# Writing

Hi everyone! Welcome to this short but intensive Writing program. Over our six hours, I hope we can cover some Writing Skills that can help you and your students. We will do a variety of writing tasks and look at a little bit of theory. *The main focus of the program is to help you and your students write.*
We will not be able to cover everything I have included in the program due to time constraints, but the uncovered material can be referenced later if needed. Thanks!

## Part 1: Writing Theory

1. Ascertaining Goals and Institutional Constraints
2. Deciding on Theoretical Principles
3. Planning Content
4. Weighing the Elements
5. **Drawing up a Syllabus**
6. Selecting Material
7. Preparing Activities and Roles
8. Choosing Types and Methods of Feedback
9. Evaluating the Course
10. Reflecting on the Teacher's and Student's Experience

## Part 2: Writing Practice

Activities will be based on **Part 5: Drawing up a Syllabus**

### Writing Skills

1. Structural
2. Functional
    a. Definition Paragraphs
    b. Process Analysis Paragraphs
    c. Descriptive Paragraphs
    d. Opinion Paragraphs
    e. Narrative Paragraphs
3. Topical
4. Situational
5. Skills and Processes
6. Tasks

We will also complete daily tasks: **Writing Warm-ups, Paragraph Editing** and **Reflective Writing**

**Note:** Extra Uploaded Material and Links will be provided online at www.teflsites.com for further reference.

## Part 1: Writing Theory

## 1. Ascertaining Goals and Institutional Constraints

### A. What do your students need to do?

These Questions should be discussed in small groups. Ask the questions, discuss, give opinions and share findings with your class.

1. Do your students have to pass exams that values writing to a formula and rewards above all accuracy of grammar, spelling, and punctuation?

2. Do they even have to compose at all, or just write sentences, judge grammatically, or pick from multiple-choice responses?

3. Do you want your students to write to demonstrate mastery of form, or to experiment with language, record experiences and reactions, and generate and communicate ideas?

4. Or do you simply want to increase their confidence in themselves as writers?

Answering questions like these is a necessary first step in designing a course.

And different answers will lead in different directions.

### B. What happens when students write or speak in English?

Most times they feel worried, embarrassed, hampered by barriers, restrictions and fears. They feel their voice is monotonous.

*Some student responses:*

> "I'm not the real me."

> "I feel like I'm choking on a word that won't come out.

"Inside of me I feel stupid and dumb."

*These were owing mainly, it seems, not to the difficulty of writing itself but to the difficulty of doing it in a new language.*

## 1. Ascertaining Goals and Institutional Constraints

### C. What happens when students write in their own language?

*Some student responses:*

"I feel comfortable, free, self-assured, open, loud, and positive."

"I feel more like me."

"I can write with feelings and anger."

"Words just come out from my brain on paper."

*We can see that taking direction from these students and addressing comfort, confidence, and fluency as a goal would lead to a very different course from one that sees its goal the production of an academic essay with an introduction, three points, and a conclusion, and effective use of transition words.*

### D. What if an imposed curriculum or textbook stresses only rhetorical form and grammatical accuracy? What is the teacher to do?

If institutional constraints limit our goals and what we see as the student's goals, a few courses of action are open to us:

- We can work politically to change the constraints. We can join and form committees, we can make proposals, and we can run pilot programs.
- We can make only a part of the course address the test or the assigned curriculum.
- We can vary our means of working towards the prescribed ends (example a 30 minute essay on a prescribed topic – the whole course doesn't have to consist of 30 minute writing tasks)

## 2. Deciding on Theoretical Principles

Principled teaching will always reveal principled theoretical underpinning.

What we decide to emphasize in the classroom is not just a practical matter of choosing an activity to fill the next day's lesson plan.

As teachers we have the choice of presenting a text structure as a given, as some kind of "standard," as a form to be learned and imitated, or going beyond that and exploring in our classes the notion that what writers do reflects an entire system of values and beliefs, with strong connections between the writing process and the beliefs of a culture.

For example:

1. Take a **Topic Sentence** – a typical standard form in an English composition class.

To someone Chinese for instance, this concept of a topic sentence stating the main idea of a paragraph right there up front is " symbolic of the values of a busy people in an industrialized society". (Fan Shen p.462 1989) In Chinese, writers try to "reach a topic gradually and systematically". Sandra McKay claims that we need to examine the "social practices that surround academic discourse" (1993, p. 74), and we can do that by discussing openly in our classes the differences in approaches to writing and reading and critically examining the text forms that appear in our textbooks and curricular guides.

2. Another example of a writing-class decision that has clear links to theory is the choice of focus on content or form. A commitment to content, fluency, personal voice, and revising is often called process writing. A process approach to teaching writing can be used with personal and with academic content, with literature and with nonfiction. And in a process approach, of course the product and accuracy and grammar are important-they are just not the first and only thing that is important. A principled process approach always pays serious attention to the product-but at an appropriate stage in the process.

*So, as teachers, we need to confront our ideological position and recognize our perceptions of the relationship between the type of writing we teach and the roles we are preparing students for in academia and the wider world of work.*

To help us and our students, we could ask ourselves:

1. Why am I doing this activity in my class?

2. How does it fit into what I know about language and language learning?
3. What will my students learn from it?
4. What is it worth learning for?

## 3. Planning Content

### 1. What can we use in a writing class?

Can we use personal experience, social issues, cultural issues, literature, or the content of other subject areas?

There is no right answer to what we should use in a writing class, but there is one wrong answer.

The wrong answer is that the content of a writing course takes a back seat to practice in prescribed models of paragraph or essay form; that is, that it does not matter what you write about as long as it conforms to an accepted rhetorical model.

Writing is for discovery of learning, not just demonstration of learning.

Writing allows us to, put words on paper before we present it to an audience. We can read it, re-read it, revise it, alter it, write it again, give ourselves feedback, learn as we go, make changes and corrections.

If we just copy, analyze and imitate given texts, we are not allowing student to struggle for that fit between content and form, that all writers need to struggle with.

### 2. What content do we need?

We need content that will encourage students to use writing as a tool for learning and for communication and to become engaged enough with their writing to have an investment in examining it, improving it, and eventually revising it for readers.

Students need topics that allow them to generate ideas, find the forms to fit the ideas, and invite risk taxing.

### 3. Discuss and suggest

In small groups, can we suggest some topics that will generate ideas and keep students motivated enough to take responsibility for their own writing?

## 4. Weighing the Elements

Writing consists of many parts. As teachers, we need to consider which parts are most important.

Content, organization, originality, style, fluency, accuracy?

We cannot do everything, so we have to form priorities and weight the elements according to students' needs and our own philosophy.

Writing is messy, chaotic. We try to focus on neat systems as teachers, to impose order on it by focusing on grammar, rhetorical modes, and models of academic discourse, to provide ourselves with neat systems to teach.

It is helpful to do a needs analysis on the first day, balancing institutional goals with what students say they need to learn and what they need to use writing for; then we can weight the elements so that the chaos of writing is somewhat reduced for the students, since they can focus on one or two things at a time.

*For example:*

My course would usually address themes (5 of them…chosen by students), and within each theme and task, students focus on critical reading, generating ideas and expressing them with a brainstorm, initial sentence, topic sentence, reasoning, support, conclusion, using learned vocabulary, phrases, expressions.

The initial focus is more on fluency, getting ideas out, rather than perfect grammar (this comes later through editing, revising etc…)

Review:

- What do your students need to do?
- How can we get around institutional constraints?
- Why am I doing this activity?
- What content can we use in a writing class?

- How can we motivate them to like what they do?
- Which writing elements are important, and which are not?

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

We will look at 6 Writing Skills, normally found in writing courses.

For each writing skill, we will look at definitions and example paragraphs.

Our **Writing Practice** element of the course will focus on these 6 skills (especially **2. Functional.**)

**Writing Skills**

1. **Structural**
2. **Functional**
3. **Topical**
4. **Situational**
5. **Skills and Processes**
6. **Tasks**

## 5.Drawing up a syllabus

### 1. Structural

Writing courses, particularly at beginning level can be organized around grammar and sentence patterns. A present tense paragraph one day, a past tense paragraph and so on. Structural courses nowadays are often organized by patterns of writing forms or genres: paragraphs with topic sentence, descriptions, analyses and so on.

**Example 1: Paragraph Structure**

Topic Sentence

The Body

- a supporting sentence
- a supporting sentence
- a supporting sentence

The Concluding Sentence

a. Topic Sentence

**My Sundays**

I enjoy being at home on Sunday. I feel comfortable and peaceful at home. I clean up my bedroom and take care of my dog. On Sunday, I have neough time to talk with my mom about my friends and school life. I like to be alone in my bedroom. I read books, draw

pictures, and listen to music there. My Sundays are not too exciting, but I am happy with my quiet Sundays.

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

b. The Body: Supporting Sentences

1. Saturday is my favorite day.
    a. Every Saturday, I play soccer with my friends outside.
    b. Sometimes I go to the movies.
2. Seoul is an important city.
    a. It is the capital of Korea.
    b. Its population is about 15 million.
3. My brother has very good study habits.
    a. He has a set time to study every day.
    b. He has a set place to study.

c. The Concluding Sentence

**My Healthy Grandfather**

My grandfather cares about healthy eating. First of all, he tries to choose a diet with plenty of vegetables, fruits, and grain products. He is also careful about cutting down on sugar and salt. I addition, he rarely eats food that has a lot of fat and cholesterol. Like many of his friends, my grandfather tries to keep in shape and stay healthy.

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

### 2. Functional

Functional Writing would include paragraph and essay forms that would look at:

a. **Definition**
b. **Process Analysis**
c. **Descriptions**
d. **Opinions**
e. **Narratives etc.**

Can you name a few more Functional Writing genres?
……..

### a. Definition Paragraphs

**What is a definition paragraph?**

A definition paragraph defines something. The word defintion comes from the verb to *define*, which means "to state the meaning of a word or to describe the basic qualities of something." In a definition paragraph, the writer's main purpose is to tell you what something is.

**A definition paragraph**

- Explains what something is
- Gives facts, details, and examples to make the definition clear to the reader

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

**Example Definition Paragraph**

**Gumbo**

The dictionary definition of gumbo does not make it sound as delicious as it really is. The dictionary defines gumbo as a "thick soup made in south Louisiana." However, anyone who has tasted this delicious dish knows that this definition is too bland to describe gumbo. It is true that gumbo is a thick soup, but it is much more than that. Gumbo, one of the most popular of all the Cajun dishes, is made with different kinds of seafood or meat mixed with vegetables such as green peppers and onions. For example, seafood gumbo contains shrimp and crab.

Other kinds of gumbo include chicken, sausage or turkey. Regardless of the ingredients in gumbo, this regional delicacy is a tasty dish.

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

### b. Process Analysis Paragraphs

**What is a Process Analysis Paragraph?**

In a process analysis paragraph, you divide a process into separate steps. Then you list or explain the steps in chronological, or time, order. Special time words or phrases allow you to tell the reader when a particular step occurs. The process analysis paragraph ends with a specific result – something that happens at the end of the process.

**A process analysis paragraph**

- Explains a sequence or process
- Presents facts and details in chronological order
- Uses time words or phrases
- Ends with a specified result

**Example Process Analysis Paragraph**

**Applying to an American University**

Althought the process for applying to an American university is not complicated, it is important to follow each step. The first step is to choose several schools that you are interested in attending. Next, write to these schools to ask for information, catalogues, and applications. You may also want to visit the schools' websites. After you have researched several schools, narrow the list to three to five. Then mail all the required forms and documents only to your final list of three to five schools. If the school of your choice requires you to take a standardized test such as the SAT, ACT or TOEFL, be sure to do so early. In addition, ask various school officials and teachers to write letters of recommendation for you if the university requires them. Finally, almost all schools have an application fee. This should be sent in the form of a check or money order. One last piece of advice is to start early because thousands of high school students are all applying at the same time.

**c. Descriptive Paragraphs**

**What is a Descriptive Paragraph?**

A descriptive paragraph describes how something or someone looks or feels. It gives an impression of something. If you only wanted to explain to someone what a *samovar* is, for example, you could write a *definition* paragraph because a definition paragraph does not include how the writer feels. However, if you wanted to tell about the feelings you had when you drank a cup of Russian tea that was made in a samovar, you would write a descriptive paragraph.

**A descriptive paragraph**

- Describes
- Gives impressions, not definitions
- "shows" the reader
- Creates a sensory* image in the reader's mind

  * related to the five senses: hearing, taste, touch, sight, smell

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

**Example Descriptive Paragraph**

**Samovar Memory**

Every time I have a cup of strong Russain tea, I remember my sweet grandma and her magical samovar. When I was a little girl, my grandmother would make tea for me in this giant, gleaming tea urn. I was fascinated by the samovar and its tasty contents. Its copper sides were decorated with beautiful red and black swirls. Grandma told me that the intricate decorations were painted by skilled craftsmen from her village. I can still remember the smell of the dark tea that my grandma made using the urn. Its leaves always filled her tiny apartment with an exotic aroma, and the rich brew tasted like liquid velvet.

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

### d. Opinion Paragraphs

**What is an Opinion Paragraph?**

An opinion paragraph expresses the writer's opinion. A good writer will include not only opinion, but also facts to support his or her opinion. For example, if a writer says "Smoking should not be allowed anywhere," the writer must give reasons for this opinion. One reason could be a fact, such as "Thirty thousand people died int eh United States and Canada last year because of lung cancer - a known result of smoking." This fact supports the writer's opinion.

**An opinion paragraph**

- Gives the writers opinions about a topic
- Interprets or explains facts
- Is often about a controversial issue
- Makes the reader think
- Considers both sides of the argument

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

**Example Opinion Paragraph**

**Dying with Dignity**

The U.S. government should support the legal use of 'medicide,' which happens when people with terminal diseases choose to end their lives rather than continue living. One reason the government should do this is because people should not be forced to continue living if they are in severe pain and cannot live with it. A second reason is that staying in the hospital for a long time often causes a financial burden on the family. Terminally ill people often worry about the hardship that this will casue their families. Finally, people who are dying sometimes lose hope. Even if they are alive, they can often only lie in bed, and for some people, this is not "life." In the end, while many people believe that medicide is an "unnatural way to die" and should remain illegal, the government should allow sick people the legal right to end their lives if they want.

**e. Narrative Paragraphs**

**What is a Narrative Paragraph?**

The narrative paragraph can be fun to write because you tell a story or relate an event. Narratives have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Any time you go to a movie or read a fiction book, you are looking at a narrative. Narrative paragraphs often describe events from the writer's life.

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

| |
|---|
| **A narrative paragraph** |

- Tells a story
- Gives background information in the opening sentence(s)
- Has a beginning, a middle, and an end
- Entertains and informs

**Example Narrative Paragraph**

**My Macy's Nightmare**

I will never forget the first time I got lost in New York City. I was travelling with my parents during the summer vacation. We were in Macy's department store, and I was so excited to see such a huge place. Suddenly, I turned around to ask my mom something, but she was gone! I began crying and screaming at the top of my lungs. A salesclerk came up to me and asked if I was okay. She got on the public address (P.A.) system and notified the customers that a little boy with blue jeans and a red cap was lost. Two minutes later my mom and dad came running toward me. We all cried and hugged each other. Every time I see a Macy's, I am reminded of that terrified boy.

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

### 3. Topical

Themes: housing, health, education, or abstractions such as success or courage. Content course writing.

**Example 1: Health**

**The Black Death**

The difference between an epidemic and a pandemic is the distance they cover. An epidemic is a contagious disease that spreads throighout a community. A pandemic, on the other hand, spreads over a larger area, sometimes acorss many countries. Based on these definitions, we can categorize the "Black Death," which devastated Europe in the 1300s, as a pandemic. By the time it ended, it had killed about 25 million people – roughly a third of Europe's population. This terrible disease, also called the plague, began in Asia and was brought to Europe through an act of war.

**Example 2: Courage**

**Courage**

Courage is mental and moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear or difficulty. It is the firmness of mind and will in the face of danger or extreme difficulty. It suggests an ingrained capacity for meeting strain with fortitude and resilience. A person who is mentally and physically strong, is normally found to be courageous.

Courage is of two kinds: physical and moral. Physical courage depends upon one's physical strength. A weak person is rarely physically courageous. But the beasts are sometimes seen to be physically courageous. Physical courage is needed in the event of any danger for bringing immediate relief or protection to the victim, as in the case of fire or war.

Moral courage belongs to an honest person. Even a physically weak person can have moral courage. It is really rare and found in one in a million. A person possessing physical courage may be able to save a victim from drowning or burning, by jumping courageously into the scene of accident.

But there are a few in the society to verbally protest against unfair or unjust deeds they come across. A person of moral courage is not a coward. He always revolts against injustice and wrong-doings.

Moral courage comes from conviction and purity of character. A person of moral courage sticks to his own principles, and does not compromise with evil forces. He is ready to sacrifice any kind of self-interest for his moral character.

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

4. **Situational**

Situational transactions, such as applying for a job, complaining to a landlord, writing letters to the newspaper, writing a business memo, TOEIC…or writing essays to pass a course.

**Example 1:Applying for a Job (Cover Letter)**

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to apply for the upcoming position available within your department. I am interested in the position of European Studies visiting English language professor, which I found advertised online at www.daveseslcafe.com, dated 12th June 2009. I was also made aware of this position from one of your colleagues, a Mr. Jones, who works with your advertising department.

I would particularly welcome the opportunity to work for your University and as you will notice from my attached curriculum vitae, the position you are offering matches both my personal and professional interests. I believe that I have obtained a vast amount of worthwhile experience from my years in teaching. I am sure that this, together with my understanding of the needs and expectations of your University and students, would be extremely relevant to the position. I am a dedicated teacher and I have a responsible attitude to my work and have the organisational skills to cope with the necessary tasks ahead. Along with this I am always open for self-development, listening to the advice, suggestions and help of others. I am well able to work alone and take responsibility for all aspects of course development and teaching and I relish the opportunity to achieve this with your department. As a person and as a teacher, I hope that my experience, skills and personality can be of use to you and your students.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for considering me for the position available within your University. I would be pleased to discuss with you my curriculum vitae and any other queries you might have in more detail. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Respectfully yours,

Seanan Clifford

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

5. **Skills and Processes.**

Skills and processes such as generating ideas, organizing ideas, revising, writing fluently, writing effective beginnings and endings, and developing an argument to convince a reader.

**Example 1: Planning a Paragraph**

a. Prewriting

**My Favorite Teacher**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Jung, Lee | long, black hair | told interesting stories |
| 34 years old | energetic | cared about students |
| tall and thin | excellent | talked to students a lot |
| walked around | funny | helped us to present school plays |
| put energy into teaching | taught us to love literature | loved classical music |
| single | played jokes | liked color black |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | excellent | • taught us to love literature<br>• helped us to present school plays |
| Jung, Lee | My Teacher | energetic | • walked around<br>• put energy into teaching |
| | tall and thin | funny | • played jokes<br>• told interesting stories |
| 34 years old | | caring | • loved students<br>• talked to students a lot |
| single | long, black hair | • loved classical music<br>• liked color black | |

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

b. Outlining

**My Favorite Teacher**

Example 1:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Life** | taught Korean | 34 years old | single | loved classical music | liked color black |
| **Character** | energetic | walked around | | funny | put energy into teaching |
| | played jokes | told interesting stories | | caring | talked a lot to students |
| | excellent | taught us to love literature | | | |
| **Appearance** | tall and thin | long, black hair | | | |

Example 2:

**My Favorite Teacher**

**Life** taught Korean 34 years old

**Appearance** tall and thin long, black hair

**Character**

a. energetic – put energy into teaching

b. Funny – played jokes, told interesting stories

c. excellent – taught us to love literature

d. caring – talked to students a lot

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus


c. The First Draft

**My Favorite Teacher**

My favorite teacher was Jung, Lee. He was 34 years old and taught Korean.

He was a tall, thin man. He had black hair. In the classroom, he was energetic.
He wore thick glasses
When he teaching he put his energy into teaching. He was also funny. He told jokes

and interesting stories in class. He was also an excellent teacher. He taught us love

literatre. Mr. Lee cared a lot of for his students too. He had time to talk to students
He helped us to present a school play every year
about their problems. I miss him very much.

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

d. Revising

**My Favorite Teacher**

My favorite teacher was Jung, Lee. He was 34 years old and taught Korean. He was a tall, thin man. He had black hair. He wore think glasses. In the classroom, he
*with black hair*
was always energetic. When he teaching he put his energy into teaching. He was also funny. He told jokes and interesting stories in class. He was also an excellent teacher. He taught us love literatre. He helps us to present a school play every year. Mr. Lee cared a lot of for his students too. After school He had time to talk to students about their problems. I miss him very much.

e. Proofreading

**My Favorite Teacher**

Jung, Lee is a teacher to remember. He was a tall, thin man with black hair. He
, = ?  , = ?
wore think glasses. In the classroom, he was always energetic. When he teaching he put
was ?
his energy into teaching. He was also funny. He told jokes and interesting stories in class. He was an excellent teacher. He taught us love literatre. He helps us to present a
to ?  literature?  helped ?
school play every year. Mr. Lee cared a lot of for his students too. After school He had
of ?  he ?
time to talk to students about their problems. I hope I can meet him again someday and somewhere.

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

f. The Final Draft

**My Favorite Teacher**

**A Teacher to Remember**

Jung Lee is a teacher to remember. He was a tall and thin man with black hair, and he wore think glasses. In the classroom, he was always energetic. When he was teaching, he put his energy into teaching. He was also funny. He told jokes and interesting stories in class. He was an excellent teacher. He taught us to love literature and helped us to present a school play every year. Mr. Lee cared a lot for his students too. After school, he had time to talk to students about their problems. I hope I can meet him again someday and somewhere.

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

### 6. Tasks.

Problem-solving activities, such as producing a class magazine of accounts of student trips; comparing the structure of texts written for different audiences and purposes; writing, editing and producing a play; and examining the difference between ESL textbook situations and the expectations of the student's culture.

**Example 1: A class magazine**

Class projects can be an excellent way to focus the whole class and get them working together towards a common goal.

Taking some 'time out' from regular classes and doing something completely different can really help group dynamics and you may also give quieter or less able students a chance to shine. Making a class magazine is a project that will appeal to most groups as it allows individuals to work on what interests them. Starting a project from scratch can seem a little daunting to begin with so here's a simple step-by-step guide on how to make a class magazine.

**Planning**

- Bring in some magazines. Let your students have a look through them. You could do a class survey on magazines at this stage or simply chat to your class about the type of magazines they like.
- On the board brainstorm the different sections that magazines have. Try to include as much variety as possible so there's something for everyone. (Horoscopes, beauty tips, sports pages, film reviews, cinema news, fashion, photo stories, comic strips, puzzles, technology pages, music, interviews with famous people, recipes, jokes, problem pages etc. etc.)
- Ask your students if they would like to make a magazine in English. Hopefully they'll be keen to! Ask students for ideas for a name for the magazine and hold a class vote to decide on the name.

**Organising the project**

- Now you need students to choose who they want to work with (pairs or small groups) and what section they want to produce. Make a list of what everyone is going to do, in case you, or they, forget by the next class.
- Set the deadlines and plan the sections. Negotiate with your students about how

long they will need to produce their section and allow sufficient class time for you

## 5. Drawing up a syllabus

to be able to help each group with their section and provide language input and error correction. You can also encourage students to look for information at home, on the internet etc. Set a date where everyone must bring their completed work to class and try to stick to it. Having said that, if your students get really into it and are producing good work you could always extend the deadline if you think their time is being well spent.

- Collect all the sections and work with your class to decide on the order they will go in. Students can now make a contents page and a cover for their magazine.
- Put the magazine together with a book spine or by stapling it. Before you do this you may want to make several copies of the magazine. If you have the facilities to do so, one for each student could be really nice and they can take it home to show their parents. If that's not possible, make a couple of copies and hang them in the classroom for other students to look at.

**Exploiting the magazine**

- If you teach several classes of a similar level you can take the magazines in to show your other groups and make some activities based around it or simply let the students read it and do the puzzle pages. You may even inspire your other groups to make one too.
- If you have access to a computer room you could really make a professional looking magazine but don't worry if you don't, a homemade looking one can be just as good.

- Having an end product to work towards can be really motivating for a class. Making a class magazine should be an enjoyable experience for you and the students and it will also give you a chance to stand back a little and observe your students in action. You should be available to guide them and offer support and advice but it will also give you a chance to find out more about their interests which will help you to plan for following lessons.

## 6. Selecting Material

When selecting materials for your students, the following *7 features* may be of help:

1. **Topics.** Will they engage students' interests? What are they based on – experience, materials in the book such as readings and pictures, activities and inquiries beyond the classroom, or out-of-the-blue random topics? Are the topics culturally appropriate for your students? Is the content relevant and engaging?

2. **Types of writing.** Are the students writing essays, letters, paragraphs? Is that what they need to be writing?

3. **Opportunities for and instruction in methods of generating ideas.** Which of the following are included: brainstorming, free writing, listing, mapping, outlining? Which are appropriate for your students?

4. **Instruction on principles of rhetorical organization.** What information is provided to help students organize various types of writing –letters, description, narration, exposition, and argument, for example – and which type do your students need to practice?

5. **Opportunities for collaboration.** Is group work a part of the activities? If so, how are collaborative activities viewed in your culture?

6. **Opportunities for revision.** Are students encouraged and directed to write drafts? Does the book provide instruction on what to do at various stages? Does your curriculum allow for revision of essays?

7. **Instruction in editing and proofreading.** What can students learn from the book about how to edit their own work? What instruction is provided in finding and editing grammatical errors?

## 7. Preparing Activities and Roles

When planning what we want our students to do, we should not just focus on imparting information and bank on students comprehending it. We should become students ourselves, be part of the activities, take roles, demonstrate, participate; learn from doing, what your students might feel about the activity and the role they are playing. Get your hands dirty so to speak! Put yourself in their shoes.

**Note:** Further Ideas and Info regarding Group Work and Pair Work can be found on our homepage: www.teflsites.com

## 8. Choosing Types and Methods of Feedback

**First:** In the case of large classes, not every piece of writing has to be corrected or even seen by the teacher. Students can do journal writing, response logs to reading, or free writing in which the aim is to generate ideas, and so increase fluency rather than accuracy. This writing can be for the student's eyes only, or students can read each other's work, with clear guidelines from the teacher about what to look for – not for accuracy, but for a response as a reader. If the teacher is to read the writing, the possible roles can be specified and distinguished: general reader, helper, copy editor, or examiner. Then the teacher will not have to look for and comment on everything all at once, in one draft.

**Second,** whoever responds has a variety of physical methods of responding: a comment to or a conversation with the writer; an interlinear response with computer software, using such features as the "Comment" capability and redlining; an audiotaped response; or a written response. If you choose a written response, you can write a note to the student on a separate sheet of paper or on adhesive "Post-it notes"; you can write comments on the page; you can use an analytical checklist, or guidelines. But students have to understand what you are doing and why, and what you are not doing and why – and also what you will do on a later draft.

**Third,** you have to select the type of response you prefer to give, with time and class size being important factors in the decision. Some teachers do the following:

- They evaluate by giving a grade.
- They locate, indicate the nature of, and/or correct the student's errors.
- They make suggestions for changes: "I think you need to rewrite the sentence about your boss so that we understand his point of view more clearly."
- They reflect – and subtly correct as they do so: "I'm not surprised that your grandmother felt upset." (The student had actually written: "My grandmother feeling upset.")
- They rewrite passages: "I am easy to change a fuse."→"Changing a fuse is easy."

## 8. Choosing Types and Methods of Feedback

- They comment on strategies: "It might be useful to define the term success."
- They ask questions: "Where was your grandmother born?"
- They emote: "What a terrible experience!" "I feel this way, too."
- They criticize: "The conclusion is weak. It introduces new points."
- They describe: "You start out by mentioning four ways in which language learning is beneficial. Then you provide two specific examples."
- (less frequently) They praise: "The paragraph about your aunt's languagelearning experience makes its point very strongly through the story you tell." I used to type up student sentences with errors in them for the whole class to edit. Now, to emphasize the positive, I type up those that work well and we discuss these "winners."

**Fourth**, you and your students need to agree on the purpose of the response. The key question here is: What are the students supposed to do next? Does the feedback help them do that? If we fail to make our expectations clear, we have only ourselves to blame if the students get it wrong.

## 9. Evaluating the Course

Teachers use sentence tests and essay tests to evaluate students' progress. They use the results of these tests in addition to questionnaires and their own reflective logs to evaluate their own success as teachers. One form of evaluation that is becoming increasingly popular in writing courses actually helps to combine student evaluation and course evalution: the use of portfolios. All semester students work on multiple drafts of their writing, which are guided by their instructor but not graded. At the end, they select three or four specified types of writing to include in the portfolio, both in-class writing and revised work. They write a cover letter assessing their work and their progress and what they have learned in the course. The portfolio is then evaluated by another instructor in the program, who assigns a grade. So the original instructor is coach, not evaluator. These portfolios lead students to want to revise, to present their best work. They also provide a valuable ongoing teacher-training tool, since teachers continually discuss appropriate assignments and the qualities of acceptable and good writing. They also see what colleagues assign and how they respond to student writing – a salutary lesson. Probably, enough problematic considerations about planning a writing course have been presented to give you food for thought for a while. But let's round off our steps with one last, vital step.

## 10. Reflecting the Teacher's Experience

Goals, theories, content, focus, syllabus, materials, activities, feedback, and course evaluation are substantive matters that we have to address whenever we design a writing course, but they pale into insignificance beside one thing: ourselves and our experience. In fact, we should begin – not end – with that. Teachers do not always consider themselves researchers. But any teacher who ponders why one class or activity works and another does not, any teacher who tests out a new approach and notes its effects, is a researcher, theorist, and practitioner – a busy person. We need to have confidence in what is called variously "the wisdom of practice" (Shulman, 1987, p. 11) or "a teacher's sense of plausibility about teaching" (Prabhu, 1990, p. 172). The best way for a teacher to record this sense of plausibility and analyze it is, of course, through writing. A key component of any teacher-training course should therefore be a massive amount of writing: reflective teaching logs, reports, essays, research papers, and responses to other teachers' and students' writing, with the hope that teachers in writing courses will then write along with their students and present their own writing for discussion. That way, we will keep in the forefront what we and our students learn and experience as we work together, and we will let that set the framework for the other nine steps in planning a writing course.

## Part 2: Writing Practice

We will do a variety of writing tasks to improve our writing and our student's writing. Activities will be based on **Writing Skills** from **Part 5: Drawing up a Syllabus**

**Writing Skills**

1. Structural **- Fly, Finger, Worm, Korea**
2. Functional
   a. Definition Paragraphs **– A Corkscrew**
   b. Process Analysis Paragraphs **– Decorating a Cake**
   c. Descriptive Paragraphs **– Hershey's Kisses**
   d. Opinion Paragraphs **- Controversy**
   e. Narrative Paragraphs **– The Magic Sword**
3. Topical**- Mers**
4. Situational**– Cover Letter**
5. Skills and Processes
6. Tasks**– A Brochure**

We will also complete daily tasks: **Writing Warm-ups, Paragraph Editing** and **Reflective Writing**