

UNIT 2: Developing writing skills

Recommended Prior Knowledge: Students will have written for a variety of purposes and in different genres during their previous years of education. In particular they will have written imaginatively and informatively and had practice in using different formats such as letters, magazine articles and so on. Their previous reading experience should have acquainted them with different models of English writing.

Context: This unit should be studied as an introduction to the work in Units 6, 7 and 8.

Outline: The Unit shows students how to be aware of their own writing skills and performance and gives practice in thinking about their written communication skills, structuring their writing and developing their knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

2	Learning Outcomes	Suggested Teaching Activities	Related Assignments	Resources
A	Communicate with your audience W4	Students read short extracts of different types of writing e.g. newspaper reports, text books, travel brochures, instruction manuals, and then discuss in groups the audience at which each is aimed and what features in the text (vocabulary, register, sentence length etc) make it appropriate for that audience.	1: Give students a selection of topics and ask them to write two passages on the same topic but aimed at different audiences. 2: Students read their passages aloud to group who try to identify audience.	1 Resource sheets containing selection of different examples of writing. 2 Resource sheets containing selection of topics and relevant information from which students choose their own topics.
B	Choose the right word W1 W3	Teacher begins lesson by performing some dramatic action emphasising particularly strong feelings (e.g. Walks into room, slams door, behaves in very angry way). Teacher asks class to state what happened and then leads them into	Students to write account of teacher's actions for a friend who was not present. It is important that they should choose their vocabulary with care. Teacher to discuss	Preparation of performance by teacher; resource bank of appropriate vocabulary.

		consideration of vocabulary which most precisely explains the exact details.	individual responses with whole class.	
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C	Topic sentences W2 W5	1: Refer back to previous session and students' written responses. Explain that a single sentence summarising the teacher's actions provides the topic sentence from which a descriptive paragraph can develop. 2: Explain main features of a paragraph: a number of sentences related to a single topic. 3: Discuss and illustrate effects to be gained by varying position of topic sentence; consider ways in which paragraphs can be linked.	1 Discuss different features of paragraphing by referring to different types of written texts. 2: Students to write two linked paragraphs based on topic sentences provided by the teacher; they are to decide where the topic sentences can most effectively be positioned.	1: Any selection of texts or prepared resource sheet.
D	Writing in different genres (This section to be developed more fully in Units 6-8) W3-W4	'Brain-storming' session to identify the main different genres of writing with which students may be familiar (fiction; non-fiction; literary non-fiction; satire; poetry; pamphlets; letters etc). Class to discuss extracts from specific examples and, in particular, identify key features of style.	This is a session which is likely to occupy more than one lesson. 1: Students to research and find their own examples of specific genres to discuss with group. 2: Students to produce a piece of writing in their own chosen genre, imitating the features of the model they have discussed in 1.	Selection of texts covering a range of genres either available in classroom or in school library. A follow-up lesson to the introductory one could very usefully be held in the library.

2	Learning Outcomes	Suggested Teaching Activities	Related assignments	Resources
E	Write what you know W1 W3 W4	Teacher introduces the idea of the importance of communicating clearly with readers through apt vocabulary choices, similes, metaphors etc. In particular, class to consider the importance of basing their writing within their own experience.	Students to practise writing tasks: creating characters; describing a scene etc by using models of writing known to them and concentrating on precise details which will create a convincing account.	Some varied texts, particularly autobiographies and travel accounts to act as models. Students could also use photographs of places and people known to them.
F	Technical matters W5	Most teachers will make improvement in accuracy and technique an ongoing process through classroom strategies and assessment. Key points relating to students' problems with spelling, punctuation etc will be highlighted as part of normal marking procedures and are best dealt with as short 10 minute starter activities as appropriate.	Students can be made aware of the particular focus of the teacher's marking for different activities and should concentrate closely on them. Students to mark and correct each other's work and discuss their findings. Students to experiment with punctuation in their writing by attempting to produce deliberate ambiguities etc.	A range of text books and guides to technical accuracy in writing. The teacher!