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WJEC Resources: Teaching Creative Writing at Key Stage 5

Kirsten Wilcock, WJEC English Subject Officer and former Head of English and English Adviser, describes some of the new teaching and learning resources from the exam board.

*Overview*

To support the teaching of its reformed GCE English language qualification, WJEC has produced a series of five units focused on developing learners' original creative writing:

[Explanation Writing](#)

[Obituary Writing](#)

[Opinion Writing](#)

[Review Writing](#)

[Travel Writing](#)

The AS and A level English Language qualifications can seem challenging to some learners with the morass of linguistic terminology, and distinctions between form and function, so it is natural that teachers devote much of their time to the analysis and interpretation of language often at the expense of teaching writing skills. It would be reasonable to extrapolate that learners' detailed exploration of language would positively impact on their own writing; however, without explicit, frequent opportunities to apply their knowledge learners may struggle to show their full skill in writing.

These structured interactive tasks, written by Sam Holleman, teacher, adviser and grammarian, prepare learners for writing different text types – exploring key features of the genre, and lexical and grammatical choices – through explicit instruction and modelling. Each unit of work is accompanied by detailed guidance for teachers on how the materials might be used.

*Explanation Writing*

The task here for learners is to:

Write a report for the National Union of Teachers (NUT) explaining the problem of the use of American English by British schoolchildren and outlining ways of addressing this problem.

Before they get to write their report, learners are taken through a number of activities related to the task exploring form and expression, including passive/active voice.

### *The problem:*

In 2015, an estimated 19.4 million children worldwide **failed to receive** routine immunisation services, with more than 60% of these living in developing countries. Figures suggest that an additional 1.5 million deaths **could be avoided** if global vaccination systems improve. And, current vaccine programmes in developing countries **do not meet** the international standards for temperature safe vaccine distribution which leads to vaccines losing potency.

### *The solution:*

ISOBAR works by using a chemical process to provide a long term cooling effect for vaccine delivery.

A mix of Ammonia and Water **is heated** in a lower pressure vessel. The ammonia vaporises and separates from the water into the upper chamber where it **is trapped** by a valve. It remains trapped until the cooling effect **is needed**.

**Modal verb** - used to show present possibility

**Passive voice** - used to describe a step in a process

**Past tense** - used to show past reality

**Present tense** - used to show present reality

### *Obituary Writing*

For many learners, this will be an unfamiliar form of writing. These resources aim to develop an understanding of the form and conventions of obituaries using exemplar written about two distinctive people. There is also focused activity on sentence structure: the creation of typical complex-compound sentences and their use to achieve an appropriate register for such writing.

Below is an extract taken from the BBC's obituary of Sir Patrick Moore. The extract includes a few characteristic elements of an obituary, which you will need to highlight. Match each label with the appropriate text selection by highlighting the text in the appropriate colour.



Identification of a notable accomplishment



Mention of a distinctive characteristic/physical appearance



Euphemism referring to death



Quote describing the deceased from someone who knew him well



## Opinion Writing

The main task here asks learners to produce a blog articulating strongly held views.

There is a free-response gap-fill activity focusing attention on lexical choices and tone, where the author's choices are revealed for learners to discuss and evaluate in comparison with their own.

Learners are also directed to explore the construction of an argument and the use of specific rhetorical devices through looking at articles written by Jeremy Clarkson and Caitlin Moran.

### Text A

Give 400,000 jobless fatties nearly a billion quid and by next week all of it will be in the hands of Allied Breweries, Ladbrokes and Pablo Escobar. You can't change that.

Trying to do something about this is as impossible as deciding that life would be fairer if everyone were good-looking. Yes. But some of us aren't. And there's nothing that can be done to change that.

So, Mrs May. Here's a tip. The next time there are riots, don't spray anyone with money. Spray them instead with a water cannon.

### Text B

So this is why, when it comes to MP Stella Creasy's amendment for Britain finally to make good its offer to home the unaccompanied child refugees in Calais, I can support it wholly unemotionally, as politicians and governments should. I agree that, in the end, it is useless to be emotional about refugees. Let's talk about how human beings do have a worth – and whenever we ignore this, others take terrifying advantage of our blindness. Yes. For the sake of us all, let us be pragmatic.

Which text includes a concession (or point of agreement with the opposition)?

☐ Text A

☐ Text B

☐ Both

## Review Writing

These resources explore the different audiences and purposes of reviews, analysing lexical and grammatical choices in two examples and then applying their understanding to their own writing.

Read the paragraph below. How does the author of the review use language to capture the atmosphere and excitement of the action film he is reviewing – what choices has he made in regards to words, sentence structure, etc.?

You may use the highlight tool to identify words and phrases that you find effective; record your thoughts in the box below the text.



Clear annotations

We catch up with our renegade anti-hero on the Greek-Macedonian border, where he flattens a burly fighter in a stripped-to-the-waist sequence that seems less Jason Bourne than Jason Statham. Bedraggled yet buff, this perennial outsider now makes an off-the-grid living as a bare-knuckle fighter, but it's clear from his haunted gaze and propensity for flashbacks that he is heading for a "tipping point". Meanwhile in Reykjavik, Julia Stiles is back as Nicky Parsons, accessing classified files that lend a dynastic edge to Bourne's ongoing identity crisis, in the process inadvertently putting him back on the CIA's radar. And we're off...

## Travel Writing

This unit of activities works towards the task of writing a travelogue to describe part of a remarkable journey for an online travel guide website. Here the learners focus on how to convey attitude and create atmosphere through lexical and grammatical choices, and the adaptations necessary to appeal to the intended audiences.

An order for several biryanis, accompanied by payment, is

accepted

all that will get rid of him

gratefully received

, and I hear him go on to the next compartment. He knocks at this door persistently for at least fifteen minutes, too afraid to open it, too dogged to give up.

Show original text

The resources discussed here, along with many, many more for KS3, GCSE and GCE – Language and Literature – can be found at: <http://resources.eduqas.co.uk/>

If you would like any information about WJEC English qualifications, please contact the Subject Officers at:

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