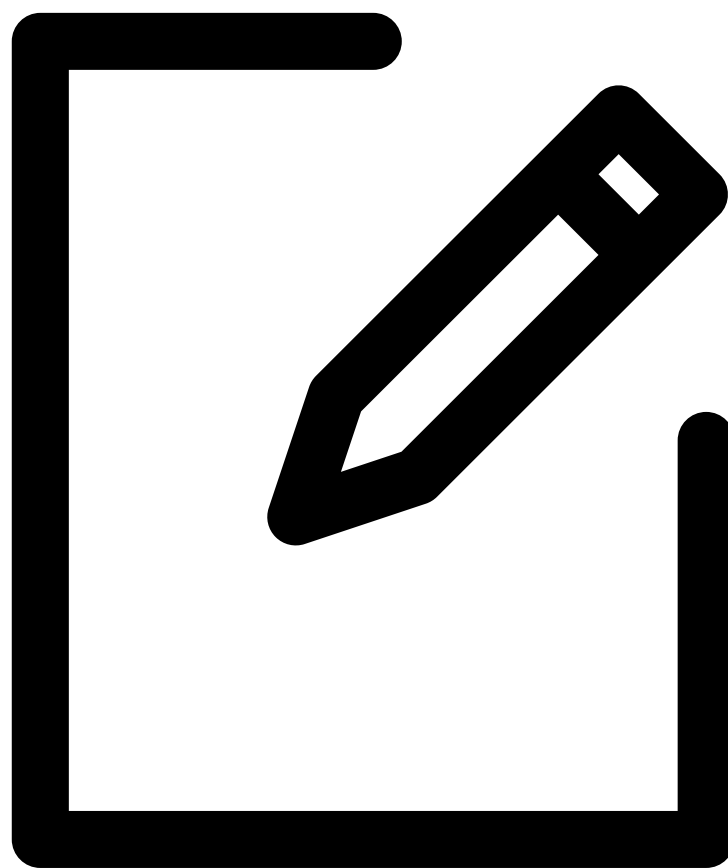




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# **Get Outstanding Outcomes in GCSE English**

**Creating Writers at GCSE – Enabling Students to  
Develop Writing Skills and Processes that Deliver  
Success**



# Develop Writing Skills

## The Barriers

Here are some of the obstacles defined by students we have known. Are they similar to yours?

'I don't see the point in writing.'

'Why bother to write when I can't spell?'

'None of my friends like writing.'

'Writing takes me ages and then all I get is criticism.'

'I don't even understand what I'm supposed to do to make my writing good.'

'What's this got to do with plumbing (or hairdressing, or catering)?'

'My dad can't even read, never mind write, and he's OK.'

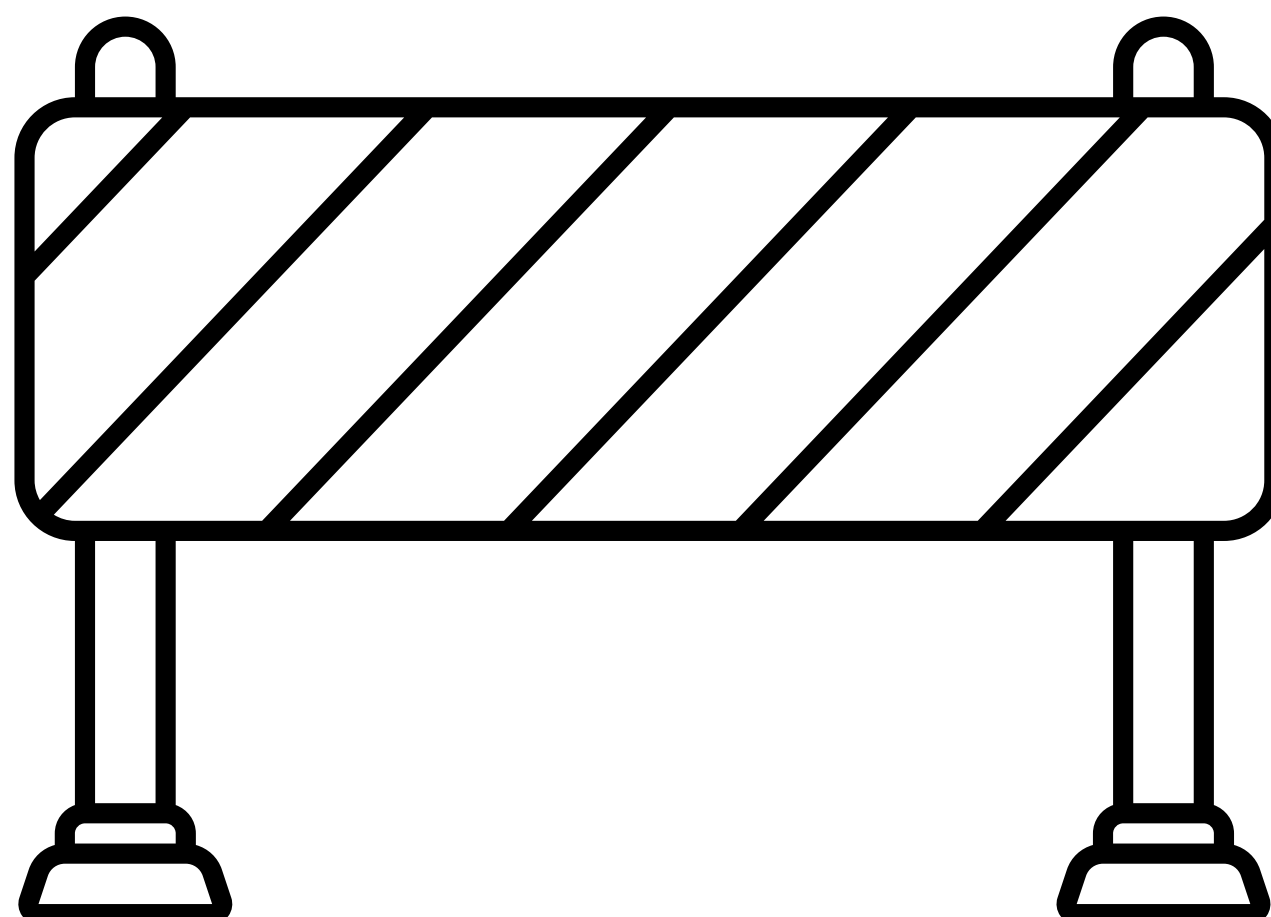
English isn't my main language. I don't speak it at home so how do you expect me to write it here?'

'I'm dyslexic.'

'I've already failed English twice. I'm just no good at it.'

'I've got better ways of spending my time.'

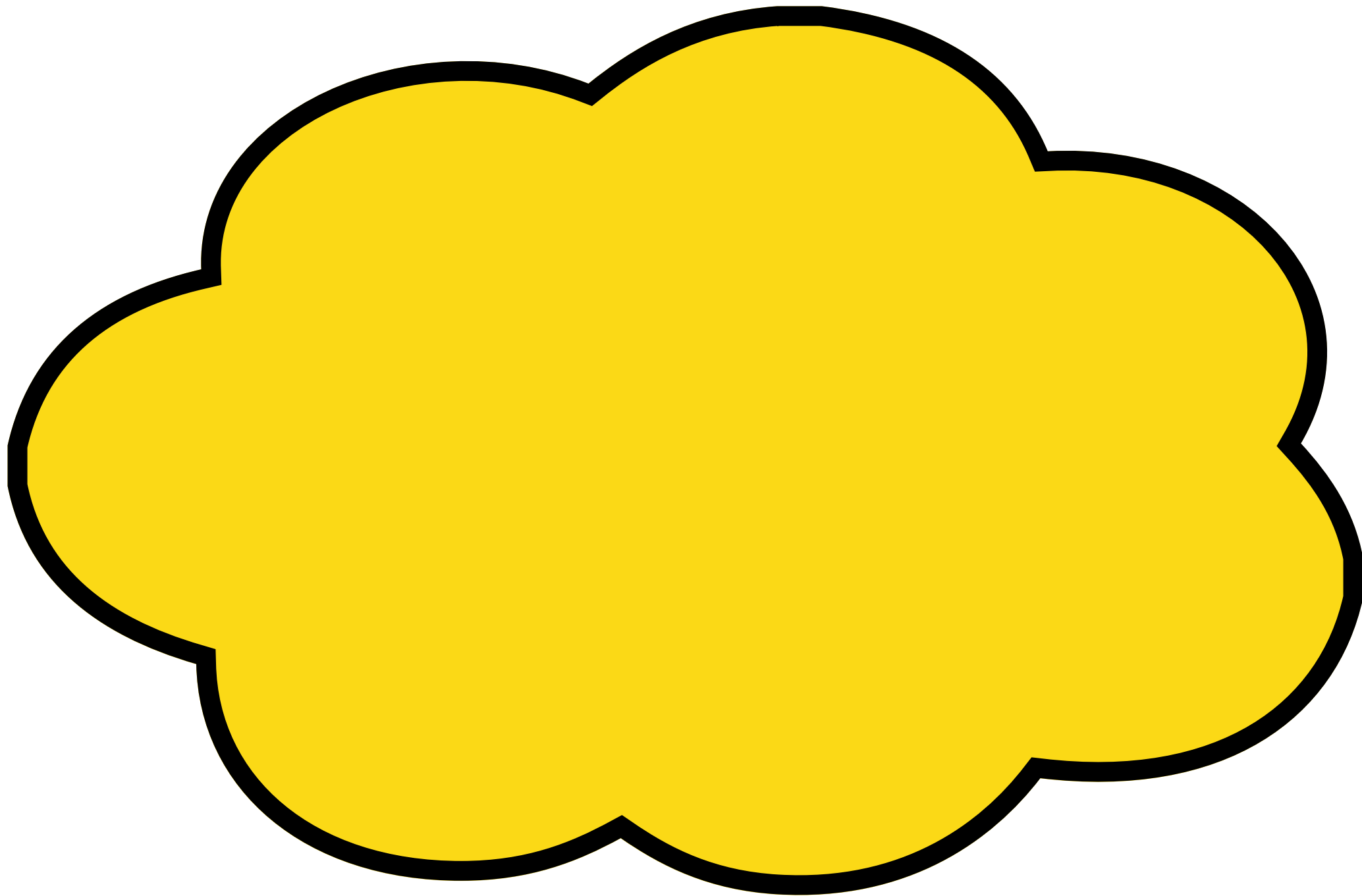
'I don't even reply to texts.'



# Develop Writing Skills

Begin at the Beginning

Think about: what is the best way to help your students enjoy writing?



# Develop Writing Skills

## Criteria

Here are some possible points. Spend a moment checking them against your list.

- The writing contains the necessary information.
- There is a sense of who the writing is for.
- A simple range of English vocabulary is used accurately.
- The writer shows confidence in expressing and supporting opinions.
- Stages in a narrative are well structured.
- Text is written at an appropriate length.
- The writing is divided into sentences with full stops.
- Paragraphs are used.
- The writing has a suitable opener and a satisfactory conclusion.
- The writer shows enthusiasm for the subject.
- The piece is written with style, humour, pathos or atmosphere.
- The writer shows evidence of observation.
- The writer writes with honesty.
- The writer evidences effort and commitment and even enjoyment.
- Most of the English grammar is correct and most of the spellings.

# Develop Writing Skills

## Digital Tools

So, how can we use digital tools and indeed the whole metaverse in the service of English?

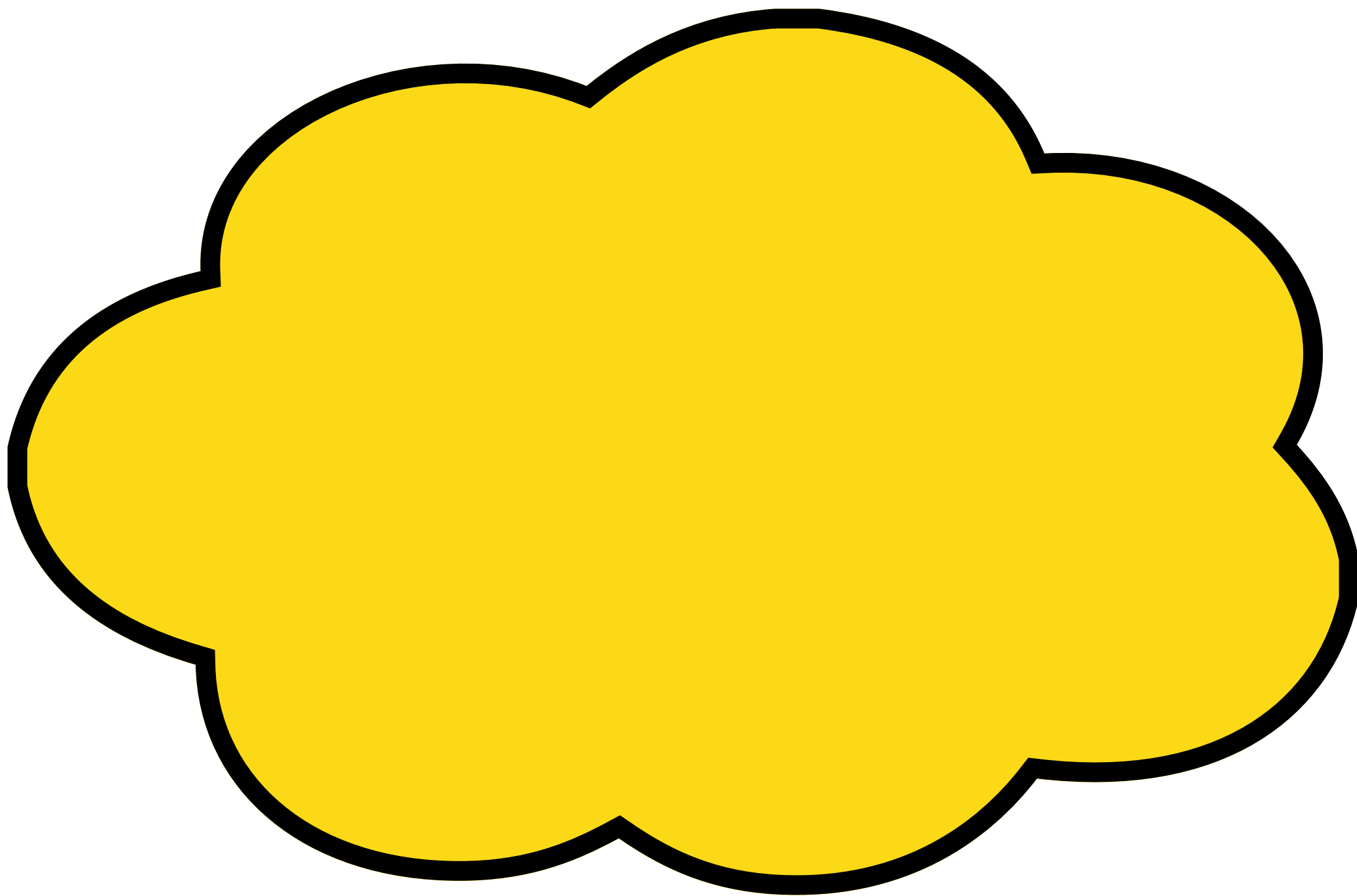
- We can establish online platforms and networks for our students to work collaboratively.
- We can direct our students to find information or read opinions to stimulate and support a piece of writing
- We can set our students to read and critique examples of GCSE-type written work and then compare notes.
- We can allow students to write some of their written work as word documents so they can easily proof-read and edit and get used to this process.
- We can encourage students to write for an audience by directing their online work at others and taking feedback.
- We can organise quizzes or padlets or word games or questionnaires so the students can contribute in their own time from their own phones and get an instant response from others or from us as teachers.

What is important here is that the students can be invigorated as they write and feel connected into the world they are part of.

# Develop Writing Skills

Writing at Home

How do your students work on their writing when they're not with you? How can you influence this?

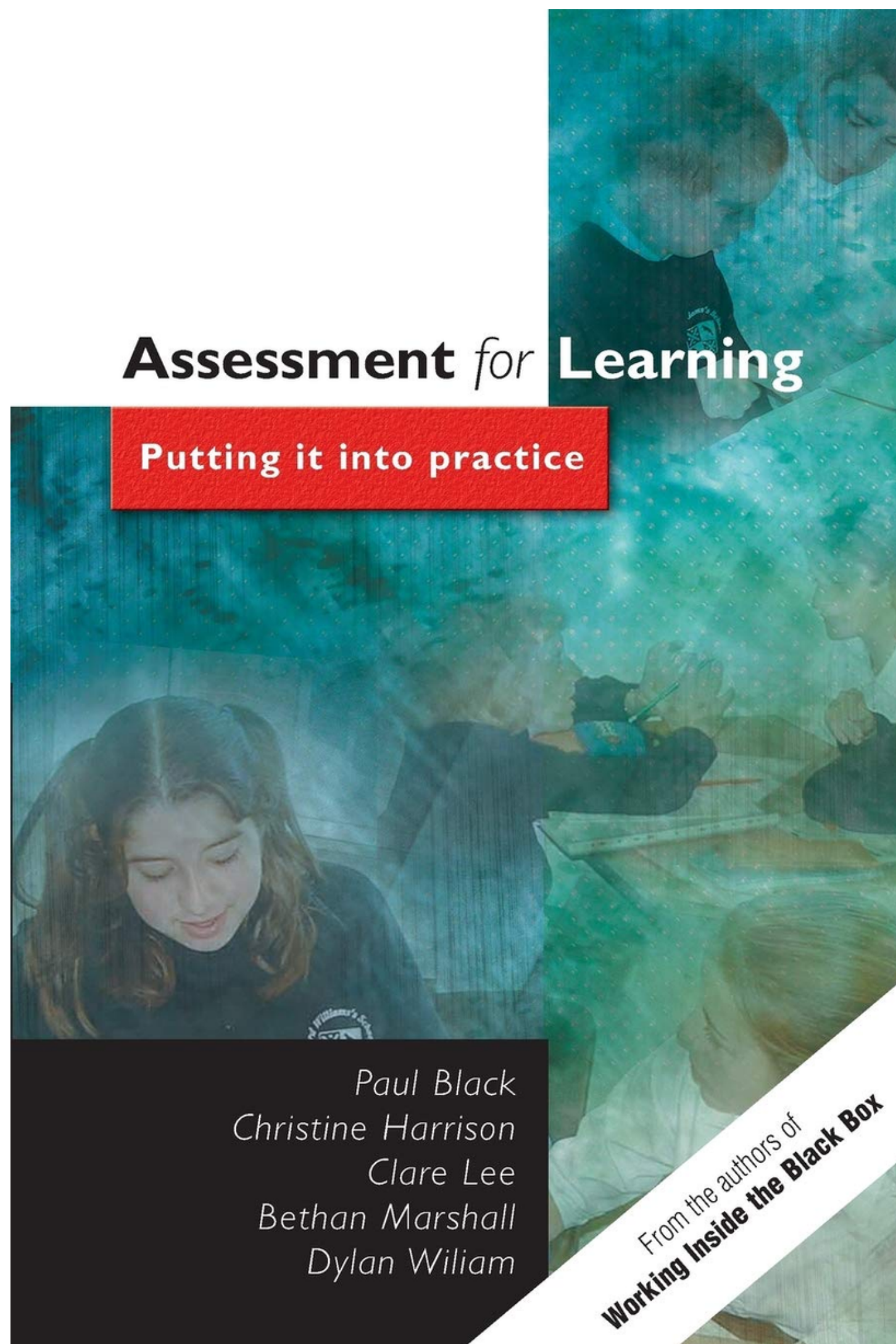


# Develop Writing Skills

Assessment for Learning – The Principles

As assessment expert Grant Wiggins tells us: ‘...the aim of assessment is primarily to educate and improve student performance, not merely to audit it.’

‘Assessment for Learning’ originated in the writings of Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam twenty years ago.



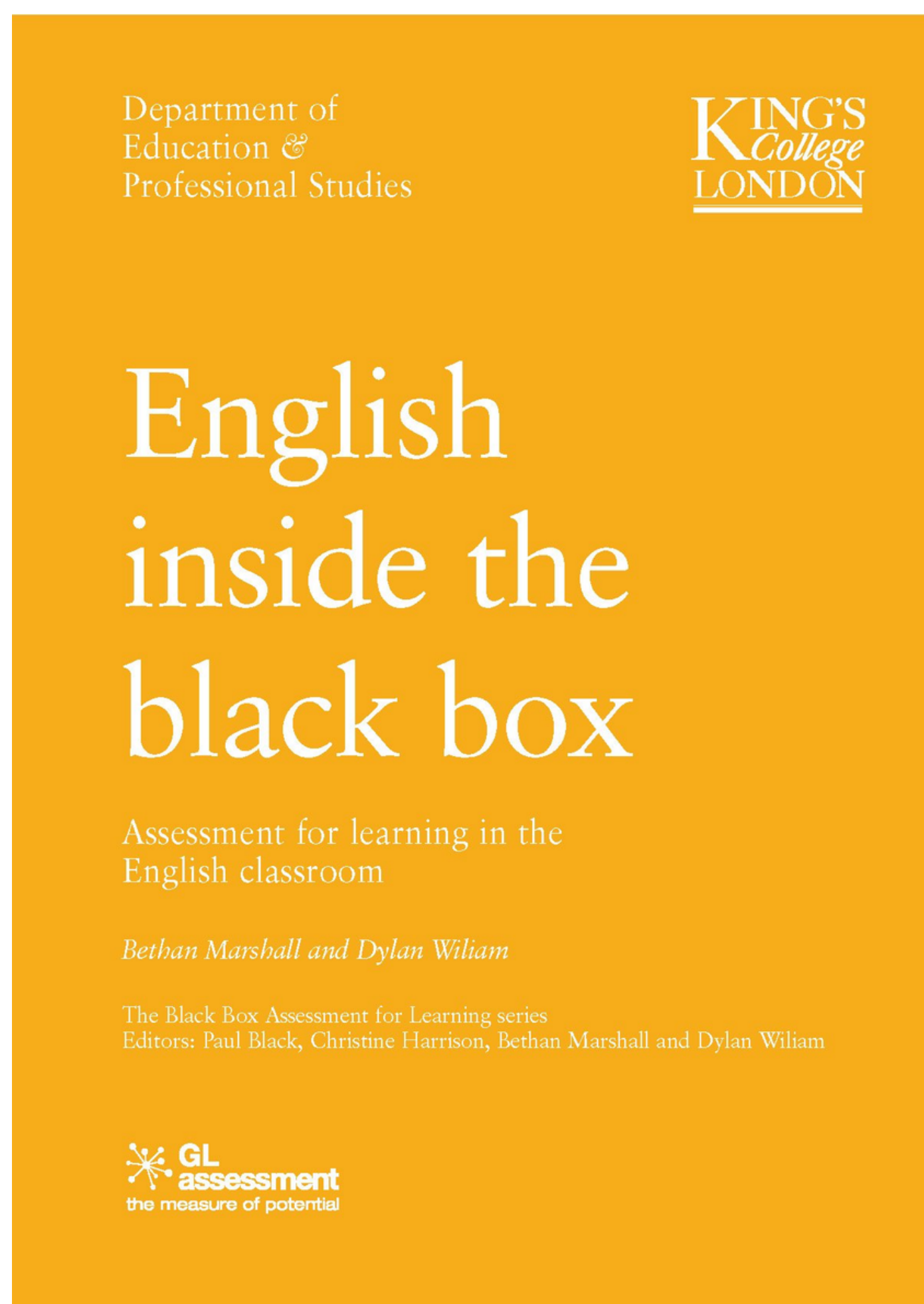
# Develop Writing Skills

Assessment for Learning – The Principles

Bethan Marshall and Dylan Wiliam's 2006 book *English Inside the Black Box*.

According to Wiliam, there are four key principles that define Assessment for Learning. They are:

- Learner talk
- Questioning
- Self/peer assessment
- Development of judgement



# Develop Writing Skills

Assessment for Learning – The Practice

Principle 1 also known as **Learner Talk** is an activity that stimulates and progresses all learning but is of particular value as preparation for writing. In the classroom, a good teacher always facilitates talk, whether it involves free, unstructured discussion, targeted discussion on a particular topic, question/answer sessions, role play, organised speaking and listening, or silence where no talking is allowed. The students should always be clear which of these disciplines is in operation and why.

Principle 2, or **Questioning** reminds us to use questioning as a stimulus for talk and critical thinking. It is one of the most effective ways of encouraging students to take control and write with forethought. Becoming accomplished in incisive questioning is the aim of all good teachers. [JP1]Can the words 'principle 2' appear on the screen?

Principle 3 is all about **Self- and peer-assessment**.

So, the final Principle, principle 4 is all about **Judgement**.

# Develop Writing Skills

Assessment for Learning – The Practice

Look at these questions:

*To initiate discussion before writing a story about a swimming incident:*

- How does swimming in the open-air feel?
- How would you describe a swimming pool you know?
- What do you like or dislike about swimming?

Let's compare now to the following questions:

- What's the difference between the words bough – spelt b-o-u-g-h – and bow – spelt b-o-w?
- Don't you think you should use a word like scepticism here?





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# Develop Writing Skills

Student Talk in Practice

## TIME TO THINK

LISTENING TO IGNITE  

---

THE HUMAN MIND



*"Do not be fooled by the simplicity of this process.  
It will unleash the power of your whole organization."*

*British Telecom*

NANCY KLINE



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# Develop Writing Skills

Questioning in Practice

So, what sort of questions prompt thoughtful responses from our students?

# Develop Writing Skills

## Questioning in Practice

Here are some ideas. Did you think of any of these?

- Ask open questions (which do not expect a yes/no or single fact answer but different answers from different individuals), e.g, 'How would you go about preparing your favourite meal?'
- Ask questions that show respect for the students' prior knowledge and opinions, e.g. What are the differences between the centre of your town and the suburbs?
- Give the students time and space to answer – if necessary, prompting with further questions. Never jump in and answer the question yourself, e.g. Teacher: 'What does your main character feel about the neighbour's behaviour?' (Pause.) Teacher: 'She'll feel angry won't she.'
- Direct questions clearly so that each individual knows if he or she has the responsibility to answer... not just... 'Anyone... anyone?'
- Follow questions with further, more searching questions.:  
'What do you think the writer is implying about the old man's lifestyle?' 'Why is his dog so important to him?' 'What does he hope for?'
- Answer questions with questions: Student to teacher: 'How do you spell 'ordinary'?' Teacher: 'Can you work it out? How do you spell the first syllable as in 'order' for instance?'

# Develop Writing Skills

Self- and Peer-Assessment in Practice

Peer assessment requires the trust of the participants and should take place only when the students:



Feel confident in the process



Have become accustomed to the self-assessment routine



Are building their knowledge of the criteria

# Develop Writing Skills

Judgement in Practice

Let's look at two things you might like to try...

The first is **Teacher modelling**.

Here, the teacher distributes a piece of writing and reads it aloud. The students volunteer ideas about what makes it good. The teacher then models an analysis of the piece with suggested improvements. Students comment and ask questions.

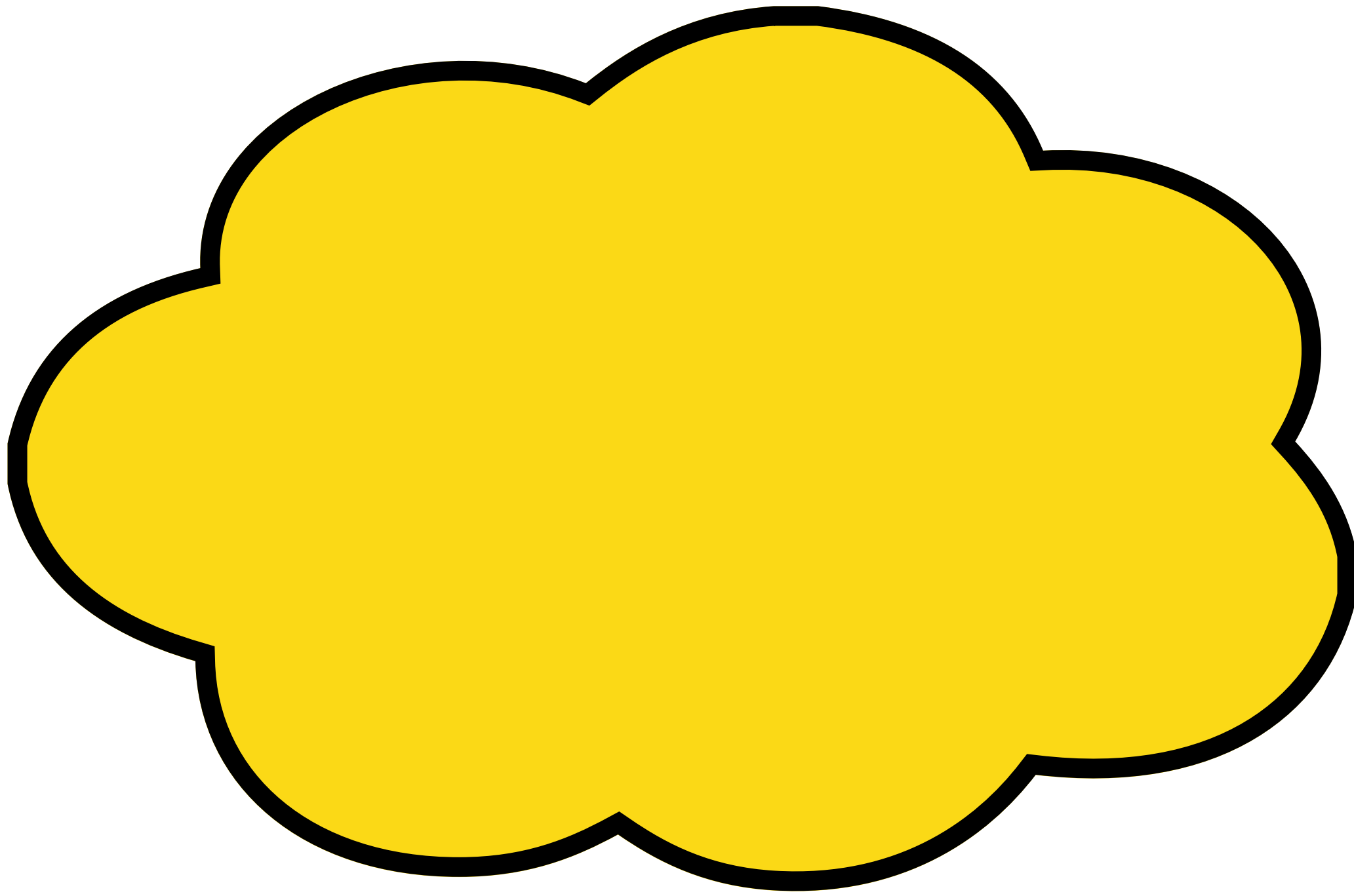
The second thing you might like to try is **Student Critiquing**.

The teacher gives the students a well written passage and invites them to read or look at it and, in small groups, suggest some success criteria evidenced and possible improvements. They then discuss their findings together as a class.

# Develop Writing Skills

Building the Content

So, how do we do this?



1. Focus on what opinions, feelings or information need to be communicated to others
2. Develop content
3. Become more practised in handwriting as a daily routine so that it becomes second nature.

# Develop Writing Skills

## Building the Content

Many of the questions you will ask about what they read will include queries about content like these:

- What is this passage about?
- What opinions of the writer are evident?
- What main points does the writer make?
- What is the writer telling us about the characters or setting in this piece?
- What does the writer feel and think?
- Why is the writer writing this?
- When and where is the story set?

# Develop Writing Skills

## Building the Content

The students read and analyse a passage on the experience of cycling.

The teacher prompts with questions about the content and other features.

The students are set a related writing task on:

- A cycling day out
- A cycling incident
- Why we need (or don't need) more cycling lanes in towns
- Cycles will outnumber cars in a few years' time
- Why I like (or don't like) cycling

The students discuss their ideas.

The teacher asks questions to expand content.

The students write their piece.

The students discuss their final thoughts and or read out extracts to the group.

Can you plan out similar related tasks?

# Develop Writing Skills

Meaning not Mechanics

Should we rather interconnect the work from the students' point of view on the basis of:

- Scaffolded development
- Assessment for Learning activity
- Reinforcement of routines

their

there

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counsellor

councillor

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Can you revisit how and when you address grammar points or spelling or punctuation? Can you work out how to turn the English curriculum into on single, meaningful journey for the students?

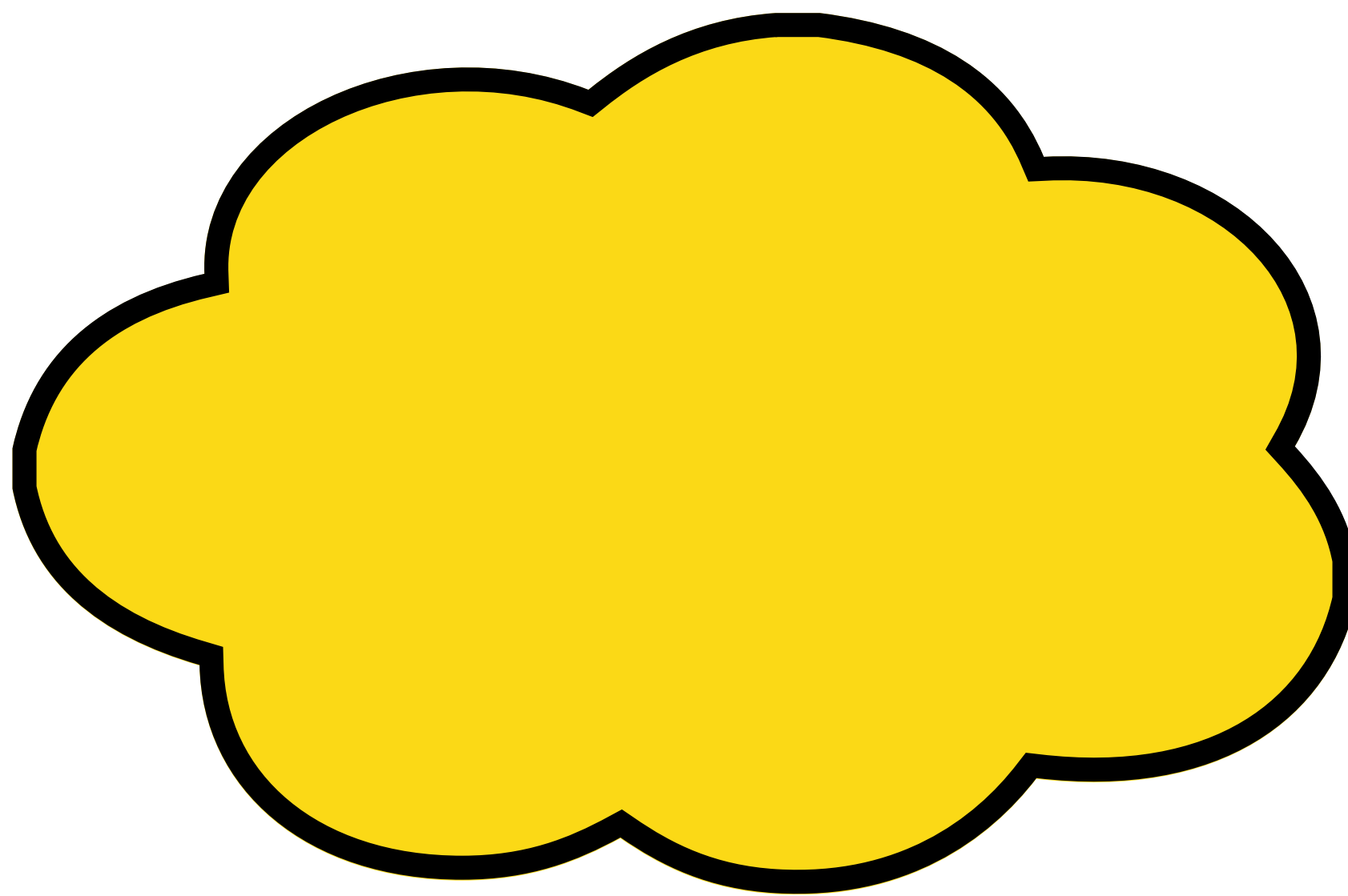
# Develop Writing Skills

Writing for an Audience

Most children's writing is only read by their teacher.

MICHAEL ROSEN

How can you ensure that the students are always writing for an audience?





# Develop Writing Skills

The Thoughts Behind Writing

'writing is thinking'

LEV  
VYGOTSKY,  
Psychologist

'The quality of everything we do depends on the quality of the thinking we do first.'

NANCY KLEIN  
Originator of the  
Thinking  
Environment

"Written language,'...grows from oral language and, in turn, becomes a container of knowledge, transferring ideas and experiences.'

LEV VYGOTSKY,  
Psychologist

# Develop Writing Skills

Talking Before Writing

## Writing task

'The Secret I Had to Keep'

Questions: What, in your own life, have you had to keep secret from somebody else? Why was keeping it a secret important? What happened and what did you do? How did keeping it a secret make you feel? Who was most affected by your keeping it a secret? Is it still a secret? Is this the first time you've shared the secret with anyone? Did you ever reveal the secret to anyone else? What happened as a result? Looking back, are you glad you kept the secret? Would it have been better to be honest and not hide this thing? How do you feel about this story now?

# Develop Writing Skills

## Picturing Meaning

Look at this picture and the questions that follow:



- What does the picture show us?
- What can we learn about the man?
- What can we learn about the woman?
- What is the relationship between them, do we think?
- What are they actually doing?
- What do we learn about the surrounding countryside?
- Why are they pictured in the countryside?
- What are they feeling or thinking, do we imagine?
- What is their relationship to the artist?

# Develop Writing Skills

## Preparing the Ground

Their reading can include:

- free newspapers or magazines
- books they've read at school
- specific articles like sports or fashion reports
- instructions, forms, questionnaires, advertising material
- documents related to their vocational courses
- online material: google, social media, emails, blogs
- books they and their friends have chosen
- graphic novels

Their writing list may include such activities as:

- forms and questionnaires
- notes, texts and emails
- online comment and communication
- diaries
- poetry
- song lyrics
- notes, reports, tests, records, time sheets, job specifications for their vocational work
- stories
- jokes
- slogans

# Develop Writing Skills

Preparing the Ground

In writing:

- becoming quicker at the physical task of writing for the exam
- becoming fluent
- getting used to thinking more quickly
- writing for meaning
- finding things to say in writing
- writing for an audience
- writing because there is a need

In reading:

- finding ideas for content
- being stimulated by content and meaning
- seeing how other writers express themselves and influence the reader
- building new vocabulary
- getting used to seeing correct spellings and grammar on the page
- observing different sentence types and lengths
- observing how simple sentences can be combined to make longer, more complex sentences
- looking at how writers use paragraphs
- experiencing new and different formats

# Develop Writing Skills

## Writing – A Communal Exercise

Invite the students to discuss in groups what they will write each day and how. This may involve:

- homework set by the teacher
- their own creative writing – stories, poems, songs, rap
- homework from their vocational teachers
- a diary with written records of what they've done
- opinion pieces for later sharing with the class
- articles for student (or other) newsletters or journals
- reviews of music or films
- letters or emails
- personal statements

You could help here by supplying the students with potential themes like:

- The things annoying me today
- The TV I watched last night
- Why I want to change my life
- It began with a loud noise...
- Spring
- What's on the news?



# Develop Writing Skills

Writing – A Communal Exercise

Could you find a way of embedding a regular writing activity into your students' private time? Can you add to the list?

Practice writing for students:

- homework set by the teacher
- their own creative writing – stories, poems, songs, rap
- homework from their vocational teachers
- a diary with written records of what they've done
- opinion pieces for later sharing with the class
- articles for student (or other) newsletters or journals
- reviews of music or films
- letters or emails
- personal statements
- 'quick write'

# Develop Writing Skills

## Time Management

When, how and what will they read?

How will reading fit into the student's private timetable alongside writing?

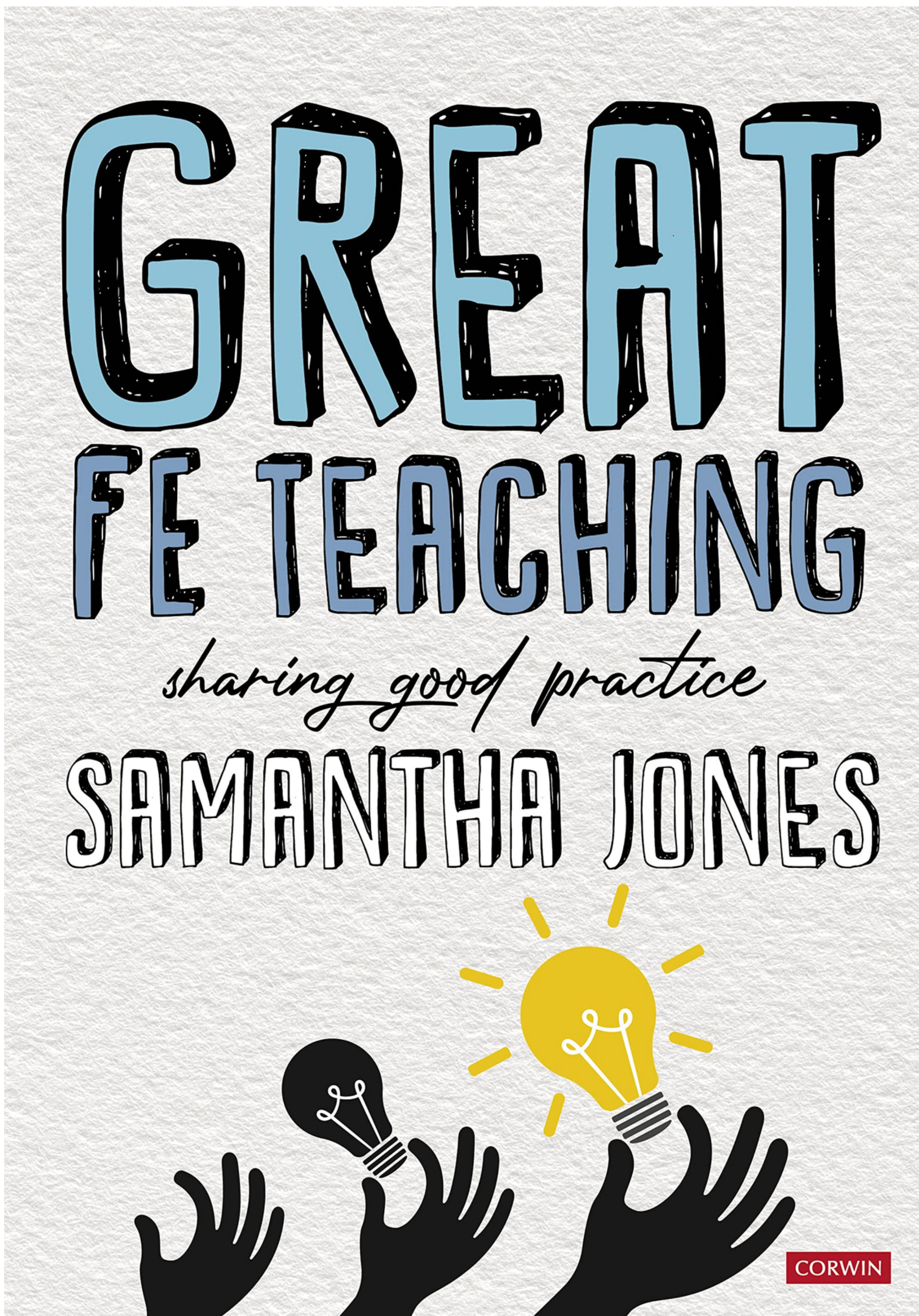
Can you involve their vocational teachers who may provide reading and writing opportunities?

Can you make use of support staff who can spend time with students helping them to read and write?

# Develop Writing Skills

Role Models

Great FE Teaching, Samantha Jones



Stop and think of potential role models and how you could use them.



# Develop Writing Skills

## Improvement Routines

### The Student Approach to Writing

#### Stage 1

##### Preparation

This includes discussion, visual and other stimuli, reading a related text, teacher 'modelling' and other input, group work, gathering content, creating a 'buzz'.

#### Stage 2

##### Writing

Producing the required written piece autonomously and in silence. Consulting the teacher, a dictionary or online information can be an option depending on the teacher's judgement.

#### Stage 3

##### Checking

What is good about the content? Does it read well? Does it satisfy my list of criteria?

#### Stage 4

##### Improvement

What two or three aspects (or more) of this piece of writing can I improve?

#### Stage 5

##### Amendment/Re-writing

Implementing my improvements

#### Stage 6

##### Celebration

What improvements have I made and what am I now proud of in this work?

# Develop Writing Skills

## Personal Engagement

Look at one example of a GCSE writing task:

1. The students read an article from a magazine describing the dangers of boxing and other sports to the participants' health.
2. The students answer questions on the passage.
3. The students are then required to write a letter to the magazine explaining why they do, or do not, think that certain sports should be subject to rule-change or even banned.

We could ask questions like..,

What do you like/not like about boxing?

Do you participate in any dance, sport or other physical activity like running? If so, have you ever been injured in your sport?

What happened?

Do you know someone who's been injured in a sporting accident? Do many people get injured in your sport?

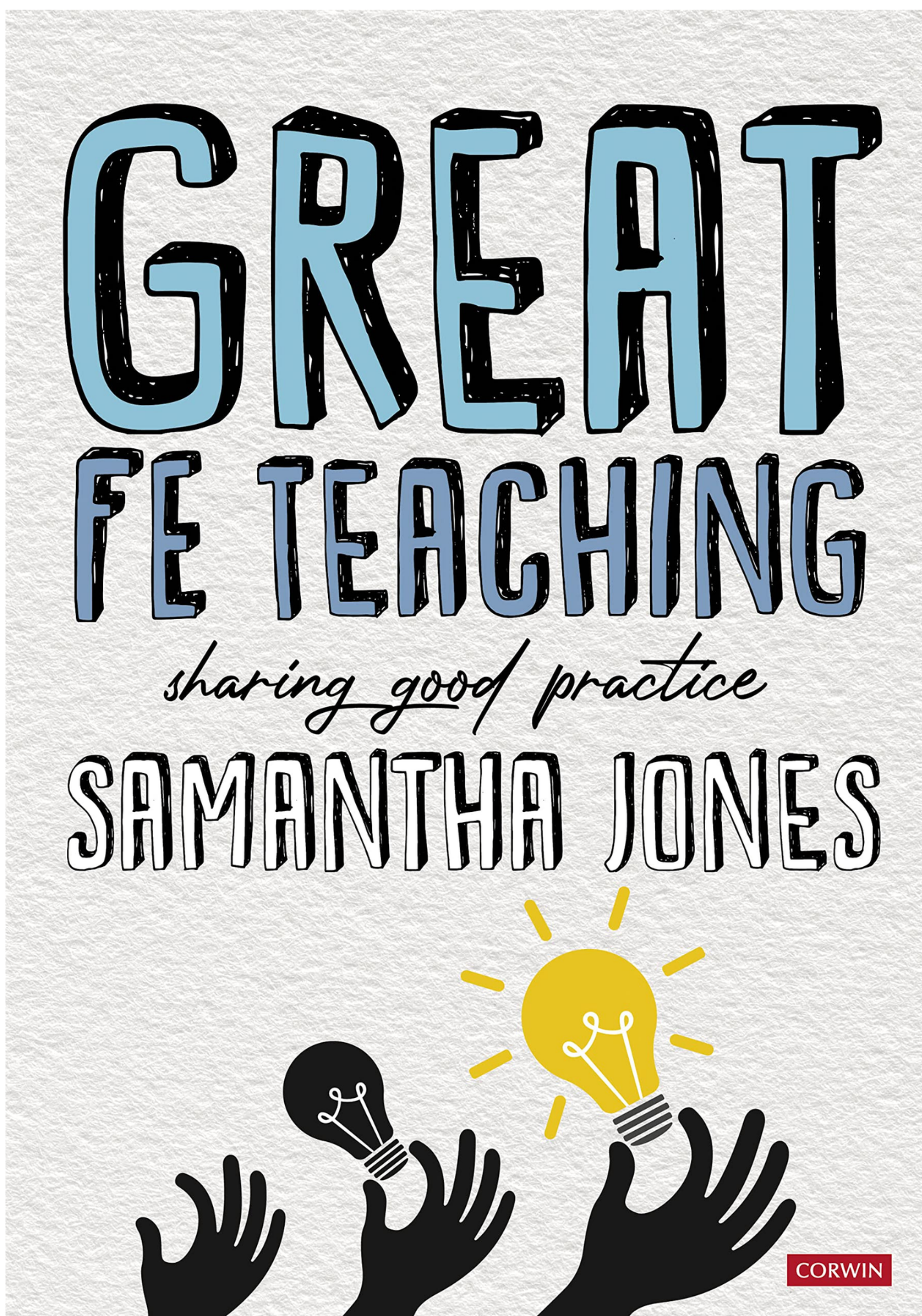
What kind of injuries do they sustain?

# Develop Writing Skills

Changing Realms

. This is what Samantha Jones in Great FE Teaching refers to as  
'moving between realms'

Great FE Teaching, Samantha Jones



# Develop Writing Skills

Changing Realms

<b>Realm 1</b> <b>The student's existing skills</b>	<b>Realm 2</b> <b>Target skills</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing in paragraphs</li> <li>• Writing in sentences</li> <li>• Using a range of simple vocabulary</li> <li>• Expressing opinion</li> <li>• Describing places and people</li> <li>• Using adjectives</li> <li>• Expressing simple ideas</li> <li>• Using simple verb tenses accurately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using 10 new words</li> <li>• Using 3 or 4 complex sentences with commas</li> <li>• Expressing new, more complex ideas</li> <li>• Using persuasive language</li> <li>• Using similes</li> <li>• Consistency with verb tenses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employing metaphors</li> <li>• Moving between short and long sentences for impact</li> <li>• Using a large and varied vocabulary</li> <li>• Expressing feelings through implication.</li> <li>• Using largely correct grammar</li> </ul>



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# Develop Writing Skills

Guild Knowledge

Dylan Wiliam in Inside the Black Box

Department of  
Education &  
Professional Studies

KING'S  
*College*  
LONDON

# Inside the black box

Raising standards through classroom assessment

*Paul Black & Dylan Wiliam*

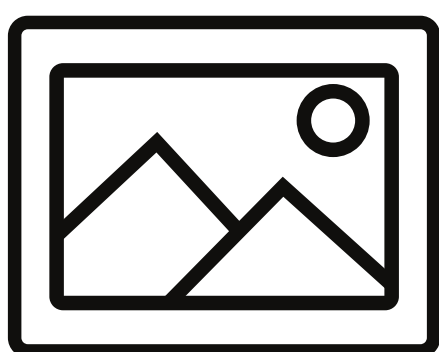
 **GL**  
assessment  
the measure of potential



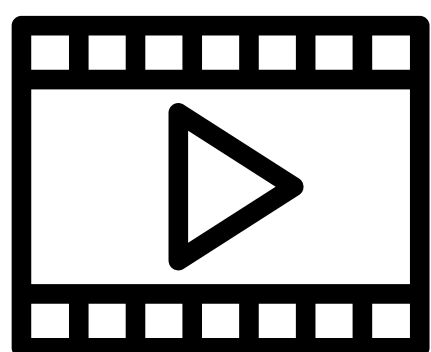
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# Develop Writing Skills

The World Out There



Pictures



Videos



Podcasts



Music



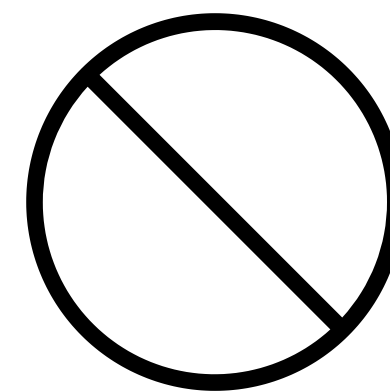
Poetry



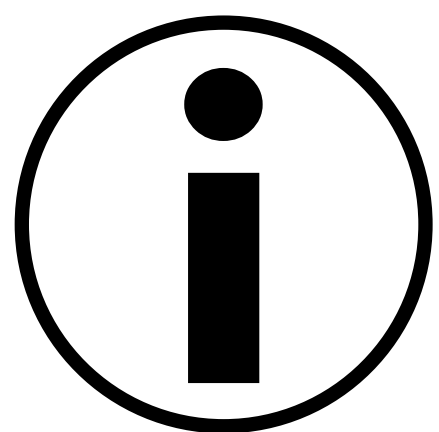
Emojis



Stars



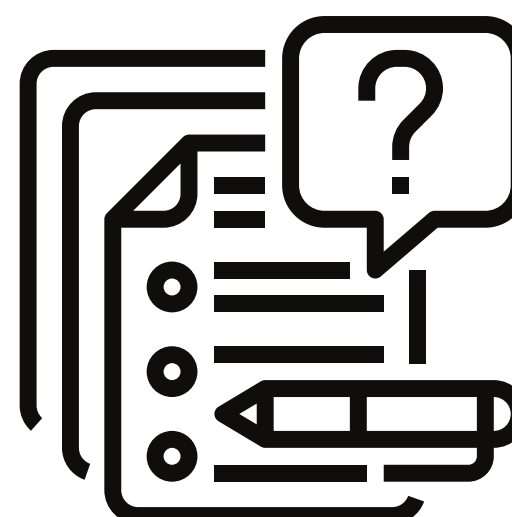
Signs



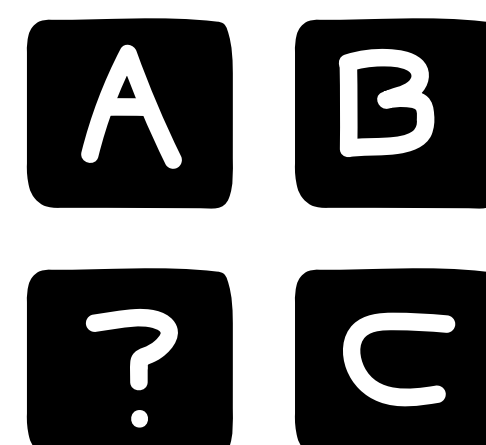
Symbols



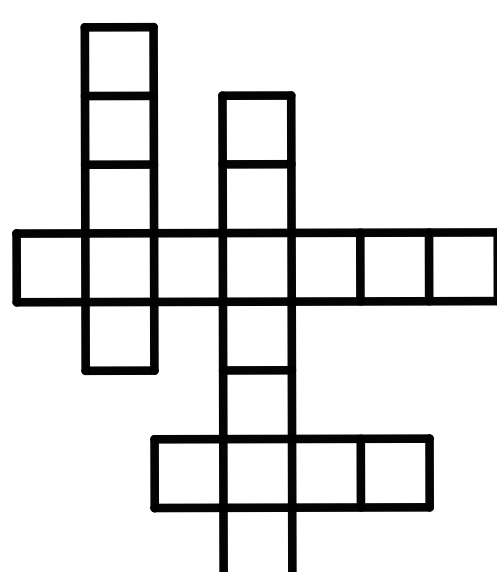
Drama and Role Play



Quizzes



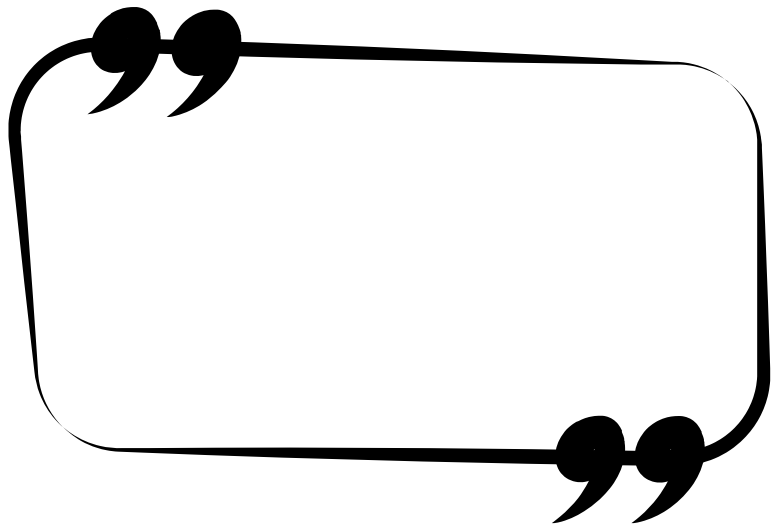
Word Games



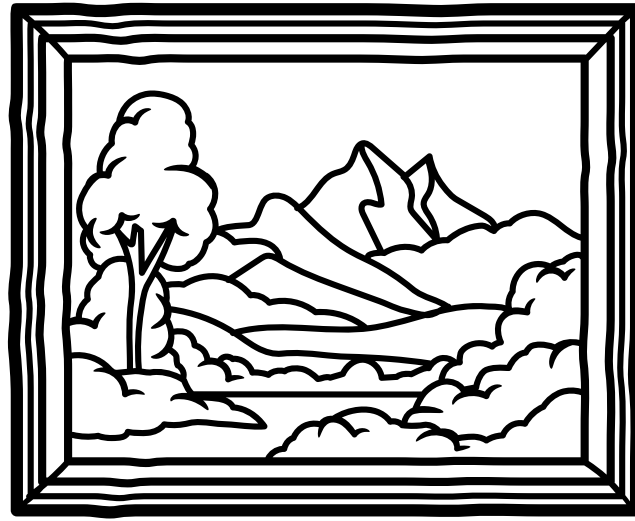
Crosswords

# Develop Writing Skills

The Classroom



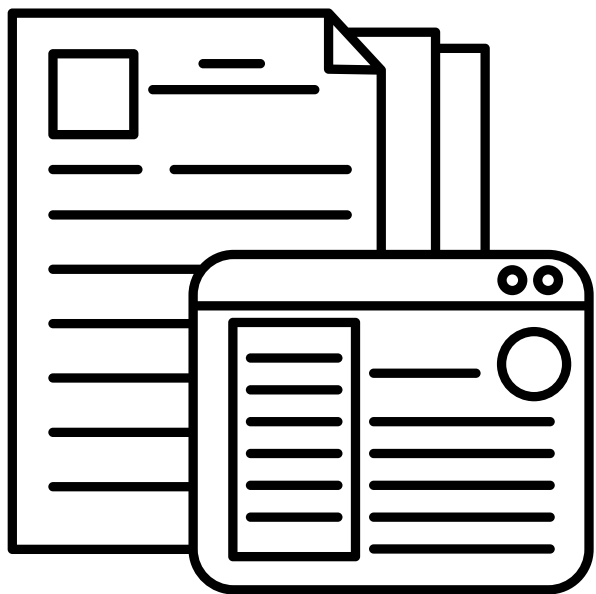
Provocative quotes



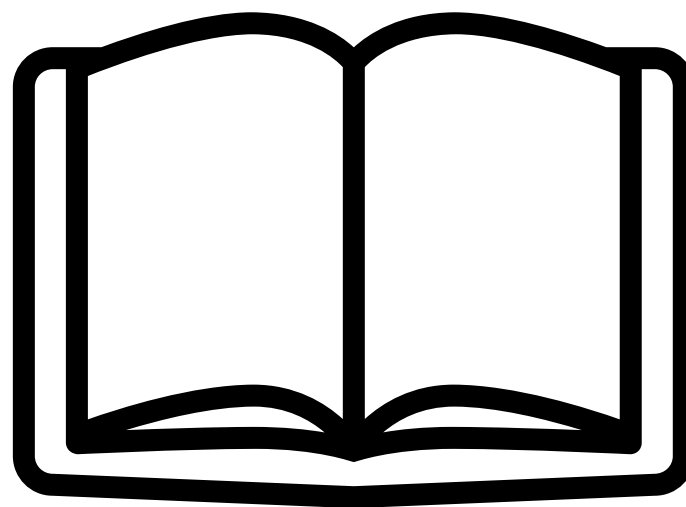
Art of all kinds to lift the students from their everyday thoughts



Posters and Notices



Article Clips



Recommended Reading



Grammatical Rule Reminders



Spellings

# Develop Writing Skills

## Ideas Exchange

Questions for individuals in the process of writing can include:

Who is your reader?

What should you say first to your reader?

What should come next... and next... and next?

How many paragraphs in all do you need?

What do you want your last paragraph to say the reader?

Following their writing, you could consider questions such as:

What is good in what you've written?

What would you like to change?

What do you need to check for?

Can you find corrections to make?

Do you need to make corrections in spelling... or in each sentence and how it reads... or in changing slang words to more formal vocabulary?

Have you said what you wanted to say?

Have you repeated yourself or missed a word out?

Are you pleased with your final piece?

# Develop Writing Skills

## Ideas Exchange

For group discussion, you can have questions ready in relation to source texts or writing preparation, such as:

What main points of information does the writer give you?

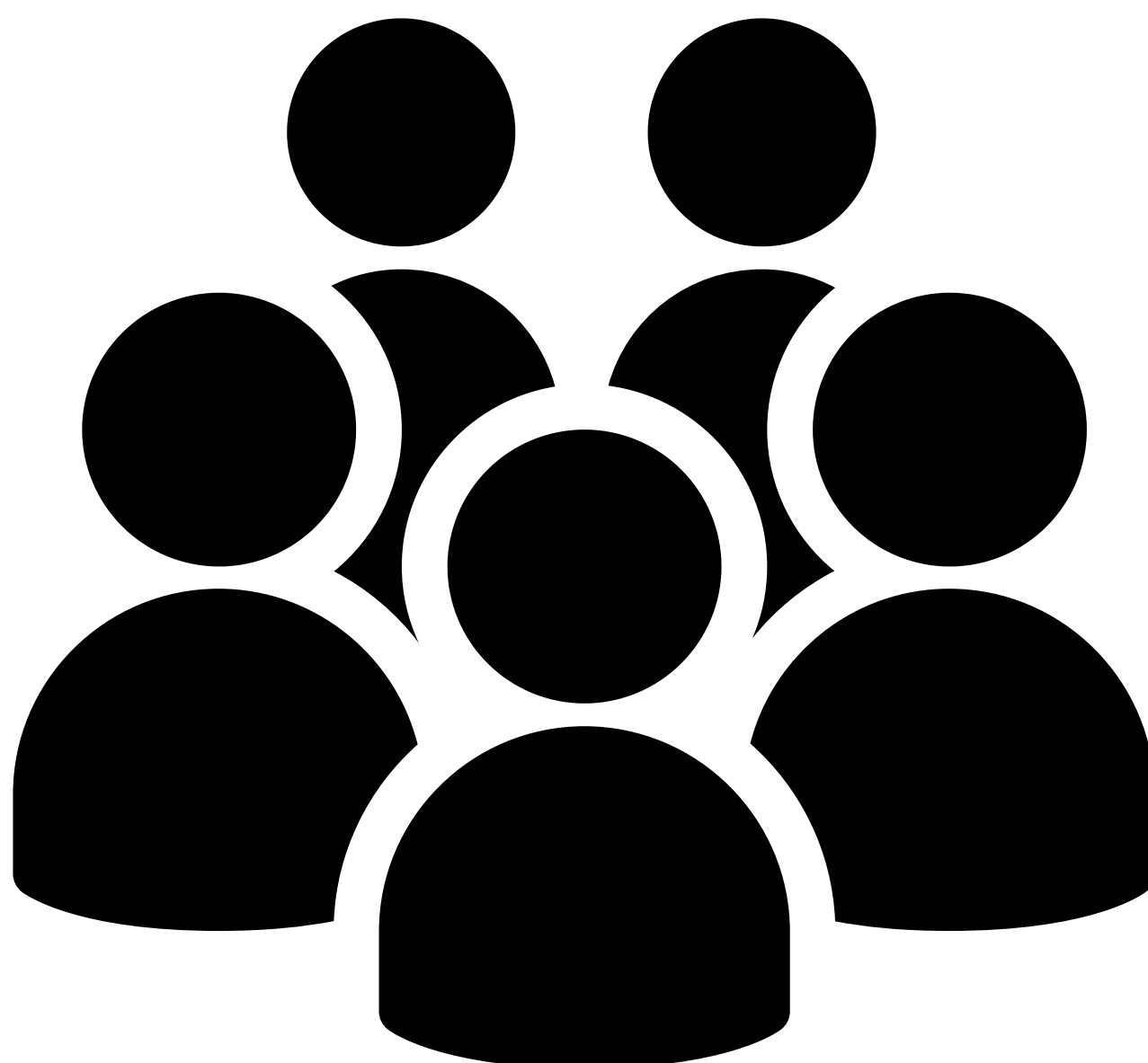
What are the key words that tell you the subject matter?

What opinions does the writer give you?

What words or phrases show you this?

and... You're going to write creatively about an incident in the workplace or workshop:

What does the workshop look and sound like? What do you like/not like about working there? Who else works there? What are the people normally doing? What stories can you share with the group about things that happened unexpectedly?

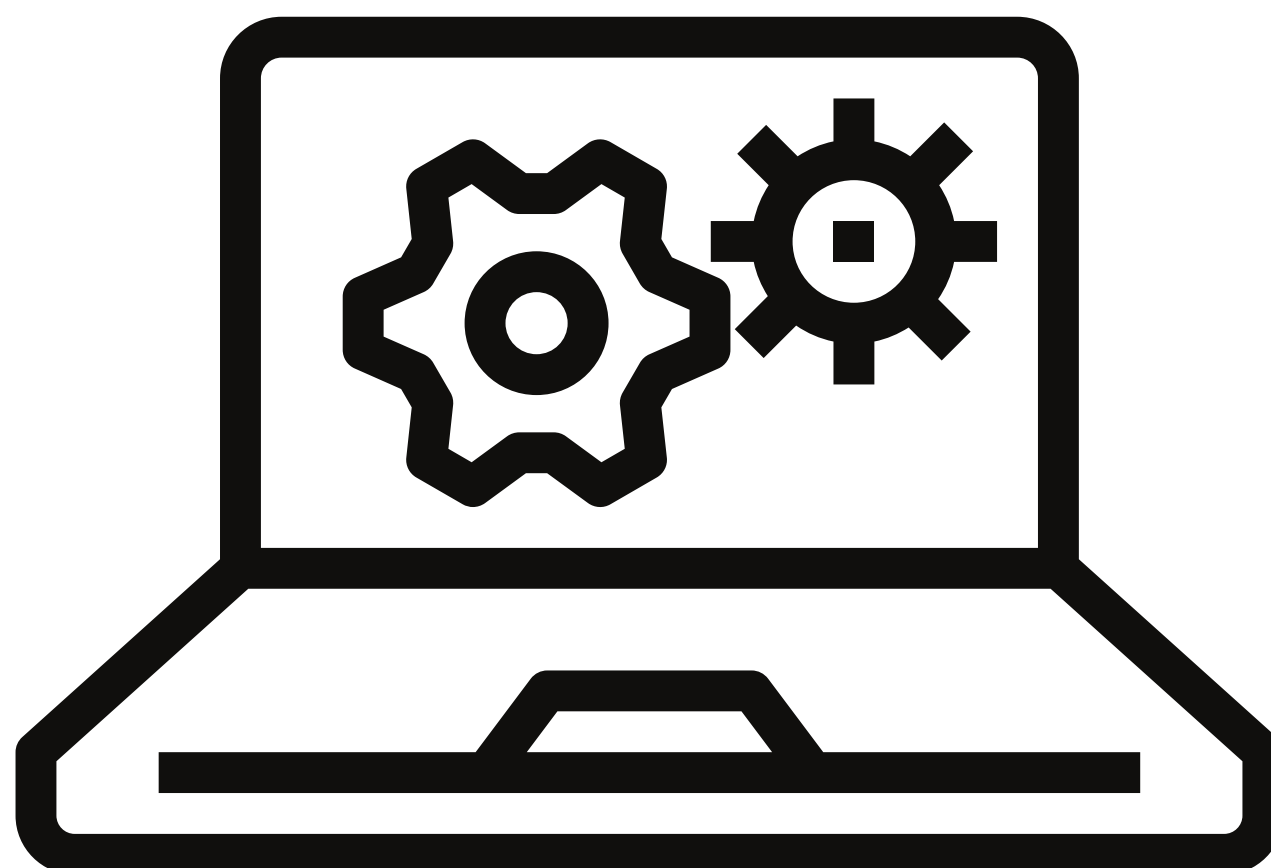


# Develop Writing Skills

## Digital Tools

So, how can we use digital tools and the metaverse?

- We can establish online platforms and networks for our students to work collaboratively.
- We can direct our students to find information or opinions or sample texts to stimulate and support a piece of writing.
- We can set our students to read and critique examples of GCSE-type written work and then compare notes.
- We can allow students to write some of their written work as word documents so they can easily proof-read and edit and get used to this process.
- We can encourage students to write for an audience by directing their online work at others and taking feedback.
- We can organise quizzes or padlets or word games or questionnaires so the students can contribute in their own time from their own phones and get an instant response from others or from us as teachers.





# Develop Writing Skills

## Vocabulary

The mountain was threatening and fraught  
with danger.

or

The mountain was big and scary.



# Develop Writing Skills

## Vocabulary

My friend is ok at English and writes ok too.

or

My friend excels in English and writes exceptionally well.

# Develop Writing Skills

Sentences

Pizza, burgers, chips, rice and spaghetti all  
on the table waiting to be eaten.

or

Pizza, burgers, chips, rice and spaghetti  
were all spread out on the table waiting to  
be eaten.



# Develop Writing Skills

## Sentences

A tall, imposing man, wearing a suit with a clean white shirt, entered the room.

or

A tall, imposing man, wearing a suit with a clean white shirt, coming in the room.

# Develop Writing Skills

Sentences

We needed to sit down. We picked up our bags. We found a park bench. We sat there, stunned.

or

We needed to sit down so we picked up our bags, found a park bench and sat there, stunned.



# Develop Writing Skills

Sentences

I pass the exam. My dad will give me a  
games console. This course finishes.  
(conjunctions: and, if, when)



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# Develop Writing Skills

Sentences

Answer: When this course finishes, and if I pass the exam, my dad will give me a games console.



# Develop Writing Skills

Sentences

You're my friend. You told tales on me. You  
can't come to my party.  
(conjunctions: although, because)



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# Develop Writing Skills

Sentences

Answer: Although you're my friend, you can't come to my party because you told tales on me.

# Develop Writing Skills

## Paragraphs

Number	Title	Content
1	Introduction	Where and when this story is set
2	Getting to the ghostly place	The main character's journey to and arrival at a ghostly place
3	What was scary at the ghostly place	Description details and signs that all is not right. Fear in the main character
4	What happened at the ghostly place	The main events
5	Running away from the ghostly place	Fear overcomes the main character who runs in terror, speeding past people and animals without stopping
6	Conclusion	The main character comes to rest and gathers thoughts and feelings. One final punchline tells of one powerful discovery from the whole experience.

# Develop Writing Skills

## Paragraphs

Which one is more effective?

He said 'Rich and poor are treated alike. Poverty is not a disability and wealth is not an advantage.' Now the poor go hungry and their children are sick. People used to feel safe. As we celebrate another anniversary of the NHS, we should recall the words of twentieth century health minister Aneurin Bevan. That was how it used to be.

As we celebrate another anniversary of the NHS, we should recall the words of twentieth century [JP1] health minister Aneurin Bevan. He said 'Rich and poor are treated alike. Poverty is not a disability and wealth is not an advantage.' That was how it used to be. People used to feel safe. Now the poor go hungry and their children are sick.

# Develop Writing Skills

## Spelling

As teachers, we can help our students with their spelling in these ways:

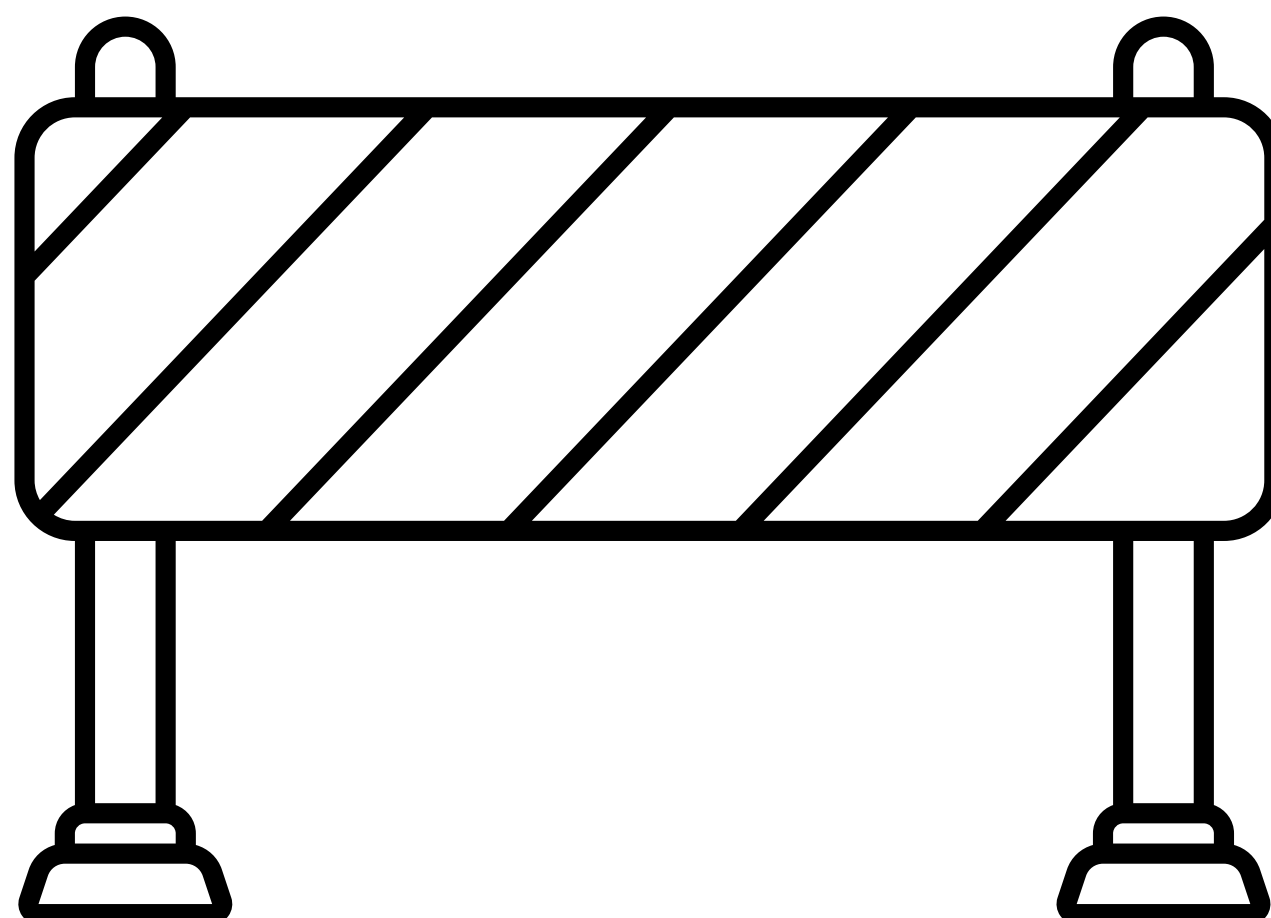
- By endorsing the spellings they get right
- By furnishing them with a range of strategies to find, or work out, the spelling of a new or difficult word
- By introducing fun spelling games and events
- By displaying key spellings on the classroom wall
- By encouraging our students in Assessment for Learning strategies, whereby they check their work – looking particularly at the words they often mis-spell – edit and amend.

# Develop Writing Skills

## Taking Stock

- 'I don't see the point in writing.'
- 'Why bother to write when I can't spell?'
- 'None of my friends like writing.'
- 'Writing takes me ages and then all I get is criticism.'
- 'I don't even understand what I'm supposed to do to make my writing good.'
- 'What's this got to do with plumbing (or hairdressing, or catering)?'
- 'My dad can't even read, never mind write, and he's OK.'
- English isn't my main language. I don't speak it at home so how do you expect me to write it here?'
- 'I'm dyslexic.'
- 'I've already failed English twice. I'm just no good at it.'
- 'I've got better ways of spending my time.'
- 'I don't even reply to texts.'

Having looked at the list as a reminder, to what extent do you think we can change our students' perspective if we do as planned and work in the way proposed on this programme?



# Develop Writing Skills

What Does Good Look Like?

Let's look together now at a potential activity you could try.

1. Students pool their ideas of what a good one looks like.
2. Give students 3 pieces of authentic student writing to rank.
  - a. They could work in small groups to discuss their thoughts.
3. Students work in pairs assessing a piece of their own writing:
  - a. What is good?
  - b. 3 ways I can improve...

# Develop Writing Skills

Judgement

'it is hard to itemise or predict in advance the features that might make it good except in the most general of terms...'

DYLAN WILLIAM

English in the Black Box

# Develop Writing Skills

Creative Writing

Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes; art is knowing which ones to keep.'

SCOTT ADAMS  
American Writer

<b>Realm 1</b> <b>The student's existing skills</b>	<b>Realm 2</b> <b>Target skills</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing in paragraphs</li> <li>• Writing in sentences</li> <li>• Using a range of simple vocabulary</li> <li>• Expressing opinion</li> <li>• Describing places and people</li> <li>• Using adjectives</li> <li>• Expressing simple ideas</li> <li>• Using simple verb tenses accurately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using 10 new words</li> <li>• Using 3 or 4 complex sentences with commas</li> <li>• Expressing new, more complex ideas</li> <li>• Using persuasive language</li> <li>• Using similes</li> <li>• Consistency with verb tenses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employing metaphors</li> <li>• Moving between short and long sentences for impact</li> <li>• Using a large and varied vocabulary</li> <li>• Expressing feelings through implication.</li> <li>• Using largely correct grammar</li> </ul>



# Develop Writing Skills

## Creative Writing

<b>Realm 1</b> <b>The student's existing skills</b>	<b>Realm 2</b> <b>Target skills</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing in paragraphs</li><li>• Writing in sentences</li><li>• Using a range of simple vocabulary</li><li>• Expressing opinion</li><li>• Describing places and people</li><li>• Using adjectives</li><li>• Expressing simple ideas</li><li>• Using simple verb tenses accurately</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using 10 new words</li><li>• Using 3 or 4 complex sentences with commas</li><li>• Expressing new, more complex ideas</li><li>• Using persuasive language</li><li>• Using similes</li><li>• Consistency with verb tenses</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employing metaphors</li><li>• Moving between short and long sentences for impact</li><li>• Using a large and varied vocabulary</li><li>• Expressing feelings through implication.</li><li>• Using largely correct grammar</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expressing feelings through implication.</li><li>• Using largely correct grammar</li><li>• Using a wider and large and varied vocabulary</li></ul>

# Develop Writing Skills

## The Examiner's View

Understanding the mark scheme is key. It's also hugely empowering for the students. Make sure they're fully briefed and on board.

Give them a chance to explore timings too by discussing questions like these:

- In the writing section of the exam, 45 minutes is the time allocation for a piece of creative writing. The examiner highly recommends planning before I write. How much of the 45 minutes should I spend on planning?
- How much of the 45 minutes should I spend on checking and amending?
- After planning and checking and amending, how much time is left for my actual writing?
- If I find I am writing too slowly and running out of time, what can I do?
- If I finish my writing after only 30 of the 45 minutes, what might be wrong? What can I do?



# Develop Writing Skills

## The Student Approach to Writing

### Stage 1

#### Preparation

This includes discussion, visual and other stimuli, reading a related text, teacher 'modelling' and other input, group work, gathering content, creating a 'buzz'.

### Stage 2

#### Writing

Producing the required written piece autonomously and in silence. Consulting the teacher, a dictionary or online information can be an option depending on the teacher's judgement.

### Stage 3

#### Checking

What is good about the content? Does it read well? Does it satisfy my list of criteria?

### Stage 4

#### Improvement

What two or three aspects (or more) of this piece of writing can I improve?

### Stage 5

#### Amendment/Re-writing

Implementing my improvements

### Stage 6

#### Celebration

What improvements have I made and what am I now proud of in this work?

# Develop Writing Skills

## Criteria

'Students are more likely to fully understand assessment criteria if they have played a role in translating the generic grade descriptors into assignment-specific grading criteria'

'Students engage with criteria by discussing their meaning and articulating the distinguishing features of work at each level of the mark scheme.'

University of Surrey

[www.surrey.ac.uk](http://www.surrey.ac.uk)

# Develop Writing Skills

## Checking Writing

Work with your students so they can agree a personal checking routine. For instance, they may:

- first read the whole passage aloud to themselves or to someone else and check that it flows, that it makes sense to the other person and that there are no careless errors
- next they may check for specific errors which they often make and know they must look for, such as the spelling of particular words or inaccurate grammar
- then check each sentence again to make sure it reads as a sentence, contains a verb, and uses punctuation effectively where subordinate clauses are used
- lastly check their paragraphs to see that they are appropriately divided and that the beginning and end of the whole piece introduce and conclude satisfactorily.

# Develop Writing Skills

Making it Practical

We've already agreed the students may aim to improve their writing by:

- structuring their work effectively with a beginning, middle and end
- providing authentic and meaningful content
- using more adventurous vocabulary
- writing in paragraphs
- varying the length of their sentences
- writing in correct sentences – is there a verb?
- displaying a sense of audience
- correcting spellings
- using more varied punctuation such as ellipsis, parenthesis, speech marks and commas
- eradicating repetition or careless omissions and inaccuracies

Writers are people for whom writing is harder than it is for anyone else.'

THOMAS MANN  
German Writer

# Develop Writing Skills

Playing with Exam Marks

## The Marks Game

1. Content: – Have I said everything I want to say? Could I express it better for my target audience?
2. Structure – Have I said everything in the right order? Have I used paragraphs? Are my paragraphs too long or too short? Would that last sentence or paragraph be better coming first? Have I repeated myself?
3. Syntax and grammar – Have I divided my writing into proper sentences divided by full stops? Does my subject agree with my verb (e.g. have I said ‘we was’ when I should have said ‘we were’)? Are my singulars and plurals consistent (e.g. have I said: ‘two heads is better than one’ rather than ‘...are better than one’)? Have I used verb tenses correctly?
4. Repetition and Mistakes – Have I repeated myself? Have I used the same word too often? Have I missed words out by mistake?
5. Vocabulary – Have I used the best words to say what I want to say?
6. Spelling – Have I spelled my words correctly?
7. Punctuation – Have I used commas correctly? Have I put in question marks and speech marks where they are needed?

# Enjoyed these sessions?

We have a range of other programmes to support GCSE resit learners post-16.



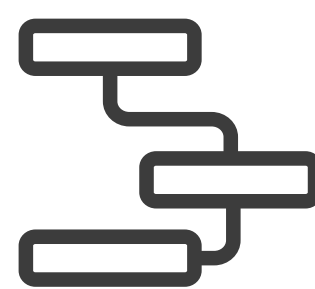
GCSE Reading –  
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Developing Writers at  
GCSE – Writing for the  
Exam and Raising the  
Level



GCSE Language and  
Structure – Teaching the  
Skills and Answering the  
Questions



Comparing Texts at GCSE  
– A Step by Step  
Approach to Teaching  
Skills and Answering  
Questions

## Have some questions?

Reach out to the team by email  
[gcseenglish@creativeeducation.co.uk](mailto:gcseenglish@creativeeducation.co.uk)