

## **Description and Evaluation of the Writing Instruction Practices of a Coursebook**

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**Abstract:** The purpose of the particular paper is to describe and evaluate the current writing instruction practices concerning a specific group of learners according to certain criteria, present an original writing lesson plan accompanied by its relevant writing tasks and evaluate it and finally, assess the whole writing lesson after teaching it. In the first part, there is a description of the current teaching situation, with reference to learners' profile, the curriculum, the coursebook and the writing instruction practices used. In the second part, there is a brief description and evaluation of the writing instruction practices/ activities of the coursebook. In the third part, the original writing lesson that was created based on the criteria mentioned in the previous part is described, while at the same time there is a justification upon the activity choices. Finally, there is an overall evaluation of the writing lesson taught in class.

### **1. Description of the current teaching situation**

The particular class consists of 16 Greek students (9 male and 7 female ones), aged 12 to 13, attending the first grade of a Greek junior high school. All learners are monolingual and they have been learning English, since they were in the second grade of primary school. The group's competence levels range from intermediate to upper-intermediate (B1-B2) according to the CEFR (2021). Most of them are highly motivated to engage actively in all activities/ tasks during the lesson, while at the same time they show a positive stance towards English as a foreign language. The writing book used is called 'B1 Writing for all' and it has been designed to guide learners upon writing and prepare them for all B level (B1-B2) exams. It includes 20 writing lessons, each one of them corresponding to a double lesson (1a/1b), composed of writing, reading, vocabulary and grammar exercises, while there are plenty of model texts, vocabulary banks, plans and exercises. Writing is taught separately, in a 60-minute-lesson, where the entire focus is on it and only when learners complete the relevant unit's activities and exercises.

### **2. Presentation and evaluation of the coursebook's writing instruction practices**

The writing instruction practices presented in this section are addressed to B1-B2 level learners (CEFR, 2021). More specifically, there are two different writing lessons presented (Appendix 1, sample 1- sample 2). The first one (Appendix I, sample 1) is called 'An adventure', while the

second one is called 'Teenagers in trouble' (Appendix I, sample 2). In the first one, learners are supposed to write an informal letter to their friends including a narrative about an adventure they had, while in the second one, they are asked to write an essay suggesting solutions to youth crime.

Both writing lessons have almost the same structure, that is a writing task, a text model, which provides learners with information about the type of text they are asked to produce and its features (Hyland, 2007:132), followed by some comprehension exercises, a vocabulary exercise which focuses on the vocabulary items presented in the model and a T/F exercise relevant to the writing styles and strategies. For example, in the first writing lesson (Appendix I, sample 1), learners are presented with the topic of the writing lesson which is an informal letter informing about a personal experience followed by a model text on the same topic. Then, there are four comprehension exercises, where the first asks learners to read once again the model text and put the events in the appropriate chronological order and the second, to spot words/ phrases in the text with a similar meaning to the ones given. In the third one, learners are asked to answer some questions on the story and in the last one, to mark the statements as True or False regarding the organization/ structure of the learners' new text. Moreover, there are some further controlled exercises focusing on form and accuracy (matching, following a model), leaving no freedom to learners for spontaneous expression. The first controlled exercise (Appendix I, sample 1, p.5) asks learners to use the words provided in the appropriate form in Past Simple and form sentences narrating a story/ experience they had, while in the second one there are some situations presented and learners are supposed to match them with some sentences expressing feelings. Afterwards, there are some vocabulary exercises (rephrasing), closed type activities focusing on correct answers, such as T/F, matching, completion of sentences with a specific grammatical item or rewriting sentences using specific words and phrases (teaching of skills) and an error correction exercise, asking learners to spot the mistakes (grammar) in the sentences given and correct them. More specifically, in exercise 1 (Appendix I, p.6) learners are asked to rephrase the sentences using the vocabulary items given in brackets, in exercise 2, to complete the sentences using Past Simple/ Past Continuous, while in exercise 3, to use the appropriate linking words to join the sentences. Also, in exercise 4, learners are given some sentences to correct other students' mistakes in their letters on the same topic. Finally, the writing task that learners are supposed to perform as homework is accompanied by a writing plan and a useful vocabulary bank (Appendix I, sample 1, p.7), while at the same time they are asked to use information from the model text and all the exercises in the unit for the task's purposes. At the end of the lesson, there is space provided to learners to copy their corrected writing tasks.

In other words, both writing lessons (Appendix 1, sample 1-sample 2) and the whole writing coursebook itself follow the product approach, where writing is concerned with knowledge about the

structure of language while at the same time it is the outcome of imitation of the input- model text provided (Pincas, 1982a) and they are text-based. More specifically, the focus is on formal units or grammatical features of the text (accuracy/ well-formedness) (Hyland, 2003: 3,4) and on the final product which should be coherent and error-free (Nunan, 1999) and not on meaning or spontaneous expression. Moreover, there is guided writing since learners are provided with a model text to familiarize themselves with the topic, some comprehension questions requiring specific answers while in the end, they are given the chance to produce a written text following and imitating the model text as in product process imitation is seen as the only way of learning (Badger & White, 2000: 154; Kamler, 1995: 9). So, there is guidance and control, while learners are supposed to produce error-free texts, since mistakes are not tolerated, as the teacher intervenes trying to check any possible one. Also, writing itself is the goal of the writing lesson (product) and not the process towards it through multiple drafting. At the same time, there is neither creativity but instead imitation of the model text (Murray, 1980; Pincas, 1962:1), nor context provided to learners, because the purpose of their writing is not a response to an authentic/ realistic situation but rather writing itself (Brakus, 2003). Finally, teacher feedback is provided to learners while checking the activities in class, focusing on forms, structures (Pincas, 1982 a), grammar, word order and error- correction exercises (correct language and forms). In other words, it is based on the product/ outcome of learners' writing decisions and not on the process itself (Leki, 1990) which indicates that the process skills, such as planning are undervalued (Kamler, 1995:9) and it does not contribute to the improvement of their writing skills (Murray, 1972).

### **3. Presentation of the original writing lesson and justification over the activity choices**

The purpose of the particular original writing lesson on hobbies (Appendix II, p.12) is to encourage learners to focus on the writing process and not only on its product (writing itself), reinforce their writing skills, increase their learner autonomy, independence and collaboration skills. It is composed of three parts, the pre-writing stage, the while-writing one and the post-writing stage, while writing is central in this 60-minute-lesson and not just a part of it. Also, there is integration of other skills, such as reading in the while-writing stage (Appendix III, ex.3, p.15).

In the pre-writing stage, where learners' background schemata are activated (Seaw, 2017), there are two activities. In the first one (Appendix III, ex.1, p.14), learners are given a picture to guess its content, discuss it with their partners and draw conclusions on its content. Its purpose is to activate their content and background schemata, so as to familiarize them with the topic of their writing, foster their prediction skills and encourage their interaction with others. In the second activity (Appendix III, ex.2, p.14), which is a brainstorming- group creativity technique (Ibnian, 2011) and a quick-writing

activity (Macrorie, 1976; Elbow, 1973; Cowan, 1983; Lane & Perrin, 1984), learners are supposed to work in pairs to write down their ideas in the space provided upon the picture of the previous exercise, increasing in this way their interaction and quick-writing skills, which are quite helpful for the writing process. Furthermore, brainstorming is considered to be crucial to generate learners' ideas for writing (Spivey, 2006:1), while at the same time it offers them the necessary time to plan their writing by collecting all the necessary ideas and make connections (Blystone, 2009: 3).

In the while- writing stages, there are three stages, the structuring, the revising, which is integral to writing and the editing one, which is an ongoing process. The while-writing stage includes five activities, among which the actual writing. In the first activity (Appendix III, ex.3, p.15) learners are supposed to read the extract of an authentic reading text and more specifically, an article on hobbies called 'How to find a hobby' from The New York Times newspaper and write a letter to the editor of the newspaper, mentioning the vital importance of hobbies in people's life. In this way, there is integration of skills (Harmer, 1991), as learners are required to read the text and perform a task. Concerning reading in the pre- or while-writing stage, it is claimed that it contributes significantly to the writing process, as learners are offered plenty of information and they are given the chance to collect the necessary for the task's purposes (Leinbersperger, 2003). In the second task of the writing stage (Appendix III, ex.4, p.16), they are supposed to answer some relevant questions to the writing task, such as the person they will have to address through their letter, or some of the advantages of hobbies, in order to structure and plan their writing about the effects of hobbies in people's lives, enhancing in this way their writing skills, as well. Additionally, in the third activity (Appendix III, ex.5, p.16) based on their notes and the stimuli from the previous tasks learners are supposed to write their first draft on the topic within 20 minutes. The first draft is the learners' first attempt to writing and it may contain many mistakes. The particular task's purpose is to enhance their writing skills and it is the first step towards the final writing. Then, in the fourth activity (Appendix III, ex.6, p.16), they are asked to work in pairs and exchange papers/ their first drafts in order to provide each other with meaningful and useful peer feedback completing a table with some questions on their drafts (Alnasser & Alyousel, 2015). In general, feedback is necessary as it offers the chance to reshape their writing. So, their interaction and collaboration skills are developed, while at the same time the feedback they exchange upon the structure, purpose, and organization of their written text is valuable for the actual writing that follows. The fifth task (Appendix III, ex.7, p.16) of the while-writing stage is focused on the actual writing (15 minutes), as learners perform the writing task taking into consideration the peer feedback they received and gave in the previous activities.

In the post-writing stage, there is one activity which has the form of peer- evaluation (Appendix III, ex.8, p.16). In this task, learners are supposed to engage actively in a group discussion

upon the whole writing process, the structure used, the difficulties they dealt, their strengths and weaknesses or even the changes they would make in order to improve it, enhancing in this way group work through their cooperation and exchanges of constructive feedback and peer evaluation.

The particular writing lesson is a process-oriented lesson (focus on the process during which learners create their writing product- Brown, 2001: 336) with some reader related elements, such as peer feedback, while there are some criteria such as the amount of guidance and control, the finality of the written product, the amount and nature of contextualization and the amount of teacher intervention to be addressed in designing a writing lesson. It includes brainstorming and quick-writing, which help learners discover and get into the topic, structuring of ideas, note-taking, revising, editing (Tribble, 1996:9), the first draft and the final draft rather than a finished product (multiple drafting), discussion and peer evaluation (cognitivism) (Applebee, 1986: 95; White & Arndt, 1991:7). So, this writing lesson is divided into many stages till the final draft (Cramer, 2001) which proves that the learner as a writer and not the written work produced is of outmost importance. More specifically, learners in pairs or groups (Bahrani & Soltani, 2012) produce their own work freely without imitating or following a specific model text, which minimizes control (White & Arndt, 1991: 7), but instead they exchange feedback (peer feedback) in order to improve their work through multiple drafting or editing. At the same time peer feedback and peer editing provide learners with authentic audience offering them the chance to respond to an authentic situation. Furthermore, learners may sometimes go back and forward (non-linear process, Zamel, 1983: 165) to rearrange their ideas (Silva, 1990) and make any necessary changes (text recursiveness), as writing is an ongoing process, where the main focus should be on content instead of form and accuracy. Additionally, regarding feedback, learners evaluate each other's work, provide and receive purposeful peer feedback (meaning, content and organization) and not form-focused, dealing exclusively with grammatical or spelling mistakes. In other words, feedback is recursive as it is provided before (pre-text), during (real-time) and after any kind of activity. Finally, the teacher serves as a facilitator and non-directive, who guides learners only when necessary, encourages and assists them in the writing process (Emig, 1983). Thus, learners can interact freely without any control for the writing task's purposes focusing on content before form, exchange peer feedback in all writing stages instead of receiving authoritative feedback from their teachers and revise their work many times (multiple drafting).

#### **4. Evaluation of the writing lesson**

Overall, the objectives set in designing the specific writing lesson were met. Learners participated actively during the whole writing process by providing and receiving information, producing drafts, editing (making necessary changes) and assessing their own and their classmates'

progress. Additionally, their collaboration and interaction skills were developed, since they cooperated a lot with their classmates, exchanging peer feedback while at the same time, their metacognitive skills were enhanced since they focused on the process of writing and not on the final product and that is the reason why, they got even more independent and autonomous. Regarding peer feedback, it increased their writing skills (Bijami et al., 2013; Gielen et al., 2010; Li et al., 2012; Yu & Wu, 2013) and the quality of their writing (Hu, 2005; Yangel et al., 2006), developed their social skills (Liu & Hansen, 2002; Hu, 2005; Hyland & Hyland, 2006), played a key role in the development of their metacognitive skills as they could manage their writing on their own (Brown, 2001: 336) and enhanced their positive stance towards writing (Nunan, 1991).

On the other hand, two of the learners- weaker students faced great difficulty in following the particular process. The main reason for this is because in process teaching learners are not given explicit teaching in the structure of target text types (Feez, 2002; Hasan, 1996). So, there were many times that they needed further guidance, complementary instructions and more teacher's control during the writing process, so as to deal with the tasks and produce the final draft on the advantages of hobbies in people's lives (Hyland, 2003).

All in all, the particular process- oriented lesson offered learners the chance to become aware of their learning process (Legutke & Thomas, 1991: 202-210) and develop their writing, interaction, collaboration and metacognitive skills.

## **5. Conclusion**

The original writing lesson (Appendix II) was suitable for the learners' CEFR level (B1-B2) and their needs, while at the same time they seemed to be highly motivated and active during the whole writing process. It followed the non-linear writing process approach, which according to Barnett (1992) contributes to the development of learners' organization, interaction (Nunan, 1991) and writing skills (Brown, 2001). Through it, learners cooperated in meaningful ways with their peers, engaged in peer editing and peer evaluation (Applebee, 1986: 95; White & Arndt, 1991:7), they were led to discoveries through their interactions (Freedman, 1992; Reid, 1992), explored and finally, developed their personal approach to writing and writing practices (Sutikno, 2008).

On the other hand, the coursebook's writing lessons (Appendix I, sample 1- sample 2) that followed the product writing approach focused on form, drills, sentence structures (Silva, 1990) and the final product, since learners were supposed to imitate a given pattern (model text) and produce a written text (Badger & White, 2000: 154).

In other words, successful and purposeful writing requires learners' active participation in the whole writing process, use of authentic material (reading text) in all writing stages, pair and group-

work (Bahrani & Soltani, 2012), specific writing purpose, exchanges of meaningful peer feedback and focus on the process through multiple drafting where learners develop their ideas and not on the writing product itself. Finally, teachers should be seen as facilitators, assistants and motivators, providing learners with positive reinforcement (Anuradha et al., 2014), while the audience that learners will address through their writing should be authentic, such as their classmates, their families or even themselves and not only teachers as usual (Christensen, 1987).

Finally we underline the importance of the digital technologies in education domain and language comprehension that is very productive and successful, facilitates and improves the assessment, the intervention and the educational procedures via Mobiles which brings educational activities everywhere [32-40], various ICTs applications which are the core supporters of education [41-77], AI, STEM & ROBOTICS which raise educational procedures into new levers of performance [78-96], and games which transforms the education in a very friendly and enjoyable interaction [97-100]. Additionally the enhancement and combination of ICTs with theories and models of metacognition, mindfulness, meditation and emotional intelligence cultivation [101-146] as well as with environmental factors and nutrition [28-31], accelerates and improves more over the educational practices and results, especially in the language comprehension domain and its practices like assessment and intervention.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I

Sample 1

## Unit 2

## An adventure

An informal letter including a narrative

**Task and model text**

Read the following writing task and model letter and answer the questions that follow.

*Think of an adventure you or someone you know had recently. Write a letter to a friend who lives in another town telling him/her about it. You should write 120-180 words.*

Dear Tom,

I hope you're fine and everything is OK at school and at home. Nothing much is going on here but you will believe what happened to me last weekend.

A few friends and I decided to go on a hiking trip in the mountains. The weather was great and we were ready for an adventure. Things were going as planned at first and we reached our destination - an old wooden cabin - at noon. Then trouble came. While we were heading home, there was a terrible storm. The thunder and lightning was absolutely terrifying, and we knew we were in danger. The rain was so heavy that we lost our way. There was nothing we could do but wait and pray that someone was looking for us.

When our parents saw that it was getting dark and there was still no sign of us, naturally they imagined the worst. They contacted the police and they carried out a search of the area. Fortunately, their dogs finally succeeded in locating us before nightfall, and we were all rescued and brought safely home.

Well, that's my story. As one of the survivors, I promised to write an article about my adventure for the school newspaper. Hope to hear from you soon.

Take care,  
Charlie

**Analysis**

**1** Read Charlie's letter and put the events in chronological order.

a. Their parents called the police.	5
b. The children decided to go hiking.	1
c. There was a terrible thunderstorm.	3
d. Everyone got home safely.	7
e. They reached the wooden cabin.	2
f. They lost their way home.	4
g. The police dogs located them.	6

**2** Find words/phrases in Charlie's letter which mean:

1. an exciting experience (§2)	— <u>adventure</u>
2. the place sb wants to go to (§2)	— <u>destination</u>
3. very scary (§2)	— <u>terrifying</u>
4. not safe (§2)	— <u>in danger</u>
5. made up sth in one's mind (§3)	— <u>imagined</u>
6. got in touch with sb (§3)	— <u>contacted</u>
7. managed to do (§3)	— <u>succeeded in doing</u>
8. got sb out of danger (§3)	— <u>rescued</u>

**3** Answer the questions about Charlie's adventure using full sentences.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. What did Charlie and his friends decide to do? | <u>They decided to go on a hiking trip in the mountains.</u>       |
| 2. What was their destination?                    | <u>Their destination was an old wooden cabin in the mountains.</u> |
| 3. When did trouble start?                        | <u>Trouble started when there was a storm.</u>                     |
| 4. Why did they lose their way home?              | <u>Because of the heavy rain.</u>                                  |
| 5. What did their parents do?                     | <u>They contacted the police.</u>                                  |
| 6. What did the police do?                        | <u>They carried out a search with their dogs.</u>                  |
| 7. How did their adventure end?                   | <u>Everyone was rescued / brought safely home.</u>                 |

**4** Read Charlie's letter again and mark the following statements as true (T) or false (F).

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. When you write an informal letter, you usually start with "Dear ...".                             | <input type="checkbox"/> T |
| 2. You start directly with your adventure.   | <input type="checkbox"/> F |
| 3. You greet your friend and say something general first.  | <input type="checkbox"/> T |
| 4. You start your story by setting the scene (who, where, when).                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> T |
| 5. You write your adventure in chronological order - the number of paragraphs is not that important. | <input type="checkbox"/> T |
| 6. You never include the feelings of the people in your narration.                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> F |
| 7. You finish your letter with a general comment to your friend and an appropriate closing remark.   | <input type="checkbox"/> T |

**How to make up a story**

**1** Making up a story needs some imagination and a lot of practice. Look at the notes below about an adventure the same friends had on the sea. Write complete sentences in the Past Simple and the Past Continuous.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. we / decide / go sailing / on the sea                | <u>We decided to go sailing on the sea.</u>                        |
| 2. it / be / beautiful day / have / wonderful time      | <u>It was a beautiful day and we were having a wonderful time.</u> |
| 3. suddenly / there / be / terrible / storm             | <u>Suddenly, there was a terrible storm.</u>                       |
| 4. our boat / rock / violently                          | <u>Our boat was rocking violently.</u>                             |
| 5. our parents / call / the coastguard                  | <u>Our parents called the coastguard.</u>                          |
| 6. they / carry out / search / and / manage / find / us | <u>They carried out a search and managed to find us.</u>           |
| 7. everyone / return / home / safe and sound            | <u>Everyone returned home safe and sound.</u>                      |

**2** A good adventure story always describes the feelings of the people in it. Match the situations below with the sentences describing feelings.

- |  |                            |   |
|--|----------------------------|---|
| 1. The weather was great.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> d | a. We were worried because we didn't know how to fix it.    |
| 2. Suddenly, our car broke down.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> a | b. We were terrified and we couldn't find our way.          |
| 3. It was getting dark and we couldn't get home. | <input type="checkbox"/> b | c. It was terrifying! We all started screaming and running. |
| 4. Everyone was finally home safe.               | <input type="checkbox"/> e | d. We were very excited about our trip.                     |
| 5. Suddenly, we saw a big snake in front of us.  | <input type="checkbox"/> c | e. We were relieved that our adventure was finally over.    |

**3** Now, think of at least three ideas for an adventure, as in the example. Use your imagination and think of the vocabulary you know to help you make up a story.

e.g. *went for a walk with friends - saw a huge snake - threw stones at it - ran home*

- check students' individual answers*
- .....
- .....

**➤ Perfecting your writing**

**1** Can you say it better? Use the words given to rephrase the following sentences.

- The police are going to check out this man. (**investigate**) The police are going to investigate this man.
- Driving without a seat belt is very dangerous. (**highly**) Driving without a seat belt is highly dangerous.
- They organized an operation to save us. (**rescue**) They organized a rescue operation.
- We didn't know the dangers of the sea. (**aware**) We weren't aware of the dangers of the sea.
- Help! This is a very dangerous situation! (**emergency**) Help! This is an emergency!
- I can't concentrate with all this noise. (**distractions**) I can't concentrate with all these distractions.
- Ann learned the whole map by heart. (**memorized**) Ann memorized the whole map.
- How many people were alive after the crash? (**survivors**) How many survivors were there after the crash?

**2** When we write a story, we use the Past Simple to describe actions and the Past Continuous to describe the setting / what was happening. Follow the example and fill in the blanks.

e.g. It was (be) a beautiful day. The sun was shining (shine) and we decided (decide) to go on a picnic.

- It was raining (rain) so heavily that we changed (change) our minds about going out.
- As it was getting (get) dark, we started (start) feeling worried.
- The children were playing (play) happily in the park when a strange animal appeared (appear).
- Everybody was laughing (laugh) and we were having (have) a great time.
- We left (leave) very early in the morning and reached (reach) the camp at about noon.

**3** Use the linking words in brackets to join the sentences, paying attention to actions with duration.

- I opened the door. I saw a strange man there. (**while**)  
When I opened the door, I saw a strange man there.
- He was driving to work. He had an accident. (**while**)  
While he was driving to work, he had an accident.
- We thought there was a mistake on our map. We realized we were reading it upside down. (**at first, but, soon**)  
At first, we thought there was a mistake on our map but we soon realized we were reading it upside down.
- I was calling out for help for ages. Somebody heard me. (**and, finally**)  
I was calling out for help for ages and somebody finally / finally, somebody heard me.

**4** Can you find and correct the following mistakes students have made in their letters? Explain.

- The police was looking for us for hours. were looking (pl. verb not the whole force but members)
- It was raining strongly all night. heavily (collocation)
- My friends and I were very frightening. frightened (explain difference between -ed and -ing adjectives)
- We run away as fast as we could. ran (Past Simple form vs p. participle)
- We decided to go to the home. to go home (expression, no article)
- We wanted to do a trip. go on a trip (collocation)
- What is the weather doing? What is the weather like? (translation from Greek)
- He was seeing me while I went out. saw - was going (wrong use of S. Past vs P. Continuous)



Sample



## Unit 13

### Teenagers in trouble

#### An essay suggesting solutions



#### Task and model text

Read the following writing task and model essay and answer the questions that follow.

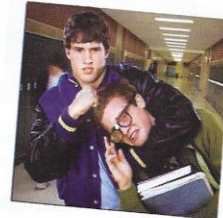
Bullying is one of the major problems teenagers face today. Suggest ways it can be prevented.  
You should write 120-180 words.

Recent figures show that most teenagers have either been bullied themselves or have witnessed such actions of violence against other teenagers. Although it is a difficult situation to handle, there are certain steps that can be taken to deal with this behaviour.

First of all, it is important for teenagers to have friends who can support them. Bullies tend to choose weaker students as their victims. If you show them that you are not alone, and that you and your friends will defend each other, they will realize they cannot win and leave you alone.

What is more, it is a good idea to recognize and avoid situations where bullying can happen. For instance, being alone with a bully is not a good idea. Teenagers should always be with their friends or have an adult present. In this way, bullies will be discouraged from attacking them.

It is highly unlikely that a bully will ever change, but I am sure that if teenagers follow these suggestions, they will be able to avoid becoming victims of bullying.



#### Analysis

1 Answer the following questions.

1. What kind of writing does the task ask for?
  - a. an opinion essay
  - b. an essay suggesting solutions
2. How many solutions does the writer suggest? Circle the linking words that list them. two
3. Find and underline the expressions used to introduce the solutions.
4. Does the writer use any examples to explain the solutions? Find them and underline the expressions used.
5. Does the writer give results to support the solutions? Find the expressions used to introduce them in the model.

2 Put the following plan for the essay in the correct order.

- a. Present your first solution and support it with an explanation, example and/or result.
- b. Summarize your views saying you believe your solutions will help.
- c. Present your second solution and support it with an explanation, example and/or result.
- d. Introduce the topic of bullying and mention there are ways to prevent it.

**3** Answer the questions about the model essay using full sentences.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. How do teenagers experience bullying?          | <i>They have either witnessed it or have been victims of it.</i>    |
| 2. What is the first solution suggested?          | <i>Teenagers should have friends to support them.</i>               |
| 3. What kind of victims do bullies choose?        | <i>They choose weaker students than themselves.</i>                 |
| 4. How can friends help you?                      | <i>They can defend you.</i>   |
| 5. What is the second solution suggested?         | <i>Teenagers should avoid situations where bullying can happen.</i> |
| 6. What shouldn't you do according to the writer? | <i>You shouldn't be alone with a bully.</i>                         |
| 7. How can adults help?                           | <i>When they are present, bullies are discouraged.</i>              |

**4** Find words/phrases in the model essay which mean:

- |                             |                             |   |                              |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| 1. not too long ago (§1)    | — <i>recent</i>             | 6. see and understand (§3)                    | — <i>recognize</i>           |
| 2. have seen (§1)           | — <i>have witnessed</i>     | 7. person over 18 years (§3)                  | — <i>adult</i>               |
| 3. dangerous behaviour (§1) | — <i>violence</i>           | 8. decide not to (§3)                         | — <i>be discouraged from</i> |
| 4. manage (§1)              | — <i>handle / deal with</i> | 9. not very probable (§4)                     | — <i>unlikely</i>            |
| 5. protect (§2)             | — <i>defend</i>             | 10. a person who suffers a bad behaviour (§4) | — <i>victim</i>              |

**5** Read the model essay again and mark the following statements as true (T) or false (F).

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. The language in an essay suggesting solutions should be formal.          | <input type="checkbox"/> T |
| 2. Use appropriate linking words and phrases to introduce your suggestions. | <input type="checkbox"/> T |
| 3. Don't use explanations or examples.                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> F |
| 4. Try to show the results your suggestions will have.                      | <input type="checkbox"/> T |
| 5. Be optimistic, saying that you hope the problem will be solved.          | <input type="checkbox"/> T |

**➤ Introductions**

**1** A good introduction for an essay suggesting solutions consists of two things: an introduction to the topic, and a sentence mentioning that there are things we can do about it. Look at the following topics. For topic A use the words given to write an introduction. For topic B write your own introduction, using your own words.

**TOPIC A**

The number of teenagers who drop out of high school is rising alarmingly. Write an essay suggesting ways to prevent this.

More and more teenagers / leave high school / nowadays / in order to / find job  
I / believe / there are / certain measures / can take / to stop / phenomenon

*More and more teenagers are leaving high school nowadays in order to find a job. I believe there are certain measures we can take to stop this phenomenon.*

**TOPIC B**

It is a sad fact that an increasing number of teenagers have turned to smoking in recent years. Write an essay suggesting ways to prevent this.

*More and more teenagers are smoking nowadays than ever before. In my opinion, this is a serious problem and we must take steps to solve it.*

**Perfecting your writing**

**1** Can you say it better? Use the words given to rephrase the following sentences.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. The crimes of teenagers are serious. ( <b>commit</b> )                  | ..... <i>The crimes teenagers commit</i> ..... are serious.    |
| 2. Many teenagers carry weapons. ( <b>adolescents</b> )                    | ..... <i>Many adolescents</i> ..... carry weapons.             |
| 3. One of the reasons is that they are bored. ( <b>boredom</b> )           | One of the reasons ..... <i>is boredom</i> .....               |
| 4. This behaviour will cause them problems. ( <b>trouble</b> )             | This behaviour will ..... <i>get them into trouble</i> .....   |
| 5. Some carry a knife to defend themselves. ( <b>self-defence</b> )        | Some carry a knife for ..... <i>self-defence</i> .....         |
| 6. According to recent answers from people ... ( <b>survey</b> )           | According to ..... <i>a recent survey</i> .....                |
| 7. The teenager had robbed a store. ( <b>guilty of</b> )                   | ..... <i>The teenager was guilty of</i> ..... robbing a store. |
| 8. Parents should know what their children are doing. ( <b>supervise</b> ) | ..... <i>Parents should supervise</i> ..... their children.    |

**2** You should support the solutions you suggest with an explanation, an example or the result you think they will have. Match the solutions below about preventing youth crime with their supporting sentences.

- |  |                            |  |
|--|----------------------------|--|
| 1. Parents should spend more time with their children.     | <input type="checkbox"/> c | a. This way, children will know that actions have consequences, and they will think twice before breaking the law. |
| 2. Teachers could organize after-school clubs.             | <input type="checkbox"/> b | b. For instance, a drama club or a cookery club would keep students creatively busy.                               |
| 3. Parents should supervise children more.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> d | c. By doing this, they will get to know them better.   |
| 4. There should be severe punishments for young criminals. | <input type="checkbox"/> a | d. As a result, they will know where they are at all times.  |

**3** Now, read the following solutions about preventing drivers from speeding, and write an explanation, example and/or result for each.

1. First of all, it would be a good idea to have special lessons teaching drivers about safety.  
..... *They could, for instance, be part of their training to get a driving licence. This way they would know how to drive safely without putting others at risk.* .....
2. Secondly, the government should have strict fines for drivers who break the speed limit.  
..... *If drivers have to pay huge amounts of money every time they drive faster than they should, they will soon start being more careful about speed limits.* .....

\* sample answers

**4** Can you find and correct the following mistakes students have made in their essays? Explain.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. If parents will try harder, their children will be safer. | ..... <i>if parents try (if + Present Simple)</i> .....              |
| 2. Reduceing youth crime can be very difficult.              | ..... <i>Reducing (wrong spelling - ing rules)</i> .....             |
| 3. It is a growing problem and we must do something for it.  | ..... <i>do something about it (wrong preposition)</i> .....         |
| 4. All schools should have available a psychologist.         | ..... <i>should have a psychologist available (word order)</i> ..... |
| 5. Many teenagers suffer discriminations.                    | ..... <i>suffer discrimination (no plural)</i> .....                 |
| 6. The arguments can lead to fights or even injuries.        | ..... <i>Arguments (no article)</i> .....                            |
| 7. Youth crime can't be prevented by schools alone.          | ..... <i>cannot be (informal register)</i> .....                     |
| 8. Most teenagers are feeling insecure about the future.     | ..... <i>feel insecure (Present Simple for state)</i> .....          |

**Your task**

Recently, youth crime is on the rise. Write an essay suggesting ways it could be prevented. Use information from the text and exercises in this unit. You should write 120-180 words.

**PLAN**

- Introduction:** Introduce the problem of youth crime with a general comment mentioning possible dangers.
- Para 1:** Suggest your first solution, give an explanation / example and say what the result will be.
- Para 2:** Suggest your second solution, give an explanation / example and say what the result will be.
- Conclusion:** Conclude with a general comment about the problem and say you think your solutions can help.

**USEFUL VOCABULARY**

- prevent, avoid, stop, reduce, restrict, impose, change, improve, supervise, take care of, encourage, follow, support, explain, organize, occupy, save, commit, increase, struggle, intend
- productive, optimistic, cultural, insecure, angry, poor, disappointed, alone, important, safe, tough, reliable,
- discrimination, fear, injustice, supervision, control, fines, consequences, result, argument, pressure, behaviour, defence, adolescent, survey, concern, conflict, adult

**Rewrite your corrected essay here**

**SAMPLE ANSWER**

Recent surveys have shown that the number of adolescents committing crimes is rising at an alarming rate. Although we do not know who or what is responsible for this situation, there are measures we can take to help improve it.

To begin with, parents should be stricter and supervise their children better. Sadly, most parents do not spend enough time with their children and are often unaware of where they are or what they are doing. By imposing stricter rules at home and paying attention to their children's actions, parents will be able to guide them and prevent them from getting involved in criminal activities.

Furthermore, it is extremely important to keep teenagers occupied creatively. A lot of crimes happen because adolescents feel bored and want to do something risky. If they get involved in productive activities, such as hobbies and trips, they will be able to spend their free time staying out of trouble.

Youth crime shows us that something is wrong in our society, and it is everybody's responsibility to make sure that teenagers are looked after properly. Following these suggestions could make a start to reducing youth crime.

Appendix II

Original Lesson Plan

‘Hobbies’

Class profile: 1st grade of a Greek Junior High School

Age: 12-13 years old

Number of learners: 16

Level: B1-B2

Time: 45 min

Materials: a laptop, a picture, a newspaper article on Hobbies (authentic text), tasksheets

**Specific objectives:**

1. To focus on the writing process
2. To reinforce learners’ writing skills
3. To increase learner autonomy
4. To develop learners’ collaboration and interaction skills

Procedure	Aims	Time
<p><b>Pre-writing stage</b></p> <p>Teacher (T) hands in the tasksheets to all learners (Ls). Then, she shows them a picture to guess what is it about, justifying their answers in pairs.</p> <p>Brainstorming/ quickwriting            Ls are supposed to write their ideas upon the picture in order to find out the topic and then, discuss them in pairs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To activate Ls’ background schemata.</li> <li>• To foster their prediction skills.</li> <li>• To motivate Ls to interact with their classmates.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase Ls’ motivation and collaboration skills.</li> <li>• To foster their prediction skills.</li> <li>• To increase Ls’ quickwriting skills.</li> </ul>	<p>2 min</p> <p>5 min</p>

<p><b>While-writing stage</b></p> <p><b>Structuring ideas</b>          Ls are asked to read an extract from a newspaper article on hobbies and write an article to the editor of the newspaper talking about the positive effects of hobbies in our lives.</p> <p>Ls are asked to answer the questions regarding the writing task in the table provided with their partners, so as to structure their writing.</p> <p>Ls are asked to write their first draft based on their notes.</p> <p><b>Revising</b>          Ls are asked to exchange papers with their partners and provide useful feedback, taking into consideration the questions that follow.</p> <p><b>Editing</b>          Ls are asked to write their final draft based on the first draft and their classmates' feedback on it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills integration (reading).</li> <li>• To check comprehension.</li> <li>• To encourage Ls to give an overall presentation of the importance of hobbies in people's lives based on the article.</li>   <li>• To check comprehension.</li> <li>• To enhance learners' writing skills.</li> <li>• To promote Ls' interaction.</li>   <li>• To enhance learners' writing skills.</li>   <li>• To provide and receive feedback (peer feedback).</li> <li>• To promote Ls' interaction.</li>   <li>• To enhance learners' writing skills.</li> </ul>	<p>5 min</p> <p>4 min</p> <p>20 min</p> <p>4 min</p> <p>15min</p>
<p><b>Post-writing stage</b></p> <p>Ls are asked to discuss in groups the whole writing process, the strategies they used and the changes they would make to improve it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide and receive feedback (peer feedback).</li> <li>• To enhance group work.</li> <li>• To promote Ls' interaction.</li> </ul>	<p>5 min</p>

Appendix III

Tasksheet

**Pre-writing stage:**

1. Warm up! Look at the picture carefully and in pairs, discuss what it is about. Justify your answers.



2. Look at the above picture again and write the ideas that come to your mind.

Then, check your answers with your partner.

**While-writing stage:**

Structuring ideas

3. Read the following extract from a newspaper article called 'How to find a Hobby' in The New York Times and do the task below.

How to Find a Hobby

By [Tara Parker-Pope](#)

### **Hobbies Are Good For You**

Need some convincing that you need a hobby? Let's start with some science. A large body of research suggests that how you spend leisure time matters to your health, and that your hobbies are good for you in many ways. In 2010, a team of researchers from universities in Kansas, Pittsburgh and Texas published the results of four large studies with a total of 1,399 participants, including men and women with various health problems, such as upper respiratory illness, arthritis and breast cancer.

**Better physical health.** People who scored higher on the enjoyable activities test

had lower body mass index, smaller waists, lower blood pressure, lower stress hormones and better overall physical function.

**More sleep.** While you may think that a hobby will take up too much of your leisure time or cut into your sleep, the Pittsburgh study showed that people who spent more time on their hobbies actually got better sleep.

**Lower stress.** A large body of research shows that [leisure activities](#) can help reduce stress. The Pittsburgh study showed that people who took part in a lot of enjoyable activities dealt better with stressful life events. People who scored high on the enjoyable activities test showed lower levels of negative moods and

depression, and higher positive attitudes than their low-scoring counterparts.

**Happiness.** People who said they participated often in enjoyable activities also had greater life satisfaction and felt their lives had a greater sense of purpose and meaning.

**More friends.** Notably, spending more time on hobbies and leisure pursuits was

associated with having a larger and more diverse social network. And we know that a [strong social network](#) is a key factor in healthy aging.

**Improved work performance.**

A [study at San Francisco State University](#) found that employees who had

creative outlets outside of the office were better at creative problem-solving on the job. The findings were based on studies of 430 workers and military personnel.

**Pick a hobby that makes you happy, and any improvement in your work will just be a bonus!**

**Writing task:** You have read the article above. Write a letter to the editor of the newspaper about the advantages of hobbies in people’s life and their importance in it. State whether you have a hobby and if yes, mention some of its effects in your life. Give reasons.

4. Pair work: Plan your ideas with your partner.

Who are you going to write to?	
What will the writing be about?	
What are the advantages of hobbies in people’s lives?	
Have you got any hobbies?	

5. Using your ideas and notes, write your first draft in about 150-180 (20 min.).

**Revising**

6. Exchange papers with your partner. Read each other’s first draft and provide feedback based on the questions that follow.

Is the purpose of the draft clear?	
Is the message of the draft clear?	
Is there logical order?	
Is the writing well-organized?	
Is language used appropriately?	
Is the style/tone used the appropriate one?	
Does the writing start/ end appropriately?	

**Editing**

7. Write your final draft based on your partner’s feedback.

**Reminder:** Check your letter carefully and pay attention to the language used and the organization of paragraphs.

**Post -writing stage:**

8. **Group discussion:** Reflect on the writing process and strategies you have used. What was easy/ demanding? What would you change? Discuss with your classmates and your teacher.

## Appendix iv

### 1. Reading text

In your quest for a balanced life, have you neglected your hobbies? As children, we are experts at finding hobbies. We play sports, take dance and music lessons, collect action figures and spend our days learning everything from languages to wood shop. But somewhere on the path to adulthood, we stop trying new things and spend less time on our non-career interests. It's not too late. Use this guide to get inspired, spark your interests and follow your passion toward a new hobby.

#### **Hobbies Are Good For You**

Need some convincing that you need a hobby?

Let's start with some science. A large body of research suggests that how you spend leisure time matters to your health, and that your hobbies are good for you in many ways.

In 2010, a team of researchers from universities in Kansas, Pittsburgh and Texas published the results of four large studies with a total of 1,399 participants, including men and women with various health problems, such as upper respiratory illness, arthritis and breast cancer. The researchers developed a scale called the Pittsburgh Enjoyable Activities Test to measure the effect of hobbies and leisure pursuits on overall health. Here's what they found:

**Better physical health.** People who scored higher on the enjoyable activities test had lower body mass index, smaller waists, lower blood pressure, lower stress hormones and better overall physical function. While it's possible that people who start out healthy are more likely to engage in hobbies, the findings are consistent with other research showing that having hobbies and other leisure pursuits is associated with a variety of benefits, including less severe disease and [greater longevity](#).

**More sleep.** While you may think that a hobby will take up too much of your leisure time or cut into your sleep, the Pittsburgh study showed that people who spent more time on their hobbies actually got better sleep.

**Lower stress.** A large body of research shows that [leisure activities](#) can help reduce stress. The Pittsburgh study showed that people who took part in a lot of enjoyable activities dealt better with stressful life events. People who scored high on the enjoyable activities test showed lower levels of negative moods and depression, and higher positive attitudes than their low-scoring counterparts.

**Happiness.** People who said they participated often in enjoyable activities also had greater life satisfaction and felt their lives had a greater sense of purpose and meaning.

**More friends.** Notably, spending more time on hobbies and leisure pursuits was associated with having a larger and more diverse social network. And we know that a [strong social network](#) is a key factor in healthy aging.

And there's one additional benefit to having a hobby that may surprise you.

**Improved work performance.** A [study at San Francisco State University](#) found that employees who had creative outlets outside of the office were better at creative problem-solving on the job. The findings were based on studies of 430 workers and military personnel that found that having a hobby gave workers a chance to recover from the demands of their jobs, increased their sense of control and in some cases challenged them to learn new skills that were transferable to work.

A word to the wise: Don't pick a hobby because it will help you at work. **Pick a hobby that makes you happy, and any improvement in your work will just be a bonus!**

#### **How to Make Time for a Hobby**

Yes, we know you are busy, but hear us out. There is time for a hobby.

Most of us have been taught that when it comes to time, productivity is what matters most. As a result, we've structured our lives around work rather than play. But with a little thought, you should be able to find more time in your schedule to do the things you love.

**Most of us have free time, we just don't spend it wisely.**

The American Time Use Survey measures the amount of time people spend doing various activities, such as paid work, child care, volunteering and socializing. This chart shows how much time full-time employed people spend on various activities during the work week.

[Average Hours Per Work Day on Various Activities](#) (Among people who work full time)

- Household chores\*: 0.96 hours
- Eating and drinking: 1.11 hours
- Leisure and sports\*\*: 3.04 hours
- Sleeping and personal care: 8.64 hours
- Caregiving (for both children and parents): 0.53 hours
- Shopping: 0.43 hours
- Working: 8.80 hours

*\*It's worth noting that the 0.96 hours (58 minutes) spent on household chores is an average. Men spend 49 minutes a day on chores, compared to 80 minutes for women.*

*\*\*Leisure and sports is another category with a gender difference. Men spend 3.5 hours on leisure and sports, while women spend 2.3 hours.*

**But those are averages! That's not me. I'm really busy!**

Yes, we believe you! But looking at your time a little differently may help you find that free time you crave.

**Think in Weeks, Not Days**

Laura Vanderkam, a writer and speaker on work-life balance, recommends thinking of time in weeks rather than days to learn where some extra time might be hiding in your schedule. A week "is really the cycle of life as people actually live it," she said. Each week is made up of 168 hours. If you work 40 hours and sleep eight hours each night, that still leaves 72 hours. "Maybe you can carve out a few hours of really fun, cool stuff per week. That will make the other 165 hours that are in a week feel a lot more doable," she explained.

To do that, Ms. Vanderkam [recommends tracking a week of your life](#). You can write down everything you do in half-hour blocks or [use these apps](#) recommended by [Wirecutter](#), the New York Times company that reviews products.

Or you can try this simple calculator to take a look at how you are spending your time. It was created by Erik Rood, a Bay Area analyst and founder of a data science service called [Data Interview Qs](#).

Being a data guy, Mr. Rood was using spreadsheets every few months to evaluate how he was spending his time. After talking with friends and co-workers who were also thinking about how they spent their time, he created a simple tool to track hours spent on various activities, including sleeping, working, commuting, gym, chores, grooming and parenting. He has shared the tool on various forums and with friends. Most people, he says, are fascinated. But after playing with the tool, he says, they sometimes get a bit frustrated about the results, because they don't think they have as much free time as it suggests.

Whatever your results, the calculator typically will show that there is some free time in your day, and that if you adjust a few factors, more free time can be found. "There's a ton of 'busy' time, no matter how most people cut it," says Mr. Rood. "But small changes can have huge impacts on overall free time when extrapolated out through one's life."

### Are You Mindful of Your Downtime?

One of the reasons our calculations of free time don't match our reality is that we can lose time doing mindless things like checking email and social media, and clicking around the internet. And sometimes, we just do nothing.

In the book "What the Most Successful People Do Before Breakfast," Ms. Vanderkam says one problem is that people often are not mindful about how they are spending free time. Sometimes we come home and "crash" and do nothing after a busy day or week, but Ms. Vanderkam says that's a mistake. But we shouldn't spend all of our "free time" catching up on work either.

"Other kinds of work — be it exercise, a creative hobby, hands-on parenting or volunteering — will do more to preserve your zest for Monday's challenges than complete inactivity or working through the weekend," she writes.

### And Don't Let Screens Become Your Hobby

We all know the internet, social media and emails can be a big time-suck. And at the end of a busy week, crashing in front of the television or the laptop might feel like relaxation, but often it's not. The Journal of Sleep Medicine recently reported that binge watchers get poorer sleep. And screens can be physiologically and psychologically stimulating, whether it's action sequences on the television or the artificial blue light [emitted by our devices](#). Another negative of screen time: It tends to be a solo pursuit that keeps us from engaging with our loved ones.

Finding time for hobbies in your day means being more thoughtful about how you spend the time you have. When you do have downtime, do you crash and do nothing? Or do you use that time for things you love?

### Free Time vs. Too Much Free Time

Here's some good news. The fact that you don't have much free time to devote to a hobby is O.K. [A recent study found](#) that having too much idle time makes us just as unhappy as not having enough free time. The research, [based on two large datasets of 35,375 Americans](#), examined the relationship between our overall life happiness and the amount of discretionary time we have (defined as awake hours spent doing whatever we want to do). For people who have jobs, the sweet spot of discretionary time is 2.5 hours a day. For people who are retired or not working, the right amount of free time for peak happiness is 4.75 hours a day.

### Schedule Your Free Time (But Don't Overschedule It)

In her book on successful people, Ms. Vanderkam found that the people she profiled all planned their weekends in advance. They didn't schedule every minute, but they did schedule "anchor events." One key to making time for a hobby is to schedule time during your week and weekends for it, the same way you would schedule work appointments or social engagements. Now a caveat: While it's important to make time for your hobbies, you don't want to be too rigid in how you schedule them. Research suggests that too much scheduling of leisure time makes it feel more like work and less like fun. In a series of studies reported by [Ohio State University](#), researchers found that when people scheduled specific times and dates for fun activities (like a movie or a coffee break), they enjoyed them less. That doesn't mean you can't plan. The same research showed that "rough" scheduling of a leisure activity didn't steal the pleasure from it. For instance, students who were given a specific time for a coffee and cookie break during finals enjoyed it less than students who were given a two-hour window to stop by and enjoy free coffee and cookies. "People associate schedules with work," [Selin Malkoc](#), a co-author of the study, said in a statement about it. Dr. Malkoc is an associate professor of marketing at Ohio State University's Fisher College of Business. "We want our leisure time to be free-flowing."

**2. Picture**

