

CFP: WTTL Standing Group Panel at CCCC 2026 (Cleveland, OH)

Word by Word: Charting a Decade of Lifespan Writing Research

Lifespan writing research (LWR), which includes life-long, life-wide, and cross-generational perspectives on writing lives, is approaching its tenth year since its inception as the “impossible dream” of Charles Bazerman, who proposed this ambitious idea at the 2016 Dartmouth Summer Institute and Conference. Since then, multiple conferences, a collaboration, the CCCC Writing through the Lifespan (WTTL) standing group, several edited collections (Dippre & Phillips, 2020; Dippre & Phillips 2024), a book series with WAC Clearinghouse, special issues of writing studies journals, works-in-progress series, and other disciplinary outlets have contributed to this interdisciplinary effort, generating a rich body of research and scholarship on the why’s, how’s, and outcomes of lifespan writing research.

During the 2025 WTTL Standing Group Business Meeting, participants proposed that, with such a plethora of LWR work in print and on-going, now is the time to take stock of what lifespan writing researchers know. Inspired by prior efforts to identify keywords in the discipline (e.g., Heilker & Vandenberg, 1996; Heilker & Vandenberg, 2015; Yu & Buehl, 2023), the WTTL Standing Group invites speakers to a sponsored roundtable to identify and “explore the multiple layers of meaning inhabiting the words” (Heilker & Vandenberg, 1996, p. 1) that capture the breadth and depth of lifespan writing research—as it stands at the end of its first decade, and as it might evolve in the years ahead.

We welcome proposals for keywords that are illustrative of the possibilities of and for lifespan writing research. Keywords could include key concepts that regularly manifest across lifespan-oriented studies of writing, such as *agency*, *identity*, and *memory*. They could also be operative terms, like *line of inquiry* (Dippre & Phillips, 2020) or *improvisation* (Dippre & Phillips, 2024), that guide lifespan writing researchers in their work. Or they could name a practice or phenomenon, such as *generational literacies* or *rhetorical flexibility*, that are especially fruitful subjects of lifespan writing inquiry.

Submission Details

Potential presenters are encouraged to submit 100-150 word abstracts that (a) name a keyword in lifespan writing research, and (b) explain what it illustrates about lifespan writing research. Please send proposals, along with your name, preferred email, and institutional affiliation, to Erin Workman (workman.erin@gmail.com) by 11:59pm central time on **Wednesday, May 28th**.

We especially encourage proposals from early career scholars, graduate students, multiply marginalized or underrepresented (MMU) scholars, and first-time presenters.

Accepted submissions will be included in the standing group-sponsored panel proposal submitted by WTTL. Per [Cs policy](#), taking part in a Standing Group-sponsored panel does not count as a speaking role.