

The Art of Pre-Production: Turning Data into a Story

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Introduction

As an intern at Charlotte Teachers Institute (CTI), I was tasked with helping to craft the vision for a creative video project. CTI was given a grant to create a promotional video with Spiracle Media, a local Charlotte production company. It was my job to come up with core themes to discuss, and key elements to showcase in this project. As an outsider to the organization with no previous knowledge, I decided to find out what made CTI special the best way I could: interacting with the program's teacher fellows through surveys and discussions.

Methods

My preliminary inquiry into CTI came from the following resources:

- CTI Website
- Meetings with Executive Director
- Core items from the 2019 CTI Fellows Survey

From this point, I prepared a powerpoint presentation for the Teacher Steering Committee to serve as a springboard for discussion. This created the following new sources of data:

- Meeting with Teacher Steering Committee
- Zoom Chat Logs
- Meeting Notes

Using these six sources, I analyzed the data and prepared several documents, including an executive summary of my research (See Figure 2), to present to Spiracle Media upon our first pre-production meetings:

- Pre-production meeting #1: CTI ED, myself
- Pre-production meeting #2: CTI ED, myself, and two university professors/seminar leaders

Results and Data

Beginning my research, I asked an important question: Why did teachers participate in CTI? The answer to this question would show me what about the program was attractive to teachers, and therefore attractive to the audience for our video. This information was the “beginning” to the CTI story for this project. 88 respondents answered a series of questions about why they participated in CTI in the 2019 Fellows Survey. I presented three items to the CTI Teacher Steering Committee (Figure 1).

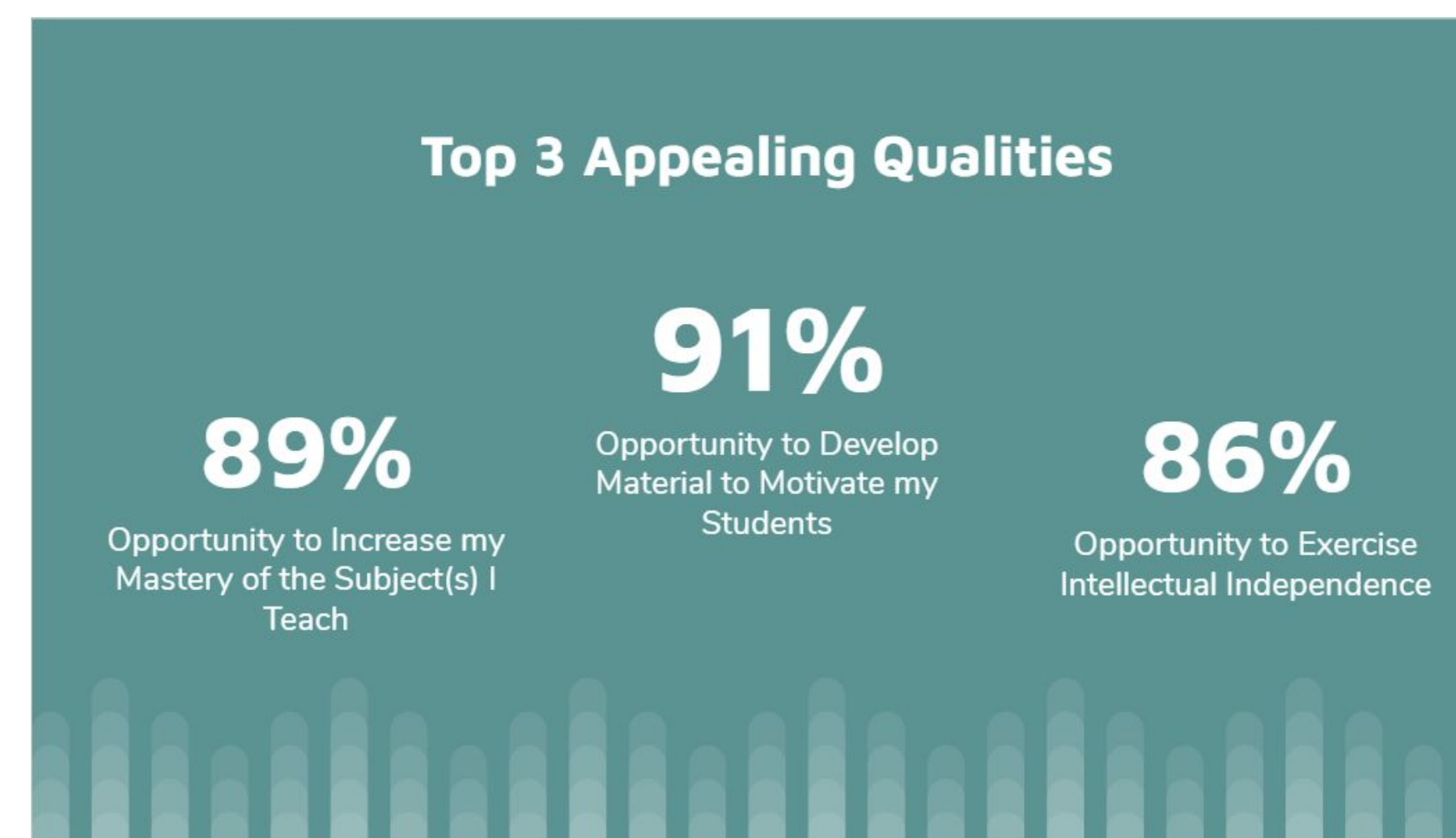


Figure 1: Top 3 reasons teachers are attracted to CTI seminars

Now that I knew why teachers joined CTI, I asked another important question: What made teachers stay in CTI? The answer to this question would bring “magic” to the video project, and help the audience emotionally connect with the teachers on the screen. Through testimonials from the CTI Teacher Steering Committee, the following themes emerged and were confirmed by the entire committee:

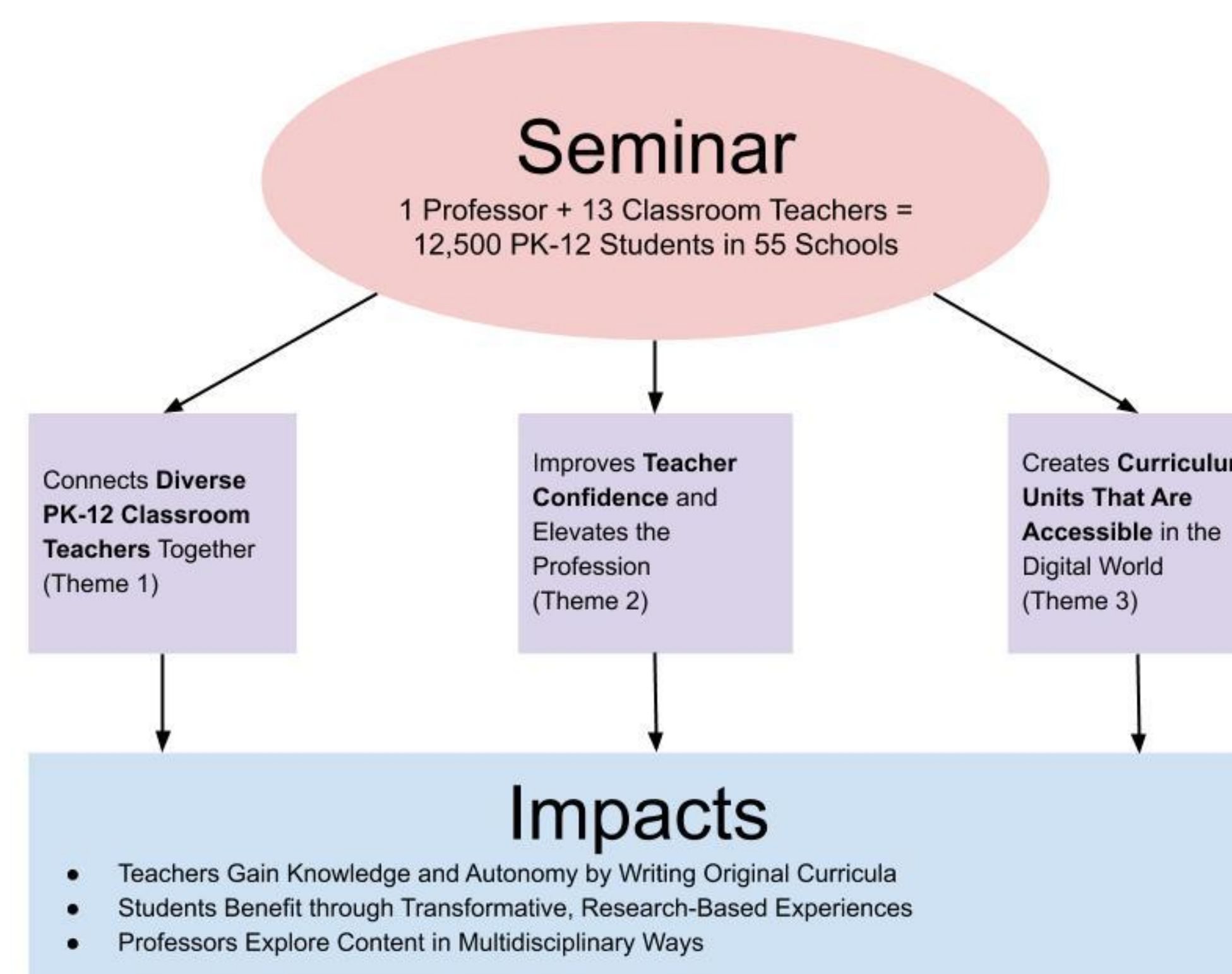


Figure 2: An infographic detailing the main themes and impacts of a CTI seminar

Conclusions

Conclusion #1: Through my research, my preliminary statistics actually matched up with the themes that were drawn. The appealing qualities of increased subject mastery, material that motivates students, and intellectual independence are all reflected in the impacts of Figure 2. This shows that these themes and impacts I developed have validity to them, and the main reasons teachers join CTI directly relates to what they get out of it.

Conclusion #2: Diversity is a big part of what makes CTI a special program. This diversity comes in many forms: school, subject area, grade level, and race. Racial equity is a reoccurring theme within CTI seminars, and it's very indicative of the institute's mission. With a racially diverse set of teachers, and a passion to educate, covering racial equity is a core part of CTI.

Next Steps

The next steps for this work is to incorporate these two conclusions into an easily-digestible product. By incorporating the data and themes of this poster into a format such as a video project, this information can be consumed by more and more people. By handing off this work to Spiracle Media, they will be able to exactly this, and at a high level. With teachers telling their stories on camera, combined with this research, the video should be able to have an emotional element to it, further pushing this message.

Acknowledgements

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