

## Written Comprehension and Production for A2/B1 learners

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## DESCRIPTION

In this pathway we will see how through the application of web 2.0 tools we can aid our students to better strategies in reading and confidence in writing. We look briefly at the CEF scales for A2 and B1 and with comparison to our own experience, note what realistic objectives we can have for our learners through considering the problems students have with reading and writing and demonstrating how well planned new teaching practices can work in the classroom.

Students will develop writing skills and gain awareness in self-correction and error identification techniques. They will also develop reading skills and techniques that reflect the CEFR objectives at A2 *(The learner) can understand a short, simple text on familiar matters of a concrete type which consists of high frequency everyday language* and B1 *(The learner) can read straightforward factual texts related to her/his field of interest with a good level of comprehension.*

Teachers will learn how to exploit and choose appropriate online reading tasks for the CEFR levels A2 and B1 and develop the ability to analyse and exploit web resources and/or textbooks in relation to the skills to be promoted i.e. reading and writing.

Teachers will begin by looking at the CEFR scales for reading and writing, reflecting on their own experience and comparing these to the objectives set out by the CEF. We will then move on to how these objectives can be best achieved using “real world” tasks to encourage young learners to read and write.

### Written Comprehension

We begin with a brief overview and methodology on the role of reading and writing strategies to be used and why use the internet for teenage younger lower level learners. The use of graded online reading tasks will be demonstrated and supported through concrete examples for A2 and B1 learners using the *Learnenglish* Teens site ([learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/](http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/)).

The topic area chosen is reviews of “books into films”. We can see the “Hunger Games”, an extremely popular science fiction story for teenagers destined to become a modern classic and the Oscar winning “life of Pi”. The level can be selected (A2= level 1 B1=level 2) as appropriate and while tasks are available to practice our authentic reading strategies (gist and detail), more importantly the topic areas allow for extension into more “real

world” activities – personalisation, showing preferences, commenting and discussion. Furthermore the reading can be done online to cater for the new generation of “digital natives” or downloaded for a more traditional approach.

### **Written Production on the web**

Here teachers will begin by reflecting on their personal experience of writing in the classroom followed by a brief overview of “process writing” and how through collaborative techniques the whole concept of writing both in and out of the classroom can appear more inviting, interesting and ultimately rewarding for learners. The teacher will then move on to a practical example for both A2 and B1 learners using a web based collaborative solution.

Through linking to the reading activity on reading “The Hunger Games”, “life of Pi”, students can write their own reviews on films or books. These can then be corrected/edited and updated by the learners themselves to produce a final polished finished product encouraging the valuable skills of proof reading and working together. Alternatively, the teacher could propose the beginning of a story and students continue revising, editing and rewriting where only the nominated learner at each stage would know the “complete story” until it was revealed at the end. In both cases lessons and examples are initiated in class and continued at home.

The World Wide Web offers a myriad of opportunities for authentic English reading texts covering all potential subjects of interest for our learners. However, as already noted many texts available would simply be too complex for A2/B1 learners and even a well-designed task could result in de-motivation and lack of interest. Fortunately the internet does offer alternatives in many online free sites that can be sourced, developed and exploited by the teacher to present our learners with the opportunity of reading interesting topics and applying the strategies outlined earlier.

The LearnEnglish Teens website is designed especially for 13-17 year-olds and lets you share opinions and learn from each other. There are lots of materials for language practice, tips for exams and help with grammar and vocabulary, as well as fun activities, videos, games and puzzles. And for our interests there is the English skills practice section to improve reading skills through articles, stories and poems as well as the magazine page which learners can read and comment on.

“Writeboarding” is a new term for collaborative writing on the internet. There are many different write-boarding writing tools available, adobe Buzzword, showdocument, mixedlink to name but a few. All have their

strengths and weaknesses but for our purposes we will focus on “sync.in”, one of the easiest to use, learn and completely free in its basic format. You start by creating your own document or “writeboard”, invite your team members (students) and then just start writing. People can see updates, edits, and changes in real-time. You can save, track revisions, create versions, and roll back to previous versions of your “writeboard”. This has enormous potential for the teacher both in the classroom and out. Group working, proof-reading, editing are just some of the skills that students can develop but moreover through collaboration and letting our learners work in their environment, writing can become a fun motivating activity.

## ACTIVITY

### Step 1

#### *Why*

Reading and Writing were historically the main focus in the grammar translation method. Writing took the form at sentence level, to practice particular grammar points or in translation and was not taught as a skill in itself. Sometimes compositions were called upon, but they were generally related to reading texts the learners had already worked on or in the form of a language test “write an essay on...” However, the situation has now changed. Increased concern in identifying learner needs and awareness of different types of discourse (transactional, interactional, etc) has given writing its place as a skill worth teaching while reading, once traditionally characterised as a “receptive” skill, where the role of the reader is a **passive** one, being fed with letters, words and sentences now takes into account the fact that written texts often contain more than we need to understand them involving principled guessing guided not only by the text, but also by what the reader brings to it. According to Grellet (1981) “what one brings to the text is often more important than what one finds in it.” Background knowledge as an aid to text comprehension and is a central part of the “schema” theory.

When considering **Written Comprehension and Production** in the classroom and their value to the teaching programme we must first consider some questions:

Reflect on the questions below and make notes for comparison before moving onto the next section.

- Let us think about written comprehension or more simply reading first:
- How do our students read in English?
- Is reading in L2 different from L1? How? In what way?
- What are some of the added disadvantages for our L2 readers?
- What do we as teachers need to provide our students to motivate them?
- What key areas can we summarise for reading?

Now if we consider written production or writing:

- Why teach our students to write?
- Why do our learners need to write?
- What is "Process Writing"?

Now look at the next video and compare your points with those presented.

*How and what*

### Written Comprehension

A simple definition of reading is that it is a process of looking at and understanding what has been written. Many students who read in a foreign language take this definition in its literal sense, i.e. comprehension of the *whole* (the text in question) trying to understand and/or translate **every** word. Of more importance many learners are unable to transfer reading skills from L1 when faced with texts in L2.

It seems appropriate to encourage students to develop the same skills and strategies they use in L1 when reading in L2 even at lower levels. It is therefore important to provide learners with opportunities for guessing, predicting, checking and asking themselves questions as they read. Students need to be taught how to utilise what they know to help them understand difficult and unknown parts of a text. Furthermore if there is no real world purpose to reading in the classroom then we must not be surprised if learner motivation is low and while aiming to create real reading opportunities, it must be remembered that L2 learners are at a disadvantage in more than one way:

- their awareness of social and cultural associations is limited;
- their linguistic competence is limited, meaning they cannot make as many automatic predictions;
- processing information in L2 is much more difficult, which can result in them concentrating on much smaller units of text.

It seems important to provide learners with texts which interest them, and moreover with authentic reasons for reading by designing realistic and motivating tasks. We rarely answer questions after reading a text in L1, but often we do something with the information we have learnt, for example, writing a letter, giving an opinion or following instructions. It is imperative

that tasks for reading are designed with these kinds of communicative aims in mind.

Ultimately, if aiming to provide students with authentic reasons for reading, then it seems logical to use **authentic texts**, where nothing is changed including the presentation and layout, to help learners become accustomed to and confident in reading “real” texts. However, for lower level students many fully authentic texts may be linguistically too complex, which can be de-motivating and discourage them from reading. Wallace (1992) discusses the meaning of authenticity as the interaction of reader with the text, rather than merely in features of the text itself. If this is the case, then the authenticity of activities in the classroom is as important as the text itself and therefore we need to provide meaningful activities which reflect real life even if we cannot always provide “real” texts for them to use.

Nuttall (1996) gives the aims of an ideal reading programme as:

“To enable students to read without help unfamiliar texts, at appropriate speed, silently and with adequate understanding.”

On reflection and evaluation of current thinking towards reading we can summarise as follows:

- selecting texts that reflect real reasons for reading;
- selecting texts that reflect the interests of the learners and tasks that will motivate students to read.

### Written Production

Byrne (1988) lists the following reasons for teaching students to write:

- Providing for different learning styles and needs. Some students remember something better if they have a written record, rather than just having oral practice.
- Students gain a sense of progress when they have some tangible evidence.
- Exposure to language through an integration of skills is more effective than exposure through one medium.
- It provides a break from oral work in the classroom, and work can be set out of the class.
- Students’ knowledge of a language is often tested through writing both in class and exams.

These reasons are primarily concerned with using writing as a means to learning, and not as a skill in itself, learning to write. If we look at what students actually need English for, we can see that they need writing as a skill, to do various things such as writing letters (formal and informal), reports, exam essays, e-mails, articles and completing forms to name but a few. Furthermore, students often view writing as boring, solitary and demotivating without any communicative interaction, however, help is at hand in the form of Process writing.

Process writing more closely resembles speaking than other forms of writing, because there is an element of two-way participation, with the teacher and other students providing constant feedback on the content of the writing. Students gain confidence in writing as attention is paid to content and improvement, rather than error correcting. While some critics believe that process writing is limited to narrative forms, and does not provide enough guidance with academic or factual writing and can be said to be time consuming the process approach is a very useful technique for encouraging writing in the first place, be self-evaluative and so produce better pieces of writing. However writing is approached:

“skills can develop rapidly when students concerns and interests are acknowledged, when they are given numerous opportunities to write, and when they are encouraged to become participants in a community of writers”.

### *Summary*

Historically reading and writing activities have always been viewed negatively by students, seen as passive, lonely and in the case of writing, as tests. The modern digital classroom offers teachers the opportunity to change this. The vast array of online readily available resources on the internet can help the teacher provide their students with interesting accessible reading texts that can be extended into real world tasks easily. Likewise we have seen that writing need not be lonely individual test focused activities, but through implementing the “process writing” techniques and taking advantage of the environment that our “digital native” learners operate in we can make writing a valued, exciting and creative activity for our students both in and out the classroom.



## Step 2

### *Introduction*

#### **The Common European Framework**

You are going to watch part of a video about the Common European Framework and answer the questions:

- What is the CEFR?
- How does it help Teachers?

Watch the section of the video up to 1 minute 33.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDPeP-gCU5E>

Does this agree with what you already knew?

#### **The CEFR Scales for A2 and B1**

What linguistic competencies for reading and writing would you expect your students to have at A2 and B1 level?

Watch the video from 2 minutes 05 to and 2 minutes 55 and compare:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDPeP-gCU5E>

Below are the descriptors for reading and writing for A2 and B1 level:

Looking at the descriptors. What are the major differences between A2 and B1 for reading and writing?

### **Reading**

<b>A2</b>	<b>B1</b>
Can understand short, simple texts on familiar matters of a concrete type which consist of high frequency everyday or job-related language.	Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to his/her field and interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension.
Can understand short, simple texts containing the highest frequency vocabulary, including a proportion of shared international vocabulary items.	Can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters well enough to correspond regularly with a pen friend.

<p>Can understand basic types of standard routine letters and faxes (enquiries, orders, letters of confirmation etc.) on familiar topics.</p> <p>Can understand short simple personal letters.</p> <p>Can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus, reference lists and timetables.</p> <p>Can understand everyday signs and notices: in public places, such as streets, restaurants, railway stations; in workplaces, such as directions, instructions, hazard warnings.</p> <p>Can understand simple instructions on equipment encountered in everyday life - such as a public telephone.</p> <p>Can understand regulations, for example safety, when expressed in simple language.</p>	<p>Can scan longer texts in order to locate desired information, and gather information from different parts of a text, or from different texts in order to fulfil a specific task.</p> <p>Can find and understand relevant information in everyday material, such as letters, brochures and short official documents.</p> <p>Can identify the main conclusions in clearly signalled argumentative texts.</p> <p>Can recognise the line of argument in the treatment of the issue presented, though not necessarily in detail.</p> <p>Can recognise significant points in straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects.</p> <p>Can understand clearly written, straightforward instructions for a piece of equipment.</p>
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## Writing

<p><b>A2</b></p> <p>Can write short, simple formulaic notes relating to matters in areas of immediate need.</p> <p>Can write very simple personal letters expressing thanks and apology.</p> <p>Can take a short, simple message provided he/she can ask for repetition and reformulation.</p>	<p><b>B1</b></p> <p>Can convey information and ideas on abstract as well as concrete topics, check information and ask about or explain problems with reasonable precision.</p> <p>Can write personal letters and notes asking for or conveying simple information of immediate relevance, getting across the point he/she feels to be important.</p>
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<p>Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like "and", "but" and "because".</p> <p>Can write about everyday aspects of his environment e.g. people, places, a job or study experience in linked sentences.</p> <p>Can write very short, basic descriptions of events, past activities and personal experiences.</p> <p>Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences about their family, living conditions, educational background, present or most recent job.</p> <p>Can write short, simple imaginary biographies and simple poems about people.</p>	<p>Can write personal letters giving news and expressing thoughts about abstract or cultural topics such as music, films.</p> <p>Can write notes conveying simple information of immediate relevance to friends, service people, teachers and others who feature in his/her everyday life, getting across comprehensibly the points he/she feels are important.</p> <p>Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence.</p> <p>Can write straightforward, detailed descriptions on a range of familiar subjects within his field of interest.</p> <p>Can write accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text.</p> <p>Can write a description of an event, a recent trip - real or imagined.</p> <p>Can narrate a story.</p> <p>Can write short, simple essays on topics of interest.</p>
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## *Task 1 – An introduction to reading skills: key concepts*

### *Task 1.1 – Thinking about reading*

- What type of reading activities in English do you do in your class?
- What do your students read outside the class?
- What procedure do you normally follow when introducing a reading text in your lessons?
- Read the following articles and compare your ideas:
  - Reading and elementary learners  
<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/reading-elementary-learners>
  - Extensive reading  
<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/extensive-reading>

### *Task 1.2 – Develop reading sub-skill skimming and scanning*

In real life our reasons for reading vary enormously, as does the style in which we read and these should not be considered mutually exclusive, indeed to understand a written text a reader may employ one or more kind during the course of reading a text. In the same way we listen, we use different strategies when reading to get the main idea and details being presented in a text. Grellet (1981) lists the following as the main ways of reading:

#### **1. Getting the general picture**

We often read to see what a text is about, to know how it is organised, or to get an idea of the tone or the intention of the writer. For example, looking through a magazine article to see whether it is worth reading, or a menu to see if you can afford to eat in the restaurant. This reading skill is often called **skimming** or reading for **gist** and involves the reader picking out the main points rapidly, discarding what is not essential or relevant. It involves a degree of inference and interpretation.

## 2. Extracting specific information

We often read something because we want to extract specific bits of information. This skill is known as **scanning**, for example, locating a name or a date. As in **skimming**, we need to disregard the other information, although we may be aware of it, and concentrate on the information we are searching for. We often **skim** through an article to find out if it is worth reading and then read (**scan**) to pick out particular points of interest or for more detail.

## 3. Extensive reading (also known as receptive reading)

Extensive reading focuses on the reading of longer texts, generally outside the classroom. Its aim is to encourage students to read on their own for pleasure, relaxation, gist and build up good reading habits in order to develop autonomy so learners can make their own decisions on what they want to get out of a text.

Now you have read, consider and answer the following questions:

- Do you use these techniques in class?
- Are your students aware of these techniques?

### *Task 1.3 – A reading skill lesson framework*

By planning a reading lesson into logical stages we can help our learners to practise and develop their reading skills and strategies.

We can divide the lesson into three main stages:

- Pre-reading stage;
- While reading;
- Post-reading stage.

Furthermore, we have already seen it is important to take into account the following key areas for both A2 and B1 learners.

- Development of skimming and scanning reading strategies to focus students away from trying to understand every word (tunnelling and translation).
- Chosen texts are of interest to our learners or texts have some “real” world purpose.

- Students have genuine reasons to read text, not just understand.
- We provide authentic tasks even if we cannot always provide authentic texts for our lower level learners.

## *Task 2*

### *Task 2.1 – Introduction*

As we have seen not only is it important to provide a variety of reading topics but also types so learners can develop and broaden their skills in different situations. In this context the internet offers an unlimited source of relevant, usable and most importantly adaptable material for us to exploit. Below we will go through a staged lesson that a fellow teacher could use as the basis for future lessons or adapt to suit student needs in their own classes.

As you experiment, evaluate your teaching by making notes about the lesson:

- What did you do?
- How did you do it?
- How did students respond at each stage?
- What was successful in the lesson? Analyse why it was successful.
- What didn't work so well? Why?
- What would you do to improve the lesson next time?

### *Task 2.2 – What activities do you like doing?*

#### **Pre-reading stage**

1. On the whiteboard in groups give students 2 minutes to brainstorm as many words as possible connected with the topics of books and films. Give one or two examples first.
2. In pairs ask students to discuss a series of questions relating to the topic of books. For example:
  - What do you read? Books? Magazines? Newspapers? The internet?
  - Do you like reading books? What was the last book you read?
  - How often do you read books? Where do you read?
  - Tell your partner about your favourite book:

- What type of story is it? Thriller? Romance? Historical? Mystery? Fantasy?
- Why do you like it? Use these words to help you: exciting, interesting, surprise ending, good story, boring, slow, fast, jealous, ambitious, honest, friendly, horrible, bad, dishonest, funny, sad, happy.
- Have you read a book that is also a film? Y/N
  - Which do you prefer? Why? In general which do you think are better? Books or films about the same story?

*Preparation – Go to:*

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/study-break/easy-reading/hunger-games-book-review-level-1>

3. Ask learners to click on the preparation tab and in pairs match the definitions with vocabulary. Demonstrate on the whiteboard if necessary to ensure understanding and “lockstep” the correction stage so students continue to work at same pace.

## **While–reading stage**

### *Skimming stage*

Tell students they have 3 minutes to read the text. Time the activity and at the end instruct them to compare answers in pairs and then click on the True/False tab (or handout) to check.

### *Scanning Stage*

Focus learners on the multiple choice questions: tell students to look at the questions and then **scan** the text to find the answers. Learners work individually at this stage then compare before checking answers. Again “lockstep” the final correction stage to ensure students move forward as a group independent of relative abilities.

## **Post–reading**

Write the following words on the whiteboard: introduction, author, basic story, why I like it, why you should read/see it. Tell learners to write a review you and that they need 3 paragraphs/sections. Ask the learners where would they put each word? Focus on useful phrases which could be recycled by learners i.e. was written by, I like ..... because ..... it's a story about .... It's set in .... Ask learners in pairs to choose a film of a book they

like and with some research online write a review, monitoring carefully to ensure students are not simply cutting and pasting. Students can use **Sync In** for this stage, editing and adjusting each other's work to produce final documents for publication on a blog.

### *Task 2.3 – Activities for B1 level*

#### **Pre-reading stage**

1. On the whiteboard in groups give students 2 minutes to brainstorm as many words as possible connected with the topics of books and films. Give one or two examples first.
2. In pairs ask students to discuss a series of questions relating to the topic of books. For example:
  - What do you read? Books? Magazines? Newspapers? The internet?
  - Do you like reading books? What was the last book you read?
  - How often do you read books? Where do you read?
  - Tell your partner about one of your favourite books:
    - What type of story is it? Thriller? Romance? Historical? Mystery? Fantasy?
    - Why do you like it? Where was it set? When? What is it about? Who are the main characters?
  - Have you read a book that is also a film? Y/N
    - Which do you prefer? Why? In general which do you think are better? Books or films about the same story?
    - Is there a film of a book or book of a film you would like to see? Why?

*Preparation – Go to:*

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/study-break/easy-reading/hunger-games-book-review-level-1>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/study-break/easy-reading/life-pi-book-review-level-1>



3. Divide the class into 2 groups "As" (Hunger Games) and "Bs"(Life of Pi). Ask learners to click on the **preparation tab** and in pairs, in there A and B groups match the definitions with vocabulary for their review. Demonstrate on the whiteboard if necessary to ensure understanding and 'lockstep' the correction stage so students continue to work at same pace.

## **While-reading stage**

### *Skimming stage*

Tell students they have 2 minutes to read the text. Time the activity and at the end instruct them to click on the True/False tab (or handout) and in pairs answer the questions.

Scanning Stage – Focus learners on the multiple choice questions: tell students to look at the questions and then **scan** the text to find the answers. Learners work individually at this stage then compare answers before checking answers. Again 'lockstep' the final correction stage to ensure students move forward as a group independent of relative abilities.

### *Scanning Stage*

Focus learners on the multiple choice questions: tell students to look at the questions and then **scan** the text to find the answers. Learners work individually at this stage then compare answers before checking answers. Again 'lockstep' the final correction stage to ensure students move forward as a group independent of relative abilities.

## **Post-reading**

Ask all learners in their respective groups to look again at the articles. Tell them to write down all the key words (not sentences) from the article and feed in any unknown vocabulary as it presents itself while monitoring. Tell students to go into A/B pairs and using key word notes only, recount their reviews to each other.

Possible further activities:

- After listening group "As" and "Bs" come back together, pool information from what they have learned and write their reviews comparing it to original after corrections.
- Use follow up questions in the form: Have you read either of these books or seen the films? If yes, what was your opinion of the book/film? If no, would you like to see either? What book would you

like to see made into a film? What book/film would you like to review and why?

Focus on the structure of a review with an example: Introduction with name of author, director, stars (1) the plot (2), where and when it was set (3), why you would recommend it (4). Students go on to write their own reviews on books into films after feeding in useful vocabulary such as: it was directed by, it is set in, it is based on the book, it's about, it stars, my favourite scene is and some initial research on the internet. For more information on writing see written production section.

### *Task 3 – An introduction to written production skills at A2/B1 level*

#### *Task 3.1 – Thinking about writing*

- What type of writing activities in English do you do in your class?
- Are they solitary or group activities?
- Do your students write for a reason or only for tests?
- What procedure do you normally follow when introducing a writing text in your lessons?
- Read the following articles and compare your ideas:
  - Planning a writing lesson  
<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/planning-a-writing-lesson>
  - Approaches to process writing  
<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/approaches-process-writing>

#### *Task 3.2 – Developing collaborative writing*

##### Process Writing

The process approach to writing concentrates on the different stages that a writer goes through to produce the final piece of writing, Hedge (1988) gives this definition:

*They start off with an overall plan in their heads. They think about what they want to say and who they are writing for. They then draft out sections*

*of the writing and as they are working on them they are constantly reviewing, revising and editing their work.*

Therefore, teachers need to encourage students to go through a process of planning, organising, composing and revising.

While there are a number of different models of the writing process, we can consider the process in three broad stages: pre-writing, composing/drafting and evaluating/revising.

### The pre-writing stage

This stage includes generating ideas of what to write, and planning the pieces of writing. One of the problems students have with writing is that they find it difficult to think of things to write about, so generating ideas will help them.

Ideas can be generated in the classroom through:

- Brainstorming;
- Using Questions;
- Making notes;
- Using Visuals;
- Role-play and simulation.

Hedge (1988) comments that the skilled writer in real life considers two important questions: What is the purpose of this piece of writing?...Who am I writing this for? In other words, good writers think about the context of the writing, as in the communicative approach, by having a sense of purpose and a sense of audience and they plan their writing with these in mind.

Students group these ideas together, rejecting some and discussing others. The criteria for organising the ideas should then be discussed with the students, i.e. whether there is a logical progression from one to another, which are the best to begin and end with.

### The composing / Drafting stage

In this stage students begin writing their texts. Also as part of the teaching sequence, examples of drafts (authentic or written by the teacher) can be introduced for analysis and focussing the learners on what they need to know; beginning, endings, formulaic expressions that can be used in different text types.

### Evaluating and Revising

In this stage, students are encouraged to check their own work, rather than just relying on the teacher. Through assessing the draft students' writing is read and evaluated by themselves and other students not only for grammar, spelling etc, but also for coherence and meaning. Learners respond to these "corrections" and rewrite through conferencing, usually with the teacher to produce a final finished piece of work.

#### *Task 4 – Classroom activities to develop written production at A2/B1 level*

##### *Task 4.1 – Introduction*

As we have seen, some of the key areas of difficulty with writing are motivation and interest because even today writing is not taught as a skill in itself but as way to test. By encouraging our learners to be creative and empowering them to correct each other's work through developing noticing skills we have a real opportunity to change attitude to both writing in and out the classroom for our learners and build valuable real-world skills of working together and proof reading.

As you experiment, evaluate your teaching by making notes about the lesson:

- What did you do?
- How did you do it?
- How did students respond at each stage?
- What was successful in the lesson? Analyse why it was successful.
- What didn't work so well? Why?
- What would you do to improve the lesson next time?

##### *Task 4.2 – Lesson plan A2 and B1*

In this lesson plan students finish a short story after being given the opening paragraph. The principle is useful for both A2 and B1 learners with only a change in the opening paragraphs necessary to accommodate each learner level.

## Preparation

Before the lesson create a number a different “writeboards” each containing different opening paragraphs. For example for B1:

*Billy Weaver had travelled down from London on the slow afternoon train, with a change at Swindon on the way, and by the time he got to Bath it was about nine o'clock in the evening and the moon was coming up out of a clear starry sky over the houses opposite the station entrance. But the air was deadly cold and the wind was like a flat blade of ice on his cheeks. "Excuse me", he said, "but is there a fairly cheap hotel not too far away from here?"*

The range of topics is limitless and could even be entirely student generated. Furthermore, the application and techniques presented would also be suitable for more formal pieces of writing such as reports, letters, articles etc.

### Task 4.3 – Lesson plan: In class and at home

#### Activity 1

1. Ask students to work in pairs/groups, give each pair/group a different “opening paragraph” on Sync.in. Multiple versions can be opened because no sign in is required. Give students enough time to complete the story in any way they see fit.  
Remind students to “Save” their story frequently with their group name.
2. In class:
  - Ask students to move to a new computer and read the story their classmates have written. While they are reading the story they must edit the story for grammatical and lexical errors. Tell them to save their work with their name before moving on. For classroom management reasons it is best to do this in lockstep.
3. At home:
  - After stage 2 assign different groups to send their work to other groups by email, including you to ensure participation. Students can then edit and correct at home by collaboratively working online, sending back their ‘corrected’ version for the next lesson.

4. In class or at home, ask students to go back to their original version and compare. This stage could be repeated more than one time with different groups correcting the corrections etc.
5. Students now can produce a final version taking into account what their peers have suggested.

## Activity 2

1. Ask students to work in pairs/groups, give each pair/group a different 'opening paragraph' on Sync.in. Give students enough time to complete the story in any way they see fit.  
Remind students to '**Save**' their story frequently with their group name.
2. In class:
  - Ask students to move to a new computer and read the story their classmates have written. They must then continue the story in whatever way they feel appropriate. Tell them to save their work with their name.
3. At home:
  - After stage 2 assign different groups to send their work to other groups by email, including you to ensure participation. Students can then continue the story before sending it on to the next person in the chain. Only when the story is complete is the final completed version sent back the teacher for correction and comments.
4. The teacher can see the relative contributions of each student and comment accordingly or wait for the next lesson and peer correct as students discover their stories.
  - Students can pass round final versions reading each other's stories, send them via email or even create posters for display.

### Step 3

#### *Self evaluation*

Think back on all you have read and how effective were the lessons you tried in class. What problems did you encounter? Will you approach reading and writing in class differently from now on?

#### *Teachers' self evaluation*

	<b>I can do this. How?</b>	<b>What do I need to improve on?</b>
I have a <b>clear understanding</b> of the <b>CEF levels</b> for A2 and B1 for reading and writing.		
I have a <b>clear understanding</b> of the value of <b>skimming and scanning</b> as approaches for teaching reading.		
I am <b>aware</b> of the value of the <b>internet</b> as source of reading material for my students.		
I have <b>successfully</b> tried out some reading activities with my students.		
I have <b>experimented</b> with further online reading tasks.		
I have a <b>clear understanding</b> of 'process writing' technique.		
I have <b>successfully</b> tried out some written activities with my students.		

My students can draft, edit, re-draft and produce a <b>final product</b> of writing.		
My students have <b>produced</b> some work which could be used in a class display or blog.		
I am more aware of how to <b>develop</b> writing tasks.		
I have <b>experimented</b> further with online writing.		
I <b>feel able</b> to use ICT in and out of the class with my learners.		

*Students' self evaluation*

	Can	Can't do it yet
I can understand short, simple texts on familiar matters of a concrete type which consist of high frequency everyday -related language (A2).		
I can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to his/her field and interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension (B1).		
I can find specific, predictable information in simple material and explain what I like or dislike about something (A2).		
I can scan longer texts in order to locate desired information, and gather information from different parts of a text in order to fulfil a specific task (B1).		
I can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like "and", "but" and "because" (A2).		



I can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within my field of interest, by linking by linking my ideas into a linear sequence (B1).		
I can write very short, basic descriptions of events, past activities and personal experiences (A2).		
I can write straightforward, detailed descriptions on a range of familiar subjects within his field of interest (B1).		
Can write short, simple imaginary biographies (A2).		
I can write short, simple essays on topics of interest (B1).		
I can describe the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions (B1).		
I can use paragraphs when I write.		
I can work in pairs and groups well and produce good examples of written English.		
I can edit my and other students' work.		
I understand why we edit and re-draft.		
I can use the most important connecting words to indicate chronological order (first, then, after, later).		
I can use the computer to write in English.		

## RESOURCES

### Bibliography

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### Websites

Adobe Buzzword.

<http://www.adobe.com/uk/acom/buzzword/>

Adobe Buzzword: The Online Word Processing Document.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=pbuxiPIOoBI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pbuxiPIOoBI)

British Council: Approaches to process writing.

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/approaches-process-writing>

British Council: Articles on reading.

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/reading?page=0%2C1>

British Council: Designing a WWW reading task

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/designing-a-www-reading-task>

British Council: Error correction.

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/error-correction-1>

British Council: Read your level.

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/english-skills-practice/read-your-level>

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common\\_European\\_Framework\\_of\\_Reference\\_for\\_Languages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_European_Framework_of_Reference_for_Languages)

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment.

[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/elp/elp-reg/Source/Key\\_reference/Overview\\_CEFRscales\\_EN.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/elp/elp-reg/Source/Key_reference/Overview_CEFRscales_EN.pdf)

CEF Guide.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDPeP-gCU5E>

Learn English Teens.

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/>

Mixedink: A simple, free way to write together.

[http://www.mixedink.com/#/\\_how\\_it\\_works](http://www.mixedink.com/#/_how_it_works)

ShowDocument: Web Meeting and Document Sharing.

[www.showdocument.com](http://www.showdocument.com)

## **SINTESI IN ITALIANO**

Storicamente le attività di lettura e scrittura sono viste negativamente dagli studenti, considerate passive e, nel caso della scrittura, paragonabili ai test.

La moderna aula digitale offre agli insegnanti la possibilità di cambiare prospettiva.

La vasta gamma di risorse online facilmente reperibili su internet, può aiutare l'insegnante a fornire ai propri studenti interessanti e accessibili testi di lettura, riconducibili facilmente a situazioni del mondo reale.

Allo stesso modo la scrittura non deve essere considerata un'attività individuale focalizzata su singole prove. Attraverso l'attuazione di tecniche di "process writing" e sfruttando l'ambiente dei nostri studenti "nativi digitali", possiamo rendere la scrittura un'attività stimolante e creativa, apprezzata dentro e fuori l'aula.