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Examining Effects of Writing Prompt Type on Choice Decision-Making Process

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ABSTRACT

Research shows a decline in students' academic achievement motivation over time and calls researchers to examine this phenomenon and its impact on student outcomes (Anderman & Maehr, 1994; Otis, Grouzet, & Pelletier, 2005; Prawat, Grissom, and Parish, 1979). Allowing students meaningful, autonomy-enhancing choices when faced with academic tasks may combat this decline (e.g., Assor, et al., 2002; Katz & Assor, 2006). The present study compared two types of writing prompts to examine learning motivation and writing outcomes and explored why fourth-grade students selected varied writing prompts when provided choice. Traditional story starters provided a sentence fragment (e.g., "if I had a million dollars, I would…"). New story starters allowed students to choose two words from lists (e.g., *sister* or *surprise*). Students selected a prompt from the list(s) provided and then wrote a narrative. Following their writing, students selected the reasons for their choices from a multiple-choice list and answered additional questions. Though no correlation between prompt type and reason for prompt selection was found in this study, future research into the motivation of students' choice of prompt and its alignment with Self-Determination Theory could benefit educators. Given the significantly higher word count and significant student preference for the new story starters, greater research into types of writing prompts is called for because of the implications for future practice.

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Chapter 1

Literature Review

Introduction

Commonly used throughout elementary schools, writing prompts provide students with a structured opportunity to practice writing and develop related skills. The typical narrative writing prompt may be a partially completed sentence, left open-ended for the student to finish, such as "if I had a million dollars, I would…" or "my favorite vacation was…" While these story starters give students a point to start writing from, they provide limited room for students to expand upon them and can often be answered with very limited effort (i.e. one short, partial sentence completing the prompt). The research team wondered whether a different style of prompt that allowed for more creativity would result in longer or more complex responses from students.

An important element to consider when examining any type of curriculum or instruction is student motivation. The lens of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) delineates two types of motivation: intrinsic motivation, which occurs when doing something for the inherent interest or enjoyment in the task; and extrinsic motivation, where motivation is derived from the outcome of completing the task (Ryan & Deci, 2000). SDT does not claim that one type is always better than the other; different forms of each type of motivation exist. The problem with extrinsic motivation arises when students complete tasks "with resentment, resistance, and disinterest" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 55). A person can be extrinsically motivated because they believe in the value of the task's outcome, maintaining their autonomy and avoiding a negative outlook about said task. Keeping students motivated to complete classroom tasks—and particularly repetitive ones used

frequently like writing prompts—challenges many educators. Several studies show a decline of student motivation over their time in school—particularly as they move from elementary to middle school—and call researchers to examine this phenomenon and the impact on student outcomes (e.g., Anderman & Maehr, 1994; Otis, Grouzet, & Pelletier, 2005; Prawat, Grissom, and Parish, 1979).

Despite research demonstrating the benefits of providing students meaningful, autonomy-enhancing choices in the classroom (e.g., Assor, Kaplan, & Roth, 2002; Katz & Assor, 2006), choice is often used minimally (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Flowerday & Schraw, 2000). Some teachers fear the loss of their control or offer choice disproportionately to high-achieving students (Flowerday & Schraw, 2000).

Tasked with creating a more engaging story starter and examining student motivation when completing writing prompts, the research team developed a new form of story starter. The resulting method first provides students with lists of words or phrases—either a person (like "teacher" or "doctor"), an object (like "treasure chest" or "pizza"), a place (like "library" or "waiting room"), or an event (like "surprise" or "secret meeting"). Students then connect the two with a narrative story.

In this study, each student was assigned one type of story starter, either an open-ended sentence ("traditional") or two phrases to connect ("new"). Every student received a choice between several prompts of that type and answered a question at the end of the study asking why they selected the prompt they did. The justifications provided are the subject of this study.

This research aims to explore how the type of story starter influences students' reasoning for selecting prompts when given a choice. What prevailing themes exist between students' responses to questions about their decision making? How do these justifications of choice

connect to students' motivation? Does the reasoning behind their choice impact the length and complexity of their response?

Writing Prompts

Research on the efficacy of writing prompts focuses primarily on writing tasks associated with other content areas—such as history essay starters and science writing prompts—or older grade levels (e.g. Jalilifar, Keyvan, & Don, 2017; Kroll & Reid, 1994; Miller, 1992; Pritchard, 1993; Way, Joiner, & Seaman, 2002). As Bae and Lee (2002) explain, limited research includes children's writing data as studies on children's language development often use records of spoken words instead. Literature relating specifically to story starters for writing narratives in elementary classrooms outside of test preparation or content-specific prompts is even more rare. Few peer-reviewed journal articles exist that show a scientific basis for the selection of certain writing prompts (i.e. Kroll & Reid, 1994). The other body of material for this subject in English Language Arts education are resources such as The New York Times' "Over 1,000 Writing Prompts for Students" that provide suggestions for writing prompts, particularly for study prep and writing in various content areas (Gonchar, 2018).

Some of the research about writing tasks that does exist advocates for student choice of topic. Gradwohl and Schumacher (1989) wrote that a good writing task is one that allows students to include their own ideas and knowledge. Student choice over topic and inclusion of personal interests into the classroom has been a part of education in America since the mid-1960s (Simmons, 2007).

Self-Determination Theory

The theoretical framework of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) asserts that there are not only different intensities of motivation, but different types or orientations of motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). SDT champions two main forms: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Inherent enjoyment of the task spurs the former while the outcome associated with completing the task dictates the latter (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Despite some previous claims in literature that extrinsic motivation is inferior, SDT claims that neither of these two types is inherently better than the other, but some mindsets associated with extrinsic motivation could cause problems for students (Ryan & Deci, 2000)

As Ryan and Deci (2000) explain, extrinsically motivated people often feel externally pressured and face the task with a negative attitude fueled by their disinterest in the task itself or lack of control over the situation; students with this outlook on academic tasks will not see the value in completing schoolwork, only feeling forced to try for a grade or to avoid punishment. They explain that, in other situations, motivation arises from valuing the outcome of a given task. A student who feels learning about a topic will be important for their future career or a person who is remodeling their house because they are excited to use their new kitchen are not worse off than someone finding their motivation from enjoyment of the process of studying or remodeling; in these situations—and many others—people tend to have extrinsic motivation. Ryan and Deci (2000) point out that this autonomous type of extrinsic motivation, which includes "personal endorsement and a feeling of choice," (p. 60) differs from nonautonomous extrinsic motivation, such as a student completing homework only because they don't want a bad grade.

Under the framework of SDT, the purpose of education is enhancing students' autonomy and relatedness as well as improving their competence (Ryan & Niemiec, 2009). External

pressure or punitive measures from teachers can detract from this goal by destroying students' interest in or enjoyment of learning (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). Research shows the connectedness of both intrinsic and autonomous extrinsic motivation to a variety of positive student outcomes such as engagement in the classroom (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009) and "higher leisure-time reading frequency, more reading engagement, and better reading comprehension" (De Naeghel, et al., 2012, p. 1019). Teachers can develop students' intrinsic motivation and competence by supporting autonomy and avoiding unnecessary control of student behavior (Deci et al., 1981; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009; Ryan & Grolnick, 1986). This opportunity to develop student autonomy can be provided in the form of instructional choices (Agbuga, Xiang, McBride, & Su, 2016). The pressure of evaluations and grades has been found to be detrimental to intrinsic motivation and academic performance (e.g., Grolnick & Ryan, 1987; Kage & Namiki, 1990).

Choice

Providing students with opportunities to make choices as they learn enhances autonomy, which in turn promotes intrinsic motivation and engagement, as stated in Self-Determination Theory (e.g., Deci & Ryan, 1985; Evans & Boucher, 2015; Katz & Assor, 2006). Assor, Kaplan, and Roth's 2002 study on autonomy-enhancing versus autonomy-suppressive behaviors by teachers highlighted the importance of relevance in the curriculum and choices that allow students to explore their interests and pursue their goals. Katz and Assor's 2007 research on choice and its relation to motivation warns educators to carefully consider whether or not the choices they provide are motivating or de-motivating, stressing the importance of relevance to students' lives, supporting autonomy, and enhancing competency in accordance with SDT, based

on a review of previous studies on the subject. They found that choices across a wide variety of tasks were competence-enhancing if they pose an "optimal challenge" at a level that students have the capability to achieve without being too easy (Katz & Assor, 2007, p. 435). Other research additionally supports that an intermediate level of difficulty is the most motivating (e.g., Deci & Ryan, 1985; Evans & Boucher, 2015). Students also should be provided with a manageable amount of choice (Evans & Boucher, 2015). An excessive number of options can be overwhelming and result in choice overload, which can lessen motivation both to make a choice and to commit to a choice (Sethi-Iyengar, Huberman, & Jiang, 2004). When looking specifically at choice in writing, research is limited, but Gradwohl and Schumacher found that students had significantly more knowledge on topics that they chose rather than those assigned to them by teachers (1989).

Audience-Centered Writing

Audience is a crucial component of writing that is sometimes overlooked when writing tasks focus on form and conventions and students fret over grades (Wong & Moorhouse, 2018). Every piece of writing is made for an audience, even if the author does not actively consider it. In the pilot study with college students using a similar procedure, several participants mentioned that they selected their prompts based on whether they believed it would make a good story for their audience, so "I thought (it/they) would make a good story for readers" was included as an option for students to select in this study. In a school setting, the students' audience is often their teacher and their goal in writing the piece is to get a good grade; writing can be described as a performance and by teaching students to consider their audience and purpose, educators can help

them understand how to make decisions predicated upon those factors (Ryan, 2014). Studies support positive outcomes of writing tasks for students with audiences other than a teacher (e.g. Chen, 2013; Gunel, Hand, & McDermott, 2009). Considering audience can be powerful for English Language Learners; Wong and Moorhouse argue that when ELL students keep their intended audience in mind, they are pushed to find creative methods to engage and persuade (2018).

Writing About Personal Experiences

Creating writing tasks where students draw from personal experience pervade classrooms, perhaps because teachers believe it is easier and more engaging to have students access prior knowledge and make connections between the material and their personal lives. Having students write autobiographical or semi-autobiographical pieces helps students develop their authenticity and share aspects of their life in a therapeutic or positive way (McCarthey, 1994). This form of writing can be engaging, and some students use personal experience to support critical reflection about themselves and their development (Kahu & Gerrard, 2018). However, some negative aspects exist when teachers require students to complete writing tasks that draw from their personal experiences. Students may not feel comfortable sharing unless they have a sense of trust in the way their teacher will respond (McCarthey, 1994; Beach & Beauchemin, 2020). Students' voices may also be limited by autobiographical writing, but only if other forms or genres are discouraged (McCarthey, 1994).

Chapter 2
Methods

This study employed statistical analysis of numerical data sets using a within-subjects design as well as qualitative responses from participants from a final discussion of their opinions on the writing tasks they completed.

Participants

Participants were twenty-one fourth-grade students (female: 38.10%, n=8; male: 47.62%, n=10; other: 14.29%, n=3) attending two classes at a rural, Central Pennsylvania elementary school. The school does not use a standard writing curriculum across classes. Nineteen students completed both sessions while three completed one session.

Measures

Self-Efficacy scale. Participants responded to nine statements about their writing by circling a number on a one through five-point Likert scale, with one being "I don't agree at all" and five being "I totally agree." These statements asked students to consider their planning and execution of writing tasks as well as their spelling skill and ability to focus while writing.

Word Count. Initially, students' responses to the prompts were going to be scored using Lu's (2010) web-based syntactic complexity analyzer in several domains but given the lack of syntactic and grammatical complexity in the responses, researchers only assessed word count. While word count analyzes quantity over quality, it was selected because of the misspellings and lack of punctuation in most responses.

Question about choice. After completing the writing task, students were asked three questions during both sessions. Participants answered the first two— "how much did you like writing your story?" and "how good do you think your story is?"—using a five-point scale ranging from "not at all" to "very."

The third question asked each student to share what they were thinking about when they selected the prompt or the words that they used. The researchers decided to study the choice decision making process related to these writing prompts because they saw a pattern of responses to the open-ended question "why did you choose the writing prompt you did" in a pilot study run with college students. There were limited responses and results from the previous study were not significant, but common themes from answers were used to create the choices for the current study. They selected as many of the following multiple-choice options as they thought fit:

1. I could be creative.
2. I have personal experience about (it/them).
3. I chose randomly.
4. (It/they) seemed easy.
5. I wanted to challenge myself.
6. I thought (it/they) would make a good story for readers.
7. (It/they) seemed fun.

The order of options was randomized, and pronouns were altered for each condition (i.e. "it" for the traditional condition and "they" for the new condition to fit how many starters the participants chose). They were instructed to select any options that they agreed with.

Procedure

Session 1. In their first session, students answered a survey with eight Likert-scale questions inquiring about their writing self-efficacy to control for students' individual confidence in writing. For each question, they circled a number from one through five with one meaning "I don't agree at all" and 5 meaning "I totally agree."

To avoid the confounding variables of typing ability or computer knowledge, researchers created paper documents for students to fill out. Students received a random assignment of either the traditional style of story starter (a sentence fragment) or the new style (two separate words to center the narrative around). After they completed the self-efficacy scale questions, they received a document explaining the writing task and providing them with options of story starters to select from. Given the focus on the question about why students made their choices and the limited sample size, all students were able to choose the story starter they completed from the list given to them. Those in the "traditional" condition selected from five story starters:

1. I wish people would stop…
2. One hundred years in the future, I think there will be…
3. When I get home from school, I like to…
4. If I had a million dollars, I would…
5. My favorite game is…

Participants in the "new" condition received two lists of words. The first list included characters (teacher, pirate, scientist, sister, and monster), while the second was situations or nouns (music, phone call, night, surprise, and camping trip). Students were asked to choose one option from each list to base the plot of their narrative on.

Students had ten minutes to complete their writing. Afterwards, they answered three questions about the end product and their thought process as they made their choice.

Session 2. The second session was completed one to two days after the first session. Participants completed the writing task for the opposite condition than the one they received in the first session, so by the end of both sessions, each student had completed one of each type of story starter. After finishing their stories and answering the questions about their writing, students discussed their thoughts on the two types of prompts with the researcher, voting on which they liked best and explaining why.

Chapter 3

Results

Choice Decision Making Process

McNemar test. A McNemar test comparing the answers to the question about students' thought process while selecting their prompt(s) found no significant difference in frequency of any answer between the two conditions. For all, n = 19, since only nineteen of the participating students completed narratives for both types of writing prompt.

Table 1. *McNemar Test Results.*

Response	Exact significance
I could be creative	.250
I have personal experience about (it/them).	.125
I chose randomly.	1.00
(It/they) seemed easy.	.375
I wanted to challenge myself.	1.00
I thought (it/they) would make a good story for readers.	.344
(It/they) seemed fun.	.625

Other results. Across all responses (for both types of prompt and including students who did not complete both sessions), certain answers to the multiple-choice question were picked

more frequently. The percentage of students who selected each option varied depending on condition, though the difference was not significant.

Table 2. *Frequency of Answers to Question on Decision-Making Process.*

Response	Frequency for all responses (n=41)	Frequency for traditional condition (n=19)	Frequency for new condition (n=22)
I could be creative	34 (82.93%)	14 (73.68%)	20 (90.91%)
I have personal experience about (it/them).	12 (29.27%)	4 (21.05%)	8 (36.36%)
I chose randomly.	14 (34.15%)	7 (36.84%)	7 (31.82%)
(It/they) seemed easy.	23 (56.10%)	12 (63.16%)	11 (50.00%)
I wanted to challenge myself.	18 (43.90%)	8 (42.10%)	10 (45.45%)
I thought (it/they) would make a good story for readers.	26 (63.41%)	10 (52.63%)	16 (72.73%)
(It/they) seemed fun.	32 (78.05%)	16 (84.21%)	16 (72.73%)

Self-Efficacy

T-test with independent variable of gender. An independent sample t-test for self-efficacy comparing gender found no significant difference. Of the twenty-one students that completed the self-efficacy survey, eight designated their gender as girl, ten as boy, two as other,

and one as both girl and other. Only those who circled either girl or boy were included in the dataset given the limited sample of those selecting other.

Table 3. *T-test of Self-efficacy and Gender*

Question Category	p-value	Mean (Female)	Standard Deviation (Female)	Mean (Male)	Standard Deviation (Male)
Idea Generation	.715	10.714	2.430	11.100	1.853
Writing Conventions	.169	9.125	.641	8.500	1.080
Self-regulation	.763	23.143	2.795	23.600	3.169

Word Count

Using the within-subjects design, a dependent t-test determined whether a difference existed between word count by condition. For this analysis, the work of two students who completed both sessions were excluded because extenuating circumstances impacted the amount of time that they spent writing during one of the tasks and the word count for one of their prompts was much longer because they were able to spend more time on it. The results found were significant ($p = .011$), indicating that students wrote more words when given the new prompts.

Table 4. *Paired Sample Statistics.*

	Mean	N	Standard Deviation
Traditional prompt	45.8824	17	23.85865
New prompt	59.5294	17	24.73135

Post-Task Discussion and Student Feedback

After the second session, a discussion was led on what students thought of the two different types of writing prompts they received. They voted on which they preferred by raising their hands for their favorite. A chi-square test of equal frequencies found that significantly more students ($p<.01$) preferred the new condition ($n = 19$, 76%) than the old one ($n=6$, 24%). One common theme in the discussion that followed centered around the new condition allowing more ideas to write about in their narratives: "[The new condition] gave me more options for what my story could be about," "I had more ideas about it—the other one was hard to write about," and "I got to say two things about the story, not just one." They seemed to feel more freedom with the ability to mix and match two prompts than the narrower focus of the traditional sentence starters. The students who preferred the traditional prompts typically liked an aspect of the particular starter they chose rather than something that was shared throughout all the options (i.e. enjoyed thinking about how they could spend a million dollars or liked writing persuasively for "I wish people would stop").

During the writing task, students asked questions to clarify instructions and gave feedback on what they enjoyed or disliked as it happened. Three students who were given the

traditional condition asked if they could write about something other than the prompts while none of those given the new condition did. In one class, several students (in both conditions) asked to have their writing samples back to continue working on them and in the second session, they eagerly shared out with the class after the task.

Chapter 4

Discussion

Discussion of Results

No significant difference was found between student responses to the question about decision making thought process and the condition they were placed into. There was no significance between the condition and gender or between the word count and self-efficacy measures. While certain reasons were selected more or less frequently than others across both conditions, no difference emerged when comparing the two conditions to each other.

The significant difference in word count between the new and traditional types of prompts indicated that students tended to write more when given the new story starters. Based on the post-task discussion, a thought shared by many students was that the new prompts were more open-ended and allowed more freedom and possibilities for the student to write about, which may have caused an increase in word count. This result is consistent with those from the college student pilot study, which also found a main effect for number of sentences and number of clauses—among other results. Syntactic structures were not analyzed in this study due to a frequent lack of punctuation and grammatical conventions.

Significantly more students preferred the new condition, citing reasons like having more ideas to write about and enjoying the open-endedness of the questions. The participants who voted for the traditional condition tended to prefer one part of a particular prompt rather than the nature of the condition. The new condition may promote students' motivation to write more effectively, since according to Self-Determination Theory, motivation increases with supported autonomy, relatedness to the students, and enhanced competence (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In the

discussion following the tasks, students expressed how they felt the new condition allowed for more choice, increasing their autonomy, which could have accounted for the difference between conditions.

Limitations

While my personal relationship with the students made them more comfortable with the task, it also led to them taking their writing less seriously than they might have if they did not know me. Since all of the students completed the task at the same time, despite me asking them to remain quiet and focus on their own work, they sometimes distracted each other by sharing what they were working on. In one session, I worked alongside a student with limited writing skills, transcribing the words he dictated to me. These data were not used for the study; I wanted him to have a way to participate in the activity with the rest of this class. Because he was talking out loud to me, this may also have interfered with student focus.

Students were given a time limit of ten minutes, which was too long for some and too short for others. I learned a lot over the course of collecting these data about how clear my instructions need to be for young students. Several participants started the first session by drawing pictures or making large block-letter titles before I reminded them that they needed to do the writing first. A few students added their own numbers to the Likert scale instead of selecting one and others filled out the questions relating to their finished product before writing anything. The multiple-choice format of the question on decision-making may have impacted the results. I decided on multiple choice initially so that students who did not have much experience reflecting on why they make choices would have some ideas to think about. However, by giving

the options, students may have selected answers that wouldn't have come to mind if the question was left open-ended—a few students selected every response when I doubt they actually made their decisions based on all of those reasons.

Given the age of the participants, I was unable to examine syntactic complexity as I had hoped to given the results found in the college student pilot study. The responses received from the fourth graders frequently lacked proper grammar and punctuation. If future research examined older students' writing, this may be interesting to examine.

Implications for Future Research

If repeated, this study may benefit from administration one-on-one or in smaller groups if the goal is to see students at their most focused. If the research's goal is to see how students perform during a typical class writing task, however, a similar set-up to this study administration would be best. Depending on the purpose of the research, changing the time limit for students may also be beneficial; some participants found ten minutes limiting and others had plenty of extra time at the end. More specific rules at the onset of the study about when they are allowed to draw and when they should answer the multiple-choice questions would help students focus on their writing first and use the questions at the end as a form of reflection. The discussion at the end of the two sessions was beneficial for determining student preference and their thoughts about the two prompt types, but doing it in a whole group—as I did—may have limited the number of students who contributed answers or the length of their responses. Including qualitative interviews in the design would be beneficial. Greater research into students'

motivation and decision-making when given a choice could serve educators well when they create and adapt curricula.

Future research could also examine whether the correlation between the new prompts and both higher word count and preference could translate to writing in different genres or across different subjects. The new prompts were designed with specifically narratives in mind, but applying them to other subject areas such as science or history could be beneficial to examine given how often students—particularly in older grades—are given prompts in areas other than Language Arts.

Implications for Practice

Students preferred to write narratives for prompts that allowed them more choice and greater autonomy over what they create, which is consistent with Self-Determination Theory (Assor, Kaplan, & Roth, 2002; Ryan & Niemiec, 2009). The results of this study support the idea that providing students with choice and autonomy motivates them, since students wrote significantly more in the new condition and preferred the more open-ended prompt style. Educators should find opportunities for students to write that are fun and engaging to help them hone their skills in a way they are motivated to complete.

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ACADEMIC VITA

EDUCATION

Penn State University – *Schreyer Honors College* 2022

Major: Elementary Education (PreK-4)
Honors in Educational Theory
Elementary Education Student Marshal

Minors: Theatre, Special Education, Deafness and Hearing Studies, Early Development and Education, Psychology, and Child Development

EXPERIENCE AND EMPLOYMENT

Fourth Grade Student Teacher – *Woodward Elementary School* 2021 – Present
- Created and executed developmentally appropriate, differentiated lesson plans in every subject, prepared necessary materials and considered the individual strengths and needs of each student.
- Supported mentor teacher's lessons by assisting students one-on-one or in small groups.
- Maintained a positive, encouraging atmosphere and gained students trust by developing relationships.

Event Support Staff – *Penn State's Schwab Auditorium* 2020 - Present
- Hung and wired fixtures, operated and programmed light board, assisted performers with microphones, ran sound board, and set up and tore down equipment including trusses, musical equipment, and theatrical sets.
- Welcomed guests, collected tickets, answered questions, and created a positive atmosphere at front of house.

Music and Dance Teacher and Musical Co-Director – *Arrowhead Day Camp* Summer 2021
- Led 32 music and dance classes and multiple club periods each week with campers aged 4 to 12.
- Choreographed and taught 22 group dances to be performed at a whole-camp showcase.
- Co-directed an hour long musical with over 80 campers. Taught choreography and blocking for several numbers; helped manage and engage the large cast; and assisted students with their microphones, running the sound during the show.

Senior Counselor and Musical Co-Director – *Sesame Rockwood Day Camps* Summer 2019
- Developed lesson plans to tailor content for 21 classes a week, ranging in age from 3 to 7 years.
- Co-directed an hour long musical for two differently aged casts. Engaged campers to maintain focus during rehearsals; taught original choreography and blocking; obtained and customized costumes and props; set up production equipment; and acted as a stage manager during shows.

LEADERSHIP ROLES

Penn State's No Refund Theatre 2019 - Present

Technical Director – *Exec Council* (2020 – Present)
- Advised and oversaw work of two tech chairs, managed club budget for technical equipment, and acted as liaison to club and university alongside previous responsibilities of tech chair.

Tech Chair – *Exec Council* (2019 – 2020)
- Collaborated with student directors about all technical aspects of three shows each semester.
- Led workshops on safely using equipment, coordinated tech crews, maintained technical equipment, and advised on sound, lighting, and set design for each show.

Assistant Director (2019 – Present)
- Selected as Assistant Director for six shows. Led rehearsals, created schedules, advised performers, and designed lighting, sound, and set. Filmed and edited three pre-recorded productions.

Assistant Technical Director – *Penn State Thespians Society* Fall 2021
- Supervised and supported three tech departments, assisted in set design, created technical drawings for set pieces, helped lead and organize set build, arranged transportation for set, and managed load-in and strike.

Council Member – *Penn State's College of Education Student Council* 2019 – 2021