

Teachers as materials writers: 5 ideas for developing materials writing skills

1. Develop your *levelling* skills

1. Choose a text
2. Make a note of the level you think it is
3. Put the text into a language profiler to check
4. Analyse your chosen words
5. Use a thesaurus to change some words
6. Consider different support options
7. Design activities at the appropriate level

<http://vocabkitchen.com>

2. *Motivating materials: design*

Look at some published classroom materials. Look at:

1. Images: How many are there? What is their purpose?
2. White space: How much is there? How is it used?
3. Font types: How many are there? How are they used?
4. Text colour: How many are there? How are they used?

Look at the same features of some materials you've made. Which changes might make your materials more motivating?

3. Develop your *rubric* skills

1. Ask a friend or colleague to cover the rubrics on a few pages of a course book.
2. Look at each activity and work out what has to be done.
3. Write the rubrics.
4. Uncover the original rubrics and compare them with yours.
5. Make a note of any differences.
6. Create a bank of rubrics that you can cut & paste.

4. Develop your *aims & objectives* skills

Evaluate some course book materials

1. Choose a double-page spread in a course book.

2. Ask a colleague to cover any headings that refer to skills focus or other aims.
3. Look at the content carefully, making a note of: (a) language being presented and/or practised (b) skills or sub-skills being developed (c) other objectives.
4. Compare your notes with the intended aims & objectives on the page, in the syllabus or in the TB.
5. Think of some aims & objectives that are useful for your class. Write a plan of the most *useful* materials.

5. Develop your *accessibility* skills

Evaluate some materials you (or someone else) created.

1. Does the chosen font make reading easy?
2. Is there a good contrast between font and background?
3. Is there plenty of white space on the page?
4. Does the layout have 1 or 2 columns?
5. Are the activities numbered clearly?
6. Are there icons that help with understanding?

Find out more by doing a Google search for *Creating an accessible word doc*.

6. Making sure your materials are *legal*

Creative commons: Know your license symbols!

1. Make a list of (e.g.) 3 texts and 3 images that you need to make some classroom materials.
2. Search for the items in (2) in the internet.
3. Check the copyright license for each item and if any item isn't free to use for your purposes either (a) contact the owner to ask for permission to use it or (b) find a replacement
4. Write an appropriate attribution for each item.

For a round up of links to videos, articles and infographics about copyright and fair use for teacher go to.

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/film-festival-copyright-fair-use>

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