

Classroom implementation

Writing aims to help students develop and improve their writing skills, in line with B1 expectations, with everyday real-life examples.

The book contains twenty units each of which can provide the basis of a lesson. They are divided across four sections:

1. *Writing socially*: emails, text, IM, invites, thank-yous and postcards.
2. *Writing to exchange information*: notes, instructions, confirmations and summaries.
3. *Writing formally*: essays, letters of complaint, CVs and covering letters.
4. *Writing online for a reading public*: blogging, tweeting, selling and advertising.

There are also appendices covering:

- useful phrases in a wide variety of forms of communication
- basic sentence structure for B1+ students
- discourse markers
- punctuation
- short forms
- proofreading your own writing

All the units in *Writing* begin with a section called *Before you start* and conclude with a *Get writing* activity. The parts in between (*Understanding*, *Language focus*, *Looking more closely*, *Writing appropriately* and *Writing clearly*) are variously arranged throughout the unit. Below, you can find explanations of how these parts, and other features, can be deployed for classroom use.

❖ BEFORE YOU START

What is it?

Each unit begins with a short passage called *Before you start* directed at the self-study student. In the classroom environment there are a number of ways you could employ this section.

Suggested implementation:

1. The passage often begins with a question, but either way it provides a starting point for a discussion of the topic. You might want to pick and choose which elements to introduce at this initial stage, and to what degree it helps to personalize the theme for the students.
2. Alternatively, you could write the individual sentences of *Before you start* out on separate pieces of paper, and get pairs of students to reconstruct the passage.
3. Or focus students on the content of the lessons by giving students the passage with some of the key vocabulary missing and getting them to work with a partner to fill the gaps.

❖ UNDERSTANDING and LOOKING MORE CLOSELY

What is it?

All the units begin with a text stimulus, and these sections work on the receptive skills needed to work towards a writing task. *Understanding* introduces students to the text type that will be studied in the unit, normally with a single comprehension exercise/question, while *Looking more closely* asks students to look again at the text and notice new things, and to see it in context. Most units have at least an *Understanding* section.

Suggested implementation:

1. As these sections involve reading skills consider at the outset what type of reading skill should be employed for each question. Speed-reading (skimming and scanning) tasks are often better done individually. Set a time limit and make sure that students are aware of it. Allow them time to check their answers with a partner before feeding back to the group.
2. Examine the text for any cultural context or grammar/ vocabulary with which you think the students might struggle, and clarify it.
3. Before commencing the exercise, ask students to identify the text type and to guess what the text might be about.

❖ LANGUAGE FOCUS

What is it?

Language focus practises the language, grammar styles and techniques used in the main text. Exercises focus on identifying the correct usage, style and sentence structure. As a certain amount of time in the classroom will be spent in concentrated and monitored writing time, you can bring these short structure exercises off the page by producing classroom materials for them.

Suggested implementation:

1. Bring the material off the page by writing sorting exercises (like ones for identifying the functions of different phrases, or the different register being used, for example) on card and cut them up for students to arrange in class. The exercise will automatically become more interactive and collaborative when done as a pairwork activity. It will also give students the opportunity to check and confirm their answers before writing them in their books, as well as giving you the freedom to add any additional language you might feel is pertinent to the students' specific purposes.

2. Producing reusable classroom materials from the ideas in the book will allow you to extend their use. On p.24, a *Language focus* exercise asks students to make postcard-style sentences from suggested prompts of time, activity and description. The book is limited to four sentences, but if you were to transfer all the options to separate cards you would increase the range of answers and again encourage students to work collaboratively to find the most appropriate expressions.

❖ WRITING CLEARLY and WRITING APPROPRIATELY

What is it?

Writing clearly and *Writing appropriately* provide exercises which practise the writing skills and language students have learned but in a targeted way. This allows students the opportunity to start producing chunks of language before embarking on a full written passage. The aim is to get students to write from instruction rather than partial prompt, and it is important to make sure they have the tools to do so. *Writing clearly* focuses on issues of structure and meaning, while *Writing appropriately* focuses on usage.

Suggested implementation:

1. Where the exercises require it, brainstorm more vocabulary which students could use in their answers.
2. Make sure students know how they can use the text from the unit as a model for their answer.
3. For extra practice try a running dictation:
 - a. Make a story/paragraph of no more than eight sentences using the language from the unit.
 - b. Cut the sentences up and place them in different points around the room.
 - c. Put students in pairs. One is the reader and one the writer.
 - d. Tell the students how many sentences there are around the room.
 - e. The reader should go around the room finding bits of the story and return to tell the writer.
 - f. You can do this twice with two passages or just tell students to *Change!* part way through.
 - g. There is no clue to the sequence of the sentences so the pair has the task of putting the text in order when they have completed the writing stage.

❖ GET WRITING

What is it?

Get writing provides opportunities for more open and creative use of the language and skills students have learned

in the unit. It might be set as homework, but if you have made good time and are able to monitor students' writing in class, you could set it to be done within the lesson.

Suggested implementation:

1. *Follow-up questions*: When students do a written piece in class – especially a creative piece – make sure you get them to read it out, and get other students to ask questions about it. This creates a more collaborative classroom and demonstrates to the students that they are not just presenting their work to you but to the rest of the class. A variation would be to put students into groups of three or four so that they can read each other's written work and write a question for each piece. The authors can then answer these questions in writing or incorporate the answers into a redrafted piece. Apart from the practical writing experience, it allows the students to consider whether that piece of information should have been in their original draft or not.
2. *Guess who*: This might be particularly suitable for a personal piece like *Write an email to a friend* (Unit 1) or *Write a postcard from a recent holiday* (Unit 6). Get students to write about an unusual experience they have had – something the other students would not know – but not tell the students their story. Students should put their names on their stories and give their story a title. Collect and read them out one by one. Students can write down the title and decide who they think wrote each story. This works best with a class whose students know each other a little, but not well enough to make the activity redundant.

❖ LANGUAGE NOTES

What are they?

All the units contain green text boxes providing information and support for the content of the unit as a whole, and to identify for you and the student matters of usage which are key to completing the writing tasks.

Suggested implementation:

1. Where they appear in the unit, use them to signal a presentation phase.
2. You may want to use the examples in the book to present on the board, or to create the sort of matching and sorting exercises suggested earlier in *Language focus*.
3. With more confident students they can be used as a starting point for discussion, or to elicit further examples of the usage identified.

❖ USEFUL TIPS**What is it?**

At various points in some units there are a series of bullet-pointed *Useful tips* aimed at giving advice about appropriateness of language in the text type being studied.

Suggested implementation:

1. Pairs or small groups of students could discuss the usefulness of the tips and to what degree they are culturally specific. Ask students if they have any of their own tips or strategies for achieving the end.
2. Provide short examples of each of the bullet-pointed tips or strategies and get the students to work in pairs to match the examples with the tips. For more independent and vocal students, put them in small groups and allow them to think of their own examples of the tips.
3. Ask students to find examples of the tip or strategy in the unit text or in other texts which you bring in.

❖ WRAPPING UP

The content of *Writing* is guided by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages at level B1+. You can use the framework as a way of setting targets for your classes and monitoring the progress of individual students. But you may also get students themselves to consider what can-do statements they feel able to assert after each unit.

1. Ask students to work together in small groups and write down three or four can-do statements for the lesson.
I can write a thank-you letter for a birthday gift that someone has sent me.
I can write a covering letter for a job application.
2. The groups can then compare statements with those of another group and see if they feel they have made the same progress.
3. Students could write a short piece on which of the can-do skills they think will be most useful for them and why.
4. Always encourage students to keep an active record of their can-do achievements and follow-up with you if they are unsure.