

Instructional Strategies for Writing



Topics

Thinking about writing

Writing process

Providing constructive feedback

Planning lessons

2 writing practice activities:

- Alternate Perspective
- Cartoon Storytelling

**Effective Writing Lessons
focus on a learner's thoughts
and ideas first**



mechanics second



Writing Process

Prewriting:

Audience: Who do learners write for?

Purpose: Why is the learner writing this? How will others use what the learner writes?

Tone: Formal or informal?

Formal:

Dear Sir,
.....
Sincerely,

Informal:

Hi, Selma,
.....
See you soon,

Drafting:

Focus on the learner's thoughts and ideas

Not important: organization, word choice, grammar, spelling, punctuation

Just let learners write!

Revising: now work on organization and word choice

Editing: now's the time for grammar, spelling, and punctuation

Timed Writing

Free Timed Writing



- Any topic or idea
- Write, type, speech-to-text, doodle, or draw for 2 minutes without stopping

Assigned Timed Writing



- Assigned topic or idea
- Write, type, speech-to-text, doodle, or draw for 2 minutes without stopping

Try one of these assigned timed writings:

- Make a list of the types of writing you do in an average week - emails, social posts, etc.
- How do you, personally, feel about writing?

Providing Constructive Feedback

Reference a skill or specific knowledge

Concentrate on one skill at a time, for example:

- word choice
- paragraph organization
- use of exclamation marks

Be specific in praise or critique

Sentence stems for feedback:

- I noticed ...
- I wondered ...
- I wasn't sure about ... because ...
- I enjoyed ... because ...
- I'm curious about ...
- I really liked how ...

Don't write on the learner's text - use post-it notes, instead



Planning lessons

First, focus on the **learner**:

- What does the learner want to write?
- What does the learner need to write?
- Have a dialogue about the writing topic
- Ask the learner what they think about the topic
- Be encouraging about their ideas

Then focus on **drafting**:

- Follow the writing process
- Use timed writing to get ideas flowing

Discuss the draft:

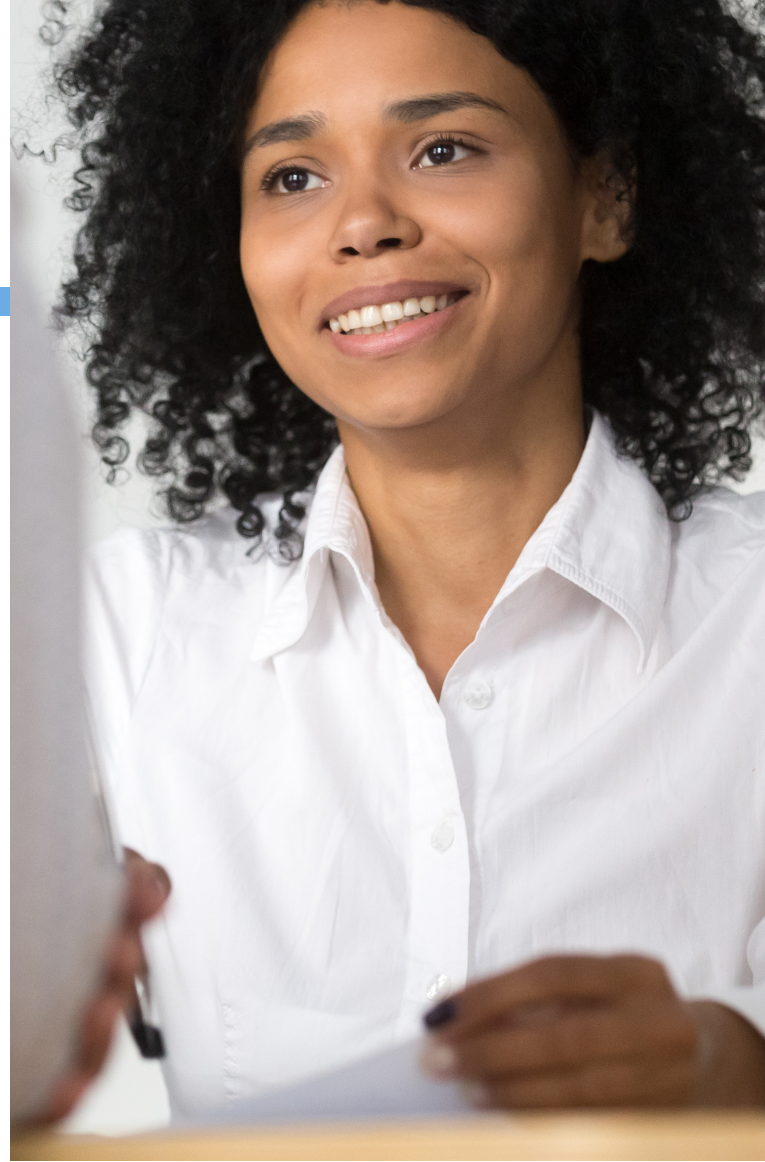
- Positive specific comments of praise about the writing, first
- Then focus on one skill to provide specific constructive feedback



Planning lessons

End with a **learner focus**, again:

- Encourage the learner's thoughts about the topic, again
- What new ideas do they want to add to their draft?
- What have they already written?
- Can they summarize it for you?
- Or read it aloud if they choose?



Writing Analysis Checklist:

- Use to analyze learner writing and plan lessons
- DON'T give it to learners
- It's for diagnosis of writing needs and planning only

Remember: Just focus on one skill to provide feedback in a lesson so learners don't get overwhelmed

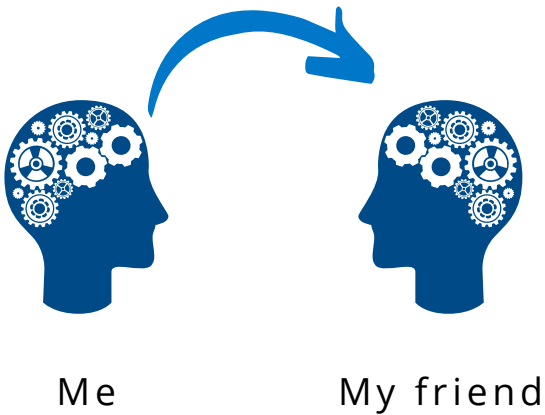
Writing Analysis Checklist

| | Can do | Needs work |
|---------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Prewriting | | |
| Chooses topic | | |
| Generates ideas | | |
| Composing | | |
| Is willing to put ideas on paper | | |
| Develops topic with details | | |
| Writes with audience in mind | | |
| Shows a clear purpose for writing | | |
| Uses correct tone: formal or informal | | |
| Revising | | |
| Revises writing | | |
| Organizes paragraphs | | |
| Sentence level | | |
| Variety of sentence structures | | |
| Writes complete sentences | | |
| Words | | |
| Variety of words | | |
| Appropriate use of words | | |
| Editing | | |
| Proofreads | | |
| Spelling | | |
| Spells phonetically | | |
| Sounds are in correct order | | |
| Spells visually | | |
| Letters are in correct order | | |
| Grammar | | |
| Complete sentences | | |
| Subjects and verbs agree | | |
| Correct verb tense | | |
| Pronouns agree | | |
| Correct joining words | | |
| No double negatives | | |
| Punctuation | | |
| End punctuation | | |
| Commas | | |
| Apostrophes | | |
| Quotation | | |
| Capitalization | | |

Alternate Perspectives

Writing practice activity

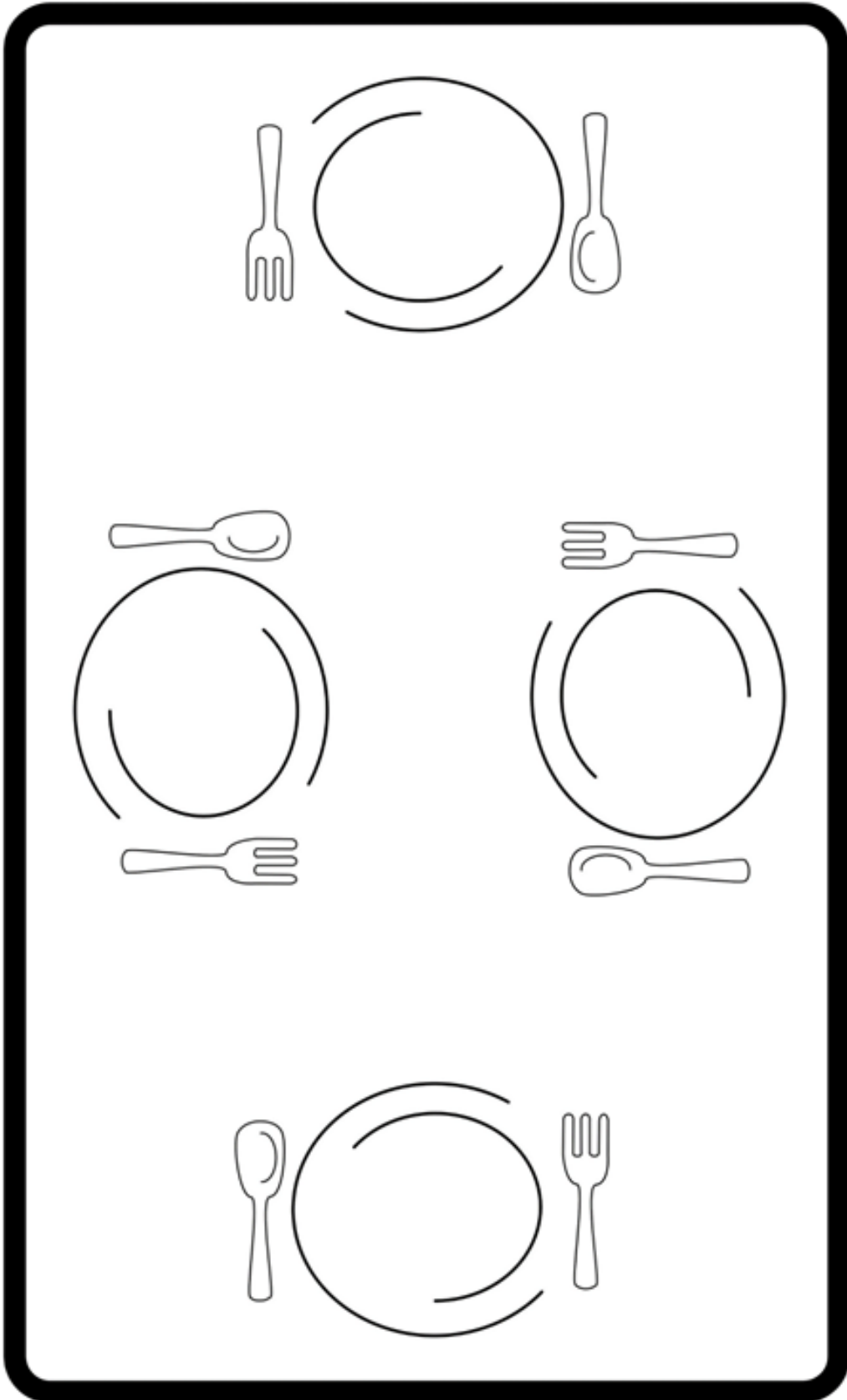
Objective:
Imagine what someone else would
think or feel



Think about a story you heard or read lately (on the news, radio, YouTube, social media, etc.) that made you feel:

- Happy
- Amused
- Sad
- Confused
- Really, any emotion

Write the names of 4 people you're close to that you'd invite for dinner



Alternate Perspectives Writing practice activity

Imagine what one of your friends would think or feel about that story

Write a draft from your friend's perspective

Follow the writing process: drafting, revising, editing

Your turn:

How else would you use this activity?

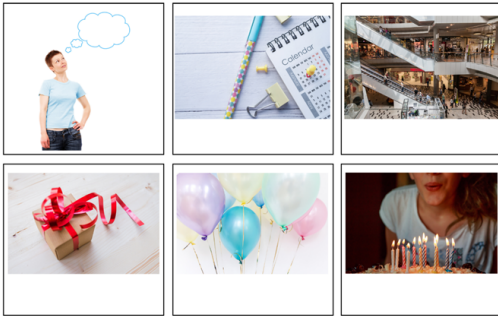


Cartoon Storytelling

Writing practice activity

Objective:
Write a story based on pictures

Title:



Use these sources to gather pictures that learners can organize into a story:

- Free online photo websites: Pixabay, Pexels, Unsplash
- Photos from your camera phone or magazines
- What else can you think of?

Have learners put the pictures in an order that tells a story

Write a draft of the story

Follow the writing process: drafting, revising, editing

This is very good practice for writing sequences: beginning, middle, end, which appear in many types of writing: stories, reports, instruction manuals, etc.

Your turn: How else would you use this activity?

