

## REVIEWS

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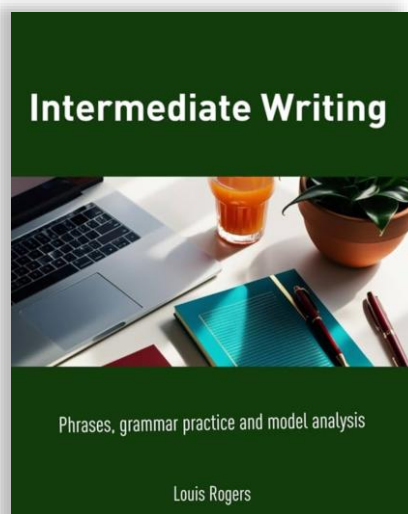
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## ***Intermediate Writing Phrases, grammar practice and Model analysis***

Louis Rogers  
Amazon, 2025  
Pp. 141  
ISBN 9798306189147



Intermediate Writing by Louis Rodgers provides support for those who wish to improve their writing skills at B1/B2 level. Although the author has written and contributed to many coursebooks, this one is designed for self-study, and answers are included. It is published by and available from [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com) in both paper and Kindle formats.

The author has chosen twenty different types of writing to work on, from informal e-mails to narratives to social media posts. All of which are useful for learners who need English for the workplace, to pass an exam, or just to improve their writing in general. Despite there being some work-related topics, there is enough range of tasks and genres for this book to be suitable for both adults and younger learners alike. Our students are mostly young adults who are studying English to certify their level, and many of the units in this book were useful for the tasks they might see in their end of course exam.

Each unit is clearly organised, starting with the objectives, which allows the learner to choose the task type that is more relevant to them. A phrase bank follows, and here the author does not overwhelm the reader with new lexis, but instead provides a carefully chosen amount of vocabulary of the appropriate level to help with the task. There is an opportunity to check understanding of the new words and phrases through practice before moving on to a relevant grammar point. Again, this section does not go into the language in detail, but does provide sufficient input followed by some exercises which can be self-corrected by the learner. The learner, or the teacher, could then decide whether more practice is needed. The final language part of each unit focuses on structure and cohesion, which is often an area learners struggle with, so we were pleased to see that it is given equal importance to the grammar and vocabulary.

The last section of the unit allows the learner to read and understand a model text before attempting to write one. A clear task with pointers is given, and the learners are encouraged to reflect on what they have written by means of a checklist.

As the publisher says, this book is 'Ideal for self-study or classroom support', and we would agree. The learners are given enough guidance and support to work at their own pace, and are provided with the tools to write a coherent text using a good range of language. Saying that, as the topics and tasks are so varied, it would be easy for a teacher to choose one that fits in with the coursebook, and use it as complementary material.

Overall, we liked how each unit was organised, with clear, but achievable objectives, and the range of writing tasks to choose from. The level is appropriate for B1 and B2, but there is enough scope for a teacher to provide more language input if Intermediate Writing is being used to complement the coursebook.



**Reviewed by**  
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## ***Puzzle Your Way***

Anne Robinson (Author)

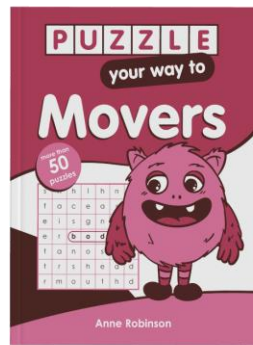
Kati Alice Bilborough (Illustrator)

2025



Pp. 72

ISBN 978-84-09-75091-7



Pp. 80

ISBN 978-84-09-75941-5



Pp. 88

ISBN 978-84-09-77698-6

Author Anne Robinson has substantial background as presenter, teacher trainer, course designer and writer of books for Cambridge exams. Her books *Fun for Starters*, *Fun for Movers* and *Fun for Flyers* as well as the *Cambridge Exam Booster for Advanced*, and *Fun Skills* levels 3 and 5, have all been published by Cambridge University Press.

The *Puzzle Your Way* series is Anne Robinson's first venture as a self-publishing author. These vocabulary books cover all three levels of the *Cambridge Young Learners Exams* and are available from Amazon.

### **The components**

The *Puzzle Your Way* series currently consists of three printed activity books available at *Starters*, *Movers*, and *Flyers* levels, which correspond to the three levels of the *Cambridge Young Learners Exams*. According to Robinson's [website](#), all levels of *Cambridge English Exams* will be covered: she has already finished the A2 level, and is working on B1.

### **Book organization**

The books are organized in one-page units and cover vocabulary, spelling, parts of speech, word formation and sentence building. Each book has more than 50 units with a wide variety of activities: guess the word, change a letter to make a new word, find words within a word, put the letters in order, word search squares, logical thinking activities, tongue twisters, personal questions and more. Most students will be familiar with several types of puzzles, and will immediately know what they are expected to do, which is a good way to boost confidence. But they will also find more challenging puzzles which is a great way to exercise the brain, and move forward.

The fact that the units are super short, makes the books particularly useful for those last few minutes in class; a quick activity which is meaningful, challenging, and gives a sense of achievement in the end.

Talking about a sense of achievement, half way through the books there are two pages that acknowledge the child's achievement, and invite reflection on the work done. At the end of the book, there is a certificate of completion which can be cut out. Simple, but effective to make children feel proud of their accomplishments.

The books feature an answer key so they can also be used for self-study. They can also be a great resource for parents to pull out while travelling, on rainy days, or in those 'I'm-bored' moments.

As a teacher, I am sure any student would really love working with *Puzzle Your Way*. My young learners have a blast when I give them any type of puzzle, and they enjoy both easy and more challenging ones. The *Puzzle Your Way* series offers both and all in between.

### **The rationale behind it all**

But why games in the classroom? Because they are fun and engaging, and we learn more and better when we play. It is no secret that word games and puzzles are extremely useful to help develop language skills and vocabulary in L1. The same applies to L2 when we offer our students graded games and puzzles to suit their language level, and challenge them to achieve more.

## Final thoughts

Each of the *Puzzle Your Way* books gives young learners the opportunity to have fun while practising and learning vocabulary and spelling. I am confident that these books will aid teachers in providing children with an entertaining and meaningful way to fix and expand their vocabulary.

If you want to learn more about the author and her work, visit her at Anne Robinson [Learning and Teaching Together](#)



**Reviewed by**  
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## **OpenLearn: Free online Teacher Development Courses**

Open University



Continuing professional development is necessary in this fast-changing world, but it can be difficult at times: lack of time for long courses or face-to-face instruction are among the main reasons.

Online courses have proved to be a successful opportunity to get further training and extra benefits at your own pace.

My experience with online courses has been very enriching for my profession. They gave me the opportunity of discovering new areas of interest, and going deeper into the ones I like. Online courses allowed me to get 'the plus' my career needed in a very professional environment and most importantly: for free.

### **Who provides the courses?**

A highly respected option is [Open University](#), a pioneer in distance learning for over 50 years. It is UK-based, but available to students around the world. Open University delivers online free courses through [OpenLearn](#), its free learning platform.

### **What does it offer?**

OpenLearn has more than 1,000 free short courses on a wide range of topics. Many are based on longer, existing courses at Open University; others are specifically prepared for Open Learn. I have prepared a selection of courses for teachers who might be interested in widening their scope of knowledge.

### **What courses might teachers find interesting with OpenLearn?**

Courses are organised according to subjects of interest, levels, length and languages.

#### **Education and Development**

- [Supporting children's learning primary education-today](#): This course offers new insights into teaching at primary level.

- [Approaching language literature and childhood: An approach to the connection between literature, language acquisition and literacy and childhood](#)
- [Take your teaching online](#): Find the necessary tools to take your teaching online with this course

## Languages

- [Grammar matters](#): This course will help you understand grammar, and improve the way you communicate.
- [Understanding language and learning](#): Is there a connection between language and learning? This course explores that relationship through videos, activities and examples.

## History and Arts

- [Agatha Christie and the golden age of detective fiction](#): This course connects the intricacies of Agatha Christie to history, literary modernism and art.
- [Exploring books for children: words and pictures](#): Discover how images and words are woven together to convey meaning to young and adults alike in an entertaining and sophisticated way.

## How do you choose your course?

To start your search, filter the offer by selecting your areas of interest. You will find detailed information on each course, such as course overview, content and reviews. One drawback: some subjects offer such a great variety that selecting one course may imply checking the whole list.

However, to narrow your options, courses are graded from Level 1, introductory, to 3, advanced. That means if you are new to this kind of education, you will benefit more and feel more comfortable with Level 1 courses.

Course duration varies from 1 to 24 hours of study depending on the time you can devote to study.

A good point: you can save your preferences!

## How do you register?

The process is very simple. You create an account with Open University and an OpenLearn profile. Your profile can be public or private- You decide the information you want to show as a personal introduction. This profile will enable you to keep track of your progress and

achievements, download activities and save courses of interest for later. And of course, you can register for courses available.

### **Are there any special requirements?**

The content of the courses is accessible to anyone with interest in a subject. The level indicates the previous educational experience that is necessary to complete the course without much difficulty.

### **When can you start/finish?**

Open Learn courses are always available, that means you start the course when you decide to, and work at your own pace. There are no finishing dates either.

### **How are courses organised?**

Each course is divided into units which are displayed before you start the course. It is advisable to follow the order suggested to build knowledge from one step to another.

There is a balance between theory and hands-on practice. Every unit alternates some theory, pictures, diagrams and/or videos/audios with an activity which may ask for your opinion or reflection. Reading discussions or general feedback allow you to check the accuracy of your answers or ideas.

### **How is the material or bibliography delivered?**

The material used may consist of short texts, pictures, discussions and audios or videos. All the materials or bibliography suggested as well as your answers are available to download in different formats.

### **What kind of recognition or certificate do you get after completion?**

After completion, all the courses offer a Statement of Participation which does not carry any formal credits towards a qualification.

Some 24-hour courses offer a free Digital Badge to participants who go through all the material, and pass compulsory online quizzes. Although Digital Badges do not carry any formal credit, they can be shared on social media to show deeper interest in the subject and as part of the e-portfolio.

## Final comments

After having taken several courses with OpenLearn, these are some of the main advantages:

- Courses are varied and always available, you do not have to wait for them to start.
- You can work at your own pace, revise and go through content as many times as you need.
- You will discover useful, interesting information created by a well-known university, which can be easily applied in your everyday teaching.

In case you are wondering, some of the OpenLearn courses that awarded me Badges and Statements of Participation, and which I really enjoyed are [Creative writing and critical reading](#), [Developing Reading for pleasure](#), and [Exploring books for children: words and pictures](#).

I truly hope you find this guide useful, and are ready to start your professional development. Happy learning!!



## Reviewed by

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