

Scheme of work – Cambridge IGCSE® First Language English (0500)

Unit 7: Composition writing

Recommended prior knowledge

Students should have a reasonable working knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar, and of the conventions of structuring stories and essays, and will have written for a variety of purposes and in different genres during their previous years of education. Their previous reading experience should have acquainted them with different models of composition writing.

Context

This is the second of three units on writing in specific genres and should be related both to these and to the skills covered in Units 1–5.

Outline

The unit introduces students to the different types of continuous writing tasks and gives practice in writing for different purposes. Teachers are recommended to create their own titles or to use those set formerly as Cambridge IGCSE First Language English, Paper 3.

AO	Learning objectives	Suggested teaching activities	Related assignments	Learning resources
C3:2 C4:1 & 2 C6:1 W1–W5 S1–S4	Persona and viewpoint	<p>1. Teacher initiates discussion of the usage, benefits and limitations of first and third person perspective, including ‘one’, in both singular and plural, in the 3 different types of composition, providing short examples.</p> <p>2. Students in pairs study a news crime report and turn it into 2 statements, 1 made by the victim, and 1 by the perpetrator of the crime, in order to understand how change of persona changes perspective.</p> <p>3. Students in pairs revisit a narrative extract from a novel or short story they have studied, in the first or third person. They discuss, and feedback their views to the class, if/how a change of person would also change the content, register and reader positioning. [E]</p>	<p>1. Students create a character (gender, age, job, attitudes, experiences) and write and perform a ‘talking head’ monologue, in an appropriate voice, about a typical day in their life. (Teacher can assess this for C6:1.) [F]</p> <p>2. Students rewrite an incident from a novel or short story, giving the narrative voice to a different character and adopting a different viewpoint. [E][F]</p>	<p>Newspaper report of a crime, e.g. a robbery at a wealthy person’s house.</p> <p>‘Day in the Life’ type magazine profiles presented as monologues.</p> <p>Novel or short story studied by the class.</p>

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C3:2 C4:1 & 2 W1–W5 S2–S4	Whole-text and sentence structures	<p>1. Students study a narrative, a descriptive and an argumentative passage, all containing a mixture of simple and complex sentences, and discuss the effect of each type of sentence in context and their contrast, and the importance of using a variety of sentence types in continuous writing.</p> <p>2. Teacher elicits or gives out for class discussion 5-stage structures for the 3 composition genres. [Use of this support can be a form of differentiation.]</p> <p>3. Teacher elicits the reasons for a change of paragraph (change of time, place, direction or topic) and stresses importance of using paragraphs in continuous writing.</p>	<p>1. Students identify the sentence structure features of a piece of narrative writing and continue it in the same style. [E]</p> <p>2. Students in pairs put paragraph breaks in a short story and label the narrative stages.</p> <p>3. Students in pairs put paragraph breaks in an argument text and label the argument stages.</p> <p>4. Students use teachit website material for 'varying your sentences'.</p>	<p>Selection of passages in 3 genres exemplifying contrasting use of sentence structures.</p> <p>Writing structures for narrative, argumentative and descriptive compositions from the Cambridge Teacher Support website.</p> <p>Short story and famous speech texts (available from websites) with paragraph breaks removed.</p> <p>www.teachit.co.uk</p>
C3:2 C4:1 W1–W5 S1–S4	Argumentative and discursive writing	<p>1. Teacher gives out list of rhetorical devices with examples, and class discusses their effect. Students write their own sentences employing these devices.</p> <p>2. Students in pairs conduct a mini-debate on a moral issue given to them by the teacher, e.g. If you knew your friend had cheated in an exam, would you tell the teacher? 1 Student argues Yes and the other No. Class judges which of the pair makes the best case, according to number and strength of arguments.</p> <p>3: Students in pairs study a piece of argument and a piece of discursive writing, and define the difference in structure, style and tone.</p>	<p>1. Students listen to a recording of a speech, e.g. Barack Obama's inauguration speech, and identify rhetorical devices.</p> <p>2. Students look at past titles set for Paper 3 Section B question 2, and discuss which of these lend themselves to argument and which to discussion.</p>	<p>Coursebook material on rhetorical devices.</p> <p>Cards from Scruples board game or Teacher's own cards with a moral dilemma on each.</p>

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		4. Students in pairs work on an example of poor quality argument writing to identify the weaknesses and suggest improvements. [E]	3. Students plan some of the past titles, making sure that they can provide 5 or 6 separate ideas, each of which could be developed into a paragraph. [E] [F]	<p>CD or political speech from YouTube.</p> <p>Piece of argument and piece of discursive writing for comparison.</p> <p>Paper 3 past papers from the Cambridge Teacher Support website.</p> <p>Low grade example of argument writing from the <i>Standards Booklet</i>, 2010.</p>
C3:2 C4:2 W1–W5 S2–S5	Descriptive writing	<p>1. Teacher reminds students of the need in descriptive writing for precision, variety, unusual and interesting words, sound effects of words. Students in groups compile lists of unusual vocabulary and appropriate imagery for a specified event or place (e.g. blizzard, beach, skiing) and feedback to rest of class on their topic.</p> <p>2. Half the class writes a paragraph of negative description and half of positive description about a kind of place (e.g. an overgrown garden). Class discuss the different uses of language to create the required atmosphere.</p> <p>3. Students in pairs take turns to describe and draw a picture postcard of a place and then compare the drawing with the original. (They will realise that without sufficient and accurate detail a true likeness is not possible.)</p>	<p>1. Students write 50 words describing the room they are in, without repeating any word.</p> <p>2. Teacher puts phrases on board (e.g. storm at sea, ruined house, area of drought) and students make mind maps for each, representing the 5 senses (e.g. stinging saltiness, mouldy damp, parched craters).</p> <p>3. Students listen to a piece of music and simultaneously write a description of the scene the music conjures in their</p>	<p>Coursebook material on descriptive language.</p> <p>Set of picture postcards or calendar pages.</p> <p>Descriptive passages from novels, e.g. <i>Lord of the Flies</i>.</p> <p>CD of peaceful or stirring instrumental or orchestral music, e.g. Holst's <i>Planet Suite: Mars and Venus</i>, or Beethoven's <i>Fifth</i></p>

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		<p>4. Students in pairs study a paragraph of strongly descriptive writing to identify and analyse the effect of the devices used, e.g. compound adjectives, present participles, multiple adjectives, alliteration, exotic colours, reference to senses.</p> <p>5. Students in pairs work on an example of poor quality descriptive writing to identify the weaknesses and suggest improvements. [E]</p>	<p>mind. [F]</p> <p>4. Students in groups play the Furniture Game with famous people or those they know (i.e. they say what piece of furniture, car, pet, colour, food, day of the week etc. they think best represents that person).</p>	<p><i>Symphony</i>. Low grade example of descriptive writing from the <i>Standards Booklet</i>, 2010.</p>
C3:2 C4:2 W1–W5 S2–S4	Narrative writing	<p>1. Teacher introduces the resource sheet on narrative openings, and students practise each type for a given title (e.g. first day at a new school) then feedback which they think works best. [E]</p> <p>2. Students in pairs study a piece of narrative writing to identify and analyse the effect of the narrative devices (e.g. direct speech, change of pace, creation of atmosphere, tension, suspense, foreshadowing, repetition for effect, symbolism). [E]</p> <p>3. Teacher elicits the purpose of using dialogue in narrative writing, the best place to use it, the rules for its punctuation and layout, and the need to avoid repeating 'said'. Students then replace dialogue punctuation, including indentation for new speaker, in a passage from which it has been removed.</p> <p>4. Students in pairs work on an example of poor quality narrative writing to identify the weaknesses and suggest improvements. [E]</p>	<p>1 Students plan a narrative composition based on the first sentence of a famous novel, using a storyboard.</p> <p>2. Students write and read out half-page stories to exemplify proverbs (e.g. a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush; look before you leap) which follow conventional narrative structure.</p> <p>3. Students use Fruit Machine story starter to be given a random main character, event, setting and key object on which to base a story.</p>	<p>Resource sheet on different types of narrative opening on the Cambridge Teacher Support website.</p> <p>Resource sheet on first sentences of famous novels (compiled by teacher or available in CUP coursebook).</p> <p>Model of a storyboard.</p> <p>Narrative passage, e.g. from <i>The Woman in Black</i> or <i>I'm the King of the Castle</i> by Susan Hill.</p> <p>Dialogue from which punctuation, indentation and speech verbs have been removed.</p>

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				<p>Englishonline website software.</p> <p>Low grade example of narrative writing from the <i>Standards Booklet</i>, 2010.</p>
C3:2 C4:2 W1–W5 S2–S4	Openings and endings	<p>1. Teacher explains how important engaging openings are for all types of writing, and gives examples. Class discusses what makes an effective kind of opening for each genre.</p> <p>2. Teacher explains how important effective endings are for all types of writing, and gives examples. Class discusses why first person narrators can't die, why clichéd endings should be avoided, and why a circular structure which refers back to the opening can be effective in all genres.</p> <p>3. Students in pairs work on examples of compositions with weak openings and endings to identify the weaknesses and suggest improvements. [E]</p>	<p>1. Students write first and last sentences for the different types of composition, using past paper titles. [Differentiation possible by which titles are given to which students.] The class judges the best.</p> <p>2. Students in pairs read and add an opening sentence and a closing sentence to an argument composition which has had them removed. The class judges the best.</p>	<p>Paper 3 past papers.</p> <p>Examples of compositions (e.g. from the <i>Standards Booklet</i>, 2010) which have weak openings and endings.</p> <p>High grade argument composition from which the opening and closing sentences have been removed.</p>