

From their earliest years, children are surrounded by texts that combine images and words, on screen and on paper, in the home, in the street and in school. This means that they bring a wide experience of texts to their school work, expecting to read images as well as print and, increasingly, expecting to use computers in seeking information. When they come to express ideas in classroom work, children readily draw on their experience to create multimodal texts using words, diagrams and pictures. And, for the majority of teachers, the children's existing knowledge of picture books should be the starting point for discussion.

The new forms of communication, and the knowledge of texts brought to the classroom by even the very youngest readers and writers, pose new questions for teaching and learning. Many books and other media now available in schools cannot be read by attention to writing alone. We read them differently from the way we read continuous print, making different choices about where to start reading: often the eye falls on a strong central image, or a colored text box presented as a 'fascinating fact'; or the arrows on a diagram might direct our gaze. With continuous print we also make choices about how we take in the meaning, but usually, in order to make sense of it, at least on first reading, we tend to read according to the direction of print. The students are aware of these differences, and the layout options available, and their reading knowledge influences how they use pictures and words to communicate their own ideas. When children use multimodal ways of presenting ideas (often pictures plus words) they use their knowledge of spatial organization as well as print conventions. The more channels students have to select from when composing and exchanging meaning, the more resources they have at their disposal for being successful communicators. Aural and video compositions sometimes reveal and articulate meanings students struggle to articulate with words; audio and visual compositions carry different kinds of meanings that words are not good at capturing. It is the thinking, decision making, and creative problem solving involved in creating meaning through any modality that provide the long-lasting and useful lessons students can carry into multiple communicative situations.

The classroom accounts and activities show how using visual approaches – and audio-visual– can build on children's knowledge of a range of multimodal texts. There are examples of teaching sequences using film, real-life observations, presentation software and the interactive whiteboard. Gieck and Brabec (2002) acknowledge that using technology for such things as composing, revising and sharing has varying benefits. Teachers who are willing to explore can find out for themselves how much their students will benefit from writing with technology in their classrooms.

### **Pre-writing activities**

Pre-writing strategies help students to generate or collect ideas, recording these thoughts on paper. Writers' block can result from not providing students opportunities to do this. Once students have initial ideas with which to work, they can then build upon them by organizing their ideas for writing—considering sequence, creating an outline, focusing on an audience and purpose, etc.

A good way to begin is by stimulating ideas and allowing the students to talk about topics that they find interesting and motivating. They should also be guided to select Internet sites to find writing prompts or discussion starters. Talking before writing serves as a catalyst for more ideas.

## Activity 1. Wiki-based collaboration and brainstorming

**Level:** upper-intermediate to advanced

**Time:** 50 minutes

**Aims:** to help with the task of generating ideas before writing

**Procedure:** The teacher introduces a topic that the students might find interesting and motivating and writes the headline on the blackboard. Then he or she will put the students in pairs and ask them to access the web server, previously installed on their computers.

A wiki can allow many developing ideas to be captured quickly and promotes the organic structuring and growth of these ideas as they develop. The pooling nature of the wiki supports mutual stimulation and as the site develops it becomes easier for participants to 'spark off' from and elaborate on existing ideas. Crucially, not only is this supporting ad hoc collaboration and data in the early stages but as the page develops and the information crystallizes, it should be seen to capture more structured data as it progresses.



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Ziua Europeană a ...  
edl.ecml.at

Which of following factors would motivate you most to learn a new language (choose a maximum of 3)? If it was none of these – let us know your suggestions!

- To speak with friends or family
- To make new friends
- To understand a different culture
- To travel
- To live/work/study in another country
- To communicate at work (on the phone, at meetings, welcoming visitors)
- To get a (better) job
- For shopping
- To surf on the Internet
- To watch films or TV
- To read books and newspapers
- Just to learn for personal satisfaction
- Other – please specify



## Why learn a language?





One day I will learn  
a new language

Learn to learn a  
new language

Learn to learn a  
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## While-writing activities

While-writing activities range from drafting and redrafting to conferencing and collaborating, to revising, editing, and evaluating.

### Activity 2. Using Short Messages Language to Observe Different Registers

**Level:** intermediate to advanced

**Time:** 50 minutes

**Aims:**

- to allow the learners to explore the relationship between purpose, audience, and appropriate language use;
- to guide the students through the process of writing original e-mail messages or letters demonstrating the effect of purpose and audience on language use and word choice.

**Procedure:** The teacher distributes the Internet Abbreviations and Shortcuts handout to each student, or shows the chart on an overhead projector. He allows students time to expand each abbreviation.

As the teacher discusses the abbreviations and their meaning, the class can add to the list. The students are allowed to share only abbreviations that are appropriate for the classroom community.

### Expanded Internet Abbreviations and Shortcuts

TOY	thinking of you
FYI	for your information
B4	before
KIT	keep in touch
TNX	thanks
GBH	great big hug
BCNU	be see in' you
PLS	Please
R&R	rest and relaxation
4ever	forever
ASAP	as soon as possible
OIC	oh I see
ILY	I love you
BC	because
LOL	laughing out loud
CU	see you
SFSG	so far so good
NOYB	none of your business
ABT	about
JK	just kidding
IOW	in other words

KWIM	know what I mean
BTW	by the way
POV	point of view
NE1	anyone

Dr. Principal Smith,

How r u? Just shooting you an em to ask u 4 the newtxtbks. The class is going SFSG.BTW, the students have been asking abt the field trip. Could you plsem me backb42longto work out the details?Thnx.TTYL.

Mrs.Jones

### Post-writing activities

We define post-writing as the step in the writing process where the written text is shared with other audiences, such as a peer-editor or the instructor or even with the general public. The post-writing activities should involve the students in:

- Re-reading their story, make sure the sentences make sense.
- Adding phrases to make the story flow smoothly (cohesion markers, pronouns, conjunctions).
- Eliminating "fluff" (unnecessary or redundant details).
- Proofreading for spelling, vocabulary, grammar (checklist).
- Editing their paper (peer-editing, post-teacher editing).
- Sharing with audience (website, print, etc.).

Post-writing activities help students polish their work. Teaching the students to complete post-writing activities with each assignment will help them to grow as writers and gain confidence in their writing skills.

#### Activity 1: Using blogs for peer-editing

**Level:** beginners to advanced

**Time:** 50 minutes

**Aims:**

- to have the students analyze their own images by determining which pictures best represent the abstract concept and writing about their choices;
- to have the students analyze the work of their peers by posting responses to a blog that make connections between the photos.

**Procedure:** the teacher has the students spend five minutes brainstorming and writing about what images come to mind when they think of the word 'success'.

The students move to the computers and search on the Internet for pictures which best illustrate this concept, in their opinions. They are instructed to consider what success looks like in each image and why they think the picture should be chosen. They upload their pictures on the classroom blog, adding a rationale for their choices.

The next step involves the students reviewing each other's pictures and descriptions. They should post responses to a number of pictures that the teacher specifies (which will vary according to the size of the class and the amount of time available).

Before the students post, the teacher should discuss what the responses should contain. Each post should contain a statement of agreement/disagreement with the picture description and a rationale for the statement. The response should also refer to other students' pictures. Ideally posts will reflect on commonalities and differences between the pictures and will also deepen discussion of the concepts being explored.

## Picture Selection Sheet

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Assign each picture you have taken a number and write it on the back. Fill in the boxes about it in the appropriate spaces on the grid. When you are finished, circle the 3 photos that have the lowest ratings in the last column.

<b>Picture Number</b>	<b>What does this picture say about courage? How is courage demonstrated?</b>	<b>What character from our readings would agree with this?</b>	<b>How easy would it be to write about courage using this picture? Rate your response from 1 to 5 with 1 being easy and 5 being hard.</b>

## Picture and Blog Entry Rubric

**Teacher Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Meaning behind The picture (Original post)	Postings are able to go “behind” the pictures and explain the contexts.	Postings are beginning to be able to go “behind” the pictures and include some explanation of the context of the pictures.	Postings don’t go “behind” the pictures, but include some explanation of the context of the pictures.	Postings do not go “behind” the pictures and there is little to no explanation of the context of the pictures.
Connection to texts read (Original post)	Postings demonstrate a strong sense of understanding of the books and characters referenced.	Postings demonstrate sense of understanding of the books and characters referenced.	Postings demonstrate a beginning sense of understanding of the books and characters referenced.	Postings demonstrate little or no sense of understanding of the books and characters referenced.
Makes sense of courage (Original post)	Postings show a strong idea of what success is and use many examples to explain thinking.	Postings show an idea of what success is and use some examples to explain thinking.	Postings show a beginning idea of what success is and use few examples to explain thinking.	Postings show little to no idea of what success is and use no examples to explain thinking.
Pictures (Original post)	Success is clearly represented in the pictures—it is clear why the student chose them.	Success can be figured out from the pictures, but some description is necessary to clarify.	Success is not well represented in the pictures and a description is necessary to understand what the pictures say about Success.	Success is not represented and the descriptions do not help in developing the idea of Success.
Makes sense of courage (Response posts)	Responses show a strong idea of what Success is and use many examples to explain thinking.	Responses show an idea of what Success is and use some examples to explain thinking.	Responses show a beginning idea of what Success is and use few examples to explain thinking.	Responses show little to no idea of what Success is and use no examples to explain thinking.



Connection of themes (Response posts)	Student is able to connect five or more pictures together and find common elements.	Student is able to connect four pictures together and find common elements.	Student is able to connect three pictures together and find common elements.	Student is able to connect two pictures together and find common elements.
Connection of texts read (Response posts)	Responses demonstrate a strong understanding of the books and characters referenced.	Responses demonstrate understanding of the books and characters referenced.	Responses demonstrate an elementary understanding of the books and characters referenced.	Responses demonstrate little or no understanding of the books and characters referenced.

<https://www.gettyimages.com/photos/courage>