362-307

Teaching Writing

October 8th – 12th

Aren Tyr

61503641027

Conventions

- *Slide number is indicated in the red box in the top right corner in square brackets (from slide 4 onward).*

- *All slide numbers listed refer to **my** slide number in top right only. The relevant task/section is also indicated there.*

- *Lecture slides are in top left corner or left side of slide.*

- *All group slides under review are also appropriately thumb-nailed on left hand side/corner.*

- *All of the computer drawn diagrams I have used are my own construction (not copy and pasted from Google ☺).*

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Task 1:

A Writing Experience

Task 1 – A Writing Experience (1)

1. Write the story as you see it. Use only part of the video.

The glint of steel, a neat exercise in geometry. When the view was good, it was like witnessing the lesson of the vanishing point made real: the two dimensional view outside the glass might as well been nothing but a line drawing. Lines heading to convergence, tending towards the inevitable point.

Yet never touching. How often was that similar to our lives? Travelling towards an end point, the mutual intertwining of perspectives, ideas, bodies and flesh; yet the distance remains. The pathos of life was itself an exercise in artistic vanishing; the withering away of certainty in every indeterminate present moment, an unrepeatable present that disappeared the moment it arrived, yet that allowed us the illusion of a continuum of experience.

The clatter of the rails, another insistent rhythm, a bit like the beating of my heart. I could change my view by simply turning my head: perhaps that was the trick to life as well. Out the side window, I had watched as the rough strewn carcasses of mountains, eroded by the ingress of insistent man with his probing tools, had given way to the endless rolling prairie land. Yet the

Task 1 – A Writing Experience (2)

apparently virginal plains were equally as illusory in their simple unspoilt presentation. They invited the eye to consider the horizon, to reach out and draw the sun down from the sky into a coruscating burning merging with the straight line that acted a rule to my vision, and as a boundary to be reached before being dismissed as I perpetually trundled onward. Clatter, patter, *dud-dud-du-duh* — the sound of man's industry an acoustic pendulum that inlaid progress. But a pendulum signalling the return; an apex reached, the drift backwards. It already delineated its own decline. Was our destiny therefore linear or recurrent? Did we simply advance in lockstep, only to prefigure our own descent back into turmoil? Pervasive perambulations.

I enjoyed pondering these questions as the cigarette slowly burnt down in my fingers. The acrid smoke inside my lungs, the swirling smog from the engine overhead; it wanted to expel, I wanted to imbibe, as if doing so would somehow impel me forward. I was inertia whilst the engine was movement: movement and stillness a conjoined whole.

The train kept care of itself. I liked to convince myself that I was necessary, that I was required.

Task 1 – A Writing Experience (3)

But in reality once it had been set into motion, I was as much a passenger as those in the carriages behind me. I pulled down the small ticket stashed overhead. The annual dance. Sandra had sold it to me. We'd been enmeshed in an ordinary commercial transaction of daily life, but I fancied that beneath our routine patter there had been more. The dance would reveal whether that was purely my own conceit or an insight that would be repaid. A dance of bodies, a dance of minds.

Still, the long lines disappeared to the distance as the trees flew by. Here was the simple moment between time, when the minutes of my day were no more meaningful than the smoke that drifted towards the clouds. And that was fine; it wasn't about telegraphing a purpose yearning towards the sun, and beyond, perhaps to some star whose existence had already extinguished a thousand lifetimes ago, whose ancient bright light belied its thermodynamic demise. It was simply about sitting, sitting, sitting. Just sitting.

Another puff on my cigarette, before tossing it out the window; yet more detritus on the journey of life.

2. i) How did you feel about this writing

I enjoyed it. I interpreted your instruction literally so I took it as a creative writing prompt to write the 'story' based on my particular viewing of the segment of the video. I decided to try to imagine a possible internal monologue that might be occurring through the driver's head who I took to be – or in any case, decided would be – the central character in this story. It has taken a significant amount of practice and diligence to be able to just 'write'. Since I am currently in the process of trying to write a novel, two key lessons have stuck in my mind: *i)* the importance of suppressing the inner critic; and *ii)* Stephen King's description of writing as a form of 'self-hypnosis'.

On *i)*, it is important to allow yourself to write *badly* in order to write. Though we of course all wish to write well, a page of badly written prose is still infinitely superior to a blank page. Something that is badly written can be rewritten and improved (most writing is regarded as really being about the 'rewriting'). If you have nothing, you have nothing on which to work with.

Related to this, *ii)*, I believe Stephen King's interpretation is extremely valuable; in order to write, you have to get yourself into the 'flow', a self-hypnotised state. Trying to decide all the words analytically in advance very rarely works, especially for anything that involves a significant amount of creativity and/or is highly abstract. Sometimes, the most important thing, is just to *start*.

2. ii) How did you start writing?

The viewing left me with a particular sequence of mental images that could plausibly be arranged into many number of possible narratives. I took my point of departure from the opening minute or so of the video, where there was an extended sequence of images showing all of the train tracks and rails crossing the landscape as the train rolled on. I thought this could serve as a frame for my character's thoughts about life. I have always enjoyed the perspective offered by two train tracks disappearing into the distance. It is, of course, now an almost hackneyed image due to overuse (probably a million such images on Instagram!), but nevertheless remains a compelling one.

2. iii) What kept you going?

Each sentence followed on from the next in a flow. It was an act of discovery. All I knew were several 'touchstone' points I wanted to connect, or particular themes I wanted to introduce.

For example, the card that the woman had left for the dance suggested a possible love interest or more 'worldly' theme to counter-balance the dreamlike/existential thoughts of my train driver. My only objective was to remain connected to the 'world' of my story, to keep my imagination metaphorically seated there, and to write in one interrupted flow.

For this reason, I prefer to write using a minimalist writing mode on my word processor that hides absolutely everything – e.g. All the toolbars, icons, taskbar, etc. – and instead just leaves me with words that I can type against a blank background. Stopping and thinking too analytically about it would have ruined the flow.

The draft I have presented is my first draft with minimal rewriting. It would no doubt benefit from multiple edits, but I wanted to retain the authentic, quickly written first draft for which to do this reflection upon.

Task 1 – A Writing Experience (7)

2. iv) What would students need to become engaged in this writing experience?

If we wanted to make this particular video more useful as a starting point for students writing, presenting the students with a range of useful vocabulary related to trains, railroads, and related industrial terms might be useful. Accompanying images, descriptive and historical accounts, and accounts of day-to-day lives from this period of human history might be very useful.

The exact nature and presentation of the writing task would depend on the age, level and composition of the class. The film was silent, so for students that require a more explicit prompt or more constrained activity, they may enjoy a task such as attempting to create an imaginary dialogue between the characters to replace the missing soundtrack.

Attention needs to be paid to the writing environment. Again, depending on circumstances, some students might enjoy writing their stories by hand, using colour, adding drawings, diagrams or other supporting material; others may enjoy prefer to simply write straight into word processing software or specialist writing/text processing software (where available).

Though it is a writing task, there is plentiful opportunity to develop other language skills too.

Task 1 – A Writing Experience (8)

Students could work in groups and discuss their interpretation or ideas concerning the video or whichever writing prompts are used.

The writing does not have to be restricted to purely individual work. Students could attempt to write collaboratively, for example:

• They could write a script/screenplay out and attempt to role-play.
• They could write a narrative 'jigsaw' style, each tackling a particular 'scene' in the story which are all assembled at the end.
• Each student could write an introductory paragraph which another student has to 'complete'.
• They could create a poster or other image that combines text, graphics, and diagrammatical information to communicate the 'story'.
•They could take each other's written texts and use them as the basis to deliberately rewrite or expand upon.
•They could create a mind-map – either by hand or with software – exploring the text.
• They could use collaborative online writing software to write a story together, in groups. (See http://collabrify.org for example).

Task 1 – A Writing Experience (9)

From a pedagogical point of view, if 'The Long Train Home' was our primary resource, it would certainly be beneficial to present the video with multiple viewings, or excised chunks, together with selected focus questions that not only cause the students to pay close attention to the material but also act as a 'focussing' prompt. Often the biggest hurdle with relatively open-ended writing is that the context is *too* open and the choices too manifest. Students that are struggling are more likely to be able to make a start if presented with concrete questions whose potential answers acts as the creative basis of their exposition.

Students should be encouraged to both share and communicate their ideas at some point in the writing process, though this should be carefully structured to encourage some sustained silent writing time where students engage with their own inner writing 'voice'. Writing should be presented as a process of writing followed by multiple rewrites – *drafting*. Very rarely, if ever, does fully polished prose appear as the result of one linear writing process from beginning to end. Writing is not 'simply' a case of 'producing' words in order; it is not simply arithmetic. Instead it requires the individual to try to find appropriate expression to their 'inner voice'. Professional writers usually benefit from having professional editors to subsequently refine and condense their text prior to publication.

Task 1 – A Writing Experience (10)

This is still true even when attempting to write an 'objective' piece of academic writing – the words are still produced on the basis of the relationship where inner experience, perceived knowledge and beliefs, collide with the means of expressing them in the abstract series of 'artefacts' which we call words.

In more pragmatic terms, this really means selecting materials or creating an environment that is likely to be *conducive* to the production of these written works. Especially with lower level writers, they need material that is likely to be of *direct* interest to them, and provide something somewhat concrete as a starting point for writing. Meanwhile the cultivation of a learning environment that is not overly critical is also key.

This does not mean abandoning the pursuit of quality – far from it. Instead, it is simply that in the earlier stages, it is more important to develop their writing *confidence* and give the students the license to freely use English language as means of formulating in written form their own thoughts, ideas and feelings. They should be encouraged to use language as a means of creative play, within the constraints of established grammar norms and within some reasonable horizon of comprehensibility and legibility.

Task 2:

Writing Basics

Writing Happens…

- The production of writing for a *fluent native speaker* is ostensibly 'spontaneous' in that it emerges with little overt deliberation. In other words, the writer is able to summon up the words that they require with a high degree of 'automaticity' as they write. L2 writers often lack this level of automaticity, so their writing process typically presents much greater deliberation.
- Cameron & Larsen-Freeman describe this automaticity as *emergentism* and something that occurs as part of the pattern recognition and production system dictated by both the *context* and *cotext* of the target language.
- Repeated practice and application of these language patterns helps this model of language as a 'complex adaptive system' evolve. In other words, the lexical resource that the learner has access to becomes refined over time and experience with repeated exposure. 'Practice makes perfect'.
- When the system is sufficiently well developed, therefore, language production occurs that has a large component of unconscious production.
- As I write these words, I am only partially conscious of this act of writing, and then mainly as a reflective and refining process; i.e. The sentences emerge, sometimes in an unrefined or crude form, and only then do I deliberately or consciously refine them – at least this is how my *apparent perception* of this process occurs, regardless of the underlying neuroscientific basis.

What is 'Writing'? (1)

1. A recording of thought processes

Writing is the primary instrument though which we can communicate our thoughts. Unlike speech (which tends to be transient, unless it is recorded with apparatus for a podcast or video), writing by its very nature tends to be something that 'records' those thoughts, in one sense ossifying them permanently. This is perhaps one of the main reasons that written personal diaries remain popular even today; by looking back over words you have written, even many years ago, you can in a sense 'restore' or 'recapture' those thoughts.

2. Use of orthographic symbols and conventions

Any particular written language has a set of lines/curves/shapes that all come together to make identifiable symbols which can be recognised as letters/words . The language in question has a given set of conventions – agreed norms – for how these particular symbols, recognised as word units, can be combined or modified, together with ancillary symbols that augment/enhance or clarify meaning (e.g. punctuation, capitalisation, verb tense, etc.). This is known as grammar.

What is 'Writing'? (2)

3. A patterned sequence of conceptual statements

Words exhibit abstraction; the ability to refer to not just specific everyday objects or direct actions, but entire classes of objects, notions and ideas that cannot be easily 'identified'. The concept of *justice* is one such example. Most native English speakers would have at least some understanding of what the word, as a concept, entails, but providing a precise specification or description of it is exceptionally difficult (and some may argue that it is an impossible undertaking).

Yet we nevertheless can communicate and make ourselves more or less understood with one another. This is because the particular concepts issued, in the form of sequences of words forming statements, nevertheless exhibits some adherence to particular communal patterns of language use, and therefore these patterns, contextually and cotextually determined, help to us to determine meaning. Grammar also dictates correct word order. Hence why writing is a *patterned* sequence of such conceptual statements.

4. A collection of cohesive and coherent ideas

In order for a piece of writing to be 'successful', i.e. understandable, generally speaking, the ideas produced must be *cohesive* in the sense that there is some logical order or theme(s) that connects them into a narrative. They must be *coherent* in that the words must combine together to say something that is meaningful. The text below is neither cohesive – the ideas do not combine in any apparent logical way – nor is it coherent, as each sentence of words in itself does not communicate any remotely clear concept or idea.

First, the dog was a cat that must be said.
Second, every tower precludes a fixed laptop.
Next, please make sure to wipe your feet before entering the room, except for parking tickets.
Lastly, how many trees do the slides take up when given fantastic unicorns?

(NB. Some modern poetry/prose deliberately pushes the boundaries of coherency/cohesiveness in an attempt to explore/exploit language possibilities for aesthetic/artistic purposes).

5. An expression of personal inner utterances

Written language provides a mechanism for recording one's own inner monologue; the stream of thought that often takes the form of a sub-vocalised discussion with oneself.

6. A response to a given written stimulus

Written language allows a discourse between many separate individuals that is not constrained by having to be present in the same place at the same time (i.e. a face-to-face dialogue), and in this mass-media digital age, this now allows a discourse to emerge between individuals anywhere on the planet. Each new piece of written text can be a response or reply to the specific thoughts and utterances of another individual. Here, writing becomes a form of potentially extended conversation.

Because writing is a "patterned sequence of conceptual items", words are necessarily associative; words prompt other words, as concepts prompt other concepts in diverse ways (mind maps take advantage of this 'radiant' thinking that language naturally produces).

7. A patterned format for formal language

Since written language conventions gradually ossify into what is considered to be 'correct' grammar, these rules can dictate a particular patterning system for the production of written according to which a given text is taken to be a valid representation of that particular formal language – i.e. it is 'correct' English, or 'correct' Russian etc.

8. Collected thoughts in writing organised around paragraph constructs

A paragraph is often taken to represent one significant unit of thought, or, roughly speaking, the presentation of one particular idea. Writing allows the organisation of thought into 'chunks' that are comprehensible and intellectually digestible. Highly complex collections of thoughts assembled into long-format texts will generally take these paragraphs and assemble them into chapters, sections, and then ultimately parts of a finished book (or series of books).

What is 'Writing'? (6)

9. Written discourse

Discourse is the overall communication 'package', and *written* discourse is therefore the compiled sequence/body of writings between many individuals that come together to form a written agglomeration of many individual texts discussing, describing, presenting, sharing, exploring or analysing any particular idea.

The philosopher Foucault wrote extensively about and developed sophisticated notions of discourse. Suffice to say here that discourse is where writing occurs in its social reality, as writings respond and add to the total pre-existent body, or corpus, of other such writings.

We do not write in a social vacuum; our ideas are influenced from other writings and written materials (and non-written, of course). This is true regardless of whether we're talking about trivial Facebook conversations or a PhD thesis attempting to contribute something new to the existing written corpus.

Reading & Writing

Excessive focus on trying to 'separate' the four key language skills (reading/writing/speaking/listening) can be detrimental to effective teaching since they are strongly interwoven and interlinked.

In the case of reading and writing, the relationship between the two is especially strong: reading is the 'fuel' for writing improvement. That is, it is perhaps the single most critical source of *input* to expand the lexical resource of the learner. The total amount of vocabulary a writer can command and appropriately utilise is closely related to the volume and range of reading they to have proactively undertaken in that language.

Whilst extensive – free reading – will almost certainly expand the writer's generalised lexical resource and should be strongly encouraged as a persistent (and hopefully enjoyable) activity, specific targeted reading of precisely the types and styles of text the writer intends on subsequently producing will be even more effective at enhancing their capability of producing well written texts in that particular form. This is because it also provides an appropriate model of language structure relevant to that task: collocations of association (especially technical language), typical lexis recruited, and countless examples of appropriately structured sentences in the *particular target style*.

Writing Applications

Intensive writing specifically develops writing skills related to fairly traditional forms and approaches to writing, and in particular uses the 'drafting' model prevalent in Western academia. *Free writing* is much more orientated towards creative exploration of language and spontaneous production of ideas.

Text in progress

Final draft

1st rewrite

2nd rewrite

Nth rewrite

Final rewrite

Intensive writing: iterations of rewrites that aims to steadily refine/improve the original text.

NB. This is my own diagram I have created from scratch! ☺
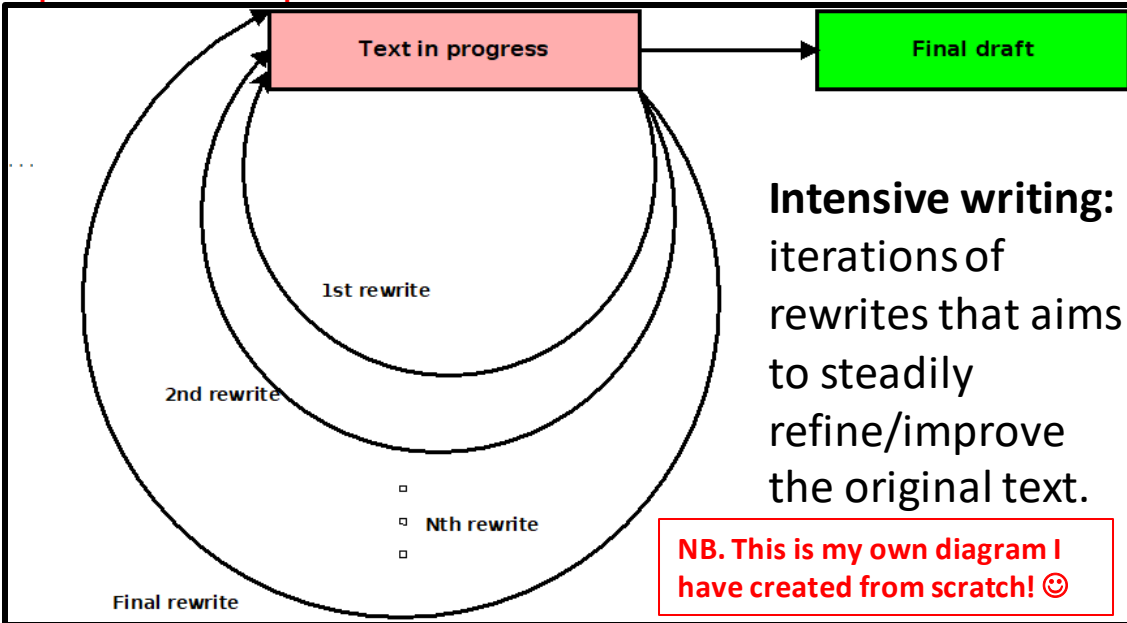
Free writing:

develops fluency & creativity.

*accuracy Regarding splling, grammar, punctuation, capiTaLisaTioN and organiTion is of **lesser** importance -*

Write freely with a flow flow flow & enjoy the process of writing & write write write frEE as a BIRD...

Traditional *Product* writing (1)

To communicate my understanding of the writing process for 'traditional *product* writing' I have drawn **my own diagram** using the Visual Understanding Environment (VUE)*. I will explain the details of my diagram step-by-step over the following slides with enlarged views.

*Free software available from: https://vue.tufts.edu/index.cfm
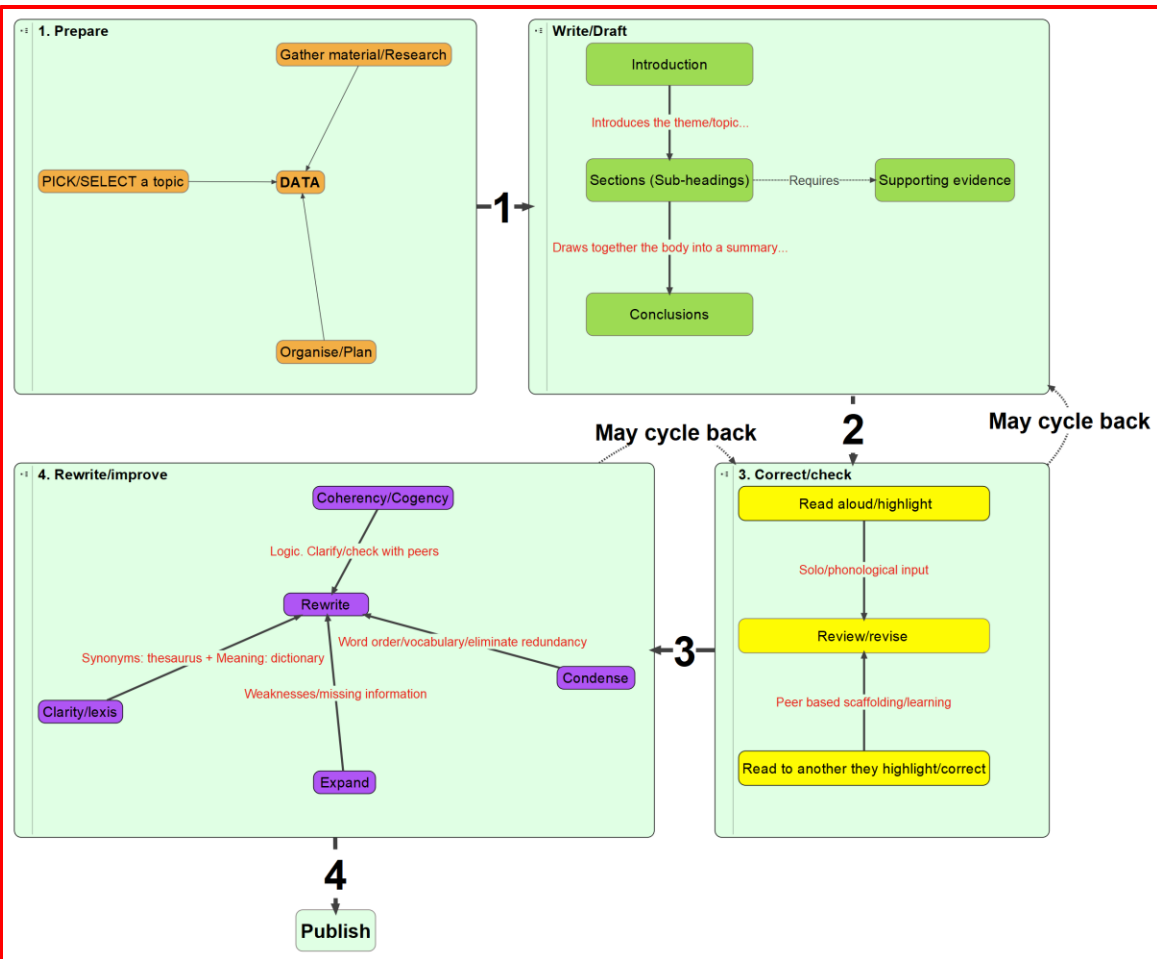
Traditional *Product* writing (2)

Step 1. Preparation.

A topic must be picked or selected, if not already given/provided by the teacher or demands of the task.

Data – meaningful information – must be collected and gathered. During this process, it must also be sieved through, appropriately sorted, and an initial plan for the writing made.

(I use a combination of mind-mapping software and reference manager software for my own writing for these steps/processes).

1. Prepare

Gather material/Research

PICK/SELECT a topic → DATA

Organise/Plan

-1
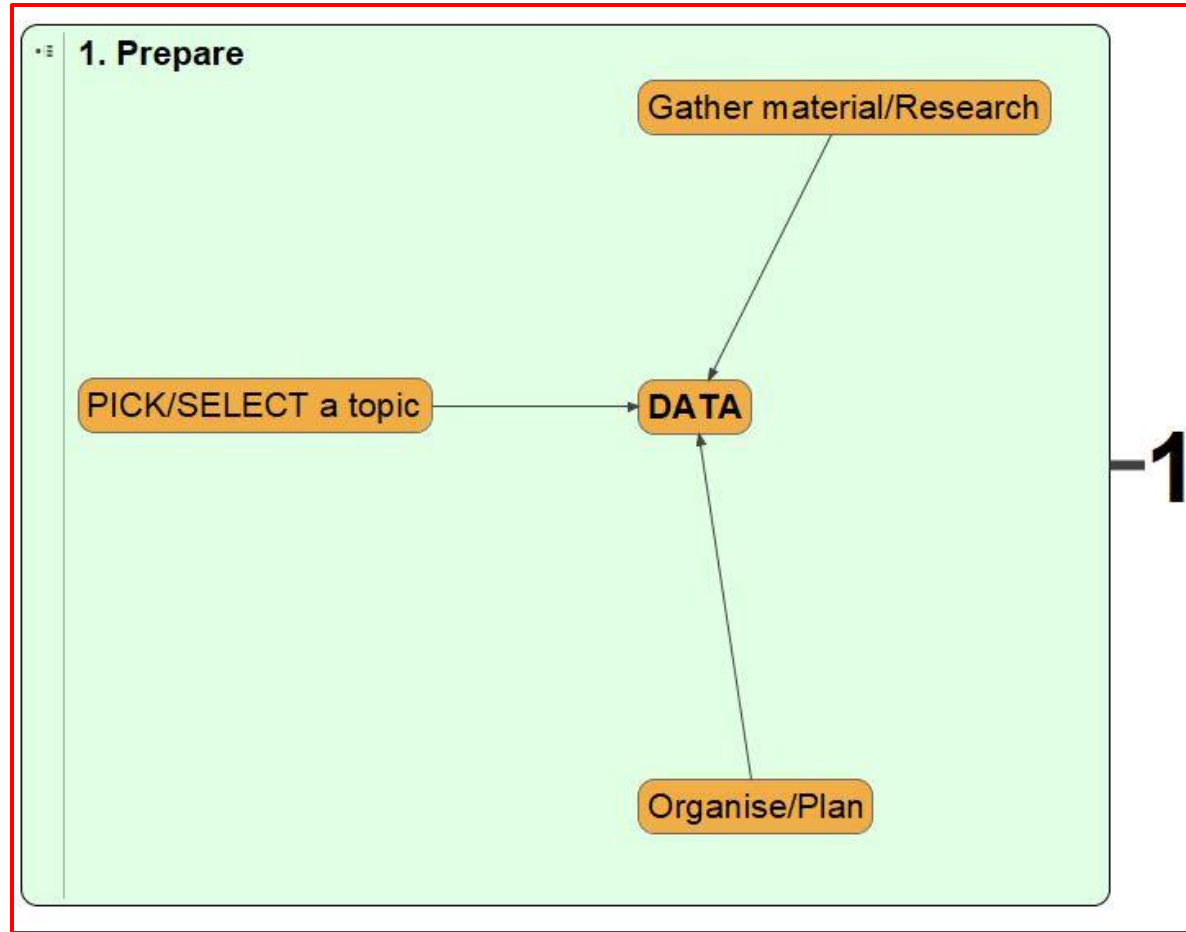
Traditional *Product* writing (3)

Step 2. Initial writing/drafting.

An initial attempt must be made to render all of the diverse data accumulated in Step 1. into some type of linear order/narrative.

Traditionally, this involves an introduction (very briefly describing what will follow), the main sections, appropriately organised with relevant evidence, then a conclusion that summarises the body and unifies the overall thesis argument(s).
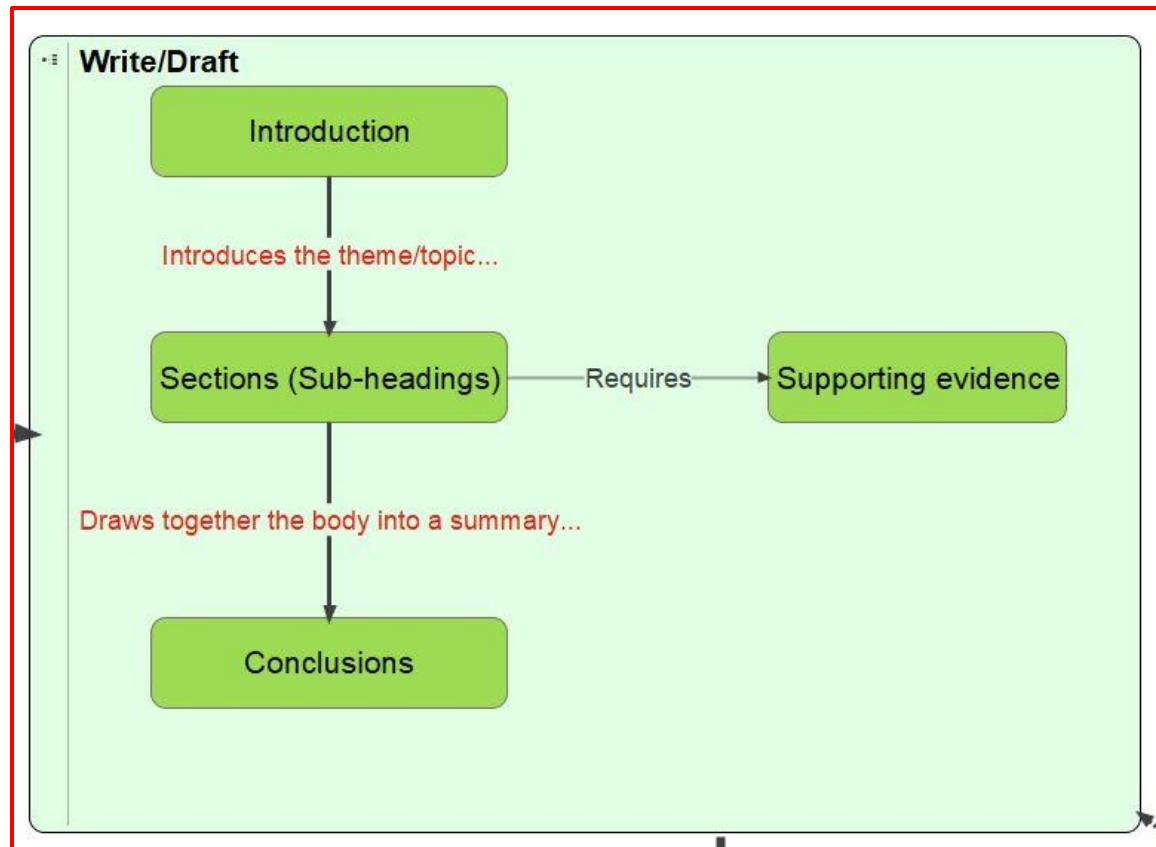
Traditional *Product* writing (4)

Step 3. Correction.

Language learners writing in L2 (or L1 when young/low level) will benefit from reading aloud their own text as this phonological input will often make them aware that a lexical structure 'sounds' wrong (even if they cannot elucidate precisely why).

This process can also involve peers, so that peer-based correction/scaffolding can occur to aid in correcting poorly written/weak text. In some cases they may have to cycle back to **Step 2.** and completely rewrite some text.
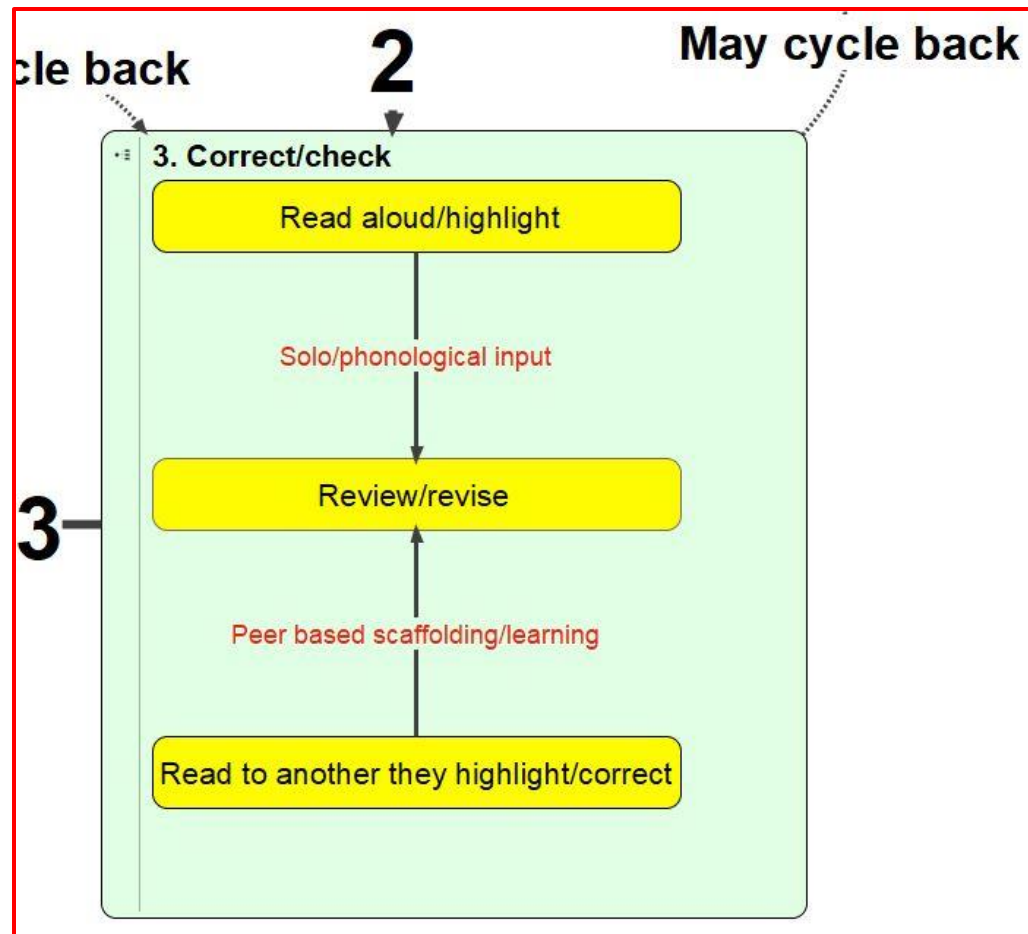
Traditional *Product* writing (5)

Step 4.
Rewriting/improving/finalising

From my own experience I can confirm this is the most difficult step. The initial draft, by necessity, will have various weaknesses. The writer may/will have to cycle back and check their rewrite in **Step 3**.

Rewriting involves addressing these weaknesses. There are several **strategies** that can be employed to do this.
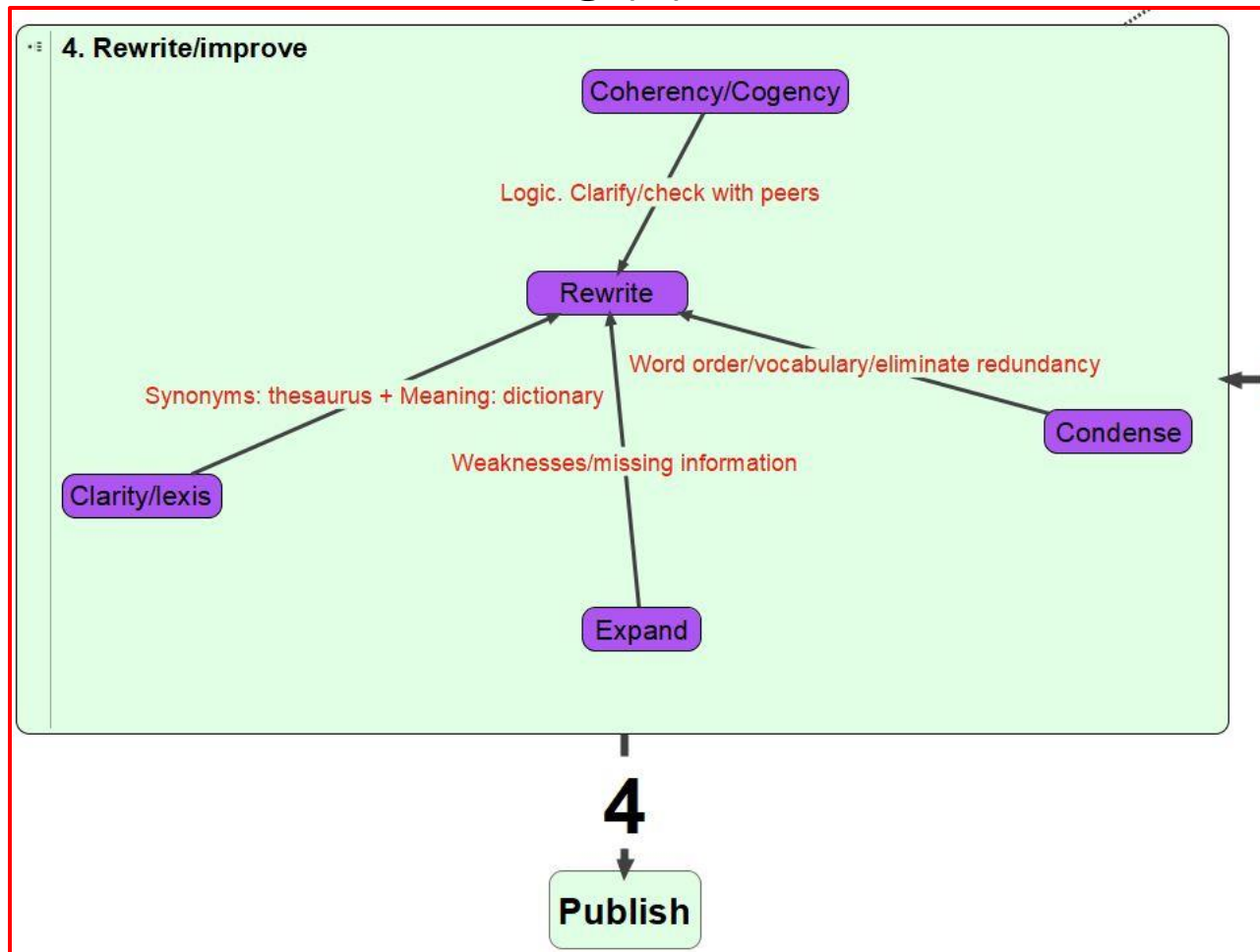
Traditional *Product* writing (6)

Strategy 1:

• **Coherency and cogency.** Check the logic of the writing. Does the statement or argument make sense? Is it clearly explained? For each point, does the deduction follow from the premises? Can a reader follow the line of the argument?

Strategy 2:

• **Condense**. Can it be reduced or rewritten with less words? Is their unnecessary redundancy or repetition, impeding clarity?

Strategy 3:

• **Expand**. The reverse of the above. Is it lacking information? Are the arguments not cogent due to due to omission or incompleteness of data or supporting evidence? Flawed reasoning due to inadequate explanation?

Traditional *Product* writing (6)

Strategy 4:

• **Clarity/lexis.** Improve the grammar, vocabulary, and overall quality/structure of language. More advanced vocabulary allows more complex articulation of concepts whilst simultaneously using less words. Can words be replaced and sentences rewritten to further the readability and aid in its comprehensibility? A dictionary, and even better, a thesaurus can help with this. Dictionary and thesaurus work can help learners develop their L2 as they progress.

Step 5. Publish/make public.

This is extremely easy now. Apart from the immediate vicinity in physical form – e.g. print off and attach to school corridors/areas – network and online forums enable the easy distribution of written work at any level from the local to the truly global. Meanwhile self-publishing means that anyone can turn their writing into a physical book reality, if they so choose.

Writing as a Thinking *process*

A common trait among those who have achieved a high level of competence at any highly skilled task – whether it be writing, or driving a Formula 1 car – is a deep engagement with the *process* itself, rather than a myopic focus with the *product*, that is, the output of the process. In an ideal scenario, an individual learner *enjoys* the process of writing itself, even if they find it difficult. And in a sense, the difficulty component never disappears; as your ability increases, so do you have a concomitant increase in expectation regarding the quality of your writing and the concepts you are able to express with it. I very much agree with the notion that writing is a 'dialogue with yourself', wherein through the act of writing itself you bring to your awareness ideas/concepts/notions that you were not able to explicate prior to the act of writing. Writing is discovery. Thought is indeed required before words can be written, but paradoxically, excessive prior thought can be an impediment, analogous to the feature by which reading speed is linked to comprehension. Reading too slowly impedes comprehension and memory, due to the various constraints of human working memory; I would suggest a similar set of constraints exists for over-deliberative thought processes related to writing. The objective, then, is automaticity; this undoubtedly takes several thousand hours practice over a number of years.

Writing is a means...

It should hopefully be a truism that if you want to be able to teach students how to write well, you must first be able to write well yourself. Since, like any skill, writing requires practice to develop, and at the very least, occasional use to remain honed, one would hope that all competent teachers do practice their writing in some context (and preferably, do some additional writing *other* than their purely academic/work/job related writing). Indeed, since their are many 'types' of writing, a good teacher should ideally practice in varying styles. Different writing modalities have differing requirements. Fortunately, the digital age provides ample opportunity to express these many different styles. Social media for informal or compressed language; academic work for 'serious' writing; blogs and personal writing projects for expressive writing, poetry, and other creative means of employing written language.

Writing as a Process

A focus on *product* based writing is a focus on externalities and essentially the production of a text according to a model archetype (e.g. "a 2000 word academic essay"; "a two page report", etc.). It is therefore possible to devise writing activities whose prime objective is replication of the specific features and characteristics of that model form; a high degree of imitation of the original model text. Critics of modern higher education, with some justification, might advance the argument that we presently have an unbalanced and excessive focus on such writing. It is writing according to a specific technical framework, almost algorithmic in character*.

Process on the other hand involves a deeper engagement. The text is not a finalised entity, but an iterative development, continually to be mined, reinvented, investigated and reconsidered. (Derrida had much to say on this type of textual engagement). Subsequent rewrites/drafts improves the text. Such writing is frequently collaborative or benefits from wider engagement/input. Above all it demands creativity; a creative demand that exerts itself both on the writer, but also the reader.

*Indeed there now exist artificial intelligent systems that are able to write articles and reports entirely from scratch without human intervention. Websites like Reuters and various sports sites *already* use such systems.

1. Integrated Skills / Integrated Skills Lesson

As stated above on slide 23, language skills are generally more effective when practiced and developed in an integrated and more holistic manner. Generally the skills develop in rough lockstep with each other; i.e. they are 'mutually supportive'.

The objective is to develop the underlying language 'architecture' which can be expressed in any one of the four modalities (reading/writing/speaking/listening). Fully proficient language adepts can fluidly shift from one form to the other. Neurobiology, complexity theory, artificial intelligence, and modern information theory all tend to place heavy emphasis on network models for explaining emergent affects. In any case, if language could plausibly be described as a 'network' of words, or their underlying artefacts/conceptual mappings, by applying an integrated approach we are hopefully training all aspects of the underlying network, thus allowing the learner to more proficiently exploit any one particular skill.

In practical terms, this means lessons whose primary focus is writing should nevertheless *still feature opportunities* for students to apply the new language taught through the other skills as well – reading, speaking, listening. Doing so will increase the likelihood of the new language being retained and 'integrated'. A one hour 'writing lesson' should *not* just consist of one hour of pure writing.

2. Establish the context

2. Establish the Context - examples
- Teacher models key ideas and KWICs
- Students look at pictures in groups and discuss
- Walkabout for students to exchange ideas on the topic
- Groups use poster paper or notes to collect ideas and vocabulary
- Groups generate a list of questions on the topic

Without context we tend to flounder. The 'problem set' is too large. So we need to delimit it; we need to provide something to anchor new concepts, to incorporate it into our 'architecture of meaning' if I may use poetic license. In addition to the ideas cited on the slide – walkabouts, explicit teacher modelling using keywords, posters, inviting the students to formulate questions – there are many creative options. Images and pictures are normally highly effective as our visual system is so acutely developed. Extending this, short video clips and sequences – with or without sound/music – are also effective and used judiciously are very good for generating interest and engagement at the start of a class. Mindmaps could be used; perhaps as a collaborative classroom board activity. For certain topics, realia itself could be used, which would be highly effective. If you are teaching low level learners about transport, for example, what could be more effective than bringing in actual bus/train/plane tickets and paper timetables/information leaflets? In a digitally enabled classroom, there are many other potential options; web-based collaborative tools (such as digital 'whiteboards/corkboards' where all the students could post their own digital 'sticky notes' and generate ideas), or give students five minutes to do 'micro' research on the new topic before presenting to their peers. As teachers we should use our imagination and be creative in exploring new ways to introduce topics to stop it becoming stale for our learners.

3. Personally involve the learner (1)

If we can emotively engage the learner in the topic/new material they are learning about, they are likely to have far better results. Following Krashen, if their 'affective filter' is high – e.g. they are completely bored, or just disengaged – it is unlikely they will learn much, if indeed anything. Therefore we need to strive to make the topic/new language of interest/relevance to the learner. Careful attention therefore needs to be given to how the material is presented, which means taking into account the composition of your classroom, both in terms of their interests and their actual requirements from the language learning (i.e. what is their purpose for learning the language). If their learning is not self-selected (i.e. They have classroom lessons simply because it is an academic requirement, e.g. In school), our challenge is even higher, as we need to identify how we can overcome their potential complete disinterest. It may be they have no intrinsic desire to learn the language at all. However, everyone does have an intrinsic interest in anything that engages with their value system or in some way relates to the realities of their day-to-day existence.

3. Personally involve the learner (2)

For example, teenagers may not stereotypically have any interest in 'flowers' as a subject. However, if we can relate the theme of flowers in the context, perhaps, of love and loss (whether romantically, or tragically, such as in bereavement or death) then suddenly the theme becomes immediately more engaging as it has a meaningful connection to issues they can identify with or care about. Therefore, they key is *always to know your learners;* what are they interested in, what affects their daily lives, what do they care about, how can we present the material using an angle that will engage them. Knowledge about the learners is the most powerful asset the teacher can have; this involves developing a meaningful rapport with the class.

4. Generate & Share ideas & Vocabulary

If rapport enables the teacher to build a sufficient relationship with the students in order to discover what matters to them, similarly on a classroom level it is what is key to fostering an environment where learners will openly share with their peers. Presentations, posters, role plays, fishbowl discussions, debates, and idea maps all empower learners to be *active participants in their own learning*, and to be able to exert some influence over the direction of the class. Reducing the didactic boundary between the teacher and the students is one step towards this; this does *not* mean abandoning respect or the sense of classroom hierarchy (the teacher, after all, still has to ultimately *direct* the class and maintain order), but simply about creating an atmosphere of mutual collaborative enquiry driven as much as possible by the learners actively engaging with the 'seed' material that we as teachers 'plant'. Learners need to make the material their own in order to fully engage with it. Students will willingly share when they feel comfortable and not threatened by the learning environment – no fear of facing ridicule or being seen as 'stupid' if they err – and also when they feel they have something relevant or meaningful to contribute. Hence the importance of presenting topics/material in a way that can be meaningfully related to learners own lives/experiences. Care should also be taken with presenting a *variety* of methods of 'sharing' – tech-savvy learners will love digital 'sharing' experiences in the classroom, but traditional options should also be available for those who excel with pen and paper, for example. Utilising variety, once more, prevents things getting stale.

5. Get the students writing in class (1)

Task 2: [40]

My own teaching experience is primarily one-to-one or small groups with comparatively advanced learners (B2/B2+/C1). After setting an appropriate context – for example, by showing a short YouTube video (2-5 minutes) – followed by a further discussion about the topic for another 10 minutes, I then set them a structured writing activity where they are given a relatively short time constraint to produce a number of sentences or paragraph of text. 5-10 minutes focussed writing time is typical. I try to make certain I do not offer any direct intervention and will only respond if they specifically ask me a question. Following this, we would then review what they have written and explore how it can be improved in terms of its technical delivery (grammar, vocabulary, cogency). On a few occasions I have had pairs or small groups of students, and this process worked very well as they were able to confer with each other and correct a number of errors. It was undoubtedly the case that strong students can be highly effective peer mentors. I once had a class of four students, of roughly similar level, and the resultant classroom dynamics proved that this number of students is close to optimum, from my own personal experiences. It had the benefit of virtually one-on-one time, where necessary, together with a collaborative and communicative 'buzz' that a group can bring in contrast to the occasionally staid one-on-one experience.

5. Get the students writing in class (2)

One concrete example. Probably one of the most successful lessons I have taught was a two hour lesson on 'flash fiction'. It proved more stimulating and interesting for my students than I could ever have envisaged. Flash fiction involves writing 'micro' fiction, i.e. super short compressed stories. It comes in many formats and their are entire websites devoted to this new form of fiction which is especially suitable for the type of brief and interrupted reading that people do on their mobile devices whilst commuting or in day to day tasks. A typical example of flash fiction is a 100 word limit. The objective is to write a pithy and engaging story using an extremely limited number of words. The idea is to leave an open question, or something that remains in the readers mind. My students loved this format as they were able to engage with some relatively difficult texts that had fairly advanced language, precisely because it was so *short;* in other words their effort was soon rewarded with a moment where the deeper meaning of the story revealed itself, and the subtext laid bare. They were engaged in the *reading* process. As a result they were highly motivated to engage in the *writing* process. Especially for students starved of creative or interesting topics – after all, how many thousands of hours have they spent 'describing what the bar chart shows' – they could finally write about something they cared about!

5. Get the students writing in class (3)

The following is an actual piece of flash fiction written by one of my Thai students (in her 20s). My only intervention was a few minor corrections to grammar. The actual writing is all entirely hers:

Every night, I always dreamed about the girl I did not know. She had long wavy black hair. Her skin was pale, yet her lips were red and soft. Her voice repeated over and over again as she hummed. I'd fallen in love with someone I knew was not real.

In my dream, I would hear her humming, so I walked, following her voice. She would disappear. I just wanted to see her face clearly, if only once. It was only my wish. I thought I would tell her how much I am into her. I would not let her disappear from me.

That night, after I fell asleep, the sound of her voice and her scent made me aware she was coming. This time, I hid myself in a bush nearby. I was certain that she was unaware of me. Finally, I jumped out and took hold of her naked body, reaching out with my arm. My wish had come true. I saw her clearly.

5. Get the students writing in class (4)

Have you ever heard the words 'the most beautiful thing is the most dangerous'? I truly understood these words when she turned to me. She was the most beautiful thing in my life. Her long wavy hair wrapped around her pale naked body. Her eyes were deep and dark. As she smiled with her red lips, it revealed her sharp white teeth. I was terrified, but I was under her beauty spell. Everything made me want her so bad.

"I love you" I whispered.

"Then do not leave" she answered, giggling.

"I promise". I kissed her but did not see the sharp knife in her hand. It stabbed down onto my back, through my chest. I'd never realised how much blood I could bleed. It felt bitter sweet.

I did not wake and live with her forever after.

6a. Opportunities for Collaboration

Collaborative input is beneficial provided the environment is supportive and any criticism is constructive. Peers are able to offer critical suggestions in terms of improving the technical quality – i.e. word selection, order, and grammatical improvements – but also can aid in highlighting logical errors, flaws in reasoning, or lexis whose meaning is unclear. "Share and compare" could be done in a grass-roots traditional manner in the classroom, in the form of small groups, or jigsaw activities; alternatively we could utilise technology and use various online forums and collaborative writing platforms, or "social writing" community sites such as Wattpad where writers and readers come together on a global social network devoted to creative writing. Or the same type of idea could be implemented on a school or classroom level. On Wattpad, for example, most longer stories are written and distributed by instalment, chapter by chapter or section by section; readers can offer critical feedback or motivation for the story to continue and develop. Such a system could easily be adopted in the classroom, perhaps over a sequence of lessons, with students offering feedback on input on the developing story. Nevertheless, there is a necessary tension here between writing as a private introspective act and its dissemination as a public work. We need to appreciate that different writers function in different ways, so need to be alert to that in our teaching.

6b. Collaboration Ways and Means

The advantage the physical classroom offers is face to face contact. It makes sense to exploit this and practice the other language skills, by encouraging students to read aloud their own work or others, or perhaps selective excerpts.

A variety of other possible activities could be devised. How about a student looks through the rest of the classes work, and selects a series of quotations or short segments they liked, reading them aloud and explaining why they were drawn to it? An open class discussion could follow. Or how about students write instalments or commentaries on other students work? Or write the next "chapter", so that several complete stories end up being written, with students each contributing a small part. The point here is experimentation.

I have little in the way of specific examples I can draw from my own teaching as it is largely one-to-one, with just the occasional micro-group. Given the popularity of my 'flash fiction' lesson, my intention is now to consider expanding this into a course (say 10 lessons over 10 weeks) for a small group and explore using creative writing of micro or 'flash' fiction as a tool for teaching English. My idea is to run this in conjunction with a digital Google Classroom to build up a small repository of their student work that they can all draw inspiration from.

7. Process and Rewriting – Basic Marking

As well as the tradition marking nomenclature indicated, digitally marking makes it pretty easy to highlight particular segments of text and insert additional comments/notes. The advantage of this is the marked script is still easy to read – which may not be the case if it has been daubed with red ink on a physical copy. Therefore digital platforms make implementing peer marking potentially easier. Furthermore, any unwarranted 'corrections' are easy to remove if adjudged to be incorrect or unsuitable interventions.

Digital or otherwise, I could envisage adding to the repertoire of standing marking devices with perhaps a series of smilies or other logos that indicate emotional response or feedback to the text, particularly in the form of a series of 'progressive carrots' – e.g. certain emojis/symbols used to indicate pieces of writing that are especially powerful or effective. Or how about a weekly vote where each class-member votes for their top-three pieces of writing that week? It could be implemented as a blind vote, where the vote cast is private, and furthermore the authorship of each text is unknown, until the winning pieces are announced. Used in a friendly/informal way, a small amount of competition might encourage student's creative instincts.

Marking sample – basic marking / Writing mechanics

Vocalising text aids in learning as it recruits the learners L2 phonological knowledge; since in many cases a learner may be better at speaking than they are writing, when they read their work aloud they will then hear that something is wrong.

In my experience more advanced students are able to see the errors in their writing mechanics by reviewing a corrected version of their script and comparing it to the original. Indeed this could be developed as a classroom activity/exercise: two scripts are presented (i.e. two separate printouts, with no red ink/type), a corrected version and the original, and students should go through and highlight the corrections and offer explanations as to why the corrections were made. So rather than just didactically lecture corrections, we could use real world student texts, from their own work – again we could do it anonymously, or use texts from an entirely separate class – and get students to be an active participant in correcting/marking as a way of refining writing mechanics. Perhaps one classroom could 'mark' an entire other class, and vice versa? Alternatively, how about presenting a sequence of rewritten drafts (possibly including a teacher rewritten 'model text'), and students have to select and explain which version is superior and identify the improvements and errors corrected?

Publish/Process the Writing

As discussed above, opportunities for publishing/processing written work, if computers and internet access are available, are now only limited your imagination as much as anything else. There are endless digital classroom tools that have cropped up to allow students to share and collaborate together. More old-fashioned approaches like e-mail/mailing lists are still eminently useable. Finally, most schools will at least have a printer/photocopier, so if nothing else, that is available as a grass-roots option. Digital classrooms like Google Classroom and Edmodo offer a great opportunity to take a Facebook-type approach to teaching but in a strictly *educational and controlled context/environment*. Since most students are social media savvy, this form of digitally presenting and sharing their written work is likely to be very popular and relevant to them. The biggest challenge for the teacher will be suitably moderating/monitoring the environment, treading a fine line between keeping control and maintaining civility/respect without acting as a digital authoritarian or quashing the creative/free-spirit of the undertaking. It seems to me that managing the *process* and 'learning context' more than the particular technological tools used that will provide the biggest challenge in getting the students to share in a productive manner, or encouraging reticent students to contribute.

Assessment

If we want to encourage student participation and writing contribution, involving the students in the assessment process will further generate interest. Linked in with *product* vs. *process* writing as discussed above, though some type of formative assessment will usually be demanded by the requirements of the job for the teacher, we nevertheless should try to move away from an explicit focus on 'grading' where everything is drilled down to one metric, a grade from A to F or a % rating. In many cases such a grade may prove a limited proxy for the value of the work; many types of writing are difficult to precisely quantify in terms of quality, and we really want to encourage students to deeply engage with the value of the writing process itself rather than obsess over externalities. Therefore, could we 'assess' in such a way that avoids drilling down into one final linear metric? How about utilising a multi-dimensional rubric, perhaps scoring something by various themes, or scales. Is it rational or emotive? Is it vague or precise? Is it detailed or abstract? On a more simple level, perhaps an Amazon style star system, rating a work in terms of certain key aspects such as "Creativity", "Clarity", "Action", "Fun" and "Emotion"? Could we get the students to agree *upon and design their own assessment rubric*, which either the students or teacher uses to mark? Or perhaps the anonymous voting system I described above on slide 45 could be used as a part of the informal assessment?

A Writing Criteria Rubric – Dean Beadle (1)

The rubric is very clear in terms of 'traditional' assessment, though to me it is far less useful for intermediate to advanced students. In the same way that there is a huge spread from the intermediate to the advanced CEFR levels (which, as you noted, is far better represented in the American Council model with its conical diagram – pictured), so here this rubric leaves an enormous range from Level 4 to Level 5.

Whilst I recognise that my perspective is necessarily coloured from my teaching experience which deals with comparatively advanced students, I nevertheless believe it highlights a significant omission in the rubric. The rubric is probably fairly useful for lower level students. However, for my type of the teaching, the rubric is essentially completely useless, since all of my students generally exceed Level 4, yet have lots of work to do in terms of the Level 5 statement 'Writing far beyond the level expected or what is taught'. In short, what I am stating is that my students are still below (in some cases, *significantly* below) an advanced native L1 writer at university level, yet they are entirely unaccounted for in the rubric. The difference between "shows some agency" and "lots of agency", for example, is again hopelessly large. And what

A Writing Criteria Rubric – Dean Beadle (2)

about aspects to do with clarity, cogency, and coherence? The IELTS band rubric is considerably more developed in this respect, with much finer granulation of levels.

And finally, as implied above, this rubric focuses on the 'traditional' aspects of writing performance. This *is* important, but it is also insufficient and myopic. What about creativity, originality, inventive use of language; or readability, interest and enjoyment that the text brings?

It depends, of course, on what we want to assess. One of the aspects I have taken away from this class on teaching writing is the importance of process writing, the necessity to engage students with the deliberative aspects of the writing process itself. This cold utilitarian rubric seems too limited to capture some of the other aspects that may be important. A student might have some issues with grammar, some poor spelling, some clumsy sentences, some incoherent structure... but what if they also demonstrate a streak of creative brilliance, a beautifully evocative image or sequence of words? Should we potentially crush the entire perceived value of their work under a poor grade due to technical deficiencies, in a rubric that does not accommodate or credit other aspects accordingly, save for a brief mention of 'agency'?

Task 3:

Formatting Lesson Sequence / Lesson Sequence Summary

Student centered lesson sequences

Student Centered Lesson Sequences

1. Student centered, not teacher plans. The lesson sequence shows inputs for students. "Teacher does" notes in performance outcomes only

2. Student performance outcomes on each lesson sequence slide

3. Outcomes on all sample lesson sequences. See examples

4. It's **not** about how you would teach the lesson OR if you agree. Show you understand the models

5. Comment in **red** in text boxes

54

- Should be student centered, teacher models. (Illustrates 'best practices' in teaching)

- Performance outcomes on each slide enables us to double check our lesson sequence.

- Outcomes should match the performance outcomes.

- A lesson sequence provides an archetype from which any number of lesson plans may be derived.

Level and context

Level and Context

Level	Communicative context
A1	Simple dialogue or picture story – *Talking about*….
A2	6+ word dialogues script – *Talking about*…. Or basic text
B1	Short Text level….the communication is between the writer and an *audience* as in a newspaper or blog post
B2	Longer text level….the communication is between writer and reader

Level is the number of words and the level of frequency of these words
In common use by the learner. There is a link between level and context.
Context is the circumstances surrounding a message. The circumstances
include the setting, the emotions of the people, the physical environment
and appropriateness of a message for the intended audience.
Those contexts are the particular combinations of people
and circumstances comprising a communication situation.

TASK: Discuss. How are "level" and "context" linked?

• Level is the number of discrete words and the relative frequency of such words in use.

• Topic and context are not the same; context takes a topic and presents a particular perspective on it.

• Context must be level-centric and level-appropriate. The conceptual difficulty of the context should appropriately reflect the level of the learners.

Exploring Teaching Writing at CEFR levels /
Common European Framework /
CEFR Writing Levels

A1 - Uses high frequency words in basic sentences

A2 - Uses simple conjunctions to build slighter more complex compound sentences. Basic adjectives and verb forms.

B1 - Produces short sequences of sentences using some compound language forms.

B2 - Uses complex sentences and more advanced language to produce longer format texts potentially containing multiple paragraphs.

C1 - Demonstrates greater clarity and ability to elaborate at length on demanding topics.

C2 - Able to produce extended prose with great clarity free from errors; summarise information from a variety of sources into a coherent and concise presentation; express themselves with cogency and precision across a wide variety of written discourse.

Performance Outcomes for Writing / Performance Outcomes - Sample

• Writing performance outcomes ensures an explicit focus on formative assessment since it prioritises what evidence the students will *produce* to demonstrate that learning has actually happened.

• A set of objectives to ensure that all lesson activities are designed and orientated toward a student or learner-centric basis.

• Enables students to demonstrate understanding of the lesson material by being able to produce evidentiary material which is assessable or peer-reviewable.

• Provides a specification for what we are looking for the students to actually *do,* and consequently allow the teacher to design activities that will lead to the students actually producing some tangible output illustrative of learning occurring.

• When writing performance outcomes, the student should be listed on the left (first) column of the table, to emphasise that the outcomes are student focussed and orientated, rather than teacher orientated.

Sequence of slides /
Lesson sequence Outline /

• New target language with a specified context is introduced and modelled by the teacher.

• The previewing process aims to engage students by attempting to get them to anticipate, predict, or guess about how the new language will be used.

• The students responses to the predicting/previewing activities in step 6 are then recapitulated in step 8 (confirmation) when students self-evaluate/self-correct after reviewing the material. Self-evaluation invests the learner with an interest in the process.

• The application stage involves using the new target language to produce some fresh output to demonstrate comprehension.

Integrated Skills lesson (1)

• Language skills do not exist in isolation. Though for pedagogical purposes we may frequently choose to separate them and focus on one particular skill, it is important when teaching to ensure that students have ample opportunity to develop all four areas in lockstep.

• Potentially all of these steps could be used in an individual lesson, or they may be developed across a sequence of lessons.

• Skills feed into other skills. Reading can/does consolidate and strongly improve writing; likewise listening with speaking. As passive skills improve, there tends to be a gradual transfer effect over to active skills in time.

• Incorporating a range of skills into a lesson allows peer-based scaffolding among students. Comparatively stronger students in a particular skill area can provide a model to assist the weaker students in that particular skill.

Integrated Skills lesson (2)

• Working on more than one skill in a lesson enables the lesson to be more dynamic with greater variety. It enables students to integrate otherwise task-specific skills into the wider cognitive framework of language development as they are forced to re-apply the new target language in a different modality.

• Re-applying the target language in a new modality helps to activate the new language resource, which eventually helps with integration (following the Gass & Selinker model).

• It is easier to achieve an appropriate balance between *passive* and *active* forms of learning if more than one skill is targeted in the class.

• Virtually all real world language use in professional life tends to involve shifting between the language skills whilst covering the same topic/material; e.g. A written business report may require a verbal summary to the boss, who then asks follow-up questions in conversation and later sends an e-mail with suggested revisions. The point is true language proficiency involves seamless shifts between the skills; therefore these shifts require practice.

Lesson Sequence Checklist (1)

- Use the checklist to ensure that all key lesson sequence objectives have been fulfilled.

- Check that it represents plausible/realistic/comprehensible use of the new target language by associating it with some meaningful real-world context, or some communicative *task*. Language is always used *for* something; hence why endless abstract lists of grammar tables/rules tends to be an ineffective method of teaching/learning...

- Use it as an opportunity to carefully consider whether the overall level, range of activities, and material selected is appropriate for the particular students in mind.

- Consider whether there is adequate variation in the apparent or *perceived* presentation and format of what are intrinsically similar activities/tasks to retain student engagement (technemes).

- The checklist can also act as a verification that there is a sufficient balance or range of skills incorporated into the lesson – i.e. Does the lesson make use of integrated skills? (See previous two slides).

Lesson Sequence Checklist (2)

• Check that the lesson sequence is developing on previous tasks/lessons and has a reasonable likelihood of capturing student engagement (i.e. Not only is the material appropriate, but is it *interesting?* And by interesting, we mean 'of interest to our student/class cohort', not simply whether the teacher happens to find it interesting).

• Check that students are actually given sufficient opportunity to apply the new target language learnt through a range of appropriate application activities. Furthermore ensure that students are able to demonstrate this new understanding across a range of communicative activities *using* the integrated skills as identified above.

• Check that we are providing/facilitating a suitable platform or method of presentation of the students work. Have we set-up a digital forum, class space, or public website? Or have we printed off some hard-copies that will be attached somewhere in the school building, in view? Or is it getting peer-reviewed in the next class? Etc., etc....

Task 4:

Reviews of Group Lesson Sequences

Task 4a:

A2 Lesson Sequence review:

The Calligraphers
(My group)

'My Friends'

The Calligraphers

Aren Tyr
Teddi Nielson
Quinn Leverton
(Peter) Ben Williams
Glen Williams-Jonosky
Marcello Williams-Jonosky
Yanathip Kongnukool (Steve)

One of the groups (*Group 1*) neglected to put a title slide with group members/group name listed. Though only a very minor omission, it does aid clarity/readability when groups have an introductory/leading slide.

The Common Core

1. **Learning not teaching:** It is well known that teaching doesn't equal learning.
2. **Student-centered lessons:** Lessons should focus on what the learner needs and what the learner is going to be doing, not what the teacher is doing.
3. **Comprehensible input:** Input needs to be graded to the learner's level and taught in a logical sequence.
4. **Context and cotext:** Teaching language without a context impedes learning. Learners need to link words in their L2 to real artifacts instead of relying on direct translations to their L1.
5. **Maximizing student to student interaction:** The best way to learn a language is to use it. Increasing S-S interaction provides a safe place for learners to practice.
6. **Learning paradigm:** Lessons need to follow a comprehensible sequence.
7. **Error:** Mistakes are proof that learning is taking place.
8. **Teacher-researcher:** Teaching language through stories isn't enough; teachers need to constantly reevaluate how they are teaching to find the best methods.

2

Our group chose to re-iterate the 'common core' principles on the first slide, though I am not personally certain it was necessary.

'Mistakes are proof that learning is taking place': the word *proof* is perhaps too strong a word in my view. Perhaps 'mistakes are *indicative* that learning is taking place' may serve as a better characterisation..?

Task 4:
A2 Lesson Sequence

My Friends

3

Our aim was clarity and simplicity of presentation.

Performance Outcomes

Student does	Teacher does
Talk about the picture	Draw picture
Speak about model	Model expands context and dialogue
Match & **label**	Model vocabulary matching activity
Read, **guess** & **write** answers	Model T/F
Read text aloud	Model Text
Read & **write** answers	Model T/F
Write gap fill	Monitor vocabulary
Speak & practice in walkabout activity	Model TT, TS, ST, SS, SS
Insert modelled vocabulary	Model/monitors
Write and complete the table	Model/monitor
Create & present poster	Monitor activity

Our objective of clarity led to minimalist statements of student performance outcomes.

Clarity of performance outcomes aids in *clearly defining the competencies you are aiming to assess*.

Context Setting Image

What do you see?

Talk about the picture

Perhaps the combination of the very neat drawing and choosing of *specific* characters is a potential disadvantage as it reduces the need for student imagination...? I am undecided on this issue.

We deliberately chose to utilise some well known characters here in Thailand, *Brown* & *Cony,* who are so-called 'LINE Friends' from the LINE mobile phone app. They are almost ubiquitous here, and even have their own shop in Bangkok. Our underlying logic was to choose characters that are instantly recognisable to Thai students and that are *immediately associable* with the concept of 'friends'.

Context Expansion

What are they doing?

Speak about model

I think the image serves to expand the context in a small but helpful manner.

Match and Label

Cinema

~~School~~

Playground

Market

Watch a movie

Eat food

~~Study~~

Kick a ball
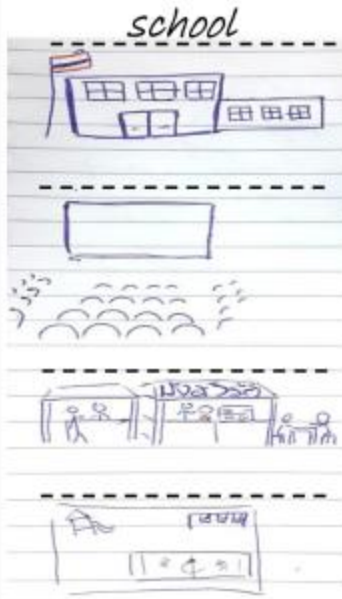
Match & label

7

This slide benefitted from peer-revision in the classroom. The original slide did not illustrate the nature of the activity sufficiently clearly. Some inputs from students outside our group helped us to modify it accordingly, since they saw it 'fresh' without presuppositions about the content and had to interpret it accordingly.

True/False Questions (Pre-Reading)

Is my friend named Noi? **T/F**

Did we go to school first? **T/F**

Did we study alone? **T/F**

Did we play sports? **T/F**

Did we watch a movie at school? **T/F**

Read, guess & **write** answers

8

The questions invite consideration of both activities undertaken and their sequence in the hypothetical scenario.

Reading Text

My Friend

My friend Noi and I go to the market everyday. We go there to buy food. After the market we go to school and study together. During the day we play sports on the playground. Sometimes we watch movies at the cinema.

Read text aloud

9

The script seems to be of roughly the correct manageable level of complexity for A2 students.

True/False Questions (Post-Reading)

Is my friend named Noi?   **T/F**

Did we go to school first?   **T/F**

Did we study alone?   **T/F**

Did we play sports?   **T/F**

Did we watch a movie at school?   **T/F**

Read & write answers

10

These questions target comprehension not just of whether a particular activity was performed, but also require the student to read carefully to determine the sequence of activities.

Gap Fill

My Friend

My friend Noi and I go to the market everyday.
We go there to _____ _____. After the _____ we
go to _____ and study together. During the day
we play sports on the _____. Sometimes we
_____ _____ at the cinema.

Write gap fill

11

Our blanks were restricted to the content words (KWICS) and not function words, in order to keep the language demands of the gap fill at an appropriate level.

Walkabout activity

A: What's his name?

B: His name is Somchai.

A: Where do you see him?

B: At the playground.

A: What do you do together?

B: Well, we usually kick a ball.

Speak & practice in walkabout activity

12

The clarity of this would be improved by underlining the new target language keywords that can be substituted in the script as students perform/improvise the walkabout – i.e. 'playground', 'kick a ball' etc. This was an error of omission on our part. I recall it being noted but I only noticed it when subsequently doing this slide review/analysis.

Controlled practice

A: What's his/her name?

B: His/her name is _____.

A: Where do you see him/her?

B: At the _____.

A: What do you do together?

B: Well, we usually _____.

Insert modelled vocabulary

13

This controlled practice script reflects the substitutable keywords discussed on previous slide.

A move from speaking to writing for integrated skills based learning is the objective here.

Writing Grid – write in grid

Who?	Where? (place)	What do? (activity)
Supaporn & Noi	Dairy Queen	Eat ice cream

Write and complete the table

14

I personally think the last column should read 'What did you do? (activity)' in the interests of presenting correctly written/formed English as all of our materials serve as a model to our students.

(Naturally I realise this is a lesson *sequence* not a lesson plan, so merely indicative of the activities students will *do*, but still...).

Application

"With My Friends"

- Make a poster about where you go and what you do with your friends.

- Present the poster in a walk about fashion.

- Ask classmates about what they see on your poster.

- Go to other stalls to participate in the walk about.

Create & **present** poster

15

A good activity, though perhaps we really should have represented this slide more visually, especially considering it as about making a poster. Inserted an image of a basic example poster, perhaps...?

My personal preference is to encourage the use of mind-maps. A simple one would have been effective here.

SUMMARY COMMENTS (A2 – 'My Friends')

• I think the principal feature of our slides is clarity, both in terms of content and consistency of presentation. I noticed that we were apparently the only group to put slide numbers on our uploaded lesson sequence, for example (bottom-right). I would hope our fellow classmates are easily able to interpret the slides and see how they could be applied in a lesson.

• I think the slides represent a sensible progression from introduction of new language items via appropriate context and modelling, followed by controlled practice activities, gradually becoming more 'open' as they move towards a final application activity.

• I think a good balance of skills is represented, though I wonder if an additional writing activity could be introduced near the end of the sequence. Perhaps get students to write their own very basic script, closely modelled/imitating the format of the example script, but with their own individual variations?

• I believe there is scope for improvement in the presentation of a couple of slides, in particular the poster slide would have benefitted from a more visual presentation. Perhaps the slides almost took simplicity too far, in a quest for minimalist aesthetics.

Task 4b:

A2+ Lesson Sequence
No Name

'Proverbial mini dramas'

Teaching Writing Task 4
Oct 8 – Oct 12

No Name

Michael Dyer
Alex Milne
Charlie Thompson
Vilma Piloton
Frazer Hainsworth
Joseph Grant
Geerthegha Peruma
Yanni Oliver

All eggs in one basket - Proverb writing lesson

I find this line drawing difficult to understand, and am unclear about what it is attempting to communicate.

I was curious to know whether this was just my own personal inability/failing to 'see' the picture, but other students in our classroom I asked also stated they found it similarly difficult to interpret.

Student...	Teacher
Retells story	Tells story and models retelling
Writes Y/N to other examples if it's the same proverb	Models
Writes and draws comic strip of an example of proverb	Models
Roleplays comic, others guess which one	Models
Fishbowls and writes notes of roleplays	Models
Writes Answers and asks question	Models
Writes story from answers	Models
Minimarket style presenting writing. Writes answers to questions from other Ss stories	Models

Some of the performance outcomes here seem to lack clarity and precision.

For example, on the second one, I think they are trying to say:

"**Circles** Y/N to determine applicable instances of the proverb".

Or, perhaps:

"**Circles** Y/N regarding whether the example sentence actually illustrates the proverb"

NB. Writing concise and precise performance outcomes is quite difficult. A significant chunk of our group time was spent attempting to write them clearly. Though clear, I think our group's performance outcomes are perhaps a little too terse.

T:"There was a boy called Somchai."

Ss:"There was a boy called Somchai."

tells story

Tells story and models retelling

Some additional lines of dialogue/script would aid presentation.

Repetition (copy & paste) of the same (to me) ambiguous line drawing. I do not personally understand/really see the connection between the drawing and the line of dialogue. Perhaps this is my own interpretative limitation.

This group's slides do not seem to have any consistent slide titles (and many slides have no title at all). They also have no slide numbers. This reduces clarity.

Yes no questions

Answer yes if the student it putting all their eggs in one basket and no if they aren't

. Noi only packs dry weather clothes but it rains **Y/N**

. Titan studies music and Maths to help with his future job **Y/N**

. Ploy only studies for one part of the exam **Y/N**

. Everyone is asked to bring food or candy to the party Steve brings both **Y/N**

. Noom only cooks fish for dinner without knowing the food the guests like **Y/N**
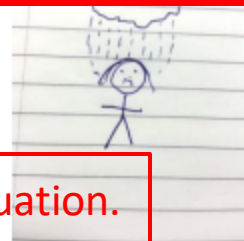
Missing punctuation.

Unclear, see comment two slides previous.

Writes Y/N to other examples if it's the same proverb	Models

This could simply be rewritten as:

Is the student 'putting all of their eggs in one basket' **(Y/N)**?

The opening line would be made clearer by using quotation marks and selective bold text (since they have bolded **Y/N**). For example:

"Answer **yes (Y)** if the student is 'putting all their eggs in one basket' and **no (N)** if they aren't."

Where are they ?
What are they doing ?
What is the decision?

Decision of what exactly – does this mean 'decision as to whether or not the story successfully illustrates a proverb'? Unclear to me.

No title or slide number (see above).

Again I find the drawing/comic script too minimal/too reduced to have much certainty regarding what it is communicating.

Writes and draws comic strip of an example of proverb	Models

The notion of using a comic strip is actually a very interesting idea and could potentially be extremely successful, but there is not enough clarity here in the slides for me to *easily* see how I would/should go about applying it in a lesson. I like the idea, but not the presentation.

Roleplay

Students will perform role plays in groups and other members of the class will guess which one it is

eplays comic, others guess which one	Models

The presentation of this slide is clearer than previous ones. It has a title, the icon on the top relates to the content, and the drawing illustrates the idea in a way I can understand.

I take this to mean 'which comic strip illustrating a proverb they are actually performing' (?). Lacking clarity.

What's happening ?
What do they want ?
What is the decision ?
Did they put all their eggs in one basket ?

ishbowls and writes notes of roleplays | Models

Presenting the text in this more explicit manner is much clearer. We can clearly understand that by 'decision' they mean, here, whether or not they 'put all of their eggs in one basket'.

It is unclear to me how their visual design/drawing here relates to the content of the slide or the concept they are trying to communicate. What does the woman with a clipboard actually represent? (The teacher?) Why are there three of them, and why are they arranged in that way? What does the hand drawing depict? And how does this all aid in communicating an idea for a communicative fishbowl activity that could be used in the classroom?

Writes answers asks questions

Who did you go with ?
Where did you go ?
What happened ?

Writes Answers and asks question	Models

There could be more detail on the slide to illustrate the type of target language that they were hoping students might elicit from each other during this communicative activity, a hypothetical dialogue. Either way the slide seems a little empty.

One presumes they mean SS or SSS here, or...?

Writing own experience

Students write individually about their own experiences regarding the proverb. Scaffolded by their answers in the previous task

Writes notes about own proverb experience	Models

OK – a useful application activity. The slide would have benefitted from an illustrative or mock example to show the sort of writing that they envisage might hopefully have been produced by a student.

Mini Market

Students will present their own stories for putting their eggs in one basket on the walls and peers will review and ask questions
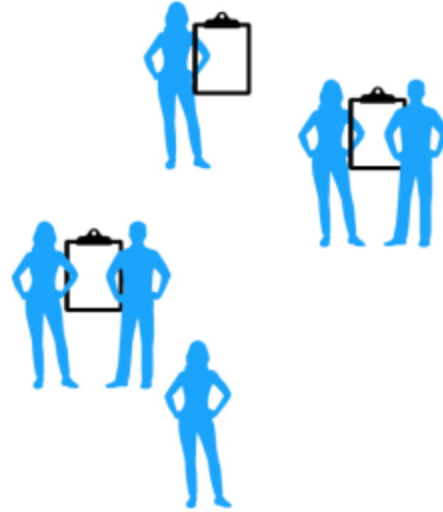
Minimarket style presenting writing. Writes answers to questions from other Ss stories	Models

This final application activity is potentially a good closing activity, yet it is not illustrated very well on the slide. What looks to be copy-and-pasted clip-art does not seem to add any real specific communicative value to the slide to me. Clip art is useful only if it aids in clarifying the concept, as opposed to simply being decoration.

SUMMARY COMMENTS (A2+ – 'Proverbial Mini Dramas')

• They might have benefitted by including your original image file (or a part of it) at some point early on in their slides as it was a very clear and nicely drawn depiction representing a proverb using a comic strip style illustration and would have aided clarity. It was only after referring to this original illustration that I really *understood* the idea behind their lesson sequence as presented.

• In general, though the activities seem potentially valuable, the lack of clarity and detail in presentation seems to hinder the communication on the slides, and reduces their utility as an interpretable lesson sequence. The result is something more akin to a sketch of a lesson sequence in my opinion.
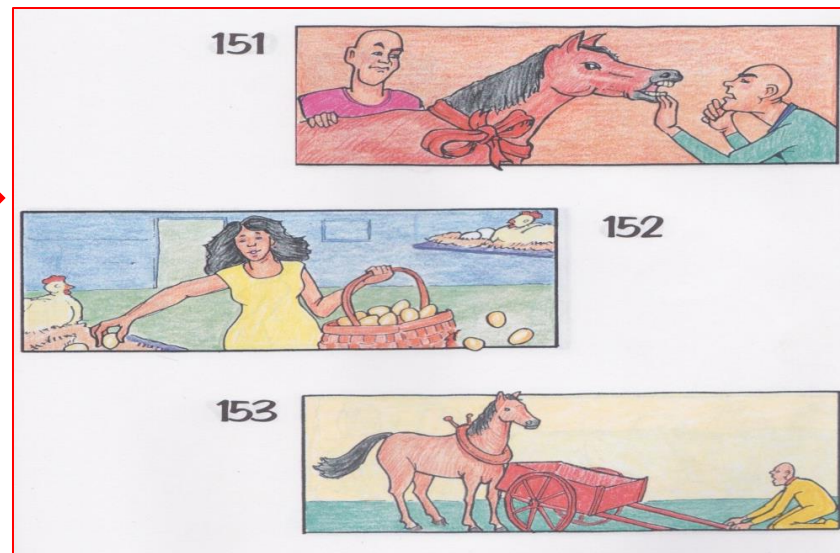
• In fairness, I do think their lesson sequence was definitely one of the more challenging ones to present well. Nevertheless, I do not think that they maximised the creative opportunities available to them for the task.

Task 4c:

B2 Lesson Sequence
Misfits

'Being Green'

Being Green

B2 Level Writing Focused - M5 or 6 - ⅓ 1 hour lessons

Daniel Terblanche / Andre Vosloo / Jason Van Der Lith / Marie Fouche / Andy Grosbois / Adrian Dias / Laurian Knop / Philippe Philippe / Carl Williams

Clear, simple, clean & green ☺.

Performance Outcomes Part 1

Students will do	Teacher will do
SS will look at the picture, guess the topic and discuss what the topic is.	Teacher will draw pictures on the board and elicit the meaning of the pictures.
Write down causes of global warming	Model the context
Discuss questions related to the video	Mentors & monitors
Discuss and answer T/F Qs (guess)	Model / Facilitate
Match pictures to paragraphs (while reading)	Model
Read and answer questions (post reading) Discuss and answer questions (post reading)	Model the comprehension questions Model the group questions
SS will make a poster in groups. SS will present their poster in class.	Teacher will model an example on the board.

These are clear and easy to understand.

Performance Outcomes Part 2

Students will do	Teacher will do
Ss fill in the missing words using the words provided.	Model the first sentence.
Ss guess the meaning of the words by looking at the context it is used in.	Model the first word.
Discuss and answer T/F Qs (confirm)	Model / Facilitate
Select 5 environmental problems from the reading to discuss in groups, write down the causes & effects for each and present findings to the class.	Model an example on the board.
Reflect and write about how their own habits cause harm to the environment. Write how they and others could change their habits for the better.	Allocate time for writing. Be available for guidance.
SS will make a poster in groups. SS will present their poster in class.	Teacher will model an example on the board.

'Ss guess' could be more explicit. How does the teacher evaluate 'guess' here? (i.e. How does it explicitly lead to the student producing something that can be formatively assessed?)

The latter performance outcomes are detailed but could probably be reduced/made more concise.

Overall a good degree of thought has gone into these.

Topic - Being Green - What do you see

Earth and environment

Recycling

Nature

Recycling Bins

Pollution

Ss look at the pictures, guess the topic and discuss the topic.

Clear enough.

'Recycling bins'/'recycling' seem to be duplicates. How about an image showing atmospheric pollution/emissions, or something to indicate waste (and thereby encourage eliciting of notion of 're-use')?

The presentation is functional but could be improved/made more attractive. Some slide numbers would have been good addition, too.

Warmer: context setting

What comes to mind when you see this picture ?

What things do you think are the cause of it ?

Work in pairs and write down 3 things that you think contribute to global warming.

Ex :   Driving alone in your car.
         Eating food from foam boxes.
         Leaving the lights on.

Drawing on the board

SS writes down causes of global warming

A very simple but neat way of conveying idea of global warming/climate change.

The second sentence could arguably be written with better English.

A good SS warmer activity overall.

Warmer: context setting

Watch the 3 min video.

Discuss in groups

Is global warming something new ?

Is global warming something that is good or bad for the human population ?

What are effects of global warming ?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McRYTC56DC4

SS discuss questions related to the video

When inserting hyperlinks into slides, **it is always good practice to make them clickable links!** (I had to manually copy/paste the link into my browser address bar). Here is the link to the video, you can simply click on it whilst in slideshow view mode to automatically open your browser to the video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McRYTC56DC4

Whilst the language in the video is above B2 level, and is frequently too difficult, I *would* use this video as I think the graphical content is sufficient to allow students to deduce the context and meaning. Overall, I actually think this is an excellent context setting activity that will stretch students.

T/F Questions- Discuss and answer before reading

1. Free-range hen farming is not cruel to hens. T / F

2. Aluminium cans can not be recycled and used again. T / F

3. Chlorofluorocarbons does not have a harmful effect on the ozone gas. T / F

4. The "greenhouse effect" contributes in changing the earth's climate. T / F

5. Plastic shopping bags can easily be recycled. T / F

6. Organic fruit and vegetables are treated with fertilizers. T / F

SS Discuss and answer T/F Qs (guess)

The questions are well presented/chosen in relation to the content of the text.

NB. The first question here seems to be conflating a separate topic in my view. Although particular farming practices do have environmental consequences, the issue of free-range vs. caged hen farming is arguably far more to do with particular ethical views concerning animal welfare rather than necessarily representing a significantly different overall environmental outcome. It could perhaps be incorporated into a different lesson sequence, though I recognise that this topic does appear in their original source text.

Are these people criminals?

Are these people criminals?

1 For a start, Julia Moore's not just killing flies with that spray. By using it, she is helping to create a hole in the ozone layer - the 'gas screen' which helps protect us from the dangerous rays of the sun. The spray is full of chemicals called chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) that eat up the ozone gas. There are now huge holes in the ozone layer, which is why CFCs should be banned.

2 The cooking pots are boiling over and wasting power. This means that more and more oil and coal has to be burned and this causes pollution and 'acid rain'. 'Acid rain' has already killed more than half of Germany's trees.

3 The vegetables you can see have probably been treated with pesticides - chemicals which kill the small animals and insects that live on them. They have also been fed with fertilisers which can exhaust the soil and kill wild animals. The pesticides and fertilisers end up in our water which is then polluted by them. In many shops you can now buy organic fruit and vegetables which are not treated with chemicals.

4 The eggs Emma is eating come from battery farms which cause great cruelty to millions of hens kept in confined spaces. Free-range eggs are more expensive but are healthier and are not as cruel to hens.

5 The hardwood which the kitchen furniture is made of comes from the tropical rain forests, which are disappearing as they are cut down to provide hardwood for the western world. Fewer trees means more carbon dioxide in the air and this traps the sun's heat and leads to the 'greenhouse effect' - a hotter climate which melts ice, causes floods and drought and changes our climate.

6 The fridge is full of meat. Tropical rain forests are often cut down to provide space to breed cattle to provide our hamburgers.

7 Julia doesn't always save her plastic shopping bags. Yet it is impossible to recycle them and plastic can harm animals.

8 The Moores throw a lot of rubbish out but glass and aluminium cans can be recycled and used again.

9 Julia's cupboard near the sink is full of washing powders and cleaners, many of which are packed with things which pollute water.

10 Out in the garden Derek Moore is spraying his plants with insecticides, which not only kill animals and birds but can also harm human eyes and skin and are also related to birth defects and cancer.

Ss reads and discuss the text.

OK, clear enough.

The slide could have illustrated one example 'criminal' showing the highlighted section of pertaining text.

Focus writing: matching activity

Ss match picture to paragraph

I understand, though there is room for illustrative improvement here. Perhaps a line linking a picture to a chunk of text by way of illustrative example, building on my suggestion on the previous slide.

Post reading \ Comprehension question

1. How pesticides, chemicals and fertilizers end up in the human body?

2. What do paragraph 1 and 10 have in common?

3. Why shouldn't you buy eggs from battery farms?

4. How does buying hardwood furnitures contribute to global warming?

5. What causes "acid rains"? In which country, forests are rapidly disappearing?

6. Read the paragraph 5 and give your own definition of "Greenhouse effect

7. S   eads and answer questions

The content of the questions is fine.

However, there are **multiple** typos – there are *nine* members in this group who should have been able to proof read it for errors! – and the English is **poorly written**, especially considering that we should be exemplars of proficient English use. If our written questions do not model well written English, how can we expect our students to produce well written English?

"What causes 'acid rain'? In which country has this caused forests to rapidly disappear?"

"Read the fifth paragraph" or **"Read paragraph 5"**.

Post reading \ Group discussion questions

1. Think as a group, the direct effect of global warming in your country that you have already noticed.

1. Discuss and list three other things that are destroying the ozone layer in your school?

1. Discuss with your group and decide on what could be changed within your school in order for it to become more "environmentally friendly".

Ss discuss and answer questions

As per my comments on the previous slide. The first question here does not represent clear or well written English.

The *content* of the questions, however, once again, is well selected and would provide a sound basis for SS discussions.

T/F Questions- Discuss and answer after reading

1. Free-range hen farming is not cruel to hens. T / F
2. Aluminium cans can not be recycled and used again. T / F
3. Chlorofluorocarbons does not have a harmful effect on the ozone gas. T / F
4. The "greenhouse effect" contributes in changing the earth's climate. T / F
5. Plastic shopping bags can easily be recycled. T / F
6. Organic fruit and vegetables are treated with fertilizers. T / F

SS discuss and answer T/F Qs (post reading)

OK, clear.

Writing Activities

1.(Fill in the missing words)

recycle   CFC'S   pollution   poisonous   dangerous

global warming   being green   pesticides

1. It is important the we _____ bottles, plastic, cans and paper.
2. _____ are chemical compounds that are used to kill pests, including insects, rodents, fungi and unwanted plants.
3. _____ can affect the air, the land and water bodies throughout the world.
4. The snakes venom was very _____.
5. It is _____ to play with fire.
6. _____ effects the climate and the rise in temperature.
7. The term given to someone who is environmentally conscious is _____.
8. _____ is the abbreviation of *Chlorofluorocarbons.*

The English could be made more precise here (see below).

Questions (3) and (6) and fill words 'pollution' and 'global warming' are potentially ambiguous as written.

The lesson activity is useful, however.

'Global warming' is typified by a rise in global average temperature. I would rewrite sentence 6 to something like this:
"_____ refers to the process of climate change whereby the overall average temperature rises across Earth."

Explain the following words (Refer to text)

- (3) "Treated"

  E.g. *Pesticides were sprayed onto the plants*

- (3) "Fertilizer"

  _____

- (4) "Confined spaces"

  _____

- (5) "Leads to"

  _____

- (9) "Packed with"

  _____

Ss should refer back to the text, locate the words and write down the meaning in their own words.

This is an inventive and clever activity. It tasks students with identifying the associated meaning and use of the verbs/phrasal verbs.

For presentation I would have preferred this slide as a table, since it took me a few moments to realise that the bracketed number refers to the numbered section of the text.

Problem Solving (Critical Thinking)

- In groups, read and discuss the text "Are These People Criminals" again.
- Choose 5 environmental problems to write about.
- Write what you think are the causes and effects of each environmental problem.
- Are you guilty of harming the environment in the same way? Write "yes" or "no".
- Present your findings to the class.

Number	Cause	Effect	Guilty or Not?

SS will select 5 environmental problems from the reading to discuss in groups, write down the causes & effects

Excellent potential for eliciting productive language use in a meaningful context/task activity.

This is an **excellent** activity, though I would probably modify the format slightly.

I think the notion of tasking students with ascribing 'criminality' or not to the people's activity, together with critically reflecting on the potential causalities involved is an engaging and demanding task that will challenge students.

Problem Solving (Critical Thinking)

Free Writing

- Think about how your own daily habits at home affect the environment.

  - Write down how your actions cause harm to the environment.

- Think about how you could change your habits for the better of the environment.
  - Write down what you think you can do to change your habits.
  - Write down if you think it is possible for others to do the same.

SS will reflect and write about how their own habits cause harm to the environment. Write how they and others could change their habits for the better.

Another demanding task that will hopefully elicit some meaningful and expansive use of 'real world' target language. The general questions are made concrete by relating them to student's daily lives. Excellent.

Project activity (Application)

Save money, and energy!
Get your electricity and
water, for free!!
Turn unwanted
items into power!

The recycling generator 1000 will change
the way you use energy. Putting your
unwanted food, your unwanted metals
and plastics into this device can save you
money, and save the environment.

Simply put the item in the correct box,
and each item will take money off your
water and electricity bill!

If you run out of food to decompose,
the scanners in the paper, metal and
plastic holes will determine how much
they are worth and remove them from
your bill, and will be collected weekly!

food   metal   plastic

Paper

Recycling
Generator 1000
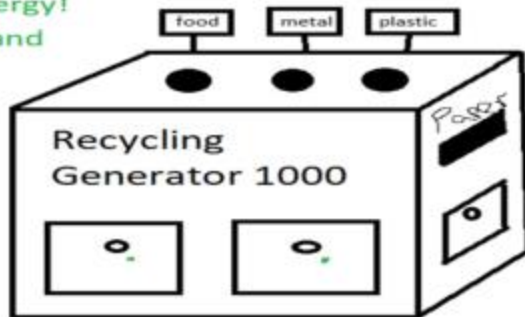
The recycling generator
1000 is a revolutionary way
to save money and save the
environment!

Re-use, reduce and
recycle!

The world is struggling. Over population and poor
planning is causing landfills, and pollution.
It is time to fight against it!

Useful for home, businesses, and public areas
(parks. malls. train stations etc)

SS will make a poster in groups. Ss
will present their poster in class.

Another strong closing application activity, and I like their fun/imaginative poster drawing (though perhaps a bit text heavy).

SUMMARY COMMENTS (B2 – 'Being Green')

• Overall this is a strong and well presented lesson sequence, let down by some technical errors and lapses of attention/quality control.

• I would certainly make use of this lesson sequence, or a modified variant thereof.

• The application activities in general are particularly strong, and I thought the critical thinking/problem solving activities were especially well constructed.

• There is a good spectrum of activities from a highly focussed intensive reading activity to some demanding writing activities that will push students.

• Despite the errors and some unevenness in quality, overall it is very clear to me how I could 'use' this sequence so the overall communication of the slides is effective.

Action reflection/Self-reflection

What you thought you understood and presented well

Task 1 was highly enjoyable for me so I felt comfortable with writing the material and answering the questions in that section. We had a group with some very experienced teachers so that aided in producing task 3 & 4a (formatting lesson sequence/creating lesson sequence).

Improvements that you intend to do something about and how.

Reviewing the group slides was informative as it revealed the divergence in presentation and approach people take. It underlined how critical it is to try to make everything as clear as possible, and also revealed some areas where our group slides could have been stronger.