The teaching of writing in elementary school settings has been well documented through research. However, when it comes to secondary schools settings, the literature reveals a gap in treatment of writing instruction in an urban school environment. This study adds to the literature guided by three major research questions: (1) What beliefs do secondary teachers across the curriculum hold about teaching writing in an urban high school? (2) What are secondary teachers’ experiences with writing instruction in an urban high school? (3) What tensions emerge for secondary teachers with writing instruction in an urban high school that is implementing Common Core State Standards?

The purpose of this interpretative qualitative study was to understand six secondary teachers’ writing beliefs, experiences, and tensions in implementing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) with respect to writing instruction across the curriculum through a social constructivist framework. Purposeful sampling and Responsive Interview Method procedures were utilized in this study. Teachers participated in interview sessions along with follow-up questions during a school semester. Data transcribed and coded using NVivo software. Themes and patterns were
identified as they emerged through analysis of statements and interpretation of data collected.

The findings of this study suggest that teachers have limited skills and various challenges that prevent effective writing instruction in the classroom. These results prompted the presentation of numerous implications for teachers, administrators, school districts, and teacher educational programs.