

Success Story: Mt. Olive High School, New Jersey

“With Turnitin WriteCycle, I’m more productive and so are my students. It’s made the process of writing, submitting, and evaluating papers a lot of fun.”

Danielle Kulawiak
Language Arts Teacher
Mt. Olive High School, Flanders, New Jersey



WHY IMPLEMENT TURNITIN?

Danielle Kulawiak teaches 112 students at Mt. Olive High, a large, diverse public school. Many are in her honors and college prep language arts courses. “What we were finding at our school was very little plagiarism from the Internet — it was from our own students sharing papers,” Kulawiak says. “Now we require all papers to be submitted through Turnitin.”

After a positive experience with Turnitin’s Originality Checking service, Kulawiak and some of her colleagues decided to implement the entire WriteCycle® online solution by adding GradeMark to grade papers digitally and Peer Review to let students give each other feedback. “I love everything it does to help me and my students,” she says. Next year, the school will upgrade to WriteCycle for all teachers. Kulawiak is excited that all of her fellow teachers also will be using the entire WriteCycle service.

Benefits

Encourages Group Interaction and Learning

For a recent research paper, Kulawiak’s students used the Peer Review discussion boards for an online brainstorming session in the writing center. Afterward, students said they had been up all night on Turnitin instead of on Facebook. “They loved it because it had the Facebook feel for them,” says Kulawiak. “I was thrilled with that. They were having a really good time, and there was a lot of excellent insight that led to better quality papers.”

“In class, not everyone gets to be heard,” she says, “but by using Peer Review they had time to think through their ideas and say what they wanted without feeling pressured to speak in one 55-minute class with other people vying to participate.”



Involves Everyone in a More Engaging Feedback Process

After students submitted rough drafts through Turnitin, Kulawiak engaged with them in the writing process. “I did an online session with each student where I marked up their paper and had them resubmit a second draft for peer review,” she explained. Kulawiak found it a plus to be able to develop her own peer review questions and rubric that aligned with “very specific things I wanted them to look at for the assignment.”

The kids were overwhelmingly positive about the experience. “They liked the feedback from me, and the feedback from their peers,” Kulawiak says, “and since it was completely anonymous, they were more at ease to give realistic feedback.”

Faster Feedback Eases Teacher Workload to Make Teachers and Students More Productive

GradeMark enables Kulawiak to give her students immediate feedback, speeding up the evaluation process. “Students are happy to have their papers back in about a week,” she says, “instead of two or three weeks it takes without Turnitin. I can take my laptop to the coffee shop, drink a coffee and grade papers without carrying around a huge stack of papers.”

Using Turnitin WriteCycle has made everyone more productive. “My success rate of students actually turning in papers has gone to nearly 100 percent since I’ve been using Turnitin,” Kulawiak says. “Most of my kids have been getting their papers in on time, if not early. It eliminates a lot of excuses: no more ‘I didn’t have paper, I didn’t have toner, my printer jammed.’”

Impact

Kulawiak says she’s thrilled with WriteCycle: “The new things I can do with Turnitin and WriteCycle are my greatest discoveries this year. It’s just made my work so much better. Anything that gets my students enthusiastic about the writing process is good for me—no more groans and grumbles. When students come in excited, I’m a very happy teacher.”