

### **Session Aims**

- Why focus on writing?
- Classroom routines / Microwriting
- Practical ideas for different ages and levels

### **Are we writing enough?**

In many British Council centres a minimum of 2 writings per term is suggested. Supposing our average student is B1/B2 level, around 150 words would be expected. If these writings are redrafted, over 3 terms students would write 1800 words.

In contrast, a slow speed of speech such as audiobook reading is set at 150-160 words per minute. The 1800 words students write over a year would only equate to **12 minutes** of speaking time.

### **The Craft of writing**

- Getting the grammar right
- Having a range of vocabulary
- Punctuating meaningfully
- Using the conventions of layout correctly, for example in letters
- Spelling accurately
- Using a range of sentence structures
- Linking ideas and information across sentences to develop a topic
- Developing and organizing the content clearly and convincingly

Hedge (2005) pg 10

### **Product Approach**

1. See model
2. Analyse model
3. Practise parts of the text type
4. Produce own text on different topic
5. Teacher reads and provides feedback

### **Process**

↓Prewriting

↓Composing / Drafting

↓Revising

↓Editing

■Publishing

Tribble, Writing OUP (1996)

### **Exploiting Classroom routines**

**Late students** - Ask students to write an excuse for why they are late on small sheets of paper. Remember to get them to review/extend/self-correct/peer correct and publish in a later activity or on the wall around the class. These can be used for fast finishers or a reading task.

**Taking the register** - Use this 'dead time' to do some speedwriting.

**Correcting / setting homework** - Ask students to write in full sentences or for higher level in taught note form.

**Games** – Many old and well used games can be adapted for writing practice.

**Recording vocabulary** – Ask students to write example sentences definitions or paraphrase.

### **Practical Activities**

**Speedwriting** – Students write as much as they can in a short period of time, the focus being on writing fluency. Peer or Self error correction can then be used to practise/review a variety of grammatical functions. For example, what did you do at the weekend? (past) What are you doing this weekend? (future) What would you do if I gave you a million pounds? (hypotheticals)

**Pair writing** – Often done with a time limit students write a story in pairs. When the teacher claps their hands they swap writing duties. This process encourages review and means that writing is being continuously published.

**Team writing** (Describing the picture) Students are put in groups of three or four. The teacher asks a question and dictates some parameters, for example, your answer should be two sentences. The teacher then calls out a students' number so that one student from each group has to come forward and write the answer on a mini-whiteboard. Students then check with their answer with their team and show the teacher. The first team with the correct answer wins a point. This is fun and communicative, it incorporates many functions of collaborative process writing.

**Writing games** – Use machine gun, knots and crosses or blockbusters to get students to work on register and paraphrasing in the context of a piece of writing.

**Proverbs** – For higher levels, a great exercise for structuring paragraphs is to get students to write a topic sentence – paraphrase – give an example – give an opinion. This takes little time and trains students well for writing Cambridge style essays.

**Publishing** – For shorter writing exercises, such as, Minisagas, Haikus, 50 word reviews, jokes, why not publish on Padlet or Edmodo.

**Diaries and learner diaries** – Different focus on language (Taught / Personal) Decide with the class whether to publish or not.