

WriteWays is a series of template-based lessons for developing writing skills. Teachers are granted full permission to download, adapt and apply the templates and lesson suggestions in whatever way they see fit, so long as the materials are not used or distributed for commercial purposes.

Each unit follows a similar approach and progression of activities:

1. **A pre-lesson writing task** for learners to complete, which will provide learner-generated content and learning goals for the teacher to use in the unit that follows;
2. **A writing skills lesson** working from discovery and noticing towards specific skills at sentence, paragraph or whole-text level, with opportunities to do targeted practice and re-writes;
3. **Opportunities to integrate writing** with other language skills and facilitate sharing of written work with other classmates.

This forms the “core” of the templates and lesson sequencing. The following teacher’s guide demonstrates how I personally would use the materials and approach in a majority of teaching situations. However, the templates are designed in a way that allows teachers to pick and choose what they like or want the lessons to focus on, by adding to and adapting anything in the Microsoft Word or (editable) PDF versions of the lessons.

Unit 1 Introduction

This initial unit presents a template for:

- Encouraging students to **write about themselves** and share this information with others;
- Addressing a sentence-level writing skill (in this case: **basic punctuation** for sentence clarity);
- Applying basic **dictation** and interactive dictation.

Page 1:



Pre-lesson task

This page is designed to be applied **before** the main lesson itself, one or more days prior to using pages 2-5 so that teachers can look at, think about and use parts of the learners’ own written production for the main lesson that follows.

The template asks the learners to write 6-8 sentences about themselves, and there are a variety of simple topical hints provided (which assume students may not know each other or the teacher all that well yet).

It is important to let the learners tackle this on their own, using whatever writing ability they currently have at their disposal. You may need to stress to the learners that the production here is just an initial practice run, and does not count towards anything like marks or grades. You might also like to inform the students that what they write here will help you the teacher in working out where and how their writing can be improved.

If the learners are already quite familiar with each other as a learning group (including awareness of a variety of basic personal details), you might like to change the emphasis of the task a little, as well as the idea prompts. For example, you could change the instructions so that they ask for interesting or unexpected information about the learners, and provide a variety of different idea prompts in the help box to assist them in thinking in this direction.

When learners have completed the task, gather them up and examine them (away from the actual classroom if possible) to find out:

- (a) How well the learners can use basic punctuation (**capital letters**, **full stops** and appropriate **spaces** between words);

- (b) How well the learners can give simple but accurate and relevant information about themselves in writing.

If the learners do exhibit some problems or gaps with (a), then the skill focus for the rest of the template will be fine to apply. If, on the other hand, these aspects of punctuation do not appear to represent an area of learning need, you might like to come up with a different sentence-level writing issue to work with, based on whatever appears to be deficient or problematic in several or all of the learners' written production for the pre-lesson task.

Whichever way the teacher chooses to go with this, from here he/she can look through the learners' initial writing and use it to generate content for the main lesson sections that follow. These are (most importantly, in terms of content input designed in advance by the teacher):

- **Part C** on page 2 (with two input texts required);
- **Part F** on page 3 (with sample sentences required for student editing/correction purposes);
- **Part H** on page 4 (with sample sentences for the simple dictation activity).

Note that in drawing on the examples of the learners' own writing, it is important to (a) not take all the samples from only one or two students, and (b) adapt or remove information to protect the identities of the students concerned.

Page 2

Me, Myself and I **UNIT 1**

B Try to remember some of the sentences you wrote about yourself in A. Share the information with a partner.

C Read the two paragraphs.

Enter input text 1 here...

Enter input text 2 here...

D Try to figure it out...

1. Which paragraph is easier for you to read? Why?
2. Circle all the CAPITAL letters and full stops (.) you can see.
3. Draw a slash (/) in the places where there needs to be a space.

WriteWays Level 1 Design by Jason Renshaw <http://jasonrenshaw.typepad.com>

- A text featuring **basic personal information, with problems and errors in it in terms of basic punctuation** (capital letters, full stops and spaces), based on the samples submitted by students in (A), but not identifying any particular students in the group;
- **Another text, also based on the samples provided by students, with accurate use of basic punctuation** (with the teacher adapting and correcting the initial sample so that it represents accurate use of this punctuation and accurate use of language).

It doesn't particularly matter which text comes first (the one with accurate usage or the problematic one), so long as there are two texts there and a definite comparison can be made by the students.

B Discussion/sharing

This asks students to talk in pairs or small groups and share (through casual discussion) what they can recall writing about in (A). In some ways it is schema-activation, but given it may have been a day or more since the pre-lesson task was completed, this creates a good opportunity to connect and recall before doing the targeted lesson that follows.

C Input Texts

This part of the lesson requires preparation and editing in advance by the teacher, as previewed in the TG section for (A) above. We want two texts here:

Another, simpler way of putting this is that we want two example texts, with one being good and the other being “dodgy” – in terms of basic punctuation issues (or whatever other sentence level issue you decided on in stage (A) of the material).

We also want the texts to stay on track with the notion of writing basic information about oneself, without actually identifying any individual students (hence we can change some of the relevant personal information as we enter the texts into the pages).

Students will then be called on to compare and contrast these two input texts in the next stage (Part D below).

Here are two example texts based on the procedure outlined above:

Hi. My name is Jiwon. I am 12 years old. I come from Korea. I am in grade 6 at Hapsol Elementary School. My father is a salesman. My mother is a shop owner. I have two older sisters. My favourite movie is Avatar. My favourite subject is Art.

Hi. my name is SUMIN i am 11 years old. I come from korea iam in grade5. at sangwon elementary school. my mother isa housewife my fatheris an officeworker. I have one younger brother. my favourite book is harry potter myfavourite subject is science

Both of the texts are built based on input from the students' efforts in (A), changing personal details concerning names and details. The top version has been corrected to represent accurate use of punctuation. The bottom example has been corrected in terms of most of the grammar and spelling, but problems with punctuation have been left in or added – based on the patterns we saw in the learners' collective efforts in (A).

Note that it is also possible to leave in things like grammar and spelling errors and encourage learners to notice these as part of (D) below, but I recommend against it for this sort of lesson because:

1. It may provide too many things to “notice” and distract/detract from the main skill objective of this unit;
2. There will be separate opportunities to concentrate on spelling and grammar skills as part of the **WriteWays** approach.

Note that if you aren't sure which sorts of punctuation to feature here, you might like to scan ahead to page 3 and look at (or edit/provide) the relevant details in parts E and G.

On a final note here, I have “pushed” the input texts into paragraph form, when in all likelihood many of my students at this level would have written many or all of their initial sentences in (A) on separate/new lines. I have done this to maximise the space available to include input, but also as an early preview of the notion of follow-on sentences to create paragraphs with a general focus or main idea. This skill will be showcased and drawn on in Unit 2 of the **WriteWays** templates at this level.

D Skill Discovery Prompts

The prompts here encourage students to examine and engage with the two example texts and come to some conclusions in terms of which is easier/clearer to read based on better use of punctuation. The prompts here will only need changing if you have decided to feature a different sentence-level skill for the materials to focus on (or can think of better or more appropriate ones to use than the ones I've featured!).

Upon completion of this part of the lesson, you might like to hand back to students the writing they did in (A) and see if they can locate and self-correct similar problems in their own initial production.

Me, Myself and I UNIT 1

E Writing Skill: Making clear sentences.

Try to write neatly and clearly. Leave clear spaces between words.
Always use a CAPITAL letter at the start of each sentence.
Use a full stop (.) at the end of each sentence to show it is finished.

F Writing Practice: Rewrite each sentence using capital letters, spaces and full stops in the correct places.

1. Write sample sentence here
2. Write sample sentence here
3. Write sample sentence here
4. Write sample sentence here
5. Write sample sentence here

G Writing Tip: Capital letters

- Always use a capital letter for I (talking about you)!
- Use a capital letter at the start of names (people, places, books, games, movies)

WriteWays Level 1 Design by Jason Renshaw <http://jasonrenshaw.typepad.com>

E Writing Skill

This is a brief (and hopefully uncluttered) explanation of the lesson's central skill or learning objective – in this case making clear sentences through the accurate application of simple punctuation devices. As with (D) on page 2, it can be adapted to describe or demonstrate whatever writing skill you decide fits best here according to the level of your students and the texts they generated in Part (A) in the pre-lesson activity.

This can serve as a reference point for the unit's main skill. To help the learners ensure they understand it, have them refer back to the discovery activity in D and input texts in C to make relevant connections and conclusions.

F Writing Practice

This is the second stage of the unit that calls on teachers to insert appropriate content for the learners to practice the central skill associated with basic pronunciation at sentence level. This can be based again on students' own input and examples from the pre-task in (A), with some adaptation to protect identity and better highlight the skill focus.

In essence, we want 5 sentences here that are problematic in terms of punctuation. Here is a quick example of what a teacher might feature:

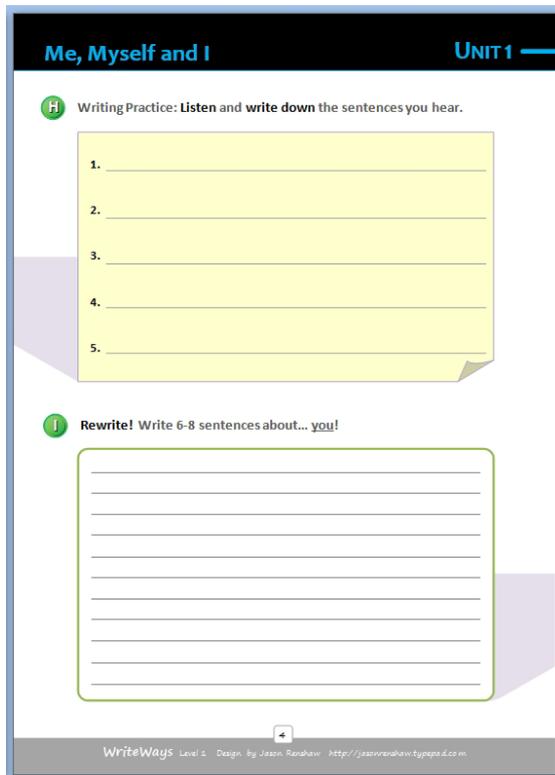
1. my name is Roger
2. i am 13 yearsold.
3. Mymother is a teacherand My fatheris a businessman
4. my favouritebook is harry potter.
5. My Favourite game is worldof warcraft

The learners' task is to identify the problems in punctuation in each sentence and rewrite it correctly on the line below.

G Writing Tip: Capital letters

This is some additional information designed to help learners grasp some basic rules for the use of capital letters. It can be changed or refocussed in whatever way the teacher decides is relevant to the skills and practice chosen for this unit.

Page 4



H Writing Practice: Dictation

This is the third (and final) stage asking for content selected by the teacher. It involves choosing 5 sentences based on the input from the students in (A), making sure they are accurate, and changing any identifying information if the teacher thinks this is desirable.

The selected sentences are not inserted into the student worksheet, but kept as a script for the teacher to read aloud. This creates a handy dictation exercise which integrates listening and writing skills and gives the learners additional chances to practice the basic punctuation skills introduced – this time requiring them to make judgements based on what they can hear (and see as they write down).

Once students have finished the dictation, you might like to get them to compare and edit in pairs or groups. The correct versions could then be provided on the whiteboard or as a handout, with the learners then self-correcting what they have written based on the correct versions.

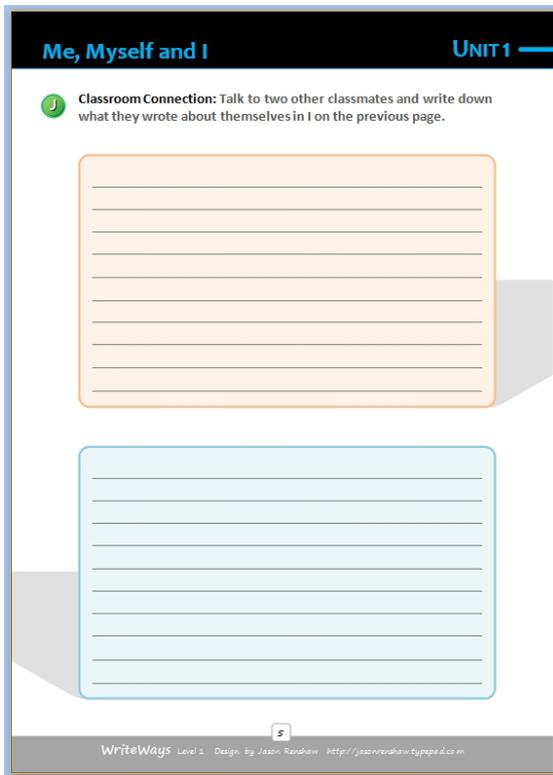
I Rewrite

The learners now have an opportunity to rewrite their initial efforts from (A) based on:

- The punctuation rules they have been exposed to and hopefully started to grasp through the noticing and practice stages of the unit;
- More samples of relevant and accurate personal information (which is why it was recommended that teachers feature correct grammar and spelling in the input texts for C, F and H – these can now become models for the learners).

If this rewrite activity appears that it will be too easy, boring or repetitive for the learners, it can be adapted to call for new personal information of some kind, or even something more creative (like creating an imaginary person from another place or time, for example). However it is applied, it is important to check and see how/whether students are correctly applying the relevant punctuation skills featured in the unit.

Page 5



J Classroom Connection

This is essentially a set of two additional dictation activities, but now the learners themselves are in the drivers' seats.

Based on what the learners wrote in the rewrite activity in (I) on page 4, they can pair up and dictate the information in turns to each other. It might be worth having learners work with students not immediately next to them (or ensure there is adequate space between them), so that they truly have to listen as part of the dictation application. The original rewrites in (I) can then be shown to partners and a collaborative editing/correction process can take place.

Given the interaction and cooperation required to complete this task, the teacher might like to help the students out with a range of useful/functional oral expressions to help the exchange of information run smoothly (for example, ***Could you repeat that?; What was that again?; How do I spell that?; Did you say...?; Does ... have a capital 'P'?; Should I put a full stop after 'old'?;*** etc.)

The page allows for the interactive dictation activity to be applied in two different pairs for each student. A possible adaptation might be to have only one round of interactive dictation and then have the learners use the bottom box to:

- Write reflective/review notes based on what they noticed about punctuation and language through the dictation activity with a classmate;
- Write a series of follow up questions to ask the student they listened to and wrote down about, to create an additional discussion with the classmate concerned;
- Apply the pre-lesson task (A) from Unit 2, which might optimise time and reduce the need for more printing, as well as create a more cohesive link from this unit to the next one.