Writers in Residence Evaluation Plan
Final Proposal
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Overview

  Writers in Residence (WIR) is a Cleveland-based nonprofit organization that was created in 2016 by four John Carroll University students, including the current director, Zachary Thomas. The founder and now-director initially developed the program through a service learning course. The initiative is centered around a series of creative writing workshops for youth who are incarcerated at seven juvenile correctional facilities and detention centers in the region. Student volunteers from seven universities throughout Ohio conduct these 12-week workshops during each academic semester to facilitate self-expression and self-reflection in facility residents, thus encouraging student volunteers and residents to develop long-lasting relationships. The mission of the program is threefold:

1. Teach creative writing and promote creative expression
2. Foster strong relationships between student volunteers and residents
3. Advocate for residents' success by publishing their work

  WIR workshop sessions take place once a week for at least 90 minutes. The first session consists of a six-word memoir activity, which serves as a starting point for residents, who often may not think they have adequate experience or skill in creative writing. In subsequent sessions, residents are then guided through a variety of exercises involving poetry, short stories, and other genres to expose residents to different authors and experiences. WIR celebrates each cohort by publishing chapbooks composed of residents' work at the conclusion of each 12-week session. Copies of these chapbooks are shared with residents, facility employees, family members, and volunteers. They are also sold at coffee shops and bookstores in the area to improve the

perception of individuals in the criminal justice system and promote empathy toward youth who are incarcerated.

Zachary strives to achieve growth in residents' literacy skills and self-expression. Youth often struggle to put their thoughts into words when communicating with others, particularly under distressing circumstances that result from incarceration. As residents grow and further develop their writing skills, WIR seeks to encourage and facilitate an experience in which they also become more confident, better able to process emotions, and better equipped to reach personal and professional goals.

Program Context

There are many factors that make up the context in which WIR operates, and any evaluation must consider how the program navigates and interacts with each of these conditions. We can think about the program context in three buckets: the organizational context, the political context, and the social context. The following outline is not exhaustive, but is meant to give an overview of the program context through different lenses.

Organizational:

An evaluation must consider WIR's relationship with its **funders**. The program is solely funded by the Cleveland Foundation and has had a collaborative, positive working relationship; however, as the program expands, other funders may enter the picture. Funders want to see that their money is making an impact and that a program aligns with their mission and priorities. Carrying out an evaluation is also sometimes a condition of a grant, and the evaluator may have to negotiate their own relationship with the funder specific to the evaluation.

WIR has expanded rapidly over the past couple of years, now covering more universities and juvenile detention facilities across a larger area of Ohio. An evaluation can play a critical role in helping WIR manage future expansion to ensure the most meaningful impact across cohorts.

WIR has some **existing assessment activities** already in place (reported in the impact reports posted on their website) and there are still other assessment activities in the works. This evaluation plan seeks to incorporate and build upon existing activities and expand organizational capacity to measure impact, and any future evaluators should do the same.

Political:

The **juvenile justice system** is a complicated network of actors and moving pieces. For example, some of the writers that WIR works with are in short-term facilities awaiting trial and may only attend a few weeks of workshops, while others are serving out a sentence in a long-term facility and may return to the workshops for multiple semesters. WIR is still a young program, but some of the writers that the program has worked with have since been released, and the program is exploring how a post-release "alumni" component of the program could work (see the *Comparison Programs* section for a particularly good example).

Beyond navigating the juvenile justice system as a whole, WIR must manage its **relationships with the individual detention facilities**, and any future evaluators must do the same if they intend to get data from facility staff. We do not incorporate interviews/surveys from facility staff in this plan because we do not have the expertise on who would be the best data sources, what would be the best questions, or what the necessary legal and ethical considerations would be, but this is a worthwhile avenue to explore for the future.

Each WIR cohort must manage its **relationship with its university** and university politics. In the example noted above, the John Carroll cohort was not allowed to return to their juvenile detention facility for a year after a riot occurred. This scenario demonstrates how cohorts have had to manage relationships with the university offices and departments that oversee student activities. Many cohorts have sought student activity funding from their universities, and have had to follow certain related requirements. Each cohort has also taken on a unique form depending on its university setting. For example, the Hiram College cohort has created a one-credit service learning course, both to try to get students service hour credit for WIR activities and to create a space for students to reflect on their experiences and collaborate on curriculum development.

Social:

Many youth who are incarcerated must deal with **stigma from society** at large during incarceration, during re-entry and beyond. An evaluator for this program must be hyper-aware of the power dynamics inherent in a detention setting, and must be proactive in giving a voice to residents. This is an integral component of WIR's mission, so an evaluator should embody this as well.

In evaluating WIR, a culturally competent evaluator must understand the stressful setting in which the writers live, the **trauma associated with being incarcerated,** and the events that led to incarceration. Evaluators must take a trauma-informed approach and evaluate the program through this lens as well, which also helps to give residents a voice.

Measuring **recidivism** in evaluation is often complicated and controversial. In the case of WIR, there may be ethical concerns to consider; WIR's writers belong to two protected groups – youth and people who are incarcerated – so an evaluation must protect their rights and privacy. Given these requirements, following through with residents and tracking their involvement with the justice system beyond WIR could be ethically questionable. Additionally, there is debate in the evaluation field over whether recidivism is a good measure of a program's value. There are so many factors that contribute to whether a particular individual is re-incarcerated, factors beyond WIR's control, so using recidivism as a primary measure can understate the value of a program, whereas other measurable outcomes can better capture program impact. Even so, reducing recidivism remains an important inspiration and guiding principle for WIR, as seen in the *Theory of Change* section.

Comparison Programs

We would like to highlight a few programs doing work similar to WIR in other parts of the country. Creative writing for people who are incarcerated is a model that has worked in other places as well, so these programs can serve as both proof of concept and potential sources for inspiration as WIR continues to grow.

InsideOUT Writers (IOW) was founded in 1996 and works in the Los Angeles County juvenile justice system. In 1999, IOW incorporated as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. IOW uses creative writing as a "catalyst for personal transformation," so that youth who are detained become "empowered with the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully re-integrate into our communities, becoming advocates for their future."[1] This program leverages the large pool of talented artists in Los Angeles to provide weekly creative writing workshops in medium- and high-security juvenile detention centers in the county, focusing on trauma-informed curriculum. IOW publishes a quarterly literary magazine called "In Depth" featuring pieces written by participants. In 2009, IOW launched its Alumni Program to provide a full slate of re-entry services and case management to youth leaving the juvenile justice system. We believe this might be a useful resource for WIR in thinking about expanding into re-entry services. IOW has a more formal relationship with the justice system - it is one of many programs funded by the Los Angeles County Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA). The RAND Corporation regularly conducts evaluations of all programs funded under the JJCPA, so this program benefits from a wealth of outcome data from those reports as well as other independent evaluations over the years. Their impact data is positive, demonstrating the personal and societal value that such a program can provide.

Writing Our Stories (WOS) is another long-standing creative writing program for youth who are incarcerated in Alabama. It was created in 1997 as a collaboration between the Alabama Writers Forum (AWF) and the Alabama Department of Youth Services and now provides services to justice system-involved youth in three locations throughout the state.[2] In 2001, AWF published a curriculum guide for creative writing classes that focuses on classes in juvenile detention settings but has broader applications as well. WOS publishes an annual anthology of participants' work, called "Open the Door." An early evaluation found that the program was effective in increasing participants' understanding of communication skills and of feelings and emotions.[3]

WRITE ON (Writing and Reflecting Identity To Empower Ourselves as Narrators) was a program designed for an experimental study on the impact of expressive writing for youth who are incarcerated. It was created through a partnership between researchers at New York University and the New York City Division of Youth and Family Justice and was the first experimental application of the creative writing model in juvenile detention facilities, using

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[1] www.insideoutwriters.org

[2] See: Kristof, Anne. "Writing Our Stories program helps "Open the Door" for juvenile offenders." *Alabama News Center*, 18 Oct. 2017.

[3] Smitherman, T. and Thompson, J. (2002). "Writing Our Stories": An Anti-Violence Creative Writing Program. *Journal of Correctional Education, 53*(2), 77-83.

randomly assigned treatment and control groups.[4] WRITE ON was structured as a 6-week program with two 1.5-hour sessions per week, and each week focused on a different theme (i.e. emotions, relationships, past self, future self). The program also included bonding activities for the group, to create a sense of community and foster an environment where participants felt safe to be vulnerable and open in their writing. It is unclear if the program, or a version of the program, continued on after this study, but the preliminary results were promising. The study found a significant increase in participants' self-reported resiliency, a skill that is crucial for dealing with obstacles in life and can help youth prepare for re-entry.[5] This study's experimental design lends strong evidence to the meaningful impact of creative writing on youth who are incarcerated.

Finally, **SpeakOut!** is a program operating through the Colorado State University Literacy Center that provides creative writing workshops at the Larimer County Jail and Turning Point, a substance abuse treatment center for teens. Some of the goals of the SpeakOut! workshops are to create opportunities for writers to recognize the value of their own experiences and to help them evaluate past actions and envision life change.[6] The program publishes their bi-annual *SpeakOut! Journal* featuring writings and visual art created by workshop participants to give incarcerated populations a voice and to promote empathy towards people who are incarcerated and social consciousness in society at large.[7]

Evaluation Purpose

The WIR evaluation plan was created in the Spring of 2020 as a final project for a program evaluation course at Loyola University Chicago. The formative evaluation plan was constructed to gain an understanding of the program's impact on primary participants: youth who are incarcerated (residents) and student volunteers. The purpose of the proposed evaluation is to determine the extent to which the workshops meet program goals and guide future growth and development. The carried-out evaluation will determine the merit and worth of the WIR creative writing workshop. Mertens and Wilson describe merit as "the absolute or relative quality of something, either intrinsically or in regard to a particular criterion." In other words, merit refers to the intrinsic value of the program. Mertens and Wilson define worth as "the extrinsic value to those outside the program." Or, how does the program positively impact the larger community or society? The evaluation will assist WIR in articulating meaningful connections between planned activities and the short- and long-term impact they strive to affect.

This evaluation plan builds on the existing impact reports conducted by WIR staff. The surveys used in previous assessments have had low response rates, which impacts the reliability of the data. The following evaluation plan recommends how to measure program outcomes and

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[4] See: The Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice's spotlight article, WRITE ON: A Youth-Centered Writing Intervention to Promote Well Being, for a description of how the program was created.

[5] Greenbaum, C. A. and Javdani, S. (2017). Expressive writing intervention promotes resilience among juvenile justice-involved youth. *Children and Youth Services Review, 73*, 220-229.

[6] See: Colorado State University Literacy Center's page on Speak Out! Writing Workshop

[7] See: SpeakOut! collection of published journals https://speakoutclc.wordpress.com/journals/

increase the response rate of participants and will help to identify measurable learning outcomes to create a basis for continued assessment. The results of the evaluation can serve as a useful tool as WIR becomes a 501(c)3 and looks to secure new funding sources. In thinking about expanding WIR, it will become increasingly important for program leaders to grow and refine their capacity to communicate crucial aspects of the program to external stakeholders.

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation questions were developed based on interviews with stakeholders and already-existing program goals. These questions examine the short-term impacts of the workshops and aim to evaluate the program's impact on both residents and student volunteers.

> *1. To what extent does WIR improve writing, communication and literacy skills of residents?*
> *2. To what extent does WIR promote creative self-expression and self-reflection of residents?*
> *3. To what extent does WIR foster strong relationships between student volunteers and residents?*
> *4. To what extent does WIR raise the social consciousness of student volunteers while promoting empathy for incarcerated youth?*

While creating the evaluation questions, we consulted Dr. Brent In, an expert evaluator with experience evaluating criminal justice system-related programs. His input was immensely helpful in guiding us toward a better understanding of the layered contexts that exist within the criminal justice system.

Stakeholders

The primary WIR stakeholder is Zachary Thomas, a co-founder and current director of the program. His perspective provides a greater understanding of the program and how it has expanded since its first year. Zachary is a fellow at the Cleveland Foundation, the primary funder for WIR. Zachary connected us to six other stakeholders who helped us understand how each participant interacts with and is impacted by the program. We interviewed the seven stakeholders listed in Figure 1 below.

| Writers In Residence (WIR) Stakeholders		
Zachary Thomas - Founder and Program Director	**Former Resident** - participated in the WIR workshops	**Student Volunteer** - John Carroll University
Dr. Philip Metres - John Carroll University Faculty Advisor	**Dr. Mary Quade** - Hiram College Faculty Advisor	**Student Volunteer** - Hiram College

Karen Long - Cleveland Foundation Advisor	**Dr. Sue Corbin** - Literacy specialist and Chair of the Division of Professional Education at Notre Dame College	

Figure 1. WIR Stakeholders

Dr. Philip Metres has been an advisor to the program since its inception. He helped create the curriculum for the workshops and helped connect Zachary to the Cleveland Foundation. We spoke with Karen Long, Zachary's advisor at the Cleveland Foundation. She outlined her vision for the future of the program as well as the history of the Cleveland Foundation's involvement in the program. Dr. Sue Corbin Chairs the Division of Professional Education at Notre Dame College. She is a literacy specialist and is currently working with Zachary to create literacy assessments. Her research will be explored further in future sections. Dr. Mary Quade is the faculty advisor for the WIR cohort at Hiram College, the most recent school to join WIR. Her perspective was especially useful as this cohort only began volunteering in the Fall of 2019. We spoke with a student volunteer at John Carroll University who has participated in the program for four years. Her perspective on the development of student volunteer training and her relationship with residents helped us gain a better idea of the program impacts on student volunteers. The student volunteer from Hiram College gave us valuable insight into the development of new cohorts in their first semester volunteering. Zachary was able to connect us to one of the most important WIR stakeholders, a former resident. His perspective helped us gain an understanding of the impact of the program on residents' experience in detention as well as on their creative expression.

Theory of Change

WIR did not have a theory of change prior to working with our evaluation team; however, the program expressed interest in expanding its ability to articulate and connect the foundational program activities to bigger-picture outcomes. The team developed a visually engaging logic model as a central component of the evaluation plan to equip program leaders with a useful tool to outline and organize 1) the resources needed to operate the program, 2) the activities that drive the program's mission, 3) the outputs that are produced as a result of those activities, and 4) the short- and long-term outcomes that the program seeks to affect. Most importantly, it builds capacity for the program to clearly connect its intended outcomes to the planned activities that were meaningfully selected to further its mission.

	Resources/Inputs →	Activities →	Outputs →	Outcomes (short-term) →	Impacts (long-term)
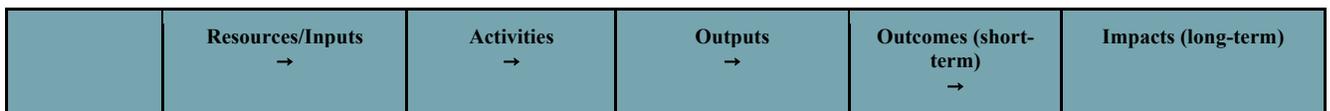
	What is needed to operate the program?	Once you have the resources, then use them to accomplish planned activities	If you accomplish planned activities, then you deliver amount of product intended	Participants will then benefit in certain ways	Organizations, communities and systems will then benefit in certain ways
*WIR cites the **reduction of recidivism of former residents** as an inspiration and guiding concept for impacting outcomes in residents.*	Grants, university funding, etc. Program leadership Student leadership Student volunteers Transportation of volunteers to and from facility University support (faculty advisors, center for service) Institutional knowledge	Design curriculum (poetry/prose exercises) Volunteer training and orientation sessions Introductory writing workshop session (six-word memoir activity) Regular weekly writing workshop sessions	Program publishes WIR Chapbooks Volunteers contribute 187.5 service hours to program Program reaches 55 residents through completion of 12-week sessions	Promote residents' creative expression and self-reflection Develop volunteer/resident relationships Improve residents' writing, communication and literacy skills	Improve emotional intelligence and self regulation of residents Raise social consciousness, promote empathy and increase concern for youth who are incarcerated Impact additional supplemental educational program attendance (vocational training, college, etc.) Impact employment of former residents

Figure 2. Logic Model

The logic model in Figure 2 draws on the four evaluation questions outlined above as short-term outcomes that the program seeks to directly influence from the outputs produced, as well as the longer-term impacts to the community at large. During our initial interview with Zachary, we learned that the program's central articulated goal was to reduce recidivism in its residents. As evaluators, we understand that this goal is large in scope, difficult to measure, and requires a high level of resources to conduct a longitudinal evaluation that is able to monitor graduated residents' life trajectory. For this reason, we chose to use the concept of reducing recidivism as an overarching framework and "inspiration" for the program's measurable goals. This allows the concept to remain a central component of WIR without feeling overburdened by the overwhelming complexity of reentry into the criminal justice system.

Evaluation Design

The team recommends implementing a mixed methods design for the program evaluation. This means there will be both qualitative and quantitative data collection assessments targeting both residents and student volunteers. We recommend that WIR staff regularly administer surveys, reading assessments, and interviews to evaluate both residents' and student volunteers' performance and overall experience during the 12-week program.

We have created sample surveys based surveys WIR has administered previously. We built on existing content to develop the tool into more of an "impact" survey rather than a "satisfaction" survey. We recommend administering surveys for both residents and student volunteers during the first week of the workshop and during the last week of the workshop. With this change to a pre-survey and post-survey format, we expect to improve measurability, especially when showing change over time. The gold standard of evaluation is an experimental

or quasi-experimental design where participants are assigned randomly to a treatment group and a control group – this provides the strongest scientific evidence of program impact. For now, an experimental design is something to aspire to, but since this is the first time WIR is approaching evaluation at this scale, a pre-post design without a control group is appropriate.

After learning about Dr. Sue Corbin's research with WIR, we are recommending integrating literacy assessments into any future evaluation. As a part of her research, Dr. Corbin tested 5 WIR participants at Cuyahoga Hills JCF on their reading fluency, conducted interviews, and assessed their silent reading skills. In follow up assessments she found that the participants' sense of self-efficacy increased. She also found that the participants had more confidence to express themselves and know that others are interested in their voice. This kind of assessment will help to capture the concrete impacts of WIR workshops on the literacy of participants. We recommend that any future assessment includes a literacy expert such as Dr. Sue Corbin as a support partner to administer literacy assessments. We will expand upon available assessments in future sections.

While surveys and assessments are particularly powerful for quantitative analyses, interviews can capture more depth and provide texture to complement quantitative results. Interviews are a useful tool to identify the intricacies of the program's strengths, weaknesses, and/or gaps. An interview can also collect narratives from both residents and student volunteers in order to better understand their unique perspectives and opinions.

Data Collection Methods and Procedures

Paper surveys and reading assessments are the best option for residents, but online surveys should be used for the university student volunteers because they will be simpler to collect and analyze. The team will program online surveys into Qualtrics, a survey platform that is well-equipped for analysis of the survey data later on. Residents' responses from paper surveys will be programmed into Qualtrics by evaluation team members after the surveys are collected. If feasible, an outside evaluator would also prove advantageous to the program's growth by helping with the data collection procedures, especially in regards to administering reading assessments. The data collection methods all aim to collect information that would inform the progress made in regards to the four evaluation questions. Figure 3 below illustrates the data collection methods, sample, and data sources in more detail. Note that all information will be collected by WIR staff and/or an outside evaluator.

Reassuring student volunteers and residents that confidentiality will be respected throughout this process is paramount in encouraging self-response. The sample surveys include a note asking that the names of other participants are not included in the survey answers. This should also be repeated by those administering the program evaluations.

Evaluative Questions	Sample	Data Source(s)/Tools	How will the data be collected?	When will the data be collected?

To what extent does WIR improve writing, communication and literacy skills of residents?	Incarcerated residents	Surveys (pre and post)	Paper and/or Qualtrics online survey, if available	Survey distributed at beginn of first/last workshops
	Incarcerated residents	Residents' writing from beginning to end of course	Administer TORC-4 and/or WIR-6 assessment	At the beginning/end of semester
	Incarcerated residents	Post-interviews with residents	Audio recording and transcript	Conclusion of program
To what extent does WIR promote creative self-expression and self-reflection of residents?	Incarcerated residents	Surveys (pre and post)	Paper and/or Qualtrics online survey, if available	Survey distributed at beginn of first/last workshops
	Incarcerated residents	Residents' writing from course	Collected form each cohort, content and stylistic analysis	Conclusion of program
	Incarcerated residents	Post-interviews with residents	Audio recording and transcript	Conclusion of program
To what extent does WIR foster strong relationships between student volunteers and residents?	Incarcerated residents	Post-interviews with residents	Audio recording and transcript	Conclusion of program
	Student volunteers	Post-interviews with student volunteers	Audio recording and transcript	Conclusion of program
	Incarcerated residents	Surveys (pre and post)	Paper and/or Qualtrics online survey, if available	Survey distributed at beginn of first/last workshops
	Student volunteers	Surveys (pre and post)	Qualtrics online survey	Survey distributed before/af program
To what extent does WIR raise social consciousness of student volunteers and promote empathy for incarcerated youth?	Student Volunteers	Post-interviews with student volunteers	Audio recording and transcript	Conclusion of program
	Student volunteers	Surveys (pre and post)	Qualtrics online survey	Survey distributed before/af program

Figure 3. Data Collection Methods and Procedures.

Data Sources

Decisions on data sources were made based on existing organizational capacity. Reading assessment formats were selected in consultation with literacy expert Dr. Sue Corbin. We believe the proposed data collection tools below carefully consider the program's limitations and leverage its strengths.

Surveys

Administer surveys at the beginning and end of the 12-week program to measure the impact on

residents and student volunteers.
- Sample Pre-Survey for Residents (see Appendix A)
- Sample Post-Survey for Residents (see Appendix B)
- Sample Pre-Survey for Student Volunteers (see Appendix C)
- Sample Post-Survey for Student Volunteers (see Appendix D)

Reading Assessments

Administer a TORC-4 test at the beginning and end of the 12-week program to measure silent reading comprehension, identifying students who need to improve reading proficiency and guiding intervention efforts. TORC-4 consists of five subsections:
- Relational Vocabulary - residents read a set of three words that are in some way related to each other. Residents are to then silently read another four words and choose two words that are related to the first set of three words.
- Sentence Completion - residents silently read a sentence that is missing two words. Residents then silently read a list of word pairs and choose the word pair that best completes the sentence.
- Paragraph Construction - after silently reading a list of sentences that are not in logical order, residents must then rearrange the sentences to form a coherent paragraph.
- Text Comprehension - residents silently read a short passage and then answer five multiple-choice questions relative to the passage.
- Contextual Fluency - measures how many individual words residents can recognize, in 3 minutes, in a series of passages. Each passage, printed in uppercase letters without punctuation or spaces between words, becomes progressively more difficult in content, vocabulary, and grammar.

Administer a QRI-6 test at the beginning and end of the 12-week program to assess residents' vocabulary knowledge, the ability to identify main ideas and supporting details, inferencing skills, and critical thinking skills. The QRI-test was previously administered by Dr. Corbin and the instructions of her assessment are listed below.[8]
1. The pre-assessment consists of asking residents to read a list of sight words that are presented out of context in list form. As they read, the administrator records miscues in word identification. These miscues are studied in order to determine the extent of the readers' abilities to use graphophonic, or sound-symbol correspondence, and morphemic (syllables, roots, and affixes) cues to identify words.
2. Residents are presented with a short passage that is approximated to be at the reader's estimated reading instructional level. The results can then be examined to determine whether or not the reader is performing at, below, or above their grade level.

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[8] For more information on the Qualitative Reading Inventory 6 (QRI-6) test, see this presentation:
https://prezi.com/lazfjvgcmm2x/the-qri-6/

3. Before reading the first passage, the residents are asked questions that reveal their understanding of the topic and their ability to make predictions about the passage based on their prior knowledge. They then read the passage silently without being timed.

4. After the reading, they are asked to tell what they recalled from the passage while the administrator records their answers. Finally, the administrator asks targeted questions related to the readers understanding of literal details and their ability to read inferentially by noting relationships among the details.

5. Residents are presented with a second passage that continues the topic from the first passage. They are again asked questions about their background knowledge and to make predictions about the text's contents. This time, the administrator leads them in a think-aloud strategy that requires them to stop at key points in the passage and to explain what they were thinking as they were reading. After reading the second passage, residents are again asked to retell what they could recall from the passage and to answer targeted comprehension questions.

6. For the post-assessment, residents are presented only with reading passages. The reading survey is not administered as it had served its purpose in the initial assessments to provide a qualitative basis for interpretation of the results. The methodology is the same with the passages on the post-assessments as they were for the initial ones; however, in order to determine a level of progress, passages on the high school level are used instead.

Create and administer an informal writing assessment such as the one below. This simple pre- and post-assessment is based on Alabama's 'Writing our Stories' program.[9]

1. Residents are presented with a pair of abstract emotions such as love and hate, they are then asked to write for 10 minutes describing the emotion. Form of writing is not assigned.

2. The grader must then answer the following questions and determine a score. The scoring instrument is based on a 5-point scale for each question, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. A perfect score is 25 points.
   a. Does the resident write consistently in complete sentences? (NOTE: A sentence fragment used for stylistic effect should not count against the student as a "sentence fragment error.")
   b. Does the resident use the five senses in images? (NOTE: At least three of the five senses should be used to rate a score of "highest.")
   c. Does the resident show knowledge of abstract versus concrete language?
   d. Does the resident make use of analogy, simile and/or metaphor to describe the abstract emotion?

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[9] Smitherman, T. and Thompson, J. (2002). "Writing Our Stories": An Anti-Violence Creative Writing Program. *Journal of Correctional Education, 53*(2), 77-83.

e. Summary score: rate the resident's writing for general communication to and engagement of the reader. (NOTE: This is admittedly a subjective comment on the part of the test scorer)

<u>Interviews</u>

To complement the survey data, we recommend conducting interviews with residents and student volunteers. Given the strong connections built between participants, interviews can be informal and conversational. Depending on how feasible they are, focus groups are a potential alternative to one-on-one interviews that may make the situation more comfortable for interviewees. We defer to the expertise of the program staff on this point, as they will have a better understanding of how to put together a focus group of residents or whether it would even be possible given the regulations of the juvenile detention facilities. Interviewers will ask for permission to record the interview prior to conducting the session, and those audio recordings will then be used to develop complete transcripts for the qualitative coding stage outlined in the analysis section. Interviewees can select a pseudonym for further assurance of confidentiality.

***Potential post-interview questions for residents*:**
1. How would you describe your experience with WIR workshops?
2. How did your involvement with WIR impact your experience in residence?
3. What were some of the aspects of WIR you enjoyed and which would you change?
4. How was your relationship with the volunteers? Were they effective teachers for the workshop? What can be improved?
5. Do you have any thoughts as to how WIR could better serve residents?

Potential post-interview questions for student volunteers:
1. What drew you to WIR? Why and how did you get involved with WIR?
2. What is the biggest challenge for WIR volunteers? What works well for you?
3. What were your expectations coming in? Did WIR meet those expectations? How did your expectations change over the semester?
4. Did the training offered by WIR prepare you for the role? What specifically did you find most helpful? Where did the training fall short?
5. How does WIR help you navigate the power dynamics/privilege between college students and residents?
6. To what extent and in what ways did the WIR curriculum support your ability to lead a workshop?
7. Do you feel the workshop activities facilitate personal growth in residents?

Sampling

Because WIR is still a relatively young program, we recommend that the surveys be administered to all participants. Delivering the survey for residents at the beginning of the first and last workshops will help to alleviate some of the issues with response rate that WIR

encountered in past impact reports. Using an electronic survey delivered via email for the university students should maximize response rate, since it would be most convenient for them. The size of the full population of both groups of survey respondents should be large enough to be used for statistical or quantitative analysis.

We leave the sampling method for interviews and/or focus groups up to the discretion of WIR. It would not be practical to try to interview all participants, so some sampling strategy is appropriate. For example, for university student volunteers, a purely random sample pulling from the full pool of volunteers could be appropriate. If the program wants to ensure that all cohorts are represented proportionally, it might be better to use a stratified random sample – randomly selecting volunteers from within each cohort rather than the entire population of volunteers. On the other hand, depending on Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocols regarding protecting minors and people who are incarcerated, it might not be possible to interview residents who are still incarcerated. A convenience sample might be more appropriate for residents, rather than a probability or random sample.

Analysis and Interpretation Procedures

At the conclusion of the data collection processes outlined above, the team will analyze the survey data, assessment results, and interview transcripts to draw out meaningful themes and statistical information that will shed light on WIR's impact. To conduct the analysis of the survey data, the team will generate a spreadsheet of raw data from Qualtrics to be cleaned and organized in preparation for analysis. The data will then be analyzed in Stata (or another statistics software program that the evaluator chooses), which will consist of generating descriptive statistics such as the mean, median and standard deviation of responses to create data summary tables. The collection of pre- and post-survey data allows for the team to use statistical analysis to show change in residents and student volunteers and therefore illustrate the measurable impacts of the program.

The analysis of the pre- and post-assessment data will be relatively similar to the process of survey analysis described above. A spreadsheet of assessment scores by resident and timestamp will be cleaned and assessed in a statistical analysis software to generate descriptive statistics. The data will primarily be used to illustrate the aggregate changes in reading level and writing skills scores of residents as a consequence of the implemented program activities. The pre-survey and pre-assessments are particularly useful for analysis because the data establishes a baseline measure for the indicators used to analyze the effectiveness of the program. Examples of the growth criteria of interest to the team include the following:

- Increase in interest in/enthusiasm for creative writing
    - What was the aggregate change in the percentage of residents who express interest in reading and writing?
- Increase in reading level before and after workshop term
    - What percentage of residents increased in reading level?
    - What was the mean reading level before and after the program?

- Increase in writings skills score before and after workshop term
  - What percentage of residents increased in writing skills score?
  - What was the mean writing skills score before and after the program?

The interview data collected will effectively develop a broad narrative of the program, but also will capture the more candid details on the experiences of participants. Thematic analysis is an effective tool for breaking down interview data by identifying common themes to help draw out the most important aspects of the program's functionality and effectiveness. The team will program thematic "buckets" or analysis categories into Nvivo, a qualitative analysis software used to code interview data. These categories of frequently occurring themes will include the following:

- Commonly identified challenges
- Commonly identified successes
- Evidence of improved resident self-expression/self-reflection
- Evidence of improved resident reading/writing skills
- Resident/volunteer relationships
- Changes in student volunteer social consciousness/perception of residents
- Self-perceived areas of other resident growth
- Self-perceived areas of other student volunteer growth
- Notable quotes

Each piece of interview data will be placed into the relevant bucket(s), and the team will then develop summary tables and data visualizations that illuminate frequencies of themes that emerge from the interview process. We recommend interpreting the survey, assessment, and interview data findings by assessing the evidence for signs of growth in participants over the course of the 12-week workshop term. For the final report and presentation, the analyzed data will be communicated using data visualizations such as tables, charts, and graphs to allow our stakeholders to easily and effectively digest the evaluation's findings.

Communication and Reporting Plan

There are a variety of formats for reporting the results of an evaluation. When doing so, it is critical to consider the stakeholders in your reporting plan. We recommend composing a formal written report for the Cleveland Foundation; as a funder and advisory, the Foundation will be interested in a higher level of detail. For residents and student volunteers, using a bit more creativity would go a long way when creating a report of the results. For example, producing a visually engaging handout that highlights the most important aspects of the assessments would be a great format. A PowerPoint presentation of the results would also be a more engaging format than a formal written report for these participant stakeholders.

Management Plan

Figure 4 below uses the Spring 2020 dates to create a project management plan for WIR. The plan sets a timeline that identifies the evaluation stage, responsibility, date of assessment, and the type of data tool used. For further context, Figure 5 shows a sample of what a WIR workshop term might look like with the integration of the evaluation plan and data collection activities into a typical program schedule.

WIR Management Plan			
Evaluation Stage	**Who?**	**When?**	**Strategi**
Pre-Survey	WIR staff or outside evaluator	Training/Orientation (27-Jan)	Administer onlin volu
Pre-Survey Pre- Assessment	WIR staff or outside evaluator	Week 1 (3-Feb)	Administer paper assessmen
Post-Survey	WIR staff or outside evaluator	Week 11 (13-April)	Administer onlin volu
Post-Survey Post-Assessment Exit Interview	WIR staff or outside evaluator	Week 12 (20-April)	Administer sur assessment Organize foc residents an

Figure 4. Sample Management Plan (1/27 - 4/27)

WIR Workshop Schedule		
Week	**Date**	**Topic**
Week 1	January 27th	Training/Orientation (Volunteer Pre-Survey)
Week 2	February 3rd	Resident Pre-Survey and Reading Assessment
Week 3	February 10th	Six-Word Memoirs
Week 4	February 17th	Poetry
Week 5	February 24th	Hype Day

Week 6	March 2nd	Spring Break
Week 7	March 9th	Short Stories
Week 8	March 16th	Speeches
Week 9	March 23rd	Screenplays
Week 10	March 30th	Comics
Week 11	April 6th	Critiques
Week 12	April 13th	Easter Break; Student volunteer post-survey
Week 13	April 20th	Resident Post-Survey & Reading Assessment & Focus Group Interview
Week 14	April 27th	WIR Showcase

Figure 5. Sample Workshop Topic Schedule

Electronic Version of Tools and Database

We have created sample surveys for both resident and student volunteers. The surveys can be seen in Appendix A, B, C, and D. As referenced above we modified the existing surveys to turn them into more of an "impact" survey rather than a "satisfaction" survey. We recommend residents are given paper surveys during workshops. The student volunteer surveys can be administered online through Qualtrics. We also created a sample database which can be used to store and clean raw data from the surveys.

Appendix A - Resident Pre-Survey

Creative Writing Workshop Pre-Survey

Please fill out this survey the best that you can by being as honest and specific as possible.

NOTE: When sharing your experiences with WIR do not use the names of residents on this survey.

 Facility: _____ Date: _____

1. Have you participated in a Writers In Residence workshop before? If so when?

2. Circle one of the numbers that correspond to each statement with how you disagree or agree.

   5 = Strong Disagree
   4 = Disagree
   3 = Neither Disagree or Agree
   2 = Agree
   1 = Strongly Agree

1	I feel close to the other residents in my workshop. We are like friends/family.	
2	I can talk about my feelings/emotions with other residents.	1 2 3 4 5
3	I feel close to the student volunteers in the workshop. We are friends/family.	1 2 3 4 5
4	The other residents/student volunteers push me to become a better writer.	1 2 3 4 5
5	I avoid writing.	1 2 3 4 5
6	I have no fear of my writing being evaluated.	1 2 3 4 5
7	I look forward to writing down my ideas.	1 2 3 4 5
8	I am afraid of writing essays when I know they will be evaluated.	1 2 3 4 5
9	Taking a writing course is a very frightening experience.	1 2 3 4 5

10	Handing in my writing makes me feel good.	1 2 3 4 5
11	My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on my writing.	1 2 3 4 5
12	Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time.	1 2 3 4 5
13	I would enjoy submitting my writing to magazines for evaluation and publication.	1 2 3 4 5
14	I like to write down my ideas.	1 2 3 4 5
15	I feel confident in my ability to express my ideas clearly in writing.	1 2 3 4 5
16	I like to have my friends read what I have written.	1 2 3 4 5
17	I am nervous about writing.	1 2 3 4 5
18	People seem to enjoy what I write.	1 2 3 4 5
19	I enjoy writing.	1 2 3 4 5
20	I never seem to enjoy what I write.	1 2 3 4 5
21	Writing is a lot of fun.	1 2 3 4 5
22	I expect to do poorly in writing classes even before I enter them.	1 2 3 4 5
23	I like seeing my thoughts on paper.	1 2 3 4 5
24	Discussing my writing with others is enjoyable.	1 2 3 4 5
25	I have a terrible time organizing my ideas in a writing course.	1 2 3 4 5
26	When I hand in my writing, I know I am going to do poorly.	1 2 3 4 5
27	It's easy for me to produce good writing.	1 2 3 4 5
28	I don't think I write as well as most other people.	1 2 3 4 5
29	I don't like my writing to be evaluated.	1 2 3 4 5
30	I'm not good at writing.	1 2 3 4 5
31	It is good to write about my life/past experiences, even the bad parts.	1 2 3 4 5
32	It is good to write about hopes for the future.	1 2 3 4 5

Appendix B - Resident Post-Survey

Creative Writing Workshop Post-Survey

Please fill out this survey the best that you can by being as honest and specific as possible.

NOTE: When sharing your experiences with WIR do not use the names of residents on this survey.

Facility: _____ Date: _____

1. I liked the creative writing workshops (circle one response).
   a.   Strongly Disagree
   b.   Disagree
   c.   Neither Disagree Nor Agree
   d.   Agree
   e.   Strongly Agree

2. Please explain why you liked the creative writing workshops.

3. Creative writing has impacted my life in a: (circle one response).
   a.   Very negative way
   b.   Negative way
   c.   no effect
   d.   Positive way
   e.   Very positive way

4. Please explain how creative writing has impacted you.

5. What did you learn from the creative writing workshops?

6. What was your favorite part of this entire creative writing workshop experience?

7. What was your experience with the student volunteers?

8. In your own words, how would you describe this program?

9. How can WIR better serve residents?

10. Circle one of the numbers that correspond to each statement with how you disagree or agree

     5 = Strong Disagree

     4 = Disagree

     3 = Neither Disagree or Agree

     2 = Agree

     1 = Strongly Agree

1	I feel close to the other residents in my workshop. We are like friends/family.	
2	I can talk about my feelings/emotions with other residents.	1 2 3 4 5
3	I feel close to the student volunteers in the workshop. We are friends/family.	1 2 3 4 5
4	The other residents/student volunteers push me to become a better writer.	1 2 3 4 5
5	I avoid writing.	1 2 3 4 5
6	I have no fear of my writing being evaluated.	1 2 3 4 5
7	I look forward to writing down my ideas.	1 2 3 4 5
8	I am afraid of writing essays when I know they will be evaluated.	1 2 3 4 5
9	Taking a writing course is a very frightening experience.	1 2 3 4 5
10	Handing in my writing makes me feel good.	1 2 3 4 5
11	My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on my writing.	1 2 3 4 5
12	Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time.	1 2 3 4 5
13	I would enjoy submitting my writing to magazines for evaluation and publication.	1 2 3 4 5
14	I like to write down my ideas.	1 2 3 4 5
15	I feel confident in my ability to express my ideas clearly in writing.	1 2 3 4 5
16	I like to have my friends read what I have written.	1 2 3 4 5
17	I am nervous about writing.	1 2 3 4 5
18	People seem to enjoy what I write.	1 2 3 4 5

19	I enjoy writing.	1 2 3 4 5
20	I never seem to enjoy what I write.	1 2 3 4 5
21	Writing is a lot of fun.	1 2 3 4 5
22	I expect to do poorly in writing classes even before I enter them.	1 2 3 4 5
23	I like seeing my thoughts on paper.	1 2 3 4 5
24	Discussing my writing with others is enjoyable.	1 2 3 4 5
25	I have a terrible time organizing my ideas in a writing course.	1 2 3 4 5
26	When I hand in my writing, I know I am going to do poorly.	1 2 3 4 5
27	It's easy for me to produce good writing.	1 2 3 4 5
28	I don't think I write as well as most other people.	1 2 3 4 5
29	It is good to write about my life/past experiences, even the bad parts.	1 2 3 4 5
30	It is good to write about hopes for the future.	1 2 3 4 5

Appendix C - Student Volunteer Pre-Survey

Student Volunteer Pre-Survey

Please fill out this survey the best that you can by being as honest and specific as possible. NOTE: When sharing your experiences with WIR do not use the names of residents on this survey.

University: _____ Date:_____

1. Have you volunteered with Writers in Residence before? If yes, how many semesters?

2. Have you volunteered at a juvenile detention center or any kind of detention center before?

3. What drew you to Writers in Residence?

4. What are your expectations for your experience volunteering with Writers in Residence?

5. What are your expectations for the workshop?

For the next questions, circle one of the numbers that correspond to each statement with how you disagree or agree.

> 5 = Strong Disagree
> 4 = Disagree
> 3 = Neither Disagree or Agree
> 2 = Agree
> 1 = Strongly Agree

6. I feel comfortable leading workshops	1 2 3 4 5

7. Criminal justice reform is important to me	1 2 3 4 5
8. Juvenile justice reform is important to me	1 2 3 4 5
9. Politicians should make criminal justice reform/juvenile justice reform a top priority	1 2 3 4 5
10. The criminal justice system/juvenile justice system affects my life	1 2 3 4 5
11. I believe I have things in common with the residents	1 2 3 4 5

Appendix D - Student Volunteer Post-Survey

Student Volunteer Post-Survey

Please fill out this survey the best that you can by being as honest and specific as possible.
NOTE: When sharing your experiences with WIR do not use the names of residents on this survey.

Facility: _____ Date: _____

1. What drew you to Writers in Residence?

2. What were your expectations coming in? Have they changed?

3. How does Writers in Residence help you navigate the power dynamics/privilege between college students and residents?

4. Please explain how creative writing has impacted you.

5. What did you learn from the creative writing workshops?

6. What was your favorite part of this entire creative writing workshop experience?

7. Explain your experience with the residents.

8. In your own words, how would you describe this program?

For the next questions, circle one of the numbers that correspond to each statement with how you disagree or agree.
    5 = Strong Disagree
    4 = Disagree
    3 = Neither Disagree or Agree
    2 = Agree
    1 = Strongly Agree

9. I feel comfortable leading workshops	1 2 3 4 5
10. Criminal justice reform is important to me	1 2 3 4 5
11. Juvenile justice reform is important to me	1 2 3 4 5
12. Politicians should make criminal justice reform/juvenile justice reform a top priority	1 2 3 4 5
13. The criminal justice system/juvenile justice system affects my life	1 2 3 4 5
14. I believe I have things in common with the residents	
15. Training offered by Writers In Residence prepared me for volunteering at the juvenile detention center	1 2 3 4 5