

Productive writing

In a nutshell

- Through productive writing, learners express their ideas and imagination. They also learn how to use the components of language.
- There are three stages of writing that teachers could use: controlled writing, teacher-guided writing, and free writing.
- The process of writing includes five stages: planning, drafting, reviewing, revising, and publishing.

Through productive writing, learners have a chance to express their ideas and imagination. Productive writing is beneficial in several ways in the lives of learners. Through productive writing, they learn how to use the components of language and improve their language skills. Productive writing also helps learners to improve their writing ability by expressing their thoughts to readers. Through teacher-guided writing, learners can improve their writing skills as well as build confidence in their writing abilities¹Mahrooqi, R., Thakur, V. S., Roscoe, A. A., & IGI Global, (2015). Methodologies for Effective Writing Instruction in EFL and ESL Classrooms.²Sharma, V.K. (2015). How do Productive Skills of Saudi Students Affect EFL Learning and Teaching. Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (AJHSS), 3(2). www.ajhss.org.

Aspects of Effective Writing

For learners to write effectively, they are required to have an understanding of the various aspects of writing. Such

aspects include spelling, grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, layout, style, and linking. Phonological awareness supports spelling. Knowledge of grammar allows writers to write content that is readable and understandable. By knowing various vocabulary words, writers can easily choose the right and most accurate words to express their ideas. Punctuation makes texts easier to read and comprehend. Learners should be taught various writing styles so that they can employ an appropriate style when writing. Learners should be aware of the different forms of writing such as letters, poems, stories and essays, among others³ Flower, L., Hayes, J. R., Flower, L. & Hayes, J. R. (1981). A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing. *College Composition and Communication*, 32(4), 365–387.⁴Hatcher, D. P., & Goddard, L. (2005). *The writing process: A step-by-step approach for everyday writers*. Springfield, Va: LandaBooks..

Approaches to Writing

There are three stages of writing that teachers could use to teach writing to their students. They include controlled writing, guided writing, and free writing. In controlled writing, all the writing activities are controlled by the teacher and guide the students towards specific features of written language.

During *controlled writing* students are exposed to various activities depending on their ability by:

- a) using a sketch to complete a story
- b) modifying a given paragraph or part of a text
- c) following a specific structure or given model and
- d) continuing a given passage

In *guided writing*, the teacher creates an ideal writing situation to guide the learners on what to write. Teachers provide the topic and the keywords to be used in the text and

later evaluate if the students have followed the instructions.

In *free writing*, the teacher provides a topic, and the students generate their own ideas on the topic using the language skills they have learned. Free writing allows students to explore their creativity and writing skills. The teachers later evaluate the students' work, keeping in mind the aspects of writing (grammar, punctuation, style, vocabulary, spelling, etc.) and language skills.

The Process of Writing

The writing process consists of five major stages: planning, drafting, reviewing, revising, and publishing. The writing process helps learners to think about their writing and improve it. All these stages are important to ensure that learners develop a well-written document.⁵Mahrooqi, R., Thakur, V. S., Roscoe, A. A., & IGI Global, (2015). Methodologies for Effective Writing Instruction in EFL and ESL Classrooms.⁶Olive, T., & Levy, C. M. (2002). Contemporary Tools and Techniques for Studying Writing. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic.⁷Golkova, D. and Hubackova, S. (2014). Productive Skills in Second Language Learning. Procedia – Social and Behavioural Sciences. 143(477–481). doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.07.520; <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>).

1. Planning

Planning is a stage of writing that aims to inspire and motivate learners to write. During this stage, learners think of the topic they are about to write on and gather ideas and points by writing an outline that will serve as a guide. Here the teacher and learners develop a plan for a piece of writing together by brainstorming and talk through the planning.

For beginners, the teacher might ask learners to write one to

three sentences based on a story they have read by asking them to think of what they want to write using a story they have read or based on their own experience. After giving learners time to write their responses, the teacher can then check their spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

It is important for the teacher to model how to do narrative writing by:

- i. modelling a response to a prompt.
- ii. guiding learners to write a short paragraph of one to three sentences.
- iii. asking learners to write a paragraph on their own.

This link is to an example.

My family

1. My name and age
2. People in my family
3. What we do at home
4. What I like about my family

It is also helpful to provide children with a template or writing frame to guide the type of writing required (e.g., narrative, factual, persuasive).

Writing frame: My favourite animal is.....

Introductory paragraph

Transition sentence about what is to follow...

Par. 1

Par. 2

Writing prompts, e.g., a picture to entice learners to write, is also a good idea, especially in the early grades.

2. Drafting

In this second stage, learners come up with a draft from the plan they created earlier. Learners are now encouraged to write their ideas in sentences that show the general flow of their ideas. The focus here is on the fluency of writing and intended meaning but with little attention to the accuracy of their writing.

In this stage, both learners and teachers engage in a shared writing activity, with the teacher guiding learners to create the text based on the plan. Learners are encouraged to focus on the content and the meaning of the writing. The teacher needs to talk through the process to help learners come up with ideas for the text, which will teach learners how to make their own draft in subsequent lessons.



My family 1. My name is Pelu and I am eight year old.
2. I stay with my father mather and two brothers. My farher name is Juma. he is a driver. My mother name is sofia. She cook food for us, Gio and King are my brothers. King is a baby he stays at home with mother. Gio goes to school with i.
3. when we are home we help our mother to clean the house. We play with the baby When food is ready we all eat together. Mothers says we must wash our hand and pray before eat. What we do at home 4. I like my family because we play together and laugh a lot.

3. Review

In this stage, students should review their draft and ensure that they have all the information that they want to write

about. Students can add, rearrange, and delete information from the draft to make the text better.

They should ensure that all sentences are well punctuated, clear and interesting to read, and spelled correctly. This activity is not only about learners making corrections but also improving the content and the organisation of the ideas. The review should focus on **CUPs**:

C – *Capitalisation* – Do all sentences and proper nouns have a capital letter?

U – *Understanding* – Are all the sentences clear, and do they contribute to an understanding of what the text is trying to communicate?

P – *Punctuation* – Do all sentences have the right punctuation, i.e., full stops, question marks, commas, etc.?

This link is to an example.

My fFamily – 1. My name is Pelu and I am eight years old. 2. I stay with my father, maother and two brothers. My farther name is Juma. hHe is a driver. My mother name is sSofia. She cook food for us,. Gio and King are my brothers. King is a baby. hHe stays at home with mother. Gio goes to school with I me. 3. wWhen we are home we help our mother to clean the house. We play with the baby When food is ready we all eat together. Mothers–says we must wash our hands and pray before eating. 4. I like my family because we play together and laugh a lot.

Learners can further review their work with partners.

4. **Revising**

During this stage, learners revise the draft and fix the errors they find as they write the final draft. Learners edit grammar and improve the style and the clarity of the ideas. When they finish, they share their work with partners. The

teacher guides learners to revise the text using the reviewed draft they wrote earlier.

Example.

My Family 1. My name is Pelu and I am eight years old.
2. I stay with my father, mother and two brothers. The name of my father is Juma. He is a driver. My mother's name is Sofia. She cooks food for us. Gio and King are my brothers. King is a baby. He stays at home with mother. Gio goes to school with me. 3. When at home I like helping my mother to clean the house. I play with the baby too. When food is ready we all eat together. Mother says we must wash our hands and pray before eating. 4. I like my family because we play together and laugh a lot. I love them all.

5. Publishing

For the final stage, learners write their final fair copy and correct all the cited errors. Then they read their work to the class and/or display it in the classroom. The teacher wraps up by asking learners what they like about the stories they have read.

Example.

My Family My name is Pelu, and I am eight years old. I live with my father, mother, and two brothers. My father's name is Juma. He is a driver. My mother's name is Sofia. She cooks food for us. Gio and King are my brothers. King is a baby. He stays at home with mother. Gio goes to school with me. When at home, I like helping my mother to clean the house. I play with the baby, too. When dinner is ready, we all eat together. Mother says we must wash our hands and pray before eating. I like my family because we play together and laugh a lot. I love them all.

The Role of the Teacher in the Writing Process

From the above steps, it is obvious that the teacher's role in

teaching learners how to develop productive writing entails the following:

1. **Demonstrating: *Direct instruction*. Direct Instruction model** (DIM) is a term for the explicit teaching of a skill-set using lectures or demonstrations of the material to students. Model includes “I do” (instructor), “We do” (instructor and student/s), “You do” (student practises on their own with instructor monitoring. For learners to understand what they need to write, the teacher has to first demonstrate and bring the key features of the writing process to their attention.
2. **Motivating and provoking:** The teacher needs to inspire and encourage the learners to generate ideas for what they would like to write.
3. **Supporting:** The teacher should be available to help learners who are experiencing difficulties.
4. **Responding:** The teacher needs to check the learners’ writing and give formative feedback and suggestions.
5. **Evaluating:** The teacher needs to grade the learners’ work by identifying its best features and the common problems they need to avoid.

Approaches to Teaching Productive Writing

There are several approaches that teachers can use to teach productive writing. They include the product-oriented approach and the process-oriented approach. The product-oriented approach is focused on the mechanical aspects of writing, such as grammar and syntactical structures. The main goal of the product-oriented approach is to ensure that the final written product is correct and in the right form. Teachers should ensure that learners meet certain writing standards when writing, use correct grammar, and arrange their work in an understandable manner. To measure writing skills, teachers

award scores based on spelling, content, grammar, vocabulary, organisation, and punctuation⁸Mahrooqi, R., Thakur, V. S., Roscoe, A. A., & IGI Global, (2015). Methodologies for Effective Writing Instruction in EFL and ESL Classrooms.⁹Javed, M., Juan, W. X. & Nazli. S. (2013). A Study of Students' Assessment in Writing Skills of the English Language. International Journal of Instruction, 6 (2). www.e-iji.net.¹⁰Zaid N. Al-Shammari (2008). The Effectiveness of Direct Instruction in Teaching English in Elementary Public Education School.

The process-oriented approach, on the other hand, focuses on the process of developing ideas and presenting them in written form. This approach builds on the stages involved in the writing process—that is, planning, drafting, reviewing, editing, and publishing. Writing skills are measured by the learners' ability to clearly and efficiently arrange and present their ideas in writing. The process-oriented approach assumes that their ideas become clearer by closely following the stages of the writing process.

For students to become better writers, teachers should employ both product-oriented and process-oriented approaches in a systematic way. Teachers need to first focus on how students organise their work before dealing with grammatical issues because better organised work leads to the reduction of other errors.

References

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Research briefs

[Building Students' Evaluative And Productive Expertise in the Writing Classroom](#)