Teach with digital

Using digital tools to improve writing

Steph Dimond-Bayir & Virgil Ierubino

Cambridge English
Who are you?

A. I’m a teacher.
B. I’m a co-ordinator/director of studies.
C. I’m a learner.
D. I’m a parent.
Teach with digital

Using digital tools to improve writing

Steph Dimond-Bayir & Virgil Ierubino
Aims

Using digital tools to improve writing
Webinar outcomes

1. To raise awareness of the features of good writing
2. To identify how to help learners with writing, using digital tools to support planning, drafting and editing skills
3. To identify practical ways to help learners improve their writing output, based around assessment criteria
4. To identify a variety of tools and approaches that can be used to give feedback from teachers and peers
What skills do learners need to be successful writers?
What skills do learners need to be successful writers?

Having motivation to write
Organising ideas
Coming up with ideas
Understanding the goal
Reviewing and editing
Producing a first draft
Producing a final draft
Approaches to writing

Product approaches  Process approaches
# Approaches to writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product approaches</th>
<th>Process approaches</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Formats and layout</td>
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<td>• Appropriate register and style</td>
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## Approaches to writing

### Product approaches
- Formats and layout
- Coherence and cohesion, e.g. topic sentences, cohesive devices
- Spelling and handwriting
- Accurate use of grammar and vocabulary
- Appropriate register and style

### Process approaches
- Identifying the purpose for writing (or task in an exam)
- Planning
- Organising ideas
- Drafting
- Editing and redrafting
- Proofreading

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Teaching writing skills?

Do you use technology to develop learners’ writing skills?

1. Yes, I use it a lot.

2. Yes, sometimes, but I would prefer to use technology more and in different ways.

3. No, not very much.
When you use digital tools in teaching, the tool should:

- support the outcome
- achieve the outcome effectively
- add value, not just novelty
- not take too much time and effort (after the first use)
Understanding the goal

Outcomes and models of good writing
Understanding the goal

In your English class you have been talking about the environment. Now, your English teacher has asked you to write an essay.

Write an essay using all the notes and giving reasons for your point of view.

Every country in the world has problems with pollution and damage to the environment. Do you think these problems can be solved?

Notes
Write about:

1. transport
2. rivers and seas
3. ……………………….. (your own idea)
Understanding the goal

DEVELOPMENT VS ENVIRONMENT

If we surf the web looking for pollution and environmental catastrophes, we will find out that every country in the world suffers them. This is a natural consequence of the struggle between development and environment.

If a country decided to live isolated from the rest of the world, living on what it can naturally grow and produce, it surely wouldn’t be highly polluted. But we all want exotic food and technological items from all over the world, so we have to pay the price.

Investing on electrical transport would benefit the environment a lot. Even more if this electricity came from a natural source of energy like wind, rivers and solar boards. It’s difficult to achieve this because petrol companies will fight against these actions.

We also have to take care of our rivers and seas. We all have heard about factories throwing highly toxic substances to rivers, without minimizing their poisoning effects. A really strict law should be applied to fine these factories and make them change their policy.

But what about ourselves? We also can do a lot! If, when possible, we bought larger packs of food, we would be producing less rubbish. And this is only an example!
Understanding the goal

What are the positive characteristics you can see?

1. Relevant content, clear opinion, register appropriate, well organised with wide range of vocabulary and minimal errors.

2. Relevant content, excellent grammar with no errors, well-linked paragraphs and coherent arguments with opinion stated.

3. Clear opinion, well-organised paragraphs, register appropriate, wide range of vocabulary with no errors.
Providing models helps learners to:

- identify features of success
- recognise the features of different genres
- understand the assessment criteria
- use assessment criteria when writing
Providing models using digital tools

Providing models using digital tools


QR code:
Providing models using digital tools


QR code:  

How to make the most of models using digital tools

Providing good models for students.
How to make the most of models using digital tools

- Providing good models for students.
- Add annotations and notes to the models for additional guidance.
How to make the most of models using digital tools

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- Annotate the task with questions for learners to answer.
How to make the most of models using digital tools

- Providing good models for students.
- Add annotations and notes to the models for additional guidance.
- Annotate the task with questions for learners to answer.
- Connect to websites, short films or visuals at the start of a writing task to help students come up with ideas – e.g., sites with information on the topic they have to discuss in an essay or film trailers for reviews.

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Coming up with ideas

Using digital tools to generate ideas for writing
Coming up with ideas

Brainstorming content ideas
Coming up with ideas

Brainstorming content ideas:

• TED.com  https://goo.gl/eBxDya
Coming up with ideas

Brainstorming content ideas:

• TED.com
• Twitter
Coming up with ideas

Brainstorming content ideas:

- TED.com
- Twitter
- Soul Pancake
Coming up with ideas

Brainstorming content ideas:

• TED.com
• Twitter
• Soul Pancake
• Cambridge English: Learning English
Coming up with ideas

Brainstorming content ideas:

• TED.com
• Twitter
• Soul Pancake
• Cambridge English: Learning English
• The Digital Teacher

Cambridge English
Having the motivation to write

Using digital tools to increase motivation
Motivating learners through mini-projects
Motivating learners through mini-projects

- Mini-books
- Comics
Motivating learners through mini-projects

- Mini-books
- Comics
- Social media pages
Motivating learners through mini-projects

- Mini-books
- Comics
- Social media pages
- Newspapers
Organising ideas

Using digital tools to plan writing
Organising ideas

What about your learners?

1. They only have one or two ideas which they repeat.

2. They have good ideas but they jump from one to another and back again.

3. They try to organise their ideas but it’s not very successful.

4. Their writing is usually well organised.
Collecting ideas

**Problem:** Learners only have one or two ideas, which they repeat.
Collecting ideas

Problem: Learners only have one or two ideas, which they repeat.

Solution: Collect ideas and notes collaboratively on an online bulletin board.
Organising ideas

**Problem:** Learners have good ideas but they jump from one to another and back again.
Organising ideas

**Problem:** Learners have good ideas but they jump from one to another and back again.

**Solution:** Explore different planning techniques using online tools.
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Solution: Explore different planning techniques using online tools.
Organising ideas

**Problem:** Learners try to organise their ideas but it’s not very successful.
Organising ideas

**Problem:** Learners try to organise their ideas but it’s not very successful.

**Solution:** Practise and work collaboratively.
Producing a first draft
Using digital tools to write the initial draft
Writing the first draft
Writing the draft by hand

• Learners will have to try to use accurate spelling and grammar without relying on computer checks.
Writing the draft by hand

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• Many formal and informal exams require students to handwrite their work.
Writing the draft by hand

- Learners will have to try to use accurate spelling and grammar without relying on computer checks.
- Many formal and informal exams require students to handwrite their work.
- Some types of writing or text are more suited to this style of production, e.g. notes, lists.
Online dictionaries

fantastic

INFORMAL extremely good:
You look fantastic in that dress.
We had a fantastic time.
They won the tournament? How fantastic!

More examples

The camera work in some of these animal documentaries is fantastic.
Don’t miss out on the fantastic bargains in our summer sale.
She’s a fantastic all-round sportswoman.
That was a fantastic goal.
We had a fantastic meal at that new restaurant.

Thesaurus: synonyms and related words

Extremely good

admirable amazing ask for sb/sth award-winning awesome bowl crack
flight inspired irreplaceable life is just a bowl of cherries idiom
magnificent marvellous outstanding sick supreme terrific
textbook the top flight idiom the top flight

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Writing collaboratively
Using an infographic
Using an infographic

- Pick out the key ideas and plan paragraphs.
Using an infographic

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- Learners (individually or in groups) take different sections of the infographic and write it into a full text.
Using an infographic

• Pick out the key ideas and plan paragraphs.
• Learners (individually or in groups) take different sections of the infographic and write it into a full text.
• Learners write summaries of parts of the chart and share; other learners identify which elements they have written about.
Using an infographic

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• Learners (individually or in groups) take different sections of the infographic and write it into a full text.
• Learners write summaries of parts of the chart and share; other learners identify which elements they have written about.
• Write topic sentences for each part of the infographic.
Reviewing and editing

Using digital tools to manage the review process
Reviewing and editing

How do you feel about reviewing and editing?

1. I trust my learners to review and edit their work before they hand it in.

2. I mark up mistakes and possible areas for improvement for my learners, but I’m not sure how many of them actually improve their work.

3. I’ve never tried asking learners to review each other’s work, as I’m not sure that they would give each other useful feedback.

4. I don’t have enough time to spend in class on reviewing and editing writing work.
Cloud-based platforms
Using cloud-based platforms

• Provide templates of different text types with some gaps for completion to allow scaffolded practice.
• Upload a template structure for students to write into.
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• Upload a task; learners collaborate to fill in plans.
Using cloud-based platforms

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- Upload a template structure for students to write into.
- Upload a task; learners collaborate to fill in plans.
- Supply a structure; learners supply contents for each paragraph then work together to write up in full.
Using cloud-based platforms

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• A model text with errors is provided; learners find the errors and correct them or provide feedback notes.
Using cloud-based platforms

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• Upload a task; learners collaborate to fill in plans.
• Supply a structure; learners supply contents for each paragraph then work together to write up in full.
• A model text with errors is provided; learners find the errors and correct them or provide feedback notes.
• Learners write an initial draft of their own and then edit each other’s work by suggesting improvements or correcting any errors.
Giving feedback on writing

Lesson Plan: 15 minutes
delivering learning, responding to learners, writing feedback

Try out Google Docs for giving feedback on writing with this ready-to-use lesson plan.

Reviewing and editing with Google Docs
Using scheduling tools

## March 2017
Thu 23

### 9 participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Punctuation</th>
<th>Paragraphing</th>
<th>Format</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abdul</td>
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<td>Syed</td>
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<td>Chiara</td>
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<td>Ling</td>
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<td>Inmaculada</td>
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<td>Dasha</td>
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© Doodle
It’s simple

1) Choose a topic
2) Write about it in English
3) Get instant feedback
4) Improve!

Write & Improve is a free service for learners of English to practise their written English. Submit your written work and receive feedback in seconds, covering spelling, vocabulary, grammar and general style.
### Write & Improve

**Start writing**
It's free to start writing! Click on any of these tasks to start. You're ready to write and improve!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W&amp;I Beginner</th>
<th>More tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A paragraph: My friend</strong>&lt;br&gt;Your teacher asks you to write about a friend. Tell your teacher:&lt;br&gt;• your friend's name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>An email: Lost property</strong>&lt;br&gt;You lost something in Dublin city centre. Send an email to Dublin Lost Property.&lt;br&gt;You must include</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A description: My family</strong>&lt;br&gt;Describe a member of your family. Remember to include information about:&lt;br&gt;• Their name and how old they are</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A postcard: My town</strong>&lt;br&gt;You receive this postcard from your English pen friend, Joe.&lt;br&gt;Here is a postcard of my town. You can see it's very nice. Please send me a postcard of</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Cambridge English
Write & Improve

An email: Lost property

You lost something in Dublin city centre. Send an email to Dublin Lost Property.

You must include

- The date and time you lost the item
- Where you think you lost the item
- What item you lost and its description

Write your email.

Start again 🔄  Saved

Dear Sir
I lost my bag on 1 March 2017 in Dublin. I think I lost it in the train station. It is a big blue bag.
Best wishes
Sally

30 words entered (the word length for this task is about 30 words). You have written enough. Well done!
Write & Improve

Feedback explained

Word-level feedback

![ ] Incorrect word? Is this word correct?

△ Did you forget something before this word?

↑ Did you forget something after this word?

☆ Suspicious word. Something doesn't look right about this word.

Sentence-level feedback

This seems to be a good sentence.

This sentence could maybe be improved.

There are some problems in this sentence.
Write & Improve

• Allows individual feedback for a learner so they can work on their own problem areas.

• Encourages learners to be more autonomous in editing and drafting their own work.

• Provides lots of extra practice without the teacher having to mark everything.

• Allows the student to work at home.
Round-up

Using digital tools to develop writing
Webinar outcomes

1. To raise awareness of the features of good writing.

2. To identify how to help learners with writing, using digital tools to support planning, drafting and editing skills.

3. To identify practical ways to help learners improve their writing output, based around assessment criteria.

4. To identify a variety of tools and approaches that can be used to give feedback from teachers and peers.
Further information
• Test your digital skills to find your starting point and decide on a direction for your digital CPD
• Decide which digital products are right for you
• Explore the latest digital ideas and trends

thedigitalteacher.com
Teaching English

→ Free resources for teachers
Sample papers, handbooks, lesson plans and teacher guides

→ Teaching Qualifications
For new and experienced teachers

→ Teaching Framework
Helps you assess which stage you are at in your professional development and work out where you want to get to next

→ Webinars
About our exams and teaching

www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english
Further information

Using digital tools for continuous professional development
19 and 21 June

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