

Writing for an Audience

Making it matter

The role of relevance, motivation and emotional involvement in learning

Teaching Objectives: What the learners should be able to do...

- All the scales you need (CEFR levels for writing)
- What teachers should be able to do...
- EPOSTL: Writing/Written Interaction (EPOSTL: p. 23-24)

Starting early: Writing about myself and the world around me

- That's Me
- Me-books
- Free homework

Format matters

- Diaries (Oliver Twist)
- Project booklets (The Middle Ages, Tall Tales)
- Online Databases

The Writer's Workshop

- peer conferencing
 - feedback
 - revising
 - publishing

Creative writing:

- Writing stories: What makes a good story?
 - Creating lively characters and convincing settings (Buttons)
 - Continue the story
 - Storybooks
- Short Stories and Narratives
- Poems: writing poems, using poems as an impulse

Writing for an audience and a purpose

- Developing and using text recipes
- Magazine Projects
- Newspaper articles
 - The Interstellar Times
 - The newspaper clippings editor
 - Article writing workshop
- Travel brochures
- Reports
- Essays
- Letters
- Letters to the editor

Portfolios

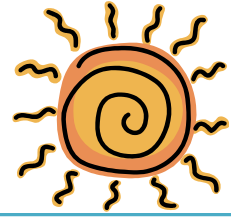
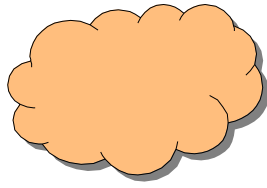
- appreciating the learners' progress and celebrating success

Assessing Writing

- General considerations: the role of mistakes
- Criteria based assessment
- Using assessment scales

EPOSTL: Writing

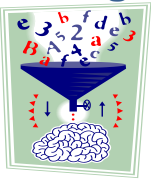
Descriptors: p. 23 – 24: How can we reach these goals? What has worked well? Where do you see need for improvement and fresh ideas?



I could use some new ideas in these areas...

These ideas have worked well...

Making it matter:



Learning is a “global event”, it involves the entire person

What is personally relevant to the learner and what has been richly imagined is more memorable than what has only been understood from words

New knowledge (ideas, concepts, words...) must be constructed by the learner and integrated into his/her existing networks.

Multisensory, multidimensional input will help learning:

ISM: Images + Somatic response + Meaning

How can we create **writing tasks that matter?**

Writing: Overview of Text Types

Text type	Purpose	Target reader	Register	Structure
opinion essay	express one's opinion convincingly	general adult / academic	formal	title introduction (inc. thesis statement) 2-3 paragraphs conclusion
article	describe inform advise entertain recommend compare give opinion etc.	according to publication article is written for	formal / neutral / informal	title introduction (inc. controlling idea) 2-3 paragraphs conclusion
recommendation report	evaluate inform recommend describe etc.	person who assigned it (usually smb in authority)	formal	title/subject introduction (inc. purpose of report) 2- 3 sections (with headings) recommendations/conclusion
e-mail (letter)	inform complain apologize apply request invite etc.	any	formal / neutral / informal	salutation introduction (inc. purpose of writing) 2-3 paragraphs conclusion letter ending
narrative	reflect human life / relationships	general adult	neutral / informal (appropriate for narrative point of view)	title 3-4 paragraphs (plot, character, setting, point of view, theme?)

Writing task/test development

components of writing task:

- prompt: input text – stimulus/function (context, content, purpose); max.150 words; B1
- rubric: instructions (time, length, text type; B1)

expected response: task developer(s) must also do task

**B. Writing/Written Interaction**

1. I can evaluate and select meaningful activities to encourage learners to develop their creative potential.

2. I can evaluate and select a range of meaningful writing activities to help learners become aware of and use appropriate language for different text types (letters, stories, reports etc).

3. I can evaluate and select texts in a variety of text types to function as good examples for the learners' writing.

4. I can evaluate and select a variety of materials to stimulate writing (authentic materials, visual aids etc.).

5. I can evaluate and select activities which help learners to participate in written exchanges (emails, job applications etc.) and to initiate or respond to texts appropriately.

6. I can help learners to gather and share information for their writing tasks.

7. I can help learners to plan and structure written texts (e.g. by using mind maps, outlines etc.).

8. I can help learners to monitor, reflect on, edit and improve their own writing.

9. I can use peer-assessment and feedback to assist the writing process.

10. I can use a variety of techniques to help learners to develop awareness of the structure, coherence and cohesion of a text and produce texts accordingly.

11. I can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of and use spelling patterns and irregular spelling.

12. I can evaluate and select writing activities to consolidate learning (grammar, vocabulary, spelling etc.).

How I Overhauled My Mechanic's Novel

Dan Greenburg

In Dan Greenburg's take-off on repair service ethics, notice how humor can help carry a discussion of what ultimately can be a serious problem. Also note how Greenburg tells a story which, while relating to all our experiences, includes a great deal of information about the craft and skills of writing.

My mechanic was having trouble with his novel. Knowing I am an author, he asked if I could help. I told him I'd have a look. He told me he needed it back pretty soon. I told him it was my busy season, but I'd see what I could do. A couple days later my mechanic came by to see what I had found. "Well," I said, "I opened her up and took a look, and I'm afraid you've got a little trouble there."

"Serious trouble?" he asked.

"Probably not too serious. The timing's off on four of your six characters, and two of the others ought to be replaced."

"Do you think I might be able to do the work myself?" he asked.

I shrugged. "Don't know how handy you are," I said, "or what tools you got. You own a thesaurus?"

"A what?" he asked.

"That's what I thought," I said. "No, I don't think you ought to do the work yourself. You get it all apart, you might not be able to put the pieces back together again."

"Maybe you could help me," he said. "I'd pay you, of course."

"I'm not cheap—\$37.50 an hour. Plus parts."

"Parts?"

"You know—typing bond, carbon paper, typewriter ribbon, correction fluid, transparent tape—that kind of thing." I scribbled an estimate on an index card. He looked at it and whistled.

"Remember, that doesn't include syntax either," I said.

"Don't you think this is a little high?" he asked. I gave him the names of a couple of my novelist friends and suggested he get competitive bids. He said he didn't really know their work and guessed he'd stick with me.

"When do you think I could pick the manuscript up?" he asked. I told him to check with me in about a week.

One week later to the day, he dropped by. "Is it ready?" he asked.

"Afraid not," I said. "Once I opened her up and really took a hard look, I discovered a few more problems."

"Like what?" he asked.

"Well, for one thing," I said, "there's a lot of cheap imagery in there that ought to come out—similes, metaphors, personifications—they're just clogging up the action. You also have some defective aphorisms. Then there's a hole in your plot about a mile wide that needs to be filled up. Plus which your superstructure is rusty and falling apart."

He seemed really upset. "What about those two characters you said ought to be replaced?"

"I'm afraid it's worse than that," I said. "If it was me, I'd replace all six of them. They're really shot. It's not just their timing that's off, it's their motivations—you left out their motivations when you hooked them up, and now I can't even get them to turn over, much less speak."

"I can't afford to replace all six of them."

"Well, then, maybe they can be rebuilt," I said. "But you definitely need to replace your protagonist."

"My protagonist?" he asked.

"I'm afraid so."

He smiled sheepishly. "Look," he said. "I'm not even sure I know what a protagonist is."

I pointed. "It's this guy right here, see?"

"But why does he need to be replaced?"

"He's weak. He's not going to be able to go the distance. He's going to give out in mid-plot, and when he does he's going to tear the hell out of the whole thing—it'll be a real mess."

My mechanic looked a little queasy. I almost felt sorry for him. "Listen," I said, "I hate to have to be the bearer of such bad news, but I figured you'd want to know the truth. Another novelist might give you a different story, tell you all you needed was a superficial tune-up—wider margins, a re-type job, stuff like that—and just forget about your protagonist. But that's not the way I operate."

He nodded miserably. "How long before my protagonist gives out?" he asked.

I shrugged. "Hard to say. Could be he'd last you all the way up to the climax in the twelfth chapter. Could be he'd give out in the first thirty pages. You just can't tell with a weak protagonist. If it was me, I'd pick up a new one, slap it in there and be done with it."

"How hard would it be to find one?" he asked. "A used one, I mean. I don't know if I can afford a new one."

"Well," I said, "a novelist I know has just scrapped a trilogy he's been working on. You could maybe make a deal with him on his protagonist. In a piece that long, even a minor character could work as a protagonist for you—after a little customizing."

"Could you give this guy a call and see if he'd be willing to sell me a minor character? A protagonist from a work that size has got to be out of my price range."

"I'll call him," I said. "Of course, I don't know how eager he's going to be to cannibalize a whole trilogy to sell you just one minor character."

"Look," he said, a pasty smile on his face, "maybe you could ask for a special favor."

"I could," I said. "Unless..."

"Unless what?"

"Well," I said, "unless you've ever done any work on his car."

in *The Short Prose Reader*, Gilbert H. Muller, Harvey S. Wiener, McGrawhill,