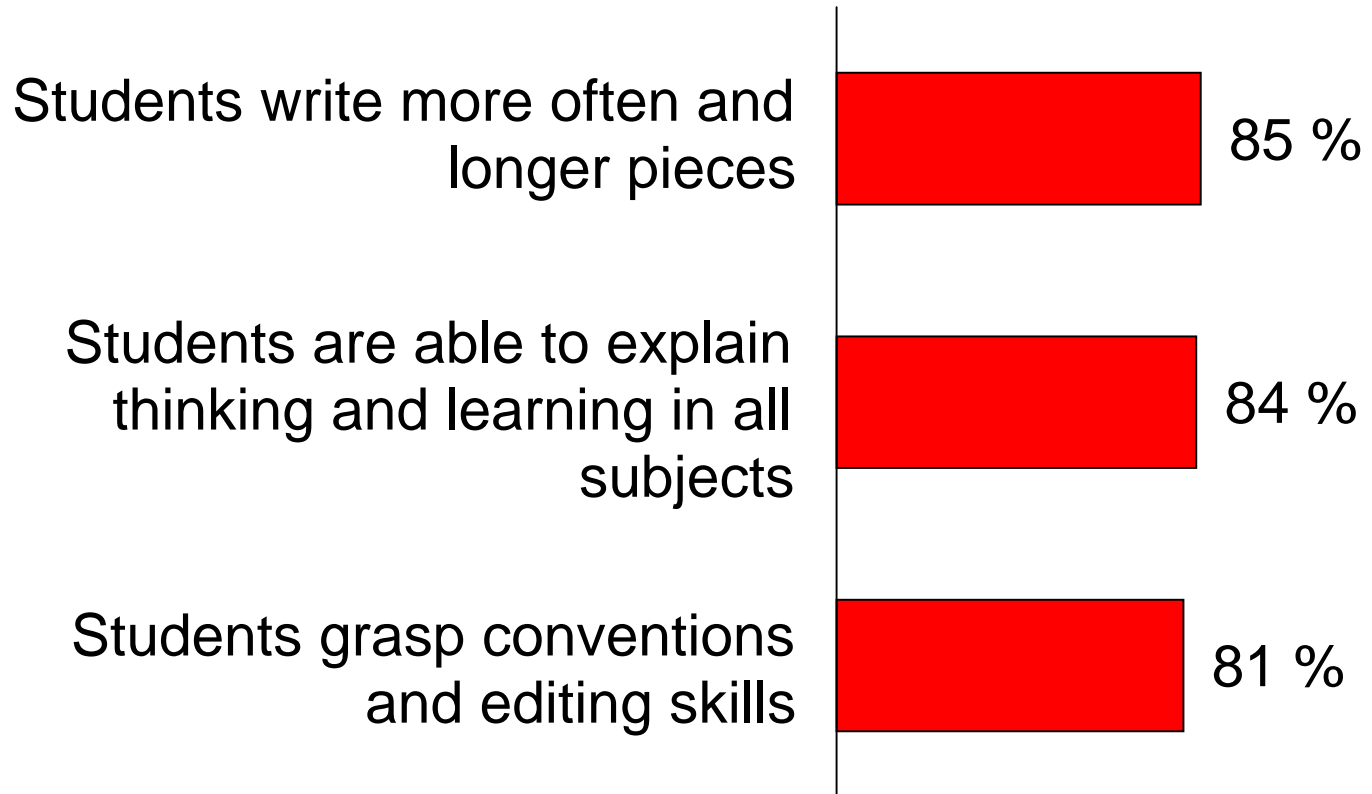


**How do teachers believe  
their students benefit?**

# What teachers believe their students gain



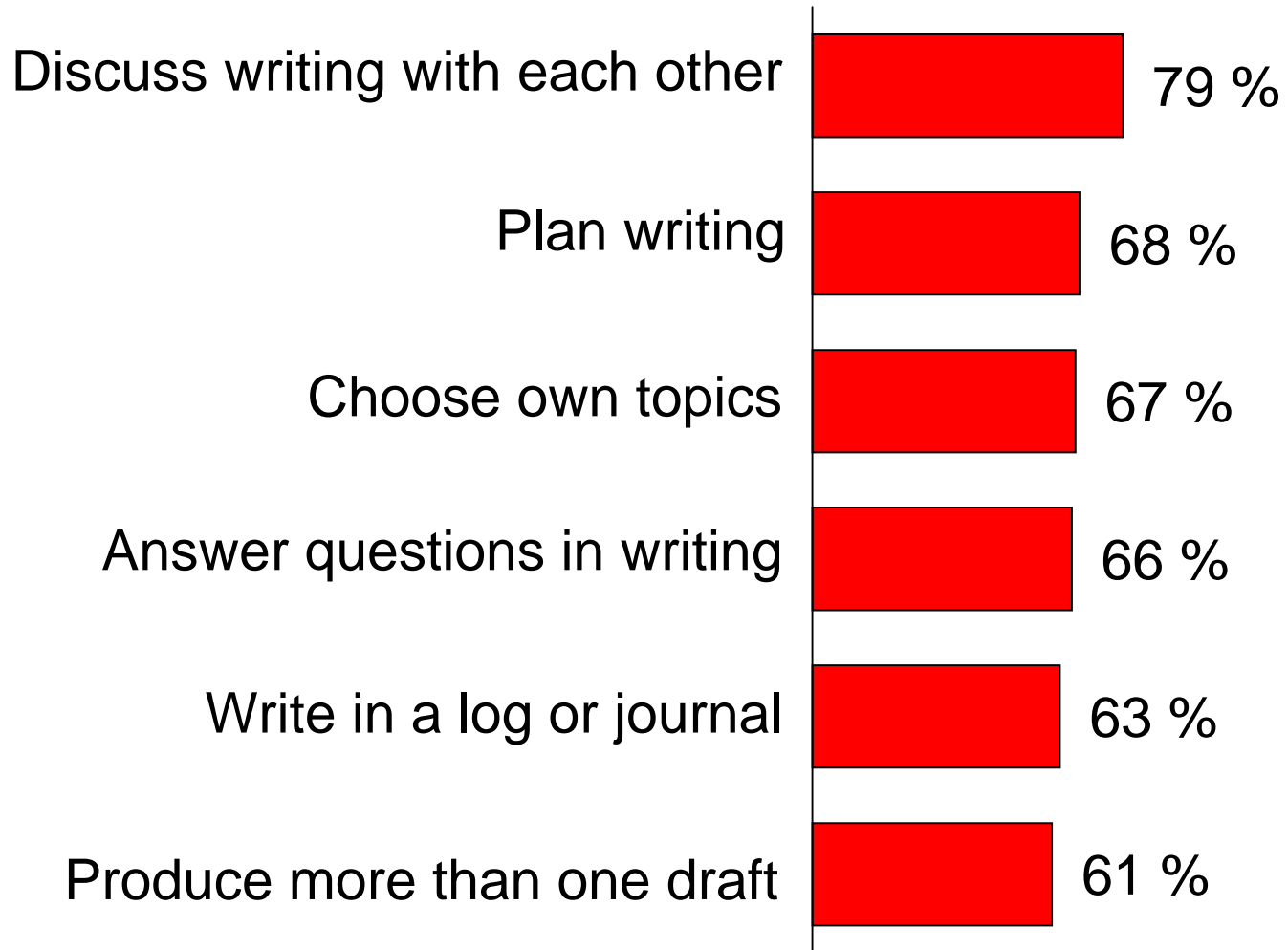
# More benefits to students...



**What changes do teachers  
make in their classroom  
practice as a result of NWP  
institutes?**



# Because of the NWP, teachers ask students to do this more often –



# How do the practices of NWP teachers compare to practices of the nations' teachers?

Comparisons using a teacher survey from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

# Comparing NWP teachers to teachers in a national sample

The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) is “The Nation’s Report Card” for student achievement

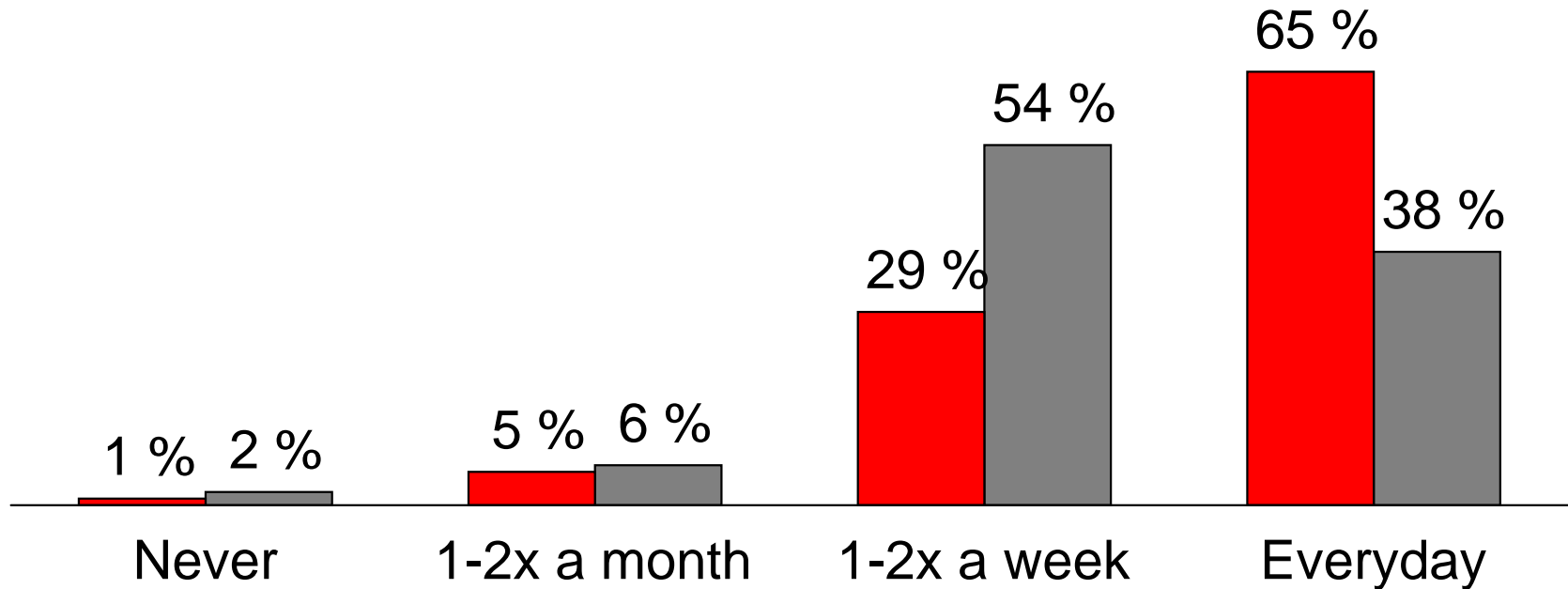
1998 NAEP Report Card on Writing

- Teacher survey (4200 teachers)
- Correlations between classroom practices and student achievement on NAEP tests

# Comparisons on classroom practices that NWP teachers use frequently

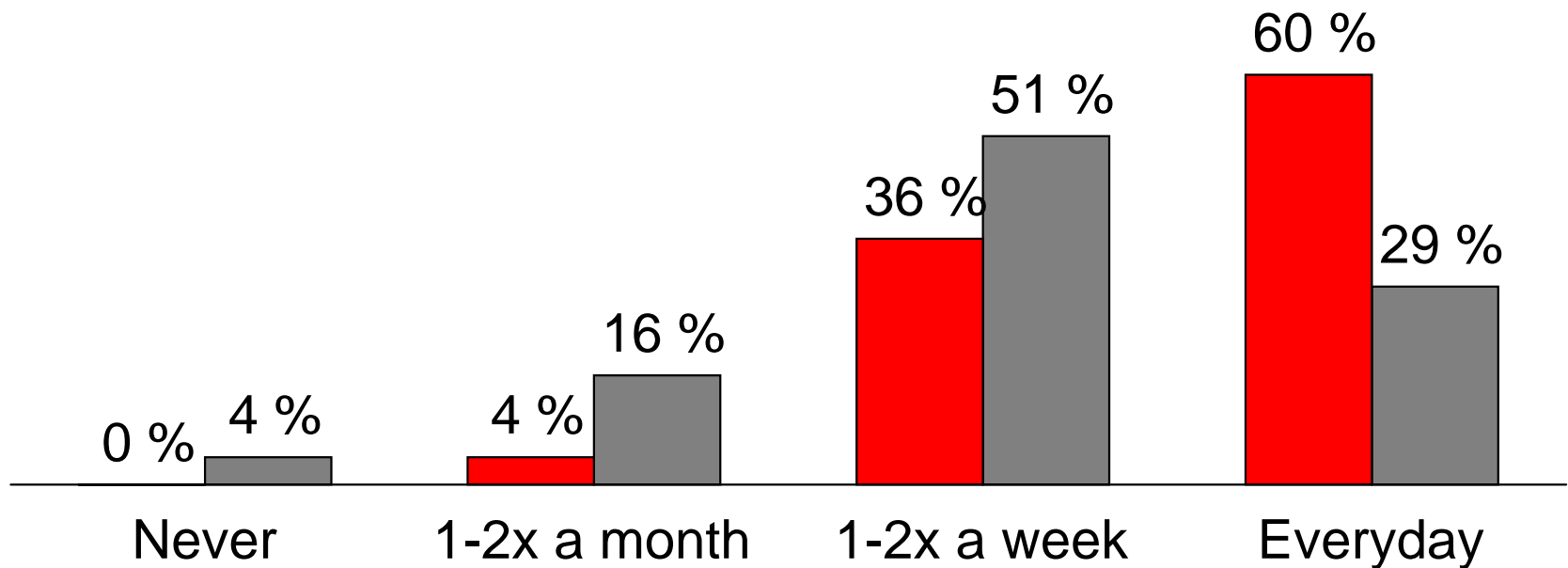
(Upper elementary and middle grades)

# Asking students to answer questions in writing (elementary grades)



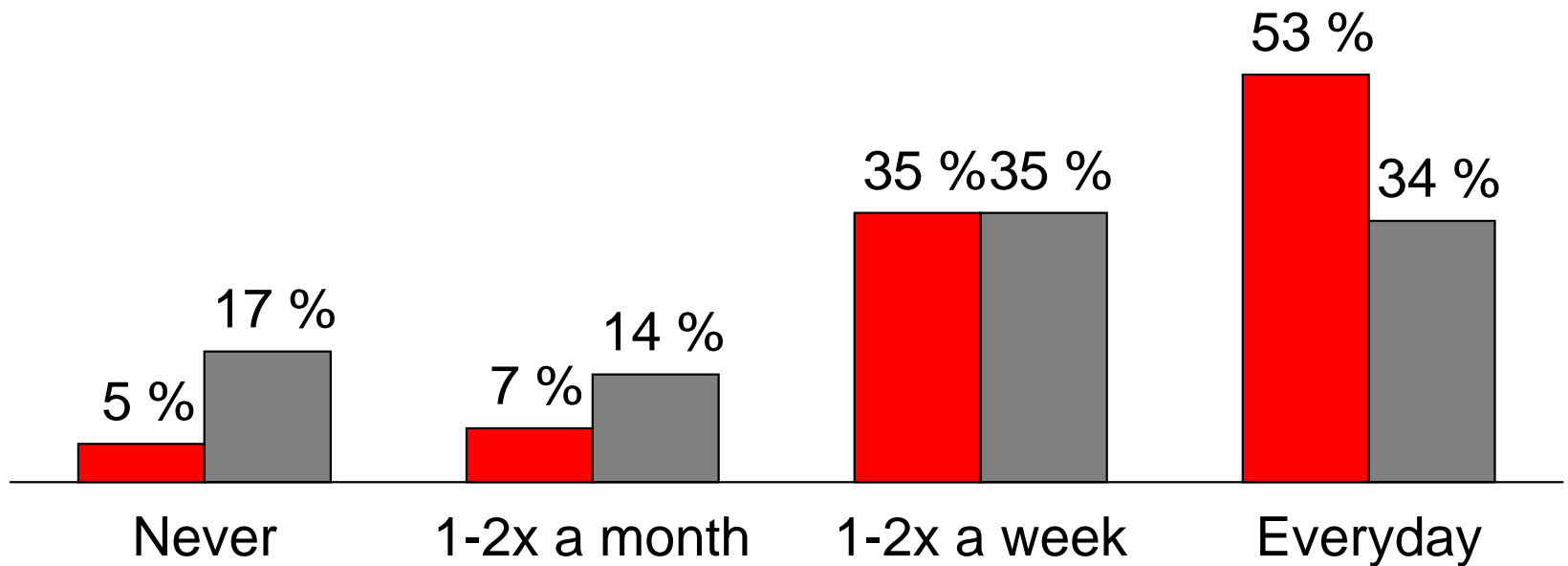
■ NWP (grades 3-5) ■ NAEP (grade 4)

# Asking students to answer questions in writing (middle grades)



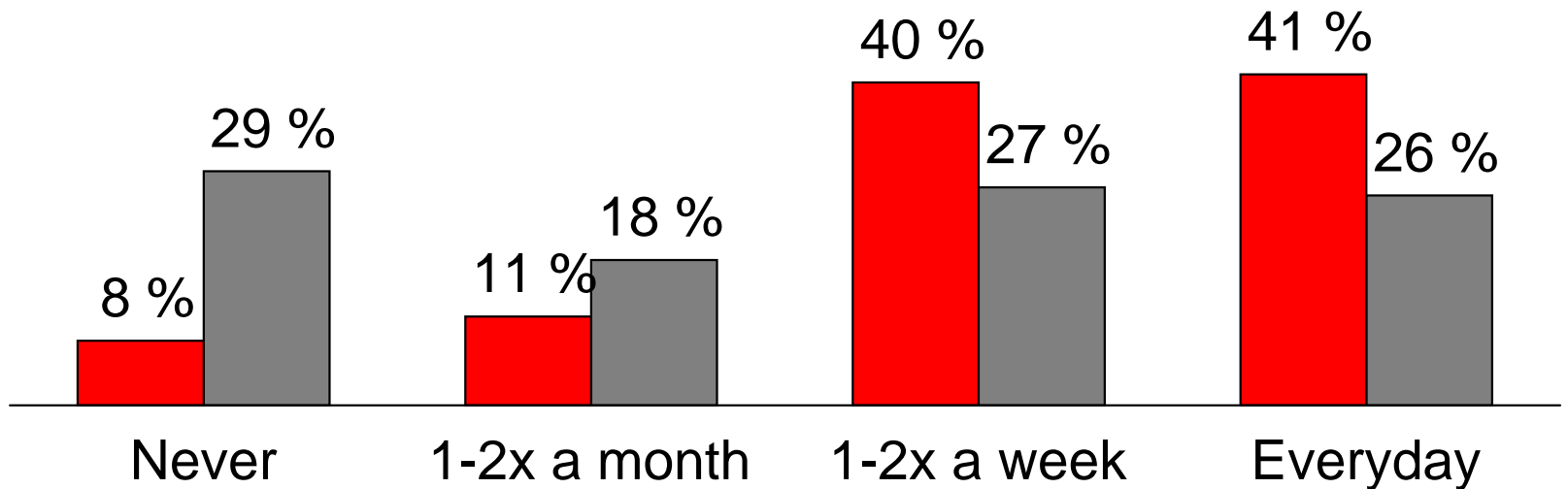
■ NWP (grades 6-8) ■ NAEP (grade 8)

# Asking students to write in a log or journal (elementary grades)



■ NWP (grades 3-5) ■ NAEP (grade 4)

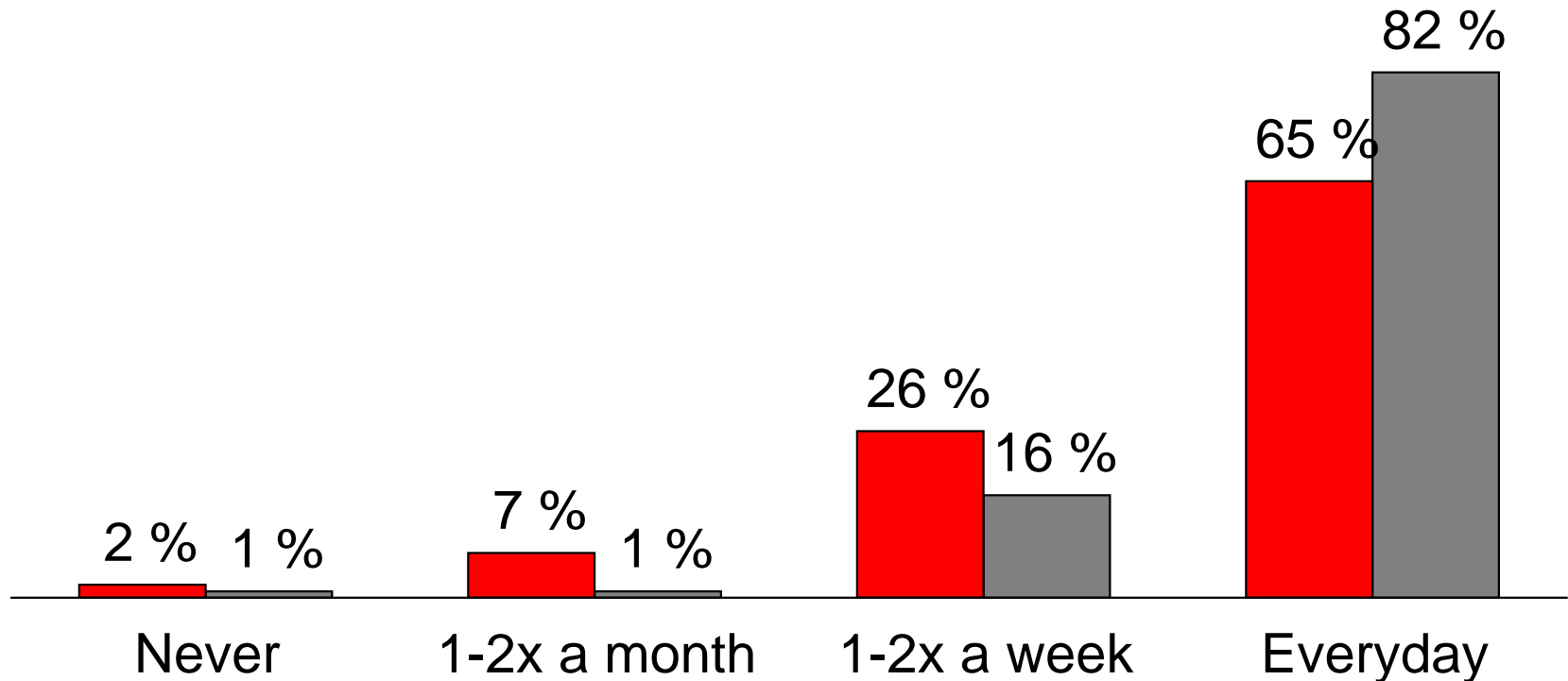
# Asking students to write in a log or journal (middle grades)



■ NWP (grades 6-8) ■ NAEP (grade 8)

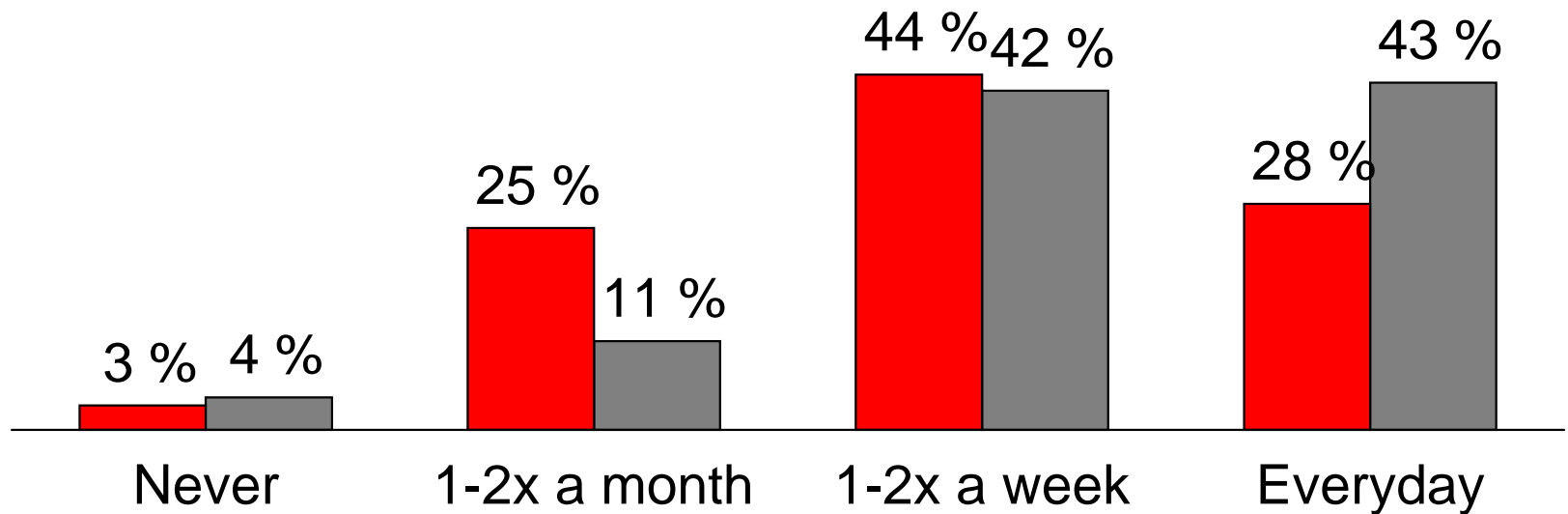


# Work on grammar, punctuation and spelling (elementary grades)



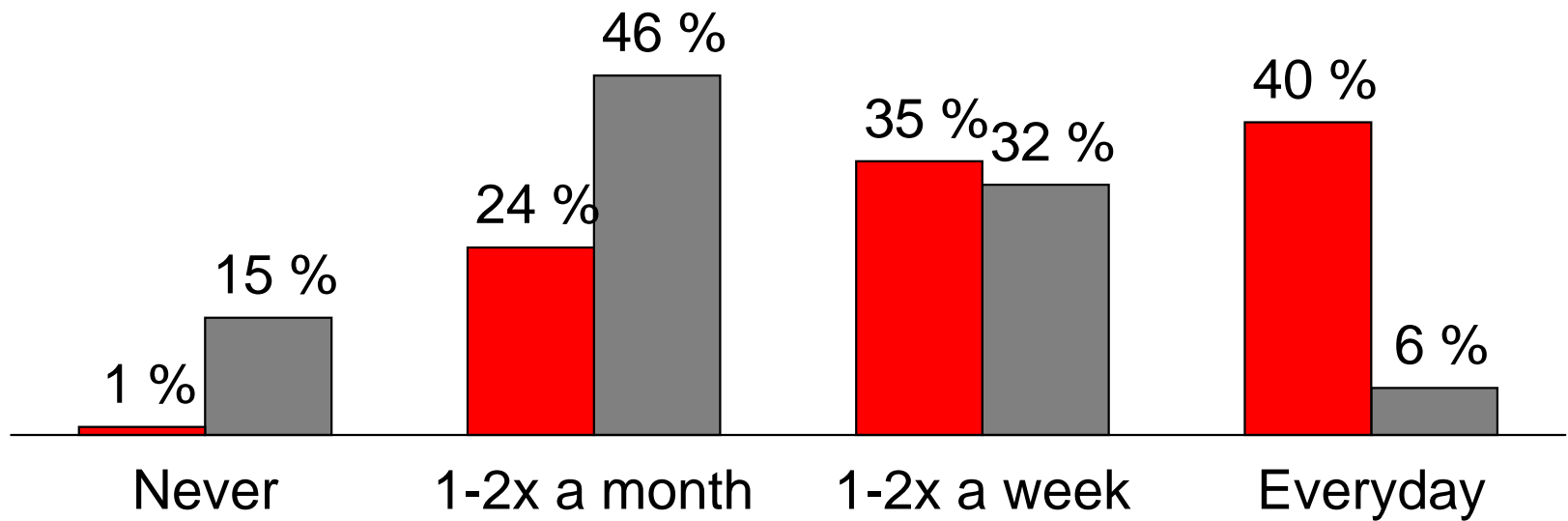
■ NWP (grades 3-5) ■ NAEP (grade 4)

# Work on grammar, punctuation and spelling (middle grades)



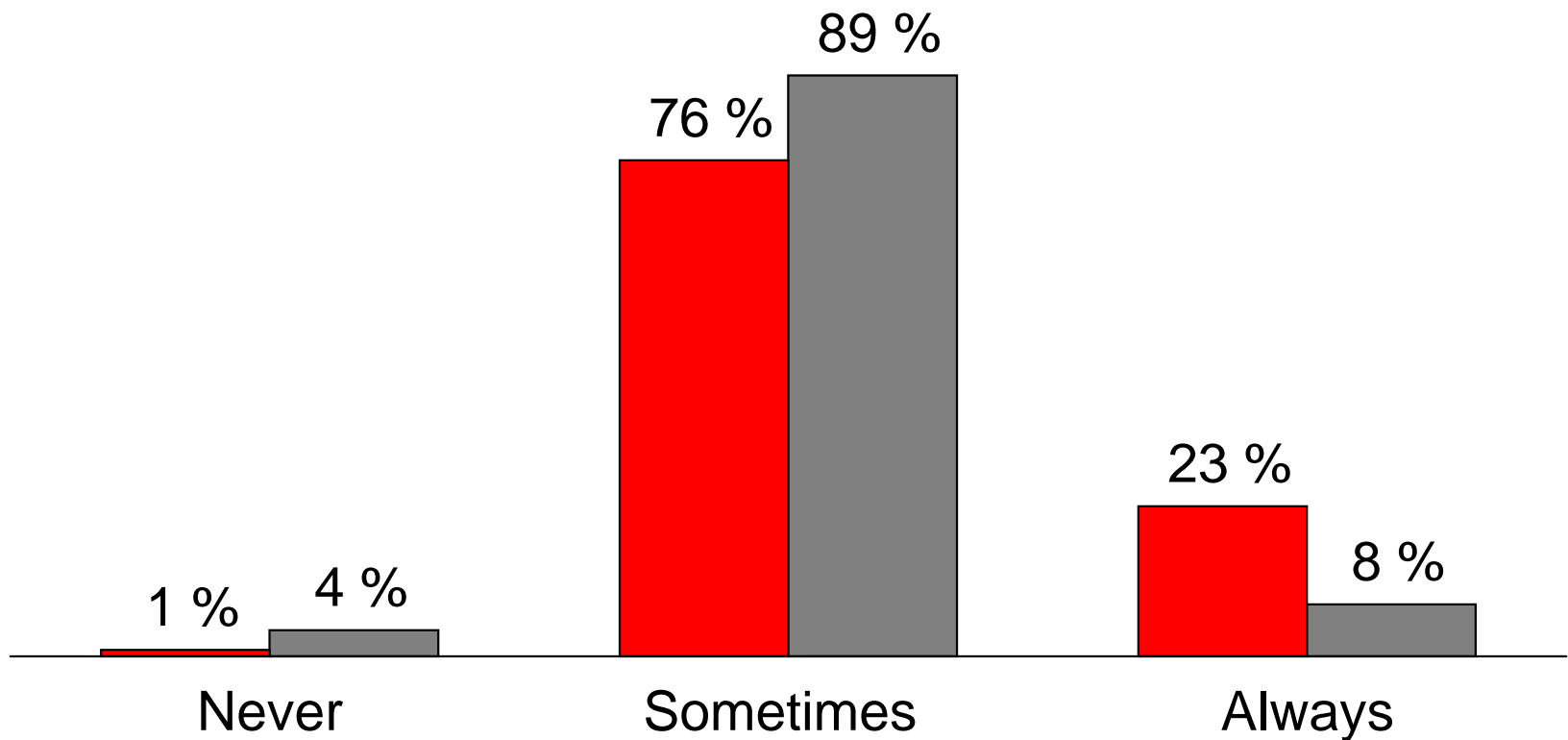
■ NWP (grades 6-8) ■ NAEP (grade 8)

# Asking students to choose their own topics (elementary grades)



■ NWP (grades 3-5) ■ NAEP (grade 4)

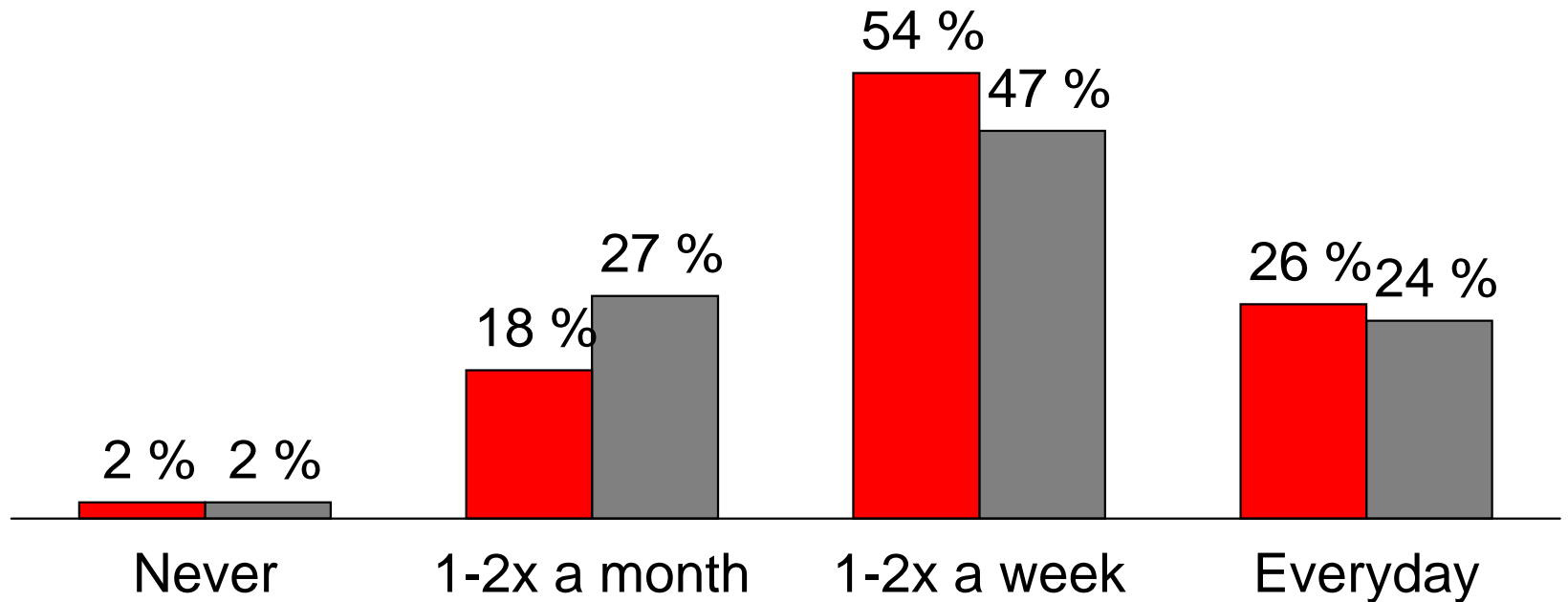
# Asking students to choose their own topics (middle grades)



■ NWP (grades 6-8) ■ NAEP (grade 8)

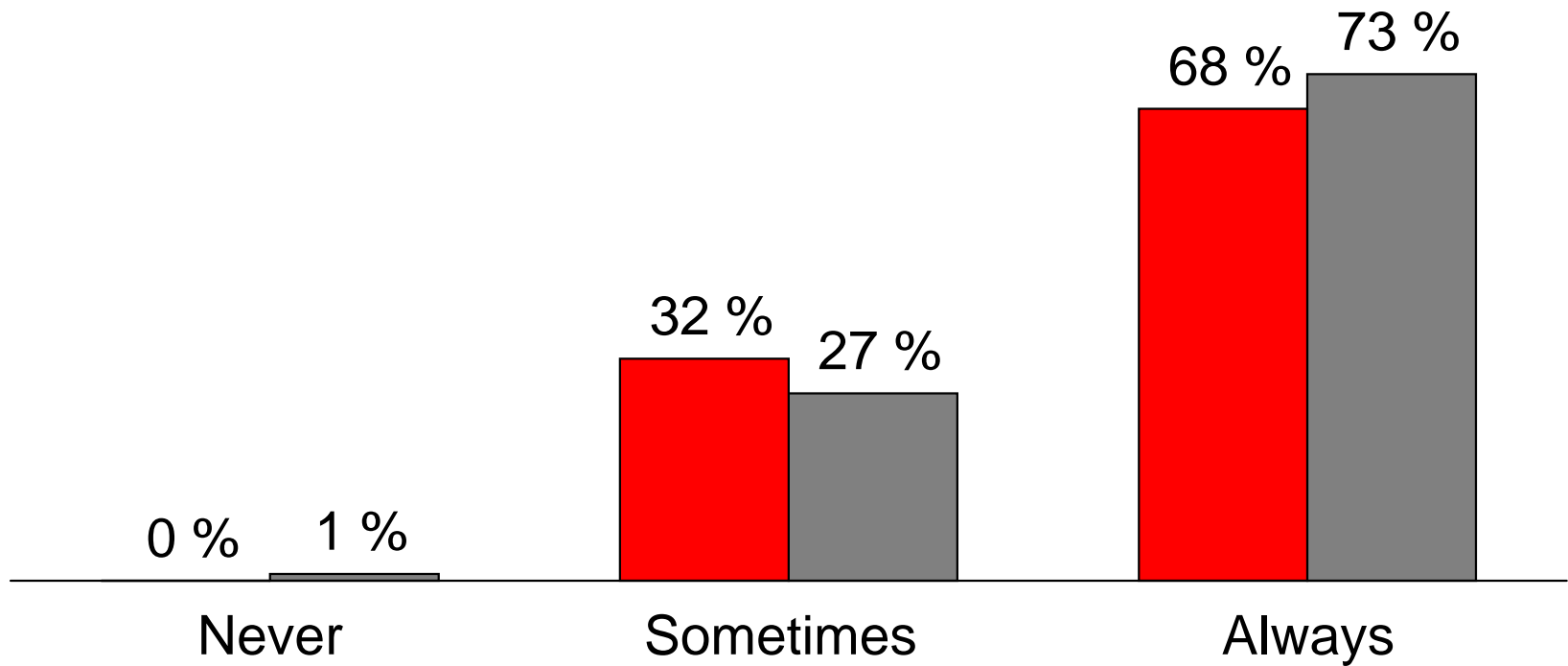
**Additional practices that  
correlate with higher scores  
on the NAEP assessment  
of student writing**

# Students plan their writing (elementary grades)



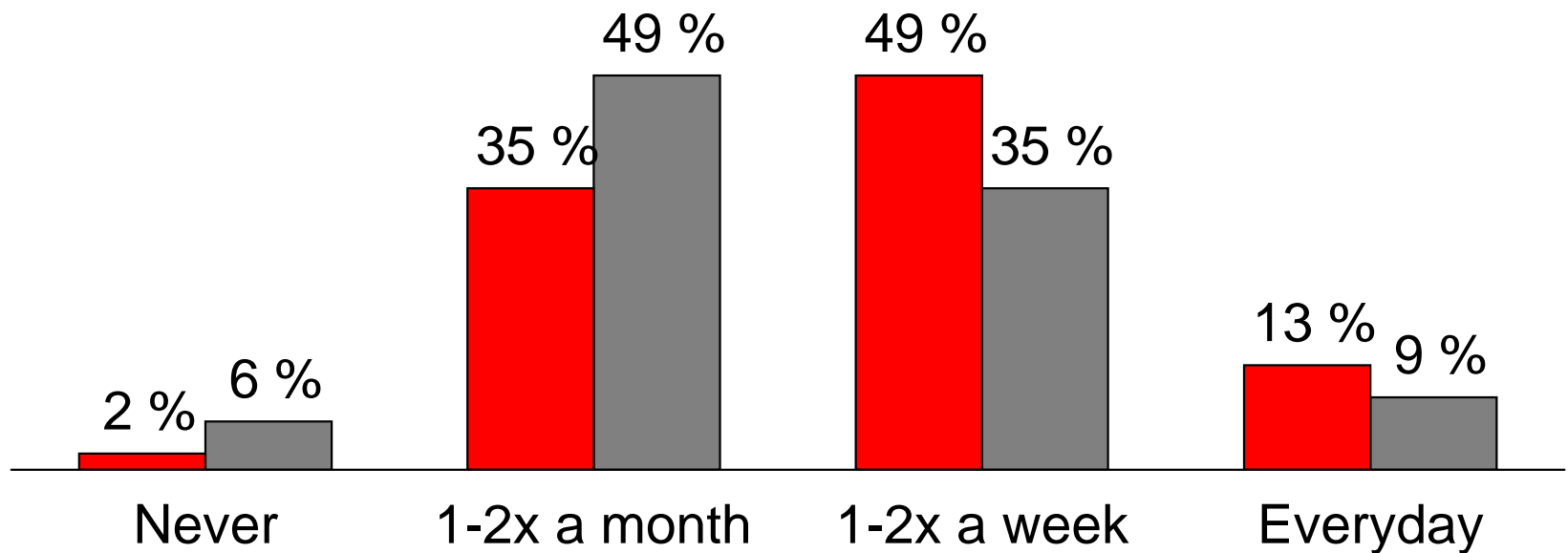
■ NWP (grades 3-5) ■ NAEP (grade 4)

# Students plan their writing (middle grades)



■ NWP (grades 6-8) ■ NAEP (grade 8)

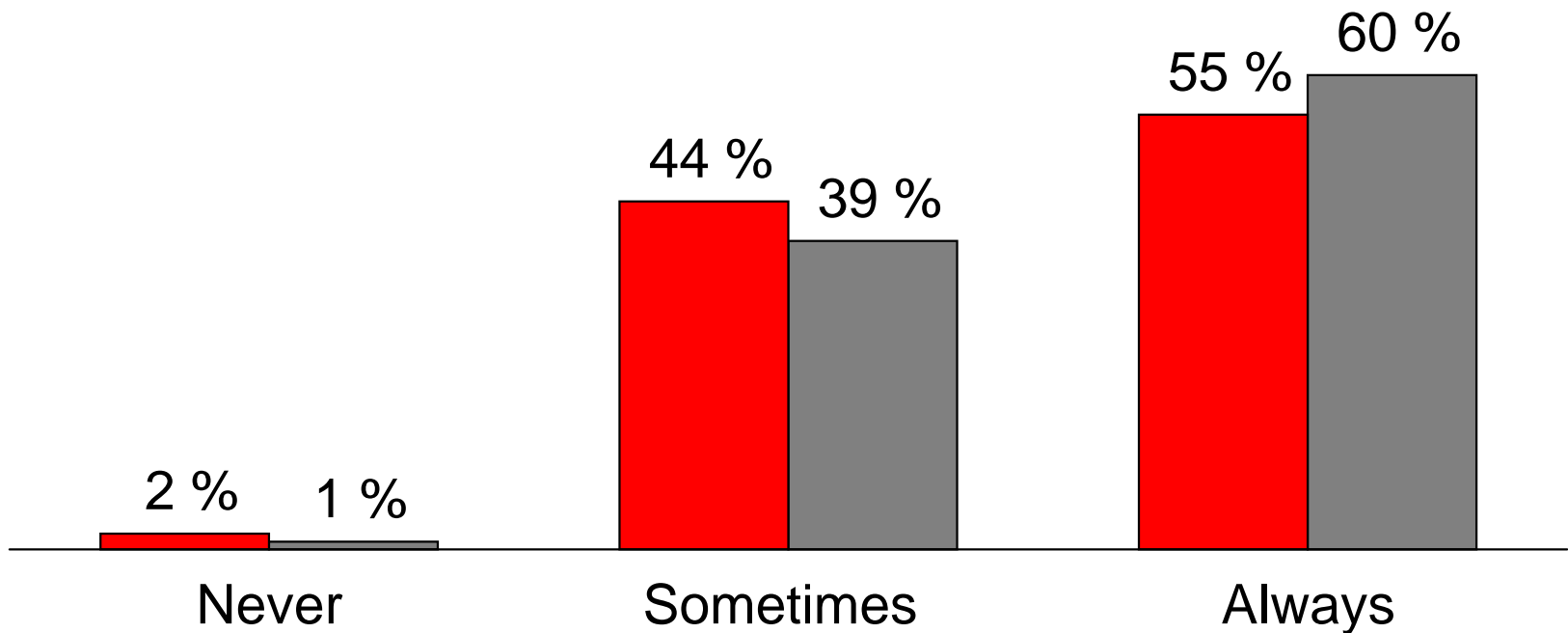
# Students produce more than one draft (elementary grades)



■ NWP (grades 3-5) ■ NAEP (grade 4)

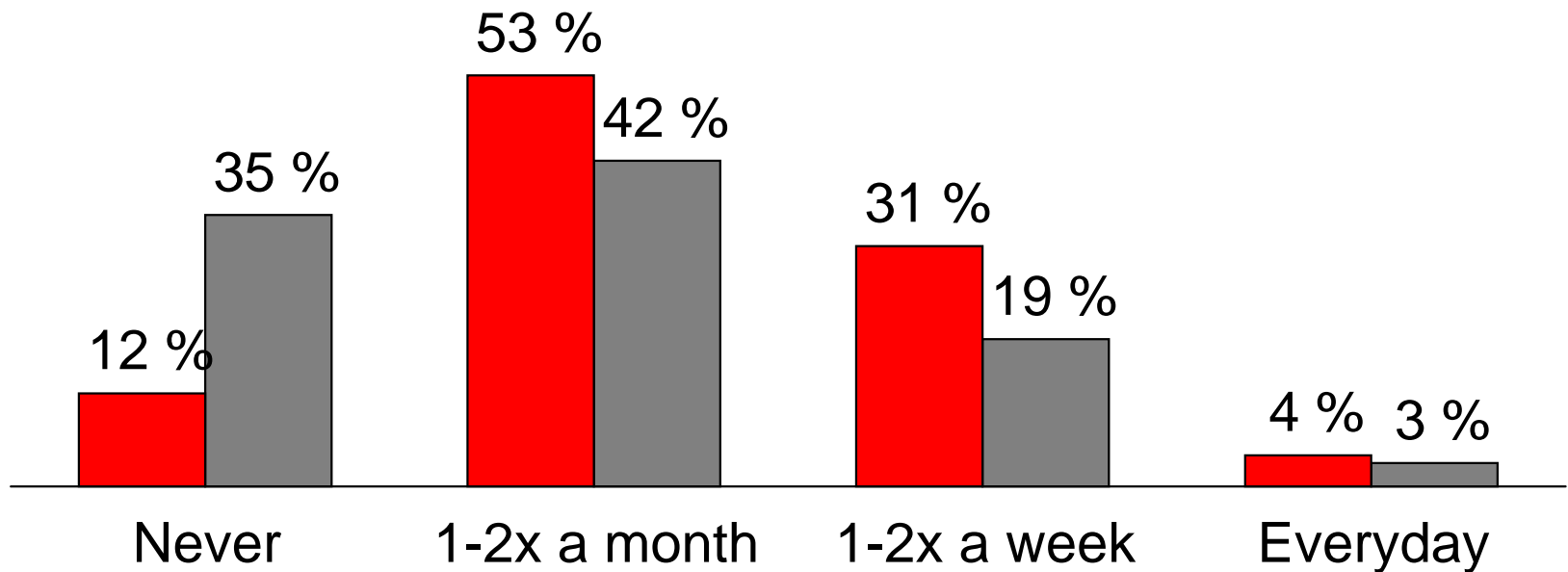


# Students produce more than one draft (middle grades)



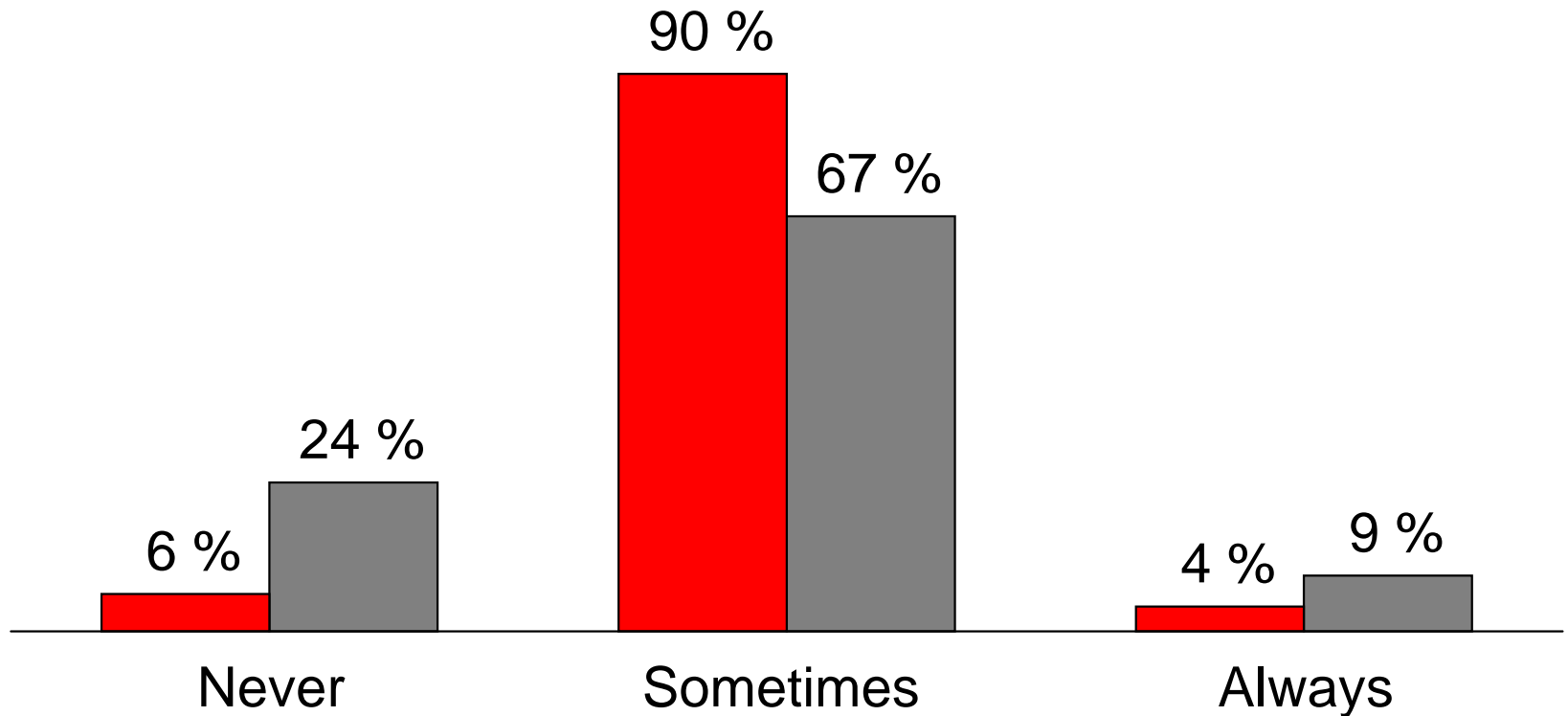
■ NWP (grades 6-8) ■ NAEP (grade 8)

# Students discuss their writing with their family (elementary grades)



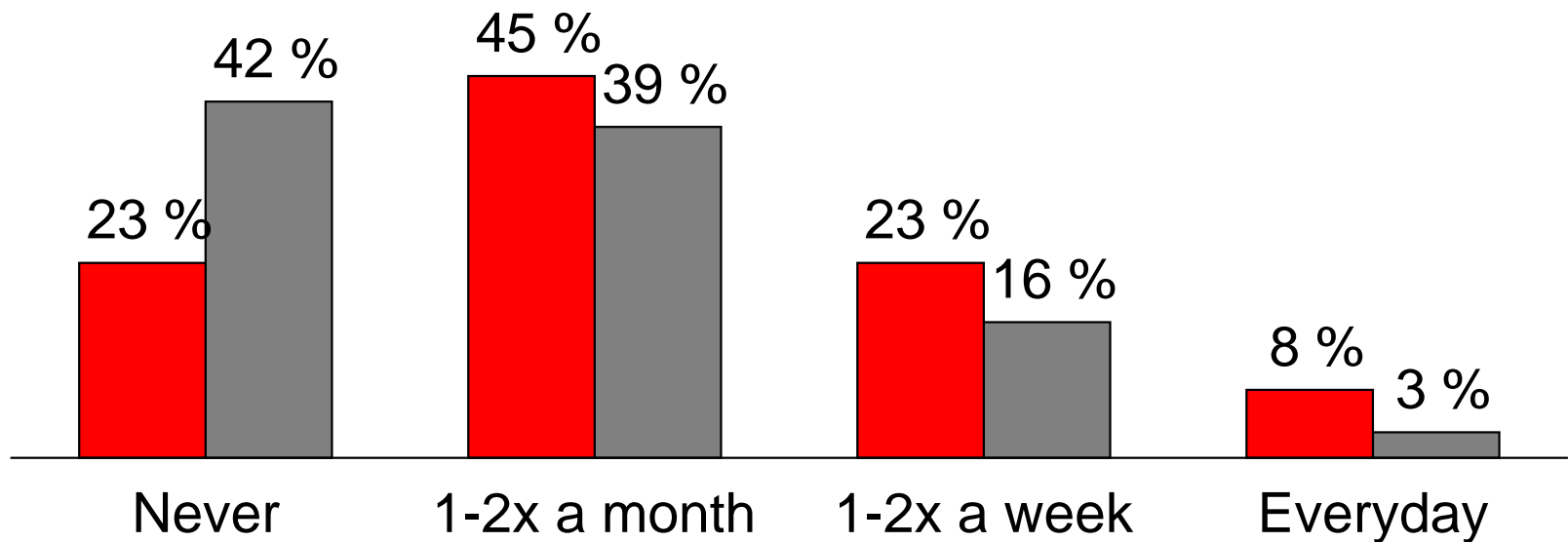
■ NWP (grades 3-5) ■ NAEP (grade 4)

# Students discuss their writing with their family (middle grades)



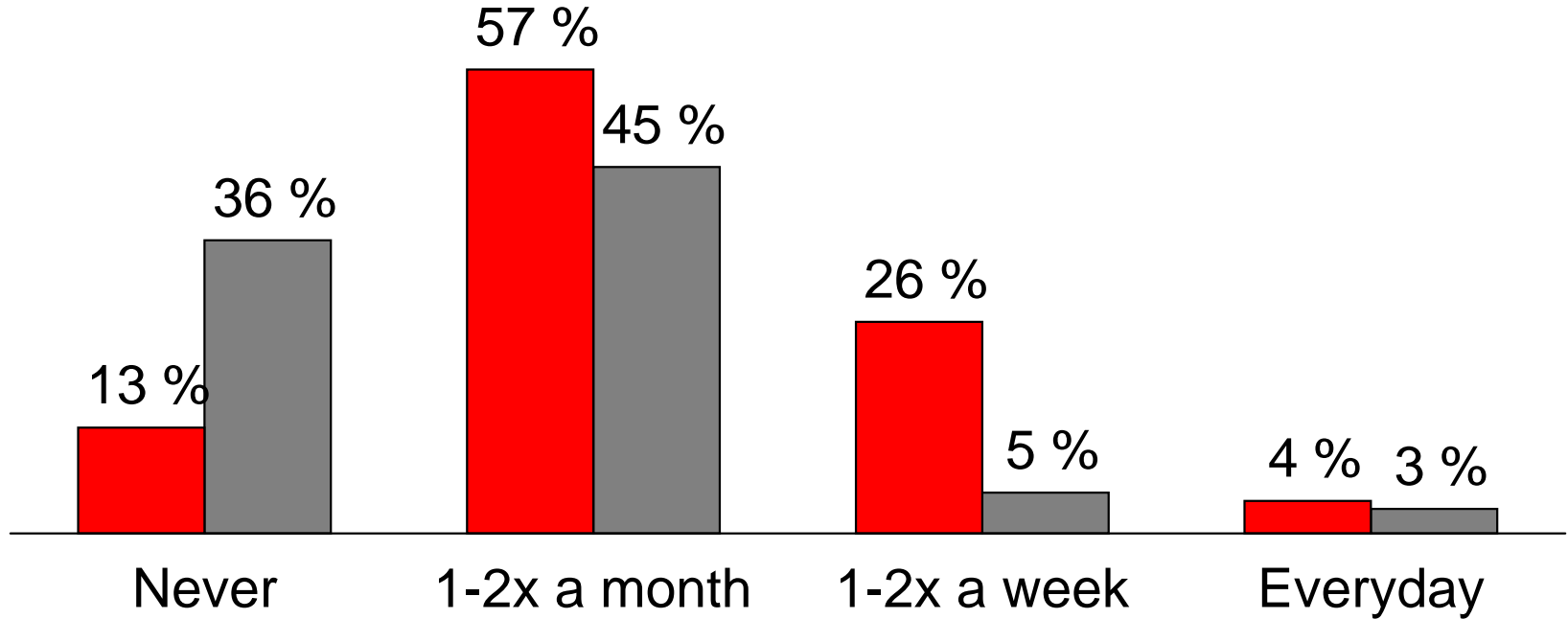
■ NWP (grades 6-8) ■ NAEP (grade 8)

# Students use computers to write drafts (elementary grades)



■ NWP (grades 3-5) ■ NAEP (grade 4)

# Students use computers to write drafts (middle grades)



■ NWP (grades 6-8) ■ NAEP (grade 8)

# Summary thoughts

# This research helps “connect the dots” between...

- NWP summer institutes



- Changes in teachers' classroom practices



- Higher scores on national writing assessment

# Values reflected in the NWP as a community of practice

**NWP teachers emphasize classroom practices that ultimately --**

- use writing to serve all curriculum areas
- build students' fluency and authority as writers, as well as their technical skills
- enable students to using writing for multiple purposes