The classic debate in Composition Studies between David Bartholomae and Peter Elbow is an ongoing source of controversy and wisdom even in the modern day. The scholars within the field continue to analyze both sides of the argument diligently searching for any flaws or potentially unexplored mental avenues. The continuation of this discussion is necessary to the advancement of student writers in the modern age, and the instructor’s tasked with the heavy burden of consistently producing capable and confident writers. Throughout the short history of the modern composition department opposing beliefs have constantly been met with immense force in the academic arena. The perpetual clashing of methods and reasoning has undoubtedly held back the advancement of the undervalued department. One can only imagine how talented the average student writer would be in this day and age if there had been some universal and reliable agreement amongst scholars in Composition Studies concerning both the content and methods of instructing students in writing for the modern world. However, with so many different voices chiming in on these problems and the vast amount of research each individual has put into their own plea for validity, the world is right on the precipice of a major breakthrough in composition methodology and the focus of those instructors on the front lines. The debate between Bartholomae and Elbow taught the world of Composition Studies many new lessons, the most important being the immense value and effort we should be putting into the advancement of student writing.
To fully appreciate and comprehend the lasting importance of the debate between Bartholomae and Elbow one must take a step back and view both sides of the argument as smaller parts of a greater whole. It is all too easy to choose sides accordingly and swiftly upon the first in-depth study into each of these prominent academic figures. The more progressive members of the Composition community will naturally gravitate towards Elbow's more open-ended and student-centered approach. At the same time, more conservative and fundamental scholars will more than likely side with Bartholomae and his instructor-driven, results-focused approach to teaching students how to write. However, the wise scholar knows that a single pointed approach is never inclusive enough to meet the needs of every student, particularly when taking into consideration the rapidly evolving profile of the modern student. To summarize the key points of their argument is a daunting task and it is questionable whether it is even in the realm of possibility. A great attempt at this arduous task is made in the article "Fear of Narrative: Revisiting the Bartholomae-Elbow Debate through the Figure of the Writing Teacher in Contemporary American Fiction" by author J. Brian Schwartz. In this article, he claims:

It is my contention that Bartholomae and Elbow's discussion in the late 1980s and early 1990s is still a text of central importance in the field of composition studies, one that speaks to timeless questions of narrative and pedagogy in the writing classroom. Indeed, the rich fictional representations of writing teachers in the work of Charles Baxter and Rick Bass remind us that Bartholomae and Elbow were articulating a crucial theoretical divide, not just in comp theory but in American higher education. (431)

It is clear that Schwartz sees the debate as a much more far-reaching issue than many of his peers in the discipline of Composition Studies.
To discover where the minds of Bartholomae and Elbow overlap and intersect it is crucial to separate out each side's key points and flaws to form a well-developed and more well-rounded perspective on each scholar. The careful study of their points in the argument will reveal flaws as well as possible modern applications and improvements that could be made to each sides appeal. Bartholomae’s more traditional approach seems like an appropriate starting point considering how it fits into the modern classroom in a more widely accepted and conservative sense. Author Ingrid Johnson, in her essay "Empowering First Year Students through Digital Rhetoric" accurately conveys the heart of Bartholomae's argument for academically focused writing in the classroom. In the article, Ingrid states "Bartholomae believes that language is socially constructed and is a product of a particular time and culture. His central thesis is that we, as academics, must teach our students to write and think the way that we academics do. This is in direct opposition to the expressivists' approach" (7). There is a lot of merit in Bartholomae's point. The object of the college student is to primarily graduate from a university to merge into the professional world to hopefully contribute something meaningful to society and earn a paycheck.

Bartholomae clearly sees writing through a much more practical lens than his counterpart, and he provides support from an entirely different perspective than Elbow as well. Bartholomae pays great respect to the tradition of Composition Studies and all of the formalities that are associated with the higher academic realm. In the article "Responses to Bartholomae and Elbow" Bartholomae best encapsulates his message while establishing common ground with Elbow, "Like Peter, I want students to take pride in their work and to take themselves and their work seriously, to be arrogant, self-absorbed" (86). The agreement on this subject is reassuring
and promising because it shows that although these individuals differ on the methodology and fundamental, their objective is essentially one and the same.

The goal of empowering the student and pushing them to be capable writers in the professional world is a noble cause that almost any instructor in the discipline could rally behind. Bartholomae elaborates on these objectives with an explanation of the methods he utilizes to achieve said goals. For example, in the article “Responses to Bartholomae and Elbow,” Bartholomae claims “My route to this is by teaching students to be able to work closely with the ways their writing constructs a relationship with tradition, power and authority—with other people's words. It is here, in the sentences and paragraphs, that I think we can work on cultural politics” (Bartholomae 86). To Bartholomae, learning to write is following a beacon of prior knowledge and wisdom that was initially ignited by scholars of the past and is maintained by those currently in the classrooms trying to instill the value of writing in the youth. In Bartholomae’s opinion, teaching students to adhere to these methods and standards is giving them power through ability.

While Bartholomae's views contrast significantly with those of Elbow, there are certain strengths that can be observed in Bartholomae’s approach. For example, in the article “Response to Bartholomae and Elbow,” Elbow shares his opinions on Bartholomae's approach, "That is, like me, you seem to want to give your student writer more control over her writing, more ability to make her writing her own" (Elbow 90). The major difference between Bartholomae and Elbow is how they believe students become empowered in the classroom. The goal of empowering the student writer is a promising and challenging one at the same time. However, the path to this shift in authority to the student's side should be much more clinical and structured in Bartholomae's eyes. The result is a more capable and confident writer. The kind of graduate
student who enters the job market with pride and reassurance in the quality of their resume and
portfolio.

The driving force behind this stern preparation is the meaningful and thorough criticism
of the student's writing on a regular basis. By forcing students to be genuinely challenged from
their initial entry into Freshman Composition and subsequently increasing those standards with
that same frequency, the student simply no longer fears writing because they have been trained to
assess and respond to any academic obstacle that requires writing. In his article, “Writing With
Teachers” Bartholomae makes a clarifying comment on his overall perspective of the role of
composition in higher education, “If I am here to argue for academic writing as part of an
undergraduate's training, or as a form or motive to be taught/examined in the curriculum, I need
to begin by saying that I am not here to argue for stuffy, lifeless prose or for mechanical (or
dutiful) imitations of standard thoughts” (63).

While the progress and dedication of Bartholomae and his contributions to Composition
Studies deserve appropriate acknowledgment and appreciation, every system of thought retains
unique shortcomings that simply cannot be avoided by the original creator. The most significant
flaws in Bartholomae's argument are appropriately highlighted by Elbow in their mutual
explorations of one another's methods and reasoning. This notion is best exemplified by Elbow
in "Responses to Bartholomae and Elbow." In this article, Elbow claims "But notice that your
arguments are mostly negative. That is, you assume without argument that if I celebrate
‘independent, self-creative, self-expressive subjectivity,’ I must be against the notion of people
as socially constructed. But I am not” (88). The same rigid adherence to authoritative guidelines
and methods of instruction that motivate Bartholomae also limit his scope of vision and
possibility. To some degree, there is an apparent hesitance in Bartholomae to extend any sense of
real power to the student. A proper balance must be struck between the reserved ideas of Bartholomae and the expansive views of Elbow to impact the quality of student writing in the future.

The foundation of Bartholomae's reasoning is made structurally vulnerable through his negligent views of the student's identity and worth in the classroom. The other factor limiting the effectiveness of Bartholomae's approach emanates from his inherent doubt in the value of what the student has to offer as an individual creator, that is separate from the conformity taught in the classroom. To Bartholomae this function is to be avoided entirely and instead redirected to the structure of academic journals and the discourse of their professors. In "Responses to Bartholomae and Elbow," Elbow elaborates on his position: "You go on to say that we should try to show them that they can be ‘elegant, smart, independent.’ However, you feel this would be lying to them, whereas I insist that they can in truth be elegant, smart, and independent" (88).

Seeing an individual place so much trust and faith in the capabilities of their students is truly refreshing and should give students and instructors hope for their academic careers concerning writing.

With Bartholomae’s side well-established it only fits to juxtapose it with the opposing mindset of Peter Elbow. The relationship between Bartholomae and Elbow is poetic in many ways. Each person embodied so much of what the other only wanted to avoid and resist. The pair is genuinely comparable to the renowned technological figures Bill Gates and Steve Jobs and the innovation that the competition between the two generated in their field of study. The result of the Bartholomae-Elbow debate was very similar in the discipline of Composition. One stood rigidly for hierarchical methods focused on academic results and the other walking into an open field so to speak, where the voice and expression of the student carried more weight than the
authority possessed by the instructor. While neither is completely perfect, Elbow was indeed heading in a more progressive and inclusive direction that seemingly produced greater results but also required a greater energetic investment by the instructor.

The defining separation between Elbow and Bartholomae is undoubtedly their opposing opinions of exactly how students learn to write and how they learn to improve their writing once they have acquired the necessary skills. In the mind of Elbow, the act of self-discovery and exploration through writing in relation to one's life, environment, and culture is necessary to growing as a writer and discovering your academic ability. The summation of Elbow's school of thought is best presented in "Empowering First Year Students through Digital Rhetoric," by author Ingrid Johnson. In the article, Johnson states: "Supporters of this expressivist approach to writing instruction argue that although writing is grounded in social interaction, its heuristic function is at least as important as its communicative function. They go on to assert that learning to write is much more than relenting to the conventions of a specific community or society in general" (5). The beauty of this approach is that it allows the student to discover the wonders and joys of learning on their own, instead of forcing them to adhere to the standards of an audience they are not yet familiar with anyway.

While the core beliefs of Elbow and his followers are certainly admirable, the methods in which they choose to implement these progressive ideas are also very impressive and effective. In the traditional classroom, one will see students sitting in uniform rows looking towards the power center of the classroom, which is undoubtedly the teacher. Students are genuinely conditioned to be uncomfortable and submissive to the will of the instructor, which makes for less than desirable creative atmosphere. However, Elbow addresses this issue of practicality in the common classroom. For example, in her essay “Empowering First Year Students through
Digital Rhetoric,” author Ingrid Johnson claims: “His theory is grounded upon his proposition that students write about their own experiences. [...] To further highlight the process of writing and not the final product, he proposed freewriting exercises. Such exercises would allow students to write out their thoughts without the interruptions of self-editing” (5). The one clear fact is that Elbow apparently wants the students to play a much more free and active role in the classroom than they have been. He believes this peaceful exchange of power coupled with regular and rigorous writing exercises is the most efficient method for producing capable writers.

At face value, it is easy to be captured by the heroic notions Elbow so valiantly defends. It makes one believe in the writing process and how competent students can be. However, Elbow did not simply base his beliefs on romantic pipe-dreams. He is the representative of this area in composition studies for a reason. The man has put in a lot of time and effort to furthering the progress of the composition department and academic pedagogy as a whole. Both of these accomplishments are seemingly monumental. However, he reveals his path to discovery clearly so that other scholars can find their own route in this forest of methodology. In her article “Houses Divide: Processing Composition in a Post-Process Time,” author Allison Fraiberg claims: “By distinguishing between high and low stakes grading and between grading, evaluating, and giving feedback. Elbow gives writing teachers a more liberated working environment at the same time that he unshackles students from the pressure of constant grading” (174). It is truly astounding how wide-sweeping Elbow’s approach is. Obviously, the goal of composition studies is to make the students better writers. However, it is rare that a scholar would even consider the desires of the instructor, much less devise a methodology that satisfies both parties needs completely.
With such a substantial shift in focus to the student and the lack of grading in the conventional sense, it makes one question exactly how Elbow is achieving all these incredible results with his students. The anticipation of Elbow to remedy these questionable areas is astounding. He simply revisited common methods and through a critical lens devised his own take on writing instruction. In her article "Houses Divide: Processing Composition in a Post-Process Time," author Allison Fraiberg states: "He closes this fascinating section with a vision of writing in the twenty-first century that includes the use of collaborative collage, non-holistically assessed portfolios, and an integrated alternative to basic writing courses" (174). All of these activities are designed with precision by Elbow to place a heavy weight of revision and personal reflection on the writing by the students themselves. The goal and outcome is a student who does not panic when forced to formulate their own argument from scratch and feels a sense of pride when they have completed the presentation of their argument.

The strength of Elbow's approach centers around his seamless integration of progressive ideology and game-changing methods to match the pace. When taking the conventional classroom setting into consideration one can imagine a very one-minded approach with little room for variation and exploration. Indeed, the specific learning outcomes set forth by the professor in the syllabus of these classic classrooms will most likely be met to a certain degree. In her article "Houses Divide: Processing Composition in a Post-Process Time," author Allison Fraiberg states: "At least two central tropes establish the spine of this collection. The first centers on Elbow's longstanding tradition of embracing the contraries or finding the uses of binary thinking, the most piercing example of which occurs when he confronts social process position" (174). But, the tragedy is that in most classrooms the outcomes will be met at the sacrifice of the student's identity and interest as an individual writer with a creative voice. Surely enough,
through semester and semester of being force-fed, that creative voice will undoubtedly be muffled.

The value and appeal in Elbow's methods are compelling. However, even the great Peter Elbow is not immune to inconsistencies and errors. The problem is that students need instructors, it is simply essential to the process. The other issue is how you view a capable writer. It seems that Bartholomae's desire is to push students to be professionally capable writers through heavy instructor-based criticism and feedback paired with the strategic study of prominent texts that best exemplify the qualities the instructor seeks. On the opposite side of the spectrum sits Peter Elbow and his prophetic visions of the future of the Composition classroom. In Elbow's mind, the separation from instructor dominated classrooms is making the students more competent and comfortable with writing. In their article “Responses to Bartholomae and Elbow,” Bartholomae states: “I would argue, however, that since the point of criticism is to ask questions of the things that seem beyond question, to ask students to see the natural as artificial, it cannot come from within. It will not happen on its own, but only when prompted. That is how I imagine the writing teacher” (87). The simple truth is that every student needs a point of reference and guiding hand that is reliable throughout the entirety of the writing process.

Bartholomae is certainly correct to an extent. The inhibiting factor in Elbow’s written equation is the continued growth of the student writer past the initial Freshman Composition courses. Can the student truly continuously push their standards in pace with upper-level courses without intervention from a high academic power? The answer is no. In many ways, the professor or instructor can be a base for safety and reliability for the progressing student. The simple mistakes that a student is unsure of can be clarified on the spot with a doctorate's degree worth of explanation in the right circumstances. Sure, the student will trip up and discover these
shortcomings on their own. However, identifying problems only takes a student so far. The writer must be able to analyze the error and then correct it in a more cohesive and meaningful way. While some creativity might be sacrificed in the adjustment phase, in all honesty, that same creativity would have most likely have been lost once the student graduated and immediately entered the workforce with a heap of student loans and much less guidance than they had received in the college setting for the last decade.

Bartholomae and Elbow each saw the problems plaguing the Composition department in the United States and knew they had to do something about. Both scholars were passionate and dedicated to their cause. However, it does make one question how a discussion between two composition professors reached the level of notoriety it has. To search for the answer is to discover the problems students of the past faced and how a vicious cycle seems to bring those same issues back around in the present day. The blame gets tossed from higher education down to the secondary level, then both parties put the remaining blame onto the legislative process and how much our government values activities like military and sports spending. The truth is, there is not one ultimate blame-all source to pin this issue on. The students of America simply are not as capable and comfortable and writing as they should be. It is my speculation and others in the field that a significant portion of this issue can be directly tied to the fading standards for reading the schools systems, in favor of more recreation and computer-based activities. The correlation between frequent and meaningful reading and able writers is undeniable, and it should have been addressed a long time ago.

Any writer's scope of ability is only a large as their lexicon permits. The use of language truly determines all known boundaries in this world. The need for the written word extends across all disciplines and is pervasive in the evolution of humanity. The concept of placing this
immense value in the study of Composition is not commonly shared by most modern scholars. While Bartholomae and Elbow brought attention to the writing classroom where it had previously been neglected, it seems that they shied away from exploring the value of student reading. However, Bartholomae's more classic approach included the study of well-known text throughout the course. The effort on Bartholomae's part to ensure the students at least get to see great works of the past is admirable. The process of critically reading prominent texts in literature allows the young writer to increase their vocabulary and understanding of rhetoric and grammar passively. The advantages of an increased focus on reading while teaching composition courses deserves to be fully explored.

While Bartholomae and Elbow chose to focus on the writing itself and not entirely on how one becomes a writer in the modern age, certain scholars are still exploring this area of education with advanced methods. It is reassuring that other experts in the field are still searching and pushing for more than what currently exists in education, especially composition. For example, author and educational psychologist Steve Graham chimes in on this topic: “In the early years of writing research, there was a strong behavioral emphasis. With the coming of the cognitive revolution, there was a shift in thinking as scholars tried to examine what was happening inside the head of writers as they composed” (Educ Psych 179). After acknowledging the impact of this study on student learning, Graham elaborates on this notion and describes how the psychological study of education and writing has evolved with rest of the world. For example, Graham states: “This later expanded into how beliefs and cognition operated conjointly. As a result, we began looking at the role in writing of hypothesized cognitive structures, such as memory, attention, working memory, and executive functioning, and how motivational beliefs provided the impetus for engaging these processes” (179). The inclusion of
these other principles into the area of educational research is a massive step forward in the discipline because it means instructors will be more capable of addressing specific problems the students have from a more productive place than simple pedagogical exercises.

So much progress has been made and continues to be made in the field of education and particularly in the study of Composition. One of the deterrents in this process is the migration of ideas and competing mindsets within the discipline itself. The number of individual scholars exploring the field in their own unique way and pushing boundaries is vast. However, very few of these scholars ever truly collaborate with others to further develop their ideas. The truth is that this hesitance to communicate and collaborate with each other is just another major factor inhibiting the advancement of the Composition department and the education department as a whole. This notion is best exemplified by Graham, “The reality of these different movements is that there are many scholars who carry on in their preferred tradition, but act as if the other traditions no longer exist or are not worth considering. This is a shame as we still have so much to learn about writing. Unfortunately, this is not specific to writing” (179). The problem is real, and it continues to metastasize in the atmosphere of modern education, especially in the United States. Maybe those in the academic realm simply have a difficult time admitting their own fault or have an even harder time praising others for their achievement. Either way, something must be done to free the department from the grips of societal conventions and unnecessary reservations.

The field of educational psychology has an immense amount of knowledge to offer the modern Composition department. The value mentioned only increases exponentially when taking into considering the rapidly shifting profile of the modern student. For many students, the English language is not their first and learning how to transition into the college realm
appropriately is a massive undertaking. The more conservative scholar in the field would insist that these students simply evolve to adhere to the standards of the institution they attend, leaving the beauty and truth of their culture behind for lofty jargon in published American journals. The situation is best exemplified by authors Kathi R. Griffin and Tatiana Glushko, in their article entitled “Caught Between the Promise and the Past: A View from the Writing Center.” In this article, the authors state: “Yet in the writing center, we find ourselves caught between the promise of twenty-first-century innovation and vestiges of nineteenth-century pedagogy in current-traditional practices, a conflict on our campus that seems to pivot on two interrelated issues: varied definitions of writing and disparate teaching approaches” (167). The summary of issues given by these authors is one of the best available at the moment. The simple truth is that the scholars who represent and maintain the Department of Composition fundamentally disagree on direction of the discipline and which methods to use.

The Composition Departments of the past were in a unique and infantile position where experimentation and exploration were extremely common, if not encouraged. Most scholars would agree on the importance of student writing and the sharing of ideas in a formal setting. However, most scholars also cannot agree on how significant that role should be or how writing should ideally be implemented into the college curriculum. The division exists from one university to another and within each one might find entirely different practices and goals. However, certain issues escape university borders and demand more attention as the world continues evolving around the Composition Department. For example, one duo claims: "As we engage students in conversation about their purpose for writing, their audience’s expectations, and rhetorical choices they can make to achieve their purpose, we also embrace their language” (Griffin & Glushko 169). The goal of understanding the student’s perspective and attempting to
integrate the language of discourse they naturally use and the academic language is a much more promising route for the future of the department than simply adhering to widely accepted methods for the sake of heritage and tradition.

It is difficult for one to understand what could possibly be holding the department of Composition back so much despite the massive amount of effort in the field. Countless studies have been done and subsequent articles written exploring new and old methods, yet scholars of the written word still cannot rally together and solve the problem. Perhaps, it would be much easier for members of the discipline to unify behind a common cause if there were certain unarguable factors available to lean on much like our scientific counterparts. However, a notion as solid as the theory of gravity has yet to appear in the realm of composition. So, what is it that current members of the craft should do to combat this issue? Authors Kathi R. Griffin and Tatiana Glushko comment on this problem in their article, “Caught Between the Promise and the Past: A View from the Writing Center.” In this text, the authors state: “However, to change the definition of writing and to address the disparate teaching approaches on our campus, we would need a writing program grounded in translingual practices and led by a person trained in the field of rhetoric and composition” (169). The claim these authors make is bold and might be met with a lot of criticism. However, that does not change its relevance the issue at hand. Something drastic must be done to remedy the plague of writing on students and teachers. With so many students coming into school from many different cultural backgrounds, it is time the departments stop forcing each of them to assimilate to purely American standards.

The debate between Bartholomae and Elbow addressed major issues plaguing the composition department of the time. While it is certainly true that many of these problems continue to exists in today’s department in one form or another, the profile of the student has
changed drastically. The arguments presented by both sides were compelling and well thought out. However, the fatal flaw in their discussion was the constant focus on the present. Each other paid their dues to past figures and acknowledged the developmental roots of the department. However, they did little more than ponder the future of the department and the students that make it up. The limited scope of their research and subsequent discussions excluded certain groups like those with learning disabilities and those whose first language was not English. This most likely was not intentional on their parts, they were simply focused on the problem at hand. However, through cooperation and sufficient effort experts in the field, today can remedy this issue with the vast amount of resources at their disposal.

With more and more individuals pursuing a degree in higher education than ever before it is only reasonable to develop methods of instruction that suit all students, not just the successful ones. One of the groups that get looked over in this constantly evolving process is those with Learning Disabilities. The need to communicate through the written word does not simply vanish from someone's life just because they have autism or dyslexia, etc. These individuals want to express themselves and better their lives just as much, if not more than the average student. And they deserve to experience a composition program that meets their needs. From the very beginning, this area of educational research has been significantly insufficient for making any tangible process. If these students with learning disabilities are never studied in a clinical and practical setting, academics simply will not know where to begin helping them or even what their greatest problems are with writing. Through careful research, cooperation, and initiative members of the composition field can begin to formulate a plan that gives these deserving students the care and attention that has been owed to them for such a long time.
At the forefront of this effort to better reach students with learning disabilities are the educational psychologist Steve Graham and his extensive studies into student writing. Graham is in a unique position to give insight into this issue being that his background is primarily concerned with the evaluation of the average student's writing process. However, he fully acknowledges the supreme need for more versatile methods of instruction to assist those who suffer from disabilities. The ugly truth is that writing is a tough task for these individuals and it is just as difficult for their instructors to reach out to them on a consistent basis effectively.

Graham comments on this topic, "So, one of the things that we know unequivocally is that writing is a very challenging task for students with learning disabilities, not only in terms of the products they produce but also in terms of the knowledge, skills, strategies, and will underlying effective writing" (Educ Psych 183). While it does not seem like much at face value, this is a large step forward towards helping these students. If the instructor is not able to successfully identify major problem areas for the students, there is simply no way to know which direction is best suited for helping them.

Discovering the roadblocks in front of these students is only one-half of the equation. Academics in the field must develop methods of instruction suitable for the needs of these students as well. The problem is with so little research done into exactly what the problems are, the amount of research into effective methods is essentially non-existent compared to other topics in the same field. It seems like every department, and every school has their own methods to approach these issues and the unfortunate students get torn in all the different directions. The learning disabled students need much more solidarity and cohesion in their academic experiences to truly grow year after year in school. Graham weighs in again on this topic, “While we don’t know enough about how to effectively teach writing to these students, we do know that explicitly
teaching them strategies for planning, revising, and editing has a strong and positive effect on their writing" (183). The major separation between effectively teaching writing to learning-disabled students versus the average students is the amount of focus placed on the post-writing process. The students who are considered at the average level in universities are constantly hounded about the actual writing process much more than revision and reflection. Perhaps, this is simply a product of time constraints, and the professors would expend more effort covering the post-writing process if they simply had the time.

Based on the studies Graham conducted it also seems evident that students with learning disabilities benefit much more from a structured and teacher-centered writing program than their average counterparts. This fact is not surprising if one considers the implications of being learning disabled and attempting to compose essays. The same skills most students take for granted are a massive barrier for learning disabled students to overcome in the classroom. For example, Graham states: “If you teach handwriting and spelling or circumvent such transcription skills through dictation, there is a positive effect on their writing. This likely occurs because becoming better at handwriting and spelling reduces the interference these skills have on other writing processes" (183). The findings in this research are reassuring because it demonstrates and reliable way to build confidence in these students that they would never have developed has these studies not been done. It seems like a simple concept, if handwriting and structuring sentences become a passive action in the student, the student is now less inhibited in the sharing of their ideas. However, many people would be astonished by how often something as simple as this concept gets overlooked and it proves to be detrimental to a student’s academic career.

The issue of finding the best way to reach students with learning disabilities continues to live on in the modern world. The biggest difference is that today the problem is no longer
stagnant and ignored. The scholars who are pursuing this cause are doing their very best to formulate practical solutions, but the future is still unclear. With such a heavy push from legislation and the world in general for more and more science and math courses, it genuinely makes one wonder what the fate of composition the future classroom will turn out to be. The best approximations that can be made must be based on the path of scholars from the past and the success of current endeavors juxtaposed with those classic principles. This notion is best conveyed by Graham, "In essence, I hope the writing community can more fully embrace multiple theories and multiple methods. That we can bring tools from outside our comfort zone into play and attract people from different disciplines who might not be involved in writing research now, but can bring new tools and ideas to the study of writing" (Educ Psych 179). The possibility of a world where scholars in the realm of composition can exchange and implement ideas freely and meaningfully is nearly utopian. It would be an excellent reality for both the students and instructors, but it just continues to appear slightly out-of-reach. Perhaps, once those well-established voices in the field pass on the torch to future generations, the world will then see greater progress and inclusion in the act of teaching writing.

Until that day of reckoning arrives for those who diligently study the written word, the world must continue to lean of the understanding of great minds like Peter Elbow and David Bartholomae. The current and upcoming minds in the field also have an obligation themselves to expand the boundaries and experiment with new methods. To simply graduate and fulfill one's job requirements with a degree in English would not only be a disservice to oneself, but also the world. Because the world desperately needs better writers and better teachers to implement more effective measures for these struggling students. The path will not be unilateral though; the solution demands a varied approach. The atmosphere of education is very different from when
Bartholomae and Elbow first presented their theories to the world. The modern student could originate from any background, speak English as a second language, or face learning disabilities. The common factor linking each one of these categories of students is their need and desire to communicate using the written word. The duty of the instructor is to give these students the tools and support they need to achieve this goal and implement effective writing into their personal and professional lives.

In conclusion, the same problems that initiated the debate between David Bartholomae and Peter Elbow continue to plague the Composition Department today. The average student simply is not as capable as they should be when it comes to sharing their ideas with writing. Both Bartholomae and Elbow sought to alleviate this issue through their own unique methods. On the one hand, Bartholomae embraced the power of the instructor and sought to mold students according to the standards of the university. The manifestation of Bartholomae's school of thought is the classic classroom model where the student is judged according to their inherent academic worth. On the complete opposite side of the spectrum exists Elbow's more progressive and student-centered approach. Elbow passionately believed that shifting the power structure in the students' favor would allow the students to find their own voice and worth in writing. The methods of Elbow include extensive free writing activities and praising the cultural and creative values of the student.

While both philosophies have their shortcomings, Bartholomae’s is particularly dangerous when considering the diverse profile of the average modern student. The benefit of Elbow’s approach is that it allows students from a myriad of backgrounds to identify and integrate their own identity with the requirements of the academic realm. In reality, the most effective approach will always be the most inclusive one. The research being done by scholars
such Steve Graham is a glimpse of what the ideal future of composition in academia could look like. Perhaps, through the conjoined efforts of scholars from every discipline and the appropriate integration of technology into the writing classroom, the future will reveal a unifying doctrine to satisfy these needs.
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