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## Student Choice is Lit!

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# 🔥 Student Choice is LIT! 🔥

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## Research Question

- Does student choice on English writing assessments improve student learning and achievement?

## Literature Review

- Differentiated instruction varies content, process, and product to connect with students on the individual level (Levy, 2008).
- Allowing for students choice and autonomy builds upon student interest and supports positive motivations (Glas, 2015)
- Autonomous classrooms inspire student motivation that manifests itself through engaged behaviors in class (Hafen et al., 2011).

## Methodology

- Participants were 30 students from a general education English 9<sup>th</sup> grade classroom.
- I compared two assessments that tested students on the same skills. Assessment 1 did not allow for student choice. Assessment 2 allowed students to choose the questions.
- My data analysis included student work and field notes from class.

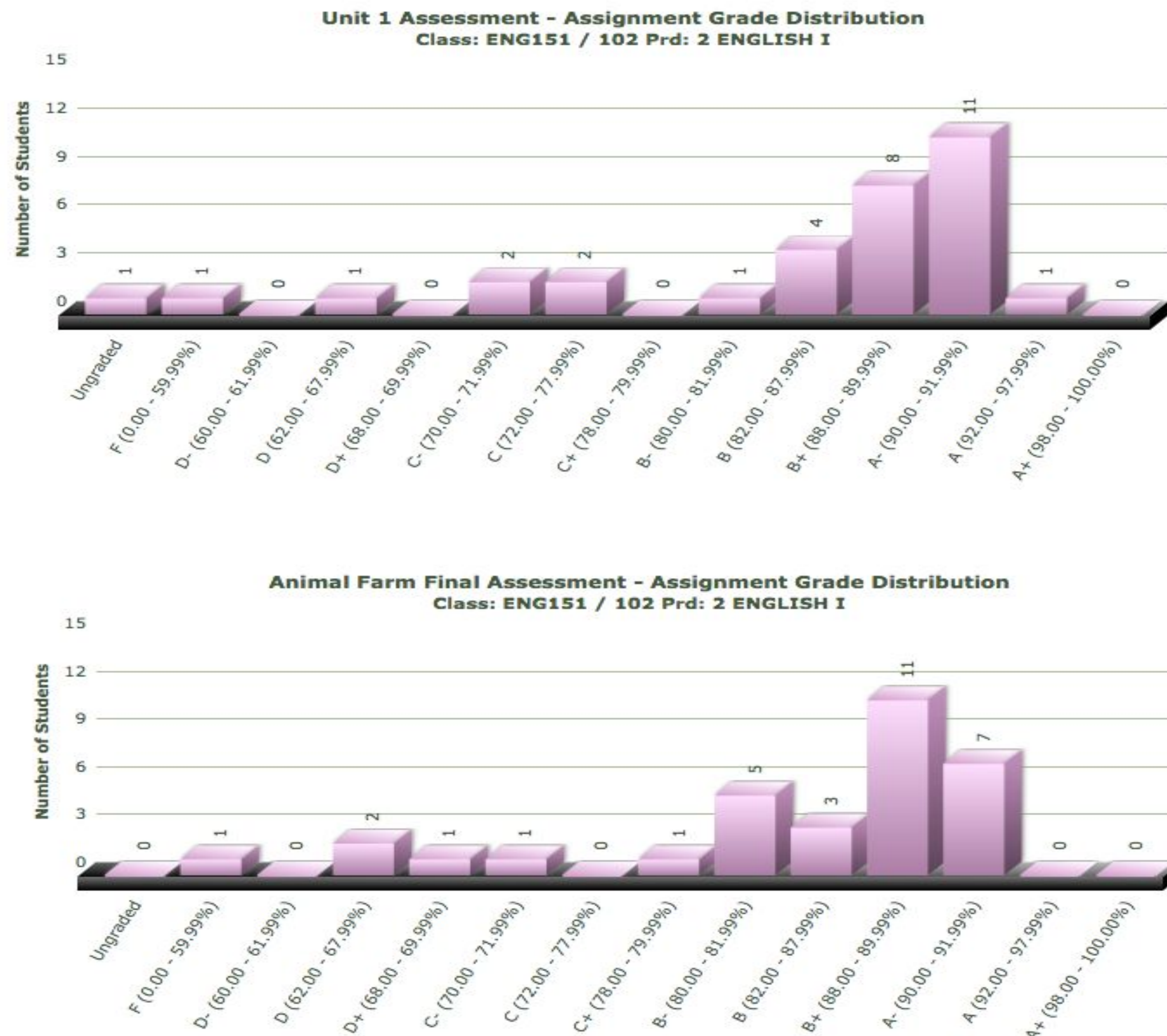


Figure 1. Scored from Assessment 1 to Assessment 2 stayed relatively the same. There were less students that struggled tremendously.

The theme of *The Firing Squad* is about an executioner who is nervous about shooting someone. He describes the story like he is the one getting executed: "The warden approached with the blindfold. Would anyone see the sweat breaking off my brow? Sure, everyone was sweating in this heat, but I was different." As soon as the warden said "fire!" his finger jerked. "The moment was broken with our rifles crackling in unison. Blood flowed. Body slumped. I lowered my gun." Then they walked away from the yard. "We made our way from the yard. The lucky few. Each had volunteered -- filled with righteous anger, eager to enact the state's judgement."

A static character is Squealer because he has been telling the animals lies so they would rebel against Napoleon. In Chapter 5 on top of page 27 Squealer said "Bravery is not enough. Loyalty and obedience are more important. As to the battle of the Cowshed, I believe the time will come when we shall that Snowball's part in it was much exaggerated. Discipline comrades, iron discipline! That is the watchword for today. One false step, and our enemies would be upon us. Surely, comrades, you do not want Jones back?" When Squealer said this to the animals everyone started arguing over if they want Mr. Jones back. Squealer said Comrade Napoleon's cunning on the plans for the windmill. "Tactics, comrades, tactics!" Skipping around laughing while whisking his tail he said those things to get rid of Snowball.

Figure 2. Both work samples are from the same student. In Assessment 1, the student struggled with the interpretation and form. In Assessment 2, the student wrote an analysis with proper support and form.

## Results and Data Analysis

- Students that struggled on Assessment 1, wrote at a higher level on Assessment 2.
- Average score on Assessment 1 was 83.71%. Number and A's plus B's was 25.
- Average score on Assessment 2 was 83.98%. Number of A's plus B's was 26.
- "Students were clearly more engaged when I told them about student choice on the test. They worked together to find quotes immediately."
- From Assessment 1 to Assessment 2, motivation and attitude improved greatly while achievement stayed the same.

## Conclusion

- Student choice differentiated assessments help improve the quality of writing in struggling students and attitude.
- This study's findings were limited in that there was only one control, one variable, and one classroom being observed.
- Assessments with student choice helps students demonstrate knowledge. This study proves motivation is improved with choice.