

2.1. Developing Writing Skills

Session Aims

By the end of the session, you will have:

- ☐ a clear picture of what the IELTS writing exam entails.
- ☐ identified students' problems and how to deal with them.
- ☐ identified the writing genres and skills used in the writing component.
- ☐ practised and analysed activities to develop some of these genres and skills.

Before we start

How much do you know about the IELTS Writing exam? Try this short quiz to test your knowledge.

1. Which exam....?	AC Task 1	AC Task 2	GT Task 1	GT Task 2
...asks candidates to describe some visual information?				
...has a recommended time of 20 minutes?				
...is given more weight than the other in the marking?				
... has a recommended time of 40 minutes?				
... must be at least 250 words?				
... must be at least 150 words?				
... is an informal, semi formal, or formal letter?				
... is a discursive essay format?				
2. Assessment criteria				
General Training/Academic Task 1		General Training/Academic Task 2		

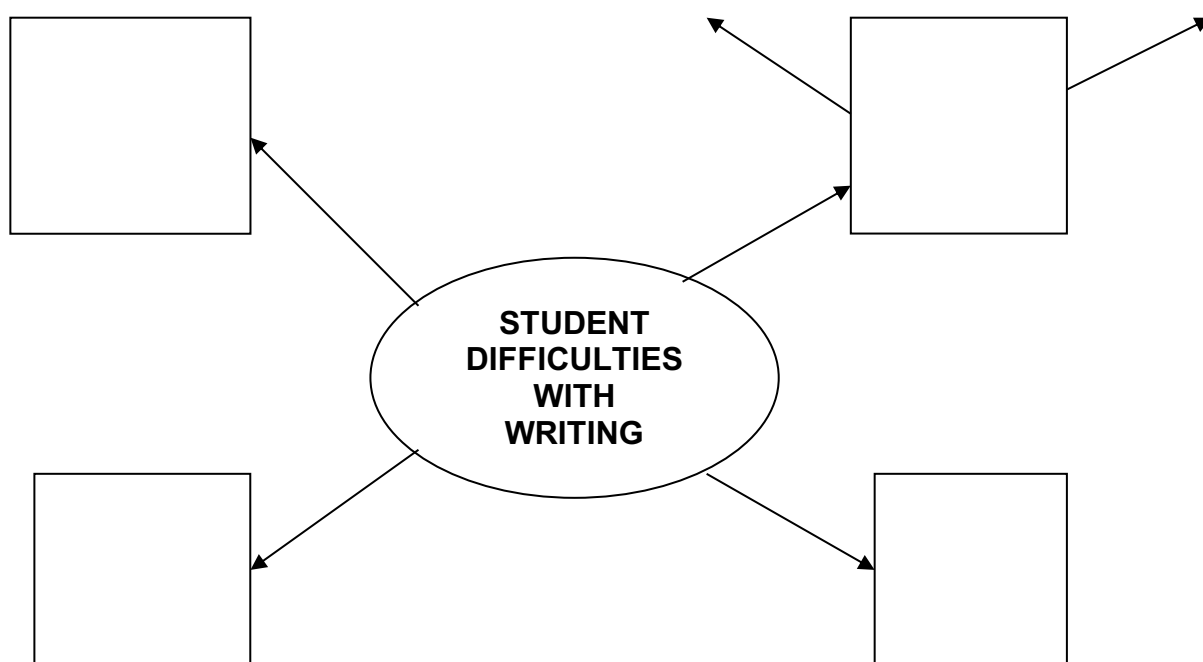
Read through the overview from the Cambridge ESOL IELTS website and / or have a look at your handbook to refresh your memory and then check your answers.

Activity type: Quiz

- ☐ Is this activity useful for your students?
- ☐ How might you adapt it?
- ☐ What learning points can you take away with you?

Learner Problems with Writing

What weaknesses have you observed from your students? Categorise them onto this mind map in any way you think makes the most sense. (i.e. maybe into use of vocabulary, structure etc)



Activity type: Mind Mapping

- ☐ Is this activity useful for your students?
- ☐ How might you adapt it?
- ☐ What learning points can you take away with you?

Solutions? The POWER writing acronym

P
O
W
E
R

Task: POWER Essay writing

Following your trainer's instructions, follow the POWER writing process to answer this essay question:

'The virtual language school – not language travel – is now the best way to learn English.'

To what extent do you agree or disagree. Give reasons to support your answer.

Activity type: Process Writing

- ☐ How is this whole process useful for your students for developing their writing skills?
- ☐ How might you adapt it?
- ☐ How does it relate to the exam?

Discourse markers.

Thinking back to the assessment criteria, do you think you currently devote enough time to teaching linking devices?

Following the essay question above, your trainer will show you an activity to develop awareness of both organisation (paragraphing) and linking devices.

Top Takeaway Tips for Developing Writing Skills

Here are some of the major things you should remember when developing your students' writing skills. Read the tip and then complete the rationale with an accurate ending. Then with your partner write your own top tip(s).

- ☐ Don't just get your students to memorise set answers – ensure that students are able to

- ☐ Writing is not only about grammar and accuracy – expose your students to a range of

- ☐ Increase your students' learner autonomy – develop their skills and confidence in

- ☐ Let your students practice as much as possible – a learner centred classroom is

- ☐ Keep your lessons focused on a particular area – ensure that the activities you use are all building

- ☐ Try the tasks yourself – this will help you to

- ☐

Activity type: Sentence Completion

- ☐ Is this activity useful for your students?
- ☐ How might you adapt it?
- ☐ What learning points can you take away with you?

Writing Skills Session - Action Plan

I learned

When I get back to work, I am going to

I would like to know more about

I am going to find out this by