

Teaching Reading and Writing

The process of writing

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Learning outcomes

This module of teaching reading and writing focuses on the stages in the process of writing, from pre-writing, drafting and editing, through to publishing. By the end of the module you will be able to:

- identify the stages required for process writing
- explore activities which support learners at each stage
- explain how the teacher manages a process writing lesson
- consider how to apply teaching techniques to your own teaching.

1 Before you watch

a. When a journalist writes a magazine article, what stages of a process does he/she go through?

b. When you write an important letter, do you go through similar stages in the process of writing?

Try to compare your answers with a partner.

2 Watch

2.1 Process writing: Part 1

Watch and listen to the commentary at the beginning of the video **Process writing: Part 1** (00:00 to 01:17). Then pause the video and answer the following questions.

a. What four stages of the writing process does the trainer mention?

1.

2.

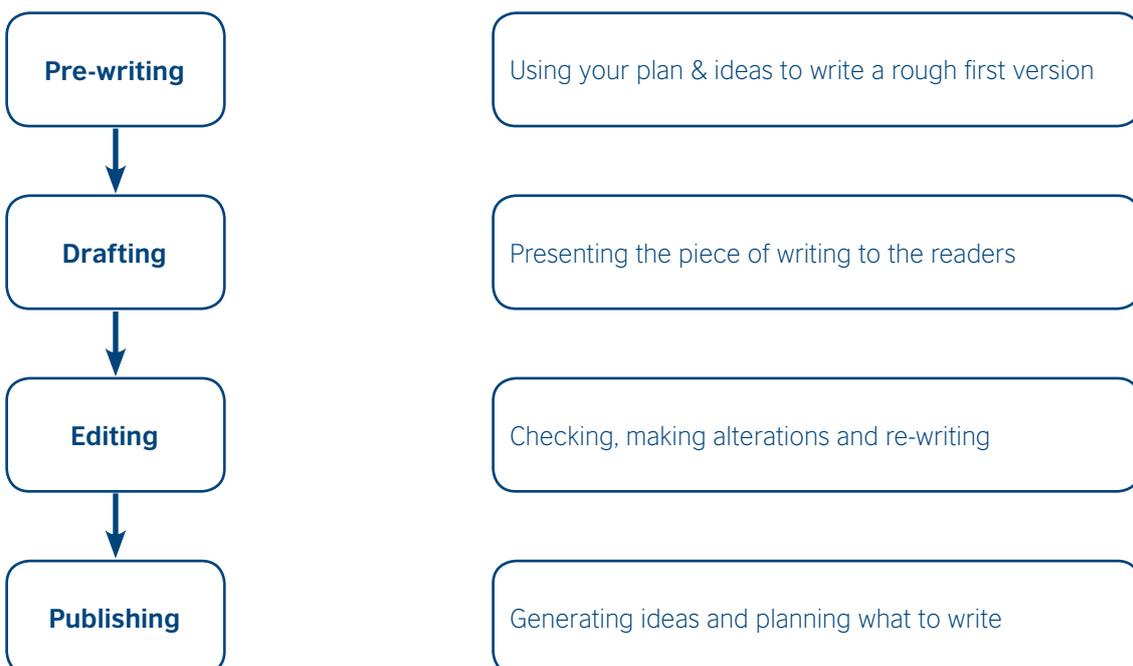
3.

4.

b. How does the consultant apply this process to teaching writing?

2.2 Applying the writing process

a. Before you continue watching, look at the writing process stages. Match each stage to a description.



b. Look at the following writing sub-skills and match each one to a stage of the writing process.

planning	evaluation	brainstorming	re-ordering
structuring	mind-mapping	revising	focusing on grammar and vocabulary
checking	forming opinions	restructuring	
presenting finished piece to readers	putting ideas into sentences	selecting/rejecting ideas	planning out the paragraphs

Process writing stages	Sub-skills
Pre-writing	
Drafting	
Editing	
Publishing	

c. How could you apply this process approach with your learners?

d. What else would you like to know about the process approach to teaching writing?
Write some questions below:

2.3 A process writing lesson

a. Watch the rest of the video **Process writing: Part 1** (01:18 to 26:23), which shows the four stages as part of a process writing class. Use the table below to answer the following questions:

1. What sub-skills are practised within each stage?
2. What is the role of the teacher in each stage? (Note, It is the same through each stage.)

Stage	Sub-skills practised	Role of the teacher
Pre-writing (01:18 to 10:00)	Brainstorming,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •
Drafting (10:10 to 15:50)		
Editing (16:00 to 22:30)		
Publishing (22:40 to 26:00)		

b. Answer these questions about the process writing lesson. Watch again if necessary.

- What kinds of activities do you see learners doing in pairs?
- How is the word processing application used?

Activities	Application

c. Look back at the questions you wrote on the previous page. Have they been answered?

2.4 Lesson feedback, learning points and goals

Watch the video **Process writing: Part 2** (00:00 to 05:39). Make notes using the following headings:

- Lesson feedback for learners:
What was the easiest activity? The most fun? The most difficult?
- Learning points and goals:
Note down five learning points and goals that students will take away from this lesson.

Lesson feedback (00:28 to 01:10)	Learning points and goals (01:20 to 05:07)
Easiest:	•
Most fun:	•
Most difficult:	•
	•
	•

3 Publishing learners' written work

- a. Which of the following ideas for publishing learners' written work would you like to try with your learners? Why?

Idea	Description	Try (✓)
Read aloud	Learners read stories, articles, descriptions and other texts to classmates.	
Role play	Learners role play characters in a story or correspondents in a letter.	
Presentation	Learners make presentations to the class on topics of interest that they have covered in their writing.	
Wall display	Put written pieces on the wall so that the class can read their friends' work.	
Classroom library	Build a library of completed pieces of writing divided into topics/genres. Learners can borrow classmates' work to read.	
Class magazine	Start a termly class magazine. Ask learners to suggest ideas for content which would then form the basis of writing lessons.	
Comments book	Have a book where learners could write positive, constructive comments about their classmates' writing.	

- b. Why have you selected these ideas?

4 Reflection

- a. Look at the following quotes. To what extent do you agree?

The writing process we have described operates whether people are writing emails, texting their friends, writing shopping lists, providing compositions for their English teachers or putting together a doctoral thesis. How much attention we give to the different stages of the process ... will largely depend ... on what kind of writing we are doing, what medium we are using, what the content and length of our piece is and who we are doing it for.

Harmer, J., (2004), How to Teach Writing, Pearson

Practice in suggesting corrections in their classmates' work helps learners to recognise errors in their own. When learners have to explain points to a partner, their own understanding is redefined and clarified. It requires them to think carefully about clarity and acceptability in writing.

Hedge, T., (1998), Writing, OUP

- b. How could you use a process approach with younger learners?
What aspects of the lesson in the video would you keep, adapt or change?

Compare your reflections with a partner, if possible.

Transcripts and answers

Transcripts of trainer's talk

2.1 Process writing: Part 1

When we write an important letter, we don't just sit down, write it and then send it off. We spend time planning what we'll say, we spend time writing, changing and when we're happy with what we've written we send it off.

We follow, if you like, a kind of process – pre-writing, drafting, editing and publishing.

So how does this process apply to teaching writing with our learners? Well it means that we should practise all the skills needed for the four stages of the process.

Now let's take a look at how this can work in practice with a mixed nationality class of young adults. These students are taking part in a process writing lesson to help them prepare for a specific IELTS exam question where they have to write a discursive essay of about 250 words. Now watch the film and make notes to answer the questions in the viewing task. The answers will appear at the end of the sequence.

2.4 Lesson feedback, learning points and goals

In this section, students give feedback on the lesson activities. Take a look and answer the questions in the viewing task.

In this final section, the students share what they've learned from the lesson. They also share learning goals that they'll work on to continue improving their writing. Take a look and answer the question in the viewing task.

Answers

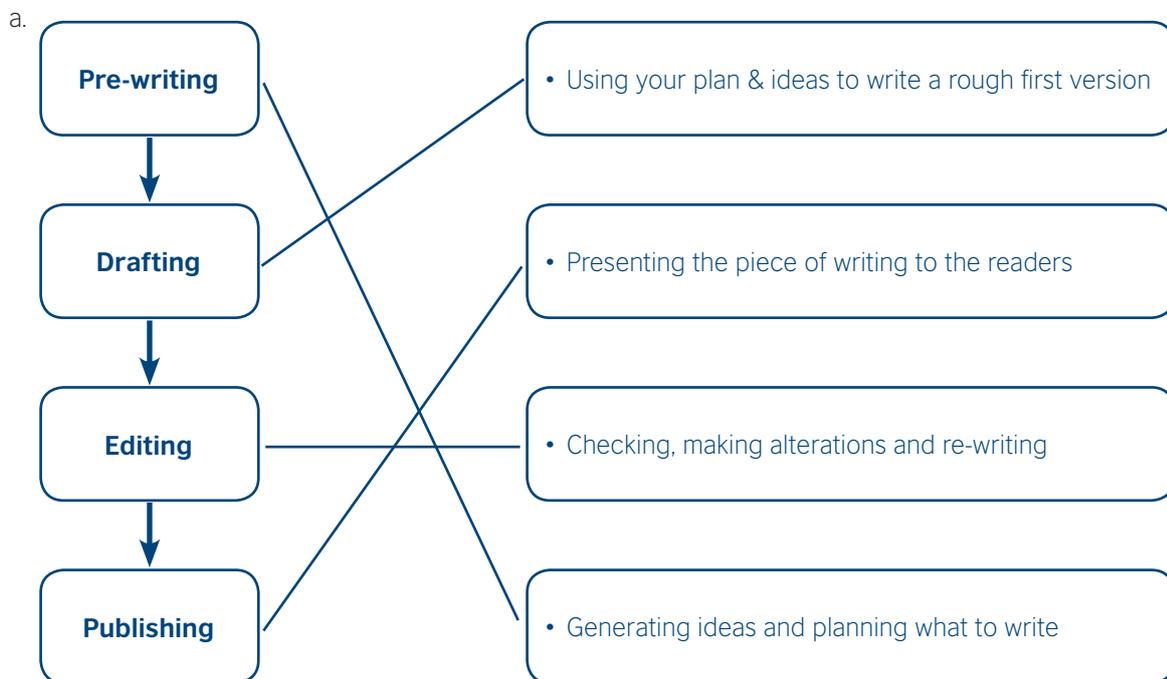
2.1 Process writing: Part 1

a. The stages of the writing process:

1. pre-writing
2. drafting
3. editing
4. publishing

b. When teaching writing we should follow this process with our students too, teaching and practising the skills for each stage of the process.

2.2 Applying the process



b.

Process writing stages	Sub-skills
Pre-writing	Brainstorming, mind-mapping, planning, forming opinions.
Drafting	Selecting/rejecting ideas, structuring, planning out paragraphs, putting ideas into sentences
Editing	Revising, checking, re-ordering, re-structuring, focusing on grammar and vocabulary.
Publishing	Presenting finished piece to readers, evaluation.

2.3 A process writing lesson

Stage	Sub-skills practised	Role of the teacher
Pre-writing	Brainstorming – generating & comparing ideas Forming opinions Mind-mapping Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing learners on the task • Generating ideas • Checking language • Encouraging peer collaboration and evaluation
Drafting	Selecting and rejecting ideas Structuring (the argument) Planning out the paragraphs	
Editing	Revising Checking Re-ordering Restructuring Focusing on language	
Publishing	Presenting the finished piece to readers Evaluation	

Activities	Application
Pair work activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Brainstorming and sharing ideas to include in the essay – writing the first drafts – drafting, editing and evaluating their own and each others work – checking. 	The word processing application is used for drafting, editing and evaluating each other's work

2.4 Lesson feedback, learning points and goals

Lesson feedback	Learning points and goals
Easiest: brainstorming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structuring and ordering ideas. • Listing key words. • Mind-mapping ideas. • Learning from other students. • Spending time editing
Most fun: editing the draft / correcting	
Most difficult: editing	

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Video produced by Jane Boylan.