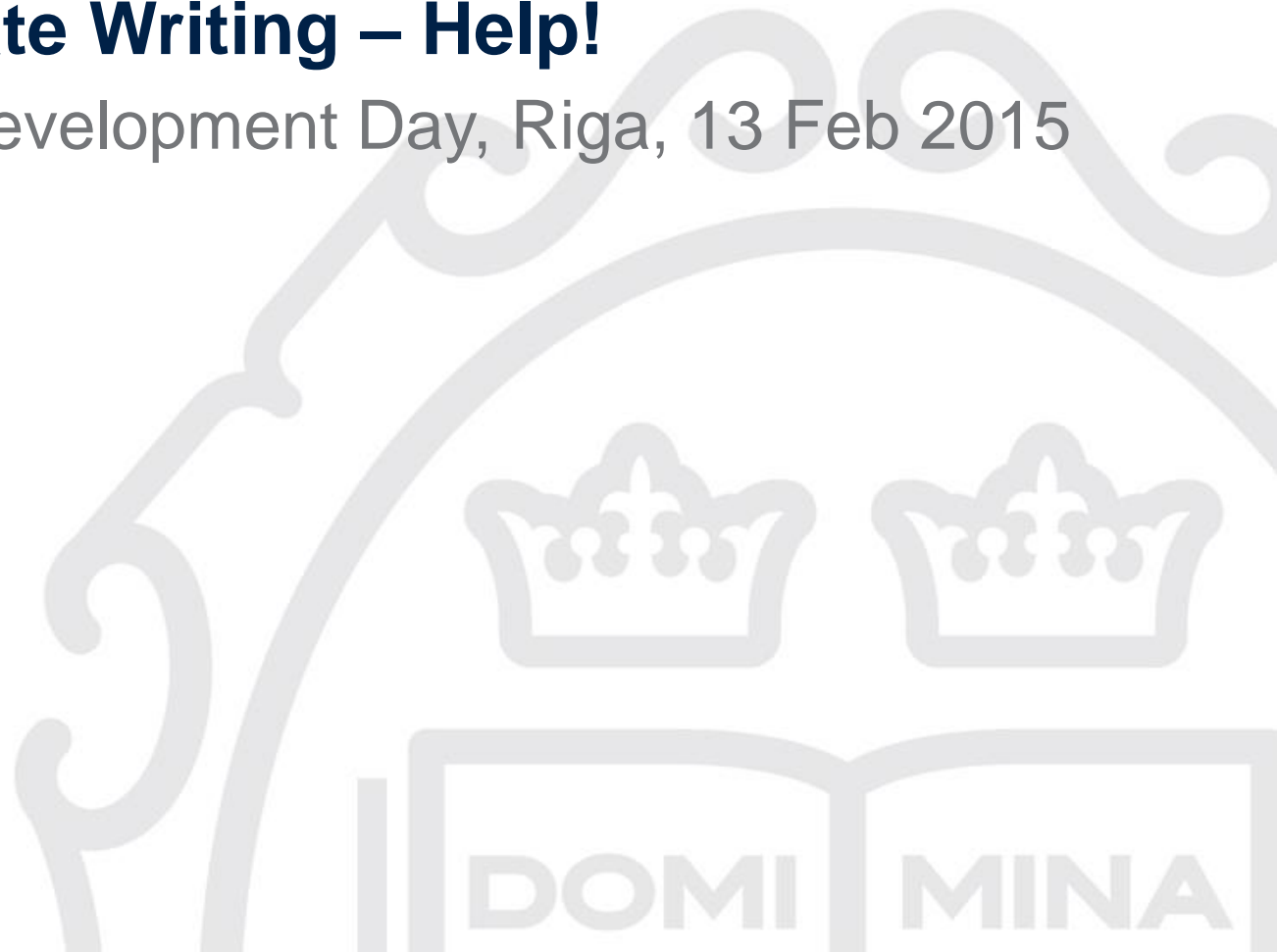


My Students Hate Writing – Help!

Oxford Teacher Development Day, Riga, 13 Feb 2015

Edmund Dudley



In this session

- **Reasons teenagers dislike writing**
- Areas of difficulty
- Practical activities



Reasons teens dislike writing

What would *you* say?

- They don't like using pens
- It's old-fashioned
- They lack real-life experience
- They lack strategies, skills and techniques
- Stressful associations
- ...



Reasons teens dislike writing

They don't like using pens

Dear John.
I ~~wrote~~ I'm happy to write you again. ~~I'm sorry for not~~
I'm sorry for not writing sooner, but I was
interested in
Gordon, so

~~My qualities are~~ I have got lots of
qualities; I'm hard-working, reliable,
and I'm also a liar, and that's a
good thing because I can learn trust me.
I'm able for an interview
anytime. If you say Monday 30³⁰ ~~AM~~
(i) will be there. ~~also~~ ^{able} on Feb. 30.
The time to see me is in

Reasons teens dislike writing (by hand)

It's old fashioned



outdated
slow
inconvenient




important
prestigious
exciting

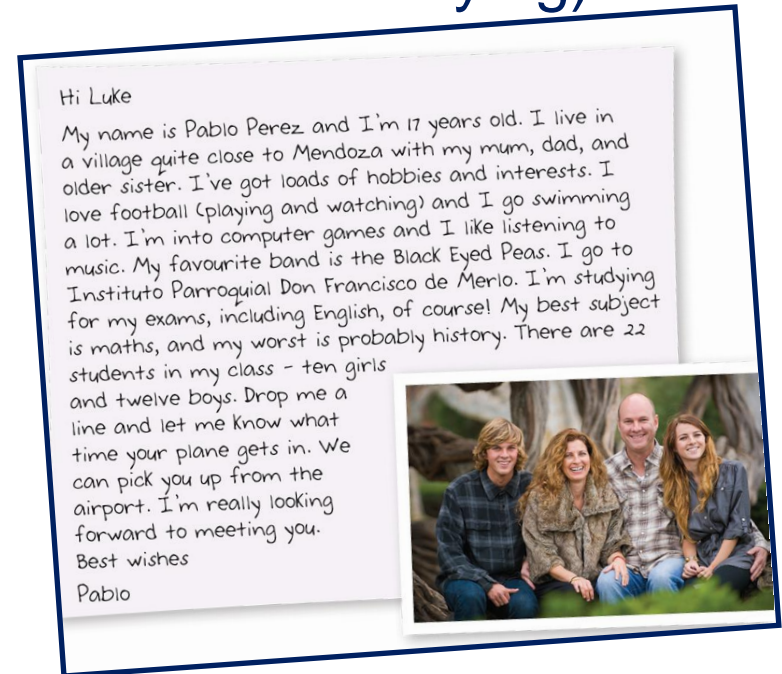
Reasons teens dislike writing

They lack real-life experience

What do teenagers write *IRL*?

(i.e. outside school, not including homework or studying)

- instant messages 
- text messages (SMS)
- emails
- uhhhhh....



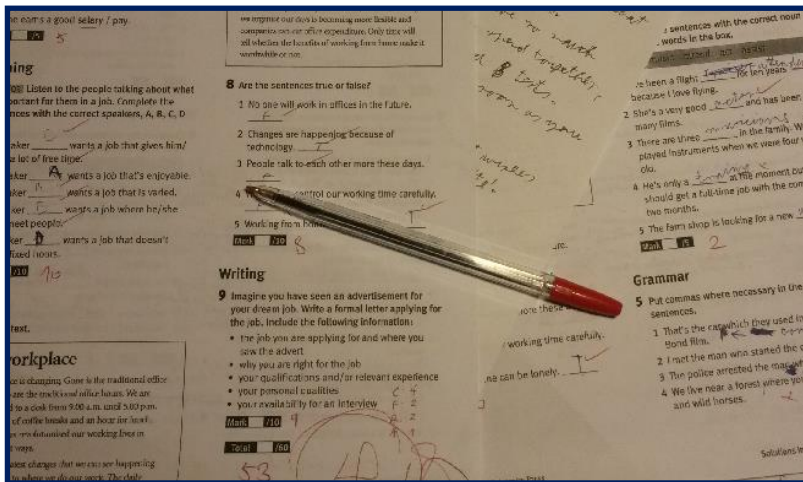
Reasons teens dislike writing

They lack strategies, skills and techniques

planning register
revising appropriate language
discourse management
paragraphs cohesive devices
drafting style

Reasons teens dislike writing

Stressful associations



Reasons teens dislike writing

What would *you* say?

- They don't like using pens
- It's old-fashioned
- They lack real-life experience
- They lack strategies, skills and techniques
- Stressful associations
- ...



- Reasons teenagers dislike writing
- **Areas of difficulty**
- Practical activities



Areas of difficulty

What would *you* say?

What causes the most problems for your students?



Areas of difficulty

- Getting started
- Generating ideas
- Planning
- Using appropriate language
- Drafting and revising



Areas of difficulty

Getting started



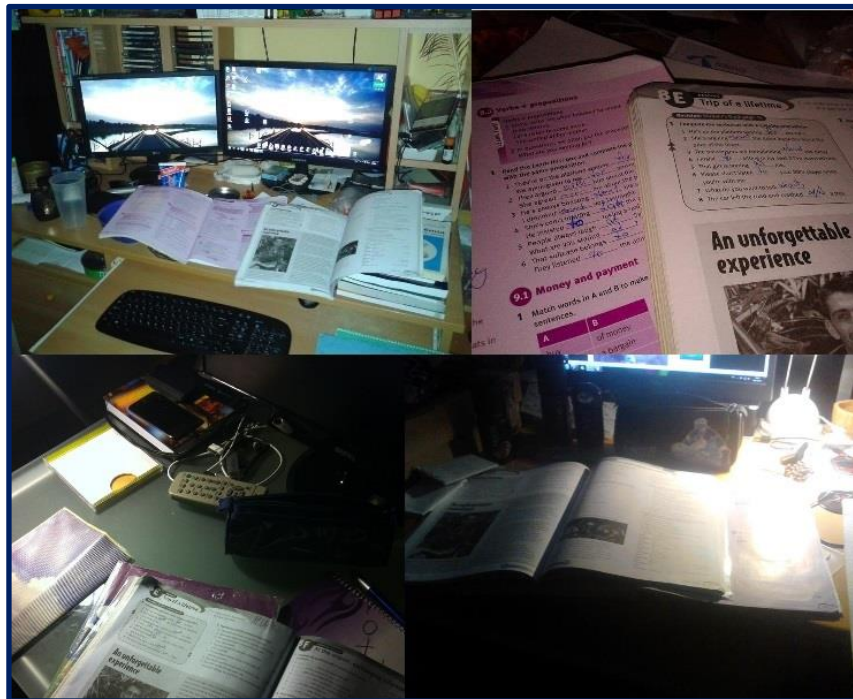
Not-corridor-work 😊



Me to Polar Bear Resistance League

Post photographic evidence that you did 'homework' and not 'corridor-work'.

Upload a photo of your finished homework. In the background your home surroundings should be clearly visible.



Areas of difficulty

Generating ideas



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What are the arguments for and against school uniforms?

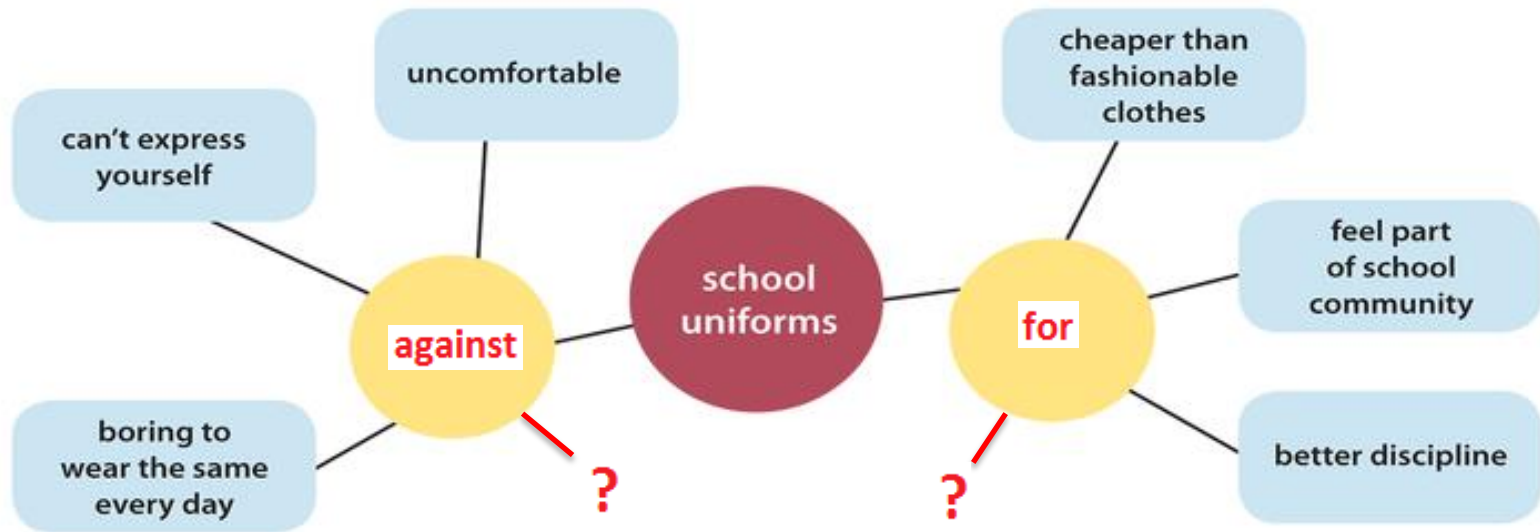


Areas of difficulty

Generating ideas



OXFORD
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brainstorm → mind maps

A **What are the arguments for and against school uniforms?**

There have always been a lot of arguments about school uniforms. In Britain, 65% of students don't like them. **However**, I think that school uniforms are a necessary part of school life.

On the one hand, some people argue that school uniforms are boring. Everyone looks the same in a uniform, and you can't express yourself, **but** your clothes are only one way of saying who you are. Other people complain that school uniforms are expensive. Some parents can't afford uniforms, so their children do not go to school. This is a bad thing.

On the other hand, school uniforms can save parents money because they are cheaper than fashionable clothes. In addition, the idea behind school uniforms is to make everyone look the same, so you can't tell the difference between rich and poor. **Although** children might still get bullied for other reasons, they won't get bullied for their clothes. School uniforms make you feel part of something bigger, too. They show that students are proud to belong to their school.

In conclusion, I think that school uniforms are a good idea, **although** they are expensive for some people. It is important for students to feel part of a community, to work together and help each other to learn. School uniforms represent this unity.

WRITING GUIDE

■ **Task** Read the task and check you understand it.

What are the arguments for and against more break times at school?

■ **Ideas** Write down your ideas in a mind map. Decide which arguments you support. Decide on the order of your arguments. Which are the most important?

■ **Plan** Decide which ideas you are going to use and match them to these paragraphs.

Paragraph 1: Introduce the topic and your opinion.
What are you going to write about?

Paragraph 2: Arguments you do not support.

Paragraph 3: Arguments you support.

Paragraph 4: Summarize the arguments you support.

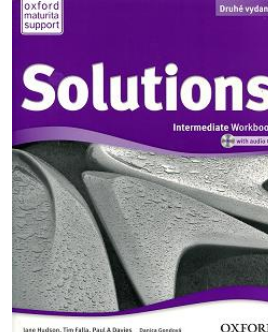
■ **Write** Write your for and against essay. Use the paragraph plan to help you.

■ **Check** Check the following points.

- Are your ideas divided into paragraphs?
- Have you used contrast linkers correctly?
- Have you checked spelling, grammar and punctuation?

Areas of difficulty

Planning structure



10G

WRITING Book review
I can write a review of a book

Preparation

1 Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

end identified main recommend set twist written

1 I _____ with the main character because he is a teenager.

2 It's _____ in Germany during the Second World War.

3 The _____ character is a student of art.

4 It was _____ by Charles Dickens.

5 There's a _____ at the end.

6 In the _____, the two lovers get married.

7 I would definitely _____ it.

2 Rewrite the sentences with nominal subject clauses starting with *what*.

1 all of the characters are looking for / success
What all of the characters are looking for is success.

2 really exciting / the setting

3 I loved / the way the story was told

4 the main character needs / a friend to help them

5 I really enjoy / reading on the train

6 this author is famous for / creating a twist at the end

3 Read the review. What does the writer like most about the book?

Writing guide

4 You have been asked by the editors of an English magazine to write a review of a book which has been given an award for the best book of the last decade. Remember to use paragraphs and nominal subject clauses.

Paragraph 1: Describe the author, the genre of the book and the characters.

Paragraph 2: Describe the general topic, main plot, and the setting.

Paragraph 3: Describe negative and positive aspects of the plot, acting, characters, etc.

Paragraph 4: Encourage or discourage the readers of the review to read the book.

CHECK YOUR WORK

Have you:

- ☐ written four paragraphs?
- ☐ included all the necessary information?
- ☐ written in an appropriate style?
- ☐ included the appropriate phrases from exercise 1?
- ☐ included nominal clauses?
- ☐ checked your work for mistakes?

Eragon is a best-selling fantasy novel written by the teenage author Christopher Paolini. It is the first in a series of four books called *The Inheritance Cycle*. The series tells the story of a farm boy called Eragon.

Eragon is a journey of experience, revenge, romance and betrayal. It is set in a land of mystery and magic called Alagaesia. Eragon is a normal teenager when we first meet him, although both of his parents are dead and he lives with his uncle on a farm. However, his life changes when he finds a dragon's egg on a hunting expedition. When the dragon hatches, Eragon becomes a Dragon Rider and the real adventure begins.

One of the strengths of the novel is the plot which holds the reader's attention from beginning to end. The main character is brave and likeable and he has some fascinating adventures. I loved the twist at the end.

What I liked most about the book was the relationship that *Eragon* has with his dragon, Saphira. The reader sees their friendship developing and by the end of the story they come to trust each other totally. I would definitely recommend *Eragon* to all teenage readers, but especially to those who enjoy fantasy literature.

90 | Unit 10 • Be creative

Writing guide

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Paragraph 4: Encourage or discourage the readers of the review to read the book.

CHECK YOUR WORK

Have you:

- ☐ written four paragraphs?
- ☐ included all the necessary information?
- ☐ written in an appropriate style?
- ☐ included the appropriate phrases from exercise 1?
- ☐ included nominal clauses?
- ☐ checked your work for mistakes?

19 Professional Development

Do you recognise the book?

- Author: LC
- Setting: A fantasy world
- Plot: Strange things happen down a hole at the river bank.
- Main character: A young girl
- Ending: She wakes up. Was it all a dream?
- Film version? Several, including a Disney animation
- Title: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll

Think of a book that you enjoyed reading.
Now respond to the prompts...



Describing a book

Responding to prompts

- It was written by...
- It's set in ...
- It's the story of ...
- The main character is...
- In the end...

**3 Complete the text about *The Lord of the Rings*.
Use the phrases from exercise 2.**

***The Lord of the Rings* is a fantasy story.**

¹ It was written by J. R. R. Tolkien.

² It's set in an imaginary
land called 'Middle Earth', and ³ it's the story of

a group of hobbits who have to destroy a
magic ring. ⁴ The main character is

called Frodo. ⁵ In the end,

they succeed in destroying the ring. A

few years ago ⁶ a film was made of the book

starring Orlando Bloom. It's a great book

and ⁷ I would definitely recommend it !

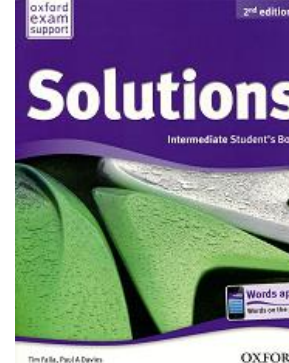
See next answer

See all answers

Hide all answers

Areas of difficulty

Using appropriate language



10G WRITING Book review
I can write a review of a book.

1 Read the review. Are these sentences true or false?

- The setting for the story is a beautiful lake.
- Stanley shouldn't be in a detention centre.
- The Warden has a secret reason for asking the boys to dig holes.

HOLES is a novel for teenagers. It was written by Louis Sachar and it was published in 1998. It's an adventure story about a group of boys at a detention centre in Texas. The detention centre is called Camp Green Lake and it's in the middle of a huge desert.

The main character is Stanley Yelnats, who has been sent to Camp Green Lake for a crime he didn't commit. Every day, the boys at the camp have to dig holes in the desert. They believe that the work is just punishment. What they don't realise is that the Warden at Camp Green Lake is secretly looking for treasure. One day Stanley and his friend Zero run away. Everybody thinks they will die in the desert. I won't give the ending away! What I will say is that the book keeps your interest right to the final page.

I really enjoyed the book for a number of reasons. I identified with the character of Stanley, who always tries to help his friend. The setting is interesting and unusual. But what I liked most was the plot. It's a gripping story and you just can't put the book down. I would definitely recommend it.

2 How many phrases from the box can you find in the review?

Talking about stories

I identified with *(a character)* It's the story of ...
 I liked the book because ... In the end, ...
 The main character is *(name)* A film was made *(of the book)*
 It was written by *(author)* There's a twist at the end.
 It's a *(type of story)* I would definitely recommend it
 It's set in *(place)*

3 Complete the text about *The Lord of the Rings*. Use the phrases from exercise 2.

The Lord of the Rings is a fantasy story. ¹ _____
 J. R. R. Tolkien. ² _____ an imaginary land called 'Middle Earth', and ³ _____ a group of hobbits who have to destroy a magic ring. ⁴ _____ called Frodo. ⁵ _____ they succeed in destroying the ring. A few years ago ⁶ _____ starring Orlando Bloom. It's a great book and ⁷ _____!

4 Read the review. Are these sentences true or false?

- The setting for the story is a beautiful lake.
- Stanley shouldn't be in a detention centre.
- The Warden has a secret reason for asking the boys to dig holes.

LEARN THIS!

Nominal subject clauses
 We sometimes emphasise particular information in a sentence by putting it in a *What*-clause followed by *be*.
I really like adventure stories.
What I really like is adventure stories.
The ending made a big impression on me.
What made a big impression on me was the ending.

5 Read the *Learn this!* box. Find two sentences with nominal subject clauses in the review in exercise 1. Rewrite them as ordinary sentences.

6 Rewrite the sentences with nominal subject clauses starting with *What*.

- All of the characters are looking for happiness.
- The setting is really unusual.
- I loved the twist at the end.
- The main character really needs a holiday.
- I really enjoy reading classic novels.
- Stephen King is famous for writing thrillers.

▶▶▶ GRAMMAR BUILDER 10.4: PAGE 126 ◀◀◀

7 Choose a book you know. Write notes under these headings. You can include any other important information.

General information	Story and characters
Title:	Where is it set?
Author:	Main characters:
Type of book:	What happens?
Your opinion	
Why did you like it? For example: It's funny / moving / exciting / gripping / interesting. It contains lots of interesting characters. I really wanted to know what was going to happen.	

▶▶▶ VOCABULARY BUILDER 10.3: PAGE 136 ◀◀◀

8 Read the writing strategy below. Write a review of 200–250 words. Use your notes from exercise 6 and include phrases from exercise 2.

WRITING STRATEGY

Remember to use the present simple to summarise the plot of a story or film.

CHECK YOUR WORK

Have you:

- ☐ included the information in exercise 6?
- ☐ used phrases from exercise 2?
- ☐ checked your word count?

2 How many phrases from the box can you find in the review?

Talking about stories

I identified with *(a character)* It's the story of ...
 I liked the book because ... In the end, ...
 The main character is *(name)* A film was made *(of the book)*
 It was written by *(author)* There's a twist at the end.
 It's a *(type of story)* I would definitely recommend it
 It's set in *(place)*

3 Complete the text about *The Lord of the Rings*. Use the phrases from exercise 2.

The Lord of the Rings is a fantasy story. ¹ _____
 J. R. R. Tolkien. ² _____ an imaginary land called 'Middle Earth', and ³ _____ a group of hobbits who have to destroy a magic ring. ⁴ _____ called Frodo. ⁵ _____ they succeed in destroying the ring. A few years ago ⁶ _____ starring Orlando Bloom. It's a great book and ⁷ _____!

24 Professional Development

Unit 10 • Be creative 101



But Alice was a careful girl. 'It can be dangerous to drink out of strange bottles,' she said. 'What will it do to me?' She drank a little bit very slowly. The taste was very [red], like [purple] and [grey] and hot sweet [yellow], and very soon Alice [blue].

Developing awareness

Other ways to use this text?



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Round the neck of the bottle was a piece of paper with the words DRINK ME in large letters.

- Dictogloss
- Double translation
- Sandwiching

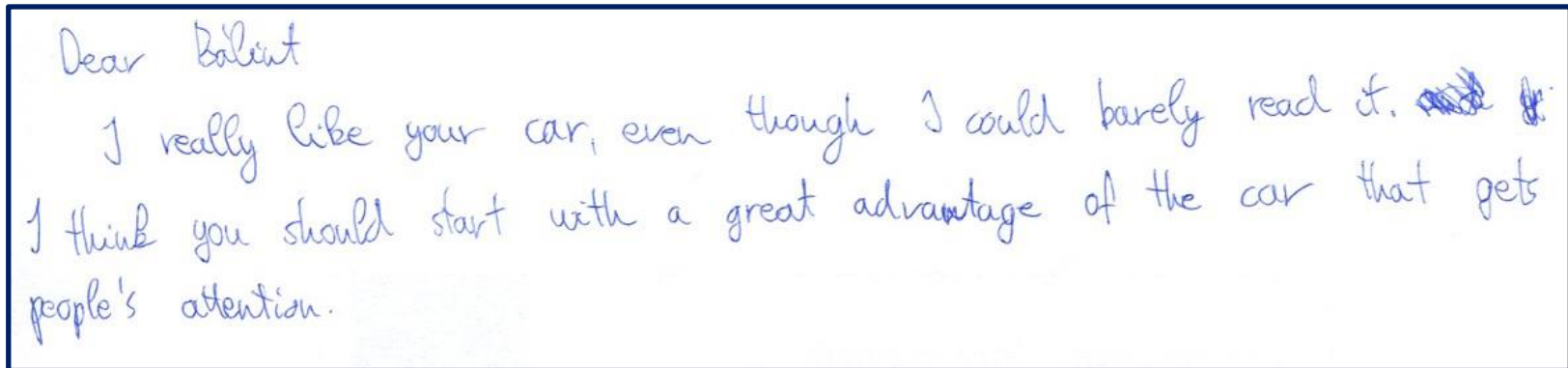
But Alice was a careful girl. ‘It can be dangerous to drink out of strange bottles,’ she said. ‘What will it do to me?’ She drank a little bit very slowly. The taste was very nice, like chocolate and oranges and hot sweet coffee, and very soon Alice finished the bottle.

‘What a strange feeling!’ said Alice. ‘I think I’m getting smaller and smaller every second.’

Areas of difficulty

Drafting and revising

→ Get students to comment on each other's work at the re-drafting stage



Dear Balint

I really like your car, even though I could barely read it. ~~and~~ it.

I think you should start with a great advantage of the car that gets people's attention.

Areas of difficulty

- Getting started
- Generating ideas
- Planning
- Using appropriate language
- Drafting and revising
- **Any others?**



In this session

- Reasons teenagers dislike writing
- Areas of difficulty
- **Practical activities**



Practical activities

Freewriting

How freewriting works:

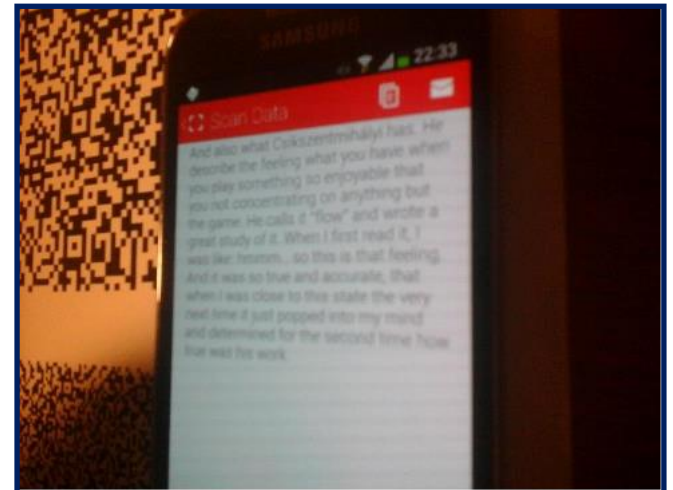
- When you get the topic, start writing.
- Don't stop.
- Keep your pen on the paper.
- Write whatever comes into your head!
 - Your topic:



Practical activities

Using technology

Do you get teens to use technology to complete writing tasks?
How?





Practical activities

Planning only

The image shows handwritten notes and a mind map on lined paper. The mind map is centered on 'Living on my street' and branches out into several topics: 'chatting with kids who knock on my door', 'old ladies', 'busting condoms late at night in front of its gate (but really!)', 'bungles', 'grabbing my hammer if someone knocks late at night', 'watching kids on the morning walking on the street', and 'watching gangster with muscular men, if they enters the garden gate without permission'. The notes are organized into four numbered sections:

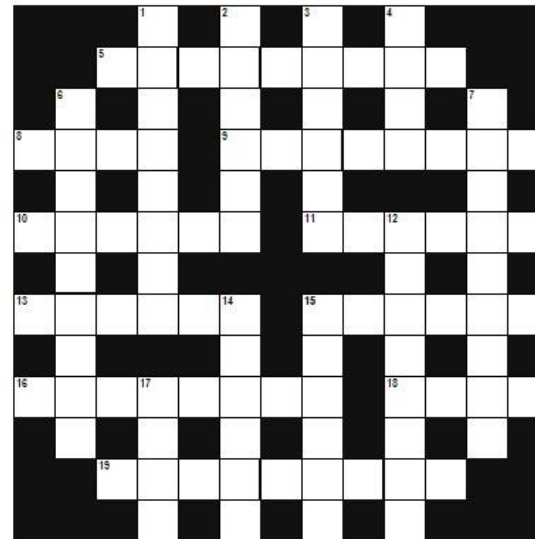
1. Describing an ordinary monday afternoon, it's maybe spring, birds are chirping, neighbours act as day usually do, kids the kindergarten is full. An ideal picture.
2. Shows the darside, the kind lady from the first paragraph spies on you, kids are too loud, etc.
3. Collecting unusual/funny stories about the street, for example story of a burglary, etc.
4. Summary with my opinion about living there.

Practical activities

Going hybrid :)



Quick crossword No 13,537



Across

- 5 Do as you wish! (2,2,5)
- 8 Japan's highest peak (4)
- 9 Cold running drink? (3,5)
- 10 Member of a branch of Islam (6)
- 11 Extensive landed property (6)
- 13 Speaking faculty (6)
- 15 Roof straw (6)
- 16 Island part of Tanzania (8)
- 18 Wharf (4)
- 19 Stop being so stupid! (4,3,2)

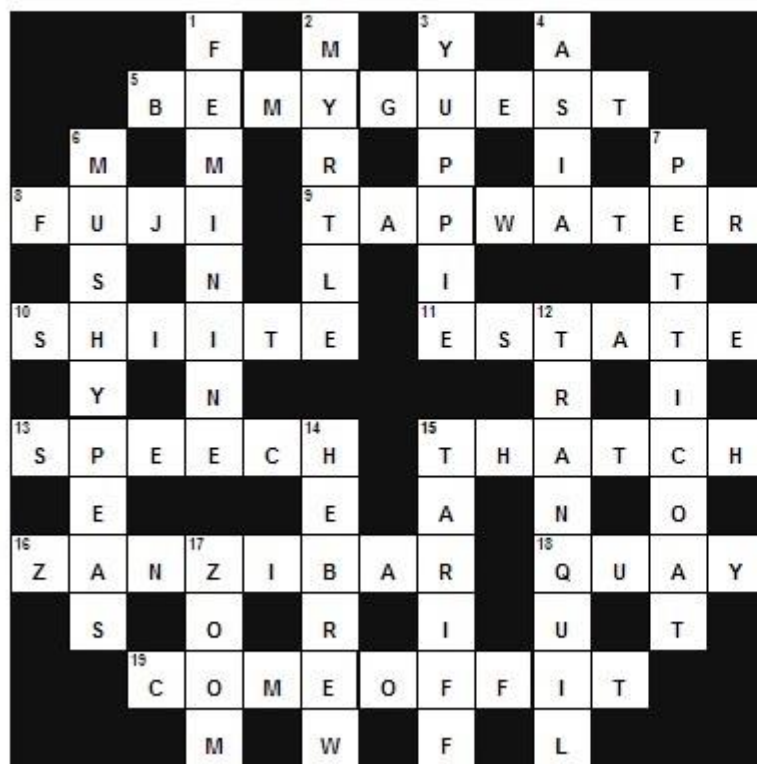
Down

- 1 Womanly (8)
- 2 Shrub with white flowers and aromatic berries (6)
- 3 Young upwardly mobile professional (6)
- 4 A is A (anag) (4)
- 6 Squishy green food (5,4)
- 7 Underskirt (9)
- 12 Peaceful (8)
- 14 Official language of Israel (6)
- 15 List of duties on imports or exports (6)
- 17 Type of camera lens (4)

Practical activities

Crosswords for vocabulary

Quick crossword No 13,537



Across

- 5 Do as you wish! (2,2,5)
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- 12 Peaceful (8)
- 14 Official language of Israel (6)
- 15 List of duties on imports or exports (6)
- 17 Type of camera lens (4)



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Sample clues from the crossword:

Do as you wish! (2, 2, 5)

BE MY GUEST

Underskirt (9)

PETTICOAT

Type of camera lens (4)

ZOOM

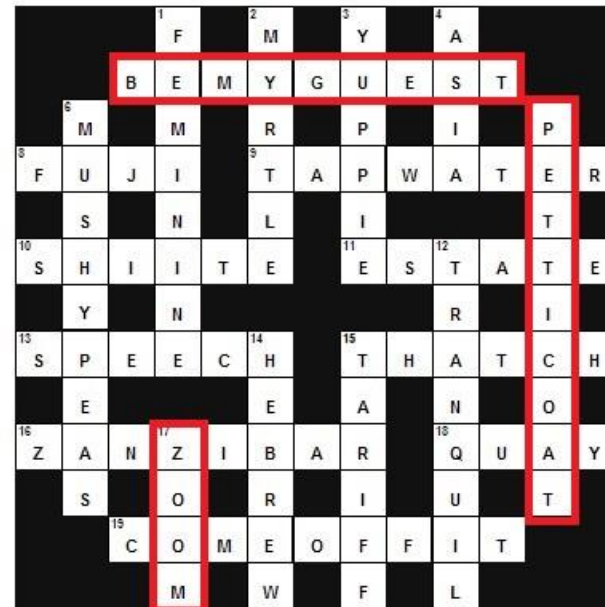
Practical activities

Compulsory phrases

Have you ever seen the youtube video called *Electrosidekickball*?
If you haven't, be my guest.

What is it about? Two teams
other, with a special ~~face~~ zapper collar
telling you. It's a zapper collar
the hands of the other team
time during (or not) the match
scene, let's zoom in on the p

Quick crossword No 13,537



Across

- 5 Do as you wish! (2,2,5)
- 8 Japan's highest peak (4)
- 9 Cold running drink? (3,5)
- 10 Member of a branch of Islam (6)
- 11 Extensive landed property (6)
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Down

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- 12 Peaceful (8)
- 14 Official language of Israel (6)
- 15 List of duties on imports or exports (6)
- 17 Type of camera lens (4)

Practical activities


Planning rubrics

1




Introduce the topic

2




What most people think

3




What most people forget

4



What you need to remember

5



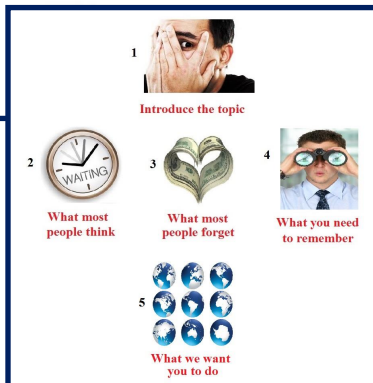
What we want you to do

Practical activities

Planning rubrics

My topic: Hungarian football

1. Most people think that Hungarian football is terrible.
2. Most people forget that they practice a lot.
3. What you need to remember: They don't play very well, but they earn a lot of money.



Practical activities

- Freewriting
- Using technology
- Planning only
- Going hybrid
- Compulsory phrases
- Planning rubrics



In this session

- Reasons teenagers dislike writing
- Areas of difficulty
- Practical activities



My Students Hate Writing – Help!

Oxford Teacher Development Day, Riga, 13 Feb 2015

Edmund Dudley

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