

1.4 Learning to Learn

Thinking about writing in English

Focus: *to think about the skill of writing, and to develop writing strategies.*

1. Make a list of everything you have to write in English. Include things that you have to write in school, and things that you write outside of school.



2. Look at the opinions of these two students. Which one is close to your own? Next write in what you think:

I much prefer writing to speaking. You can take your time and correct your mistakes.

With writing you have to worry about spelling and being tidy. I much prefer speaking!



3. How can you help to make your writing better? Think of at least three ways. Write these down.

4. Now compare your list with other students in the class, and come up with the top 3 ways of making your writing better. Put this list somewhere in the class for everyone to read.
5. When you are doing written homework, or writing in class, it is best to think of three stages of writing.

Planning

Writing

Revising

Planning: The plan could be very brief (thinking for a few seconds) before writing the answer to a comprehension question.

OR the plan may be very detailed because you have to write a lot on the topic.

Before you write...

- Brainstorm ideas
- Make list of useful vocabulary
- Put the ideas in order and plan the paragraphs and conclusion

Note: there is a *Planning Text* sheet in each of your Language Support Activity Units which gives you an exact outline on how to do this.

EXERCISE

- a. Find some homework that you have to do for your subject class that involves extended writing. For example:

Write an account of a native of a land discovered by Europeans during the age of exploration. (In *The Past Today Complete JC History* Dermot Lucey Gill & Macmillan, page 41)

Rivers have always been useful to humans. Describe three ways in which people use rivers. (New *Complete Geography* Charlie Hayes Gill & Macmillan, page 38)

If it isn't easy to find a suitable exercise just yet, write about one of the following:

Write about a figure, alive or dead, whom you admire.

The differences between food in Ireland and the food in my country.

- b. **Plan** what you re going to write, by following the three steps above.
- c. **Writing** – first check with your teacher how long the piece should be. Follow your plan and while you are writing you also need to search your mental dictionary and grammar book for the correct written form of each word.
- d. **Revising** - bring your work to class. Check your work, use a dictionary, correcting it and rewriting it. It is always much better second time around. Now swap it with other students and read one another's work

Always remember - somebody will be reading your work!