



Using coursebook material to assess young learners' writing skills

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Elaine Boyd has been involved in assessment design and quality assurance for over 30 years, working for a range of international exam boards. She has been especially concerned with the impact of assessments in the classroom and worked closely with teachers and teacher educators delivering courses in assessment literacy in Europe, India and SE Asia and has published articles in this field. She has been Visiting Professor at the Universitat Politècnica in Valencia with responsibility for developing a framework for EMI. Her research includes intercultural communication and pragmatics and her PhD investigated spoken language using corpus data. She is currently a post graduate tutor at The Institute of Education at University College London. Elaine has authored several exam coursebooks for a range of age groups for leading international publishers and is a Course Consultant for Look, a seven-level primary series from National Geographic Learning.



Today we will look at

- What are we aiming to assess when we assess young learners' writing?
- Why are the benefits of exploiting coursebook material?
- How can we exploit?

What are we aiming to assess in writing?

Typical features of writing:

- the message (task)
- grammar
- vocabulary
- organization
- neatness /legibility
- length
- complexity/length of sentences
- appropriacy to reader

Are all of these appropriate to young learners? Why? / Why not?

Which features can we assess in YLs?

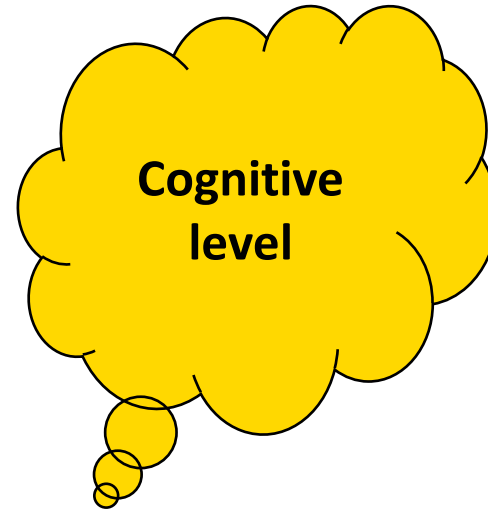


Speed of
tackling task

Attitude



Number of
attempts



Ability to improve



Use of wider
knowledge

Why use coursebook material?

- Familiarity
- Already levelled/ selected/ created by experienced team
- Repetition is good for success and to embed learning
- Helps them see relevance of vocabulary and grammar learning
- Teaching transferable skills

Process

1. Decide need or purpose
2. Decide criteria
3. Share purpose and criteria
4. Allow oral planning
5. Share ideas across class
6. Students do task
7. Assess according to agree criteria only
8. Students have opportunity to repeat either for 2nd assessment OR for portfolio

How can we use: vocabulary activities?

Focus on: audience

Activity

Write a 2-line dialogue

Assess

Linking sense (coherence)

Ability to improve

1 Listen and point. 🎧 TR: 179

 fly a kite	 make a cake
 paint a picture	 play a game
 play soccer	 read a book
 sing a song	 write a story

How can we use: grammar activities?

Focus on: creating stories

Activity:

Make detached sentences into a story

Assess:

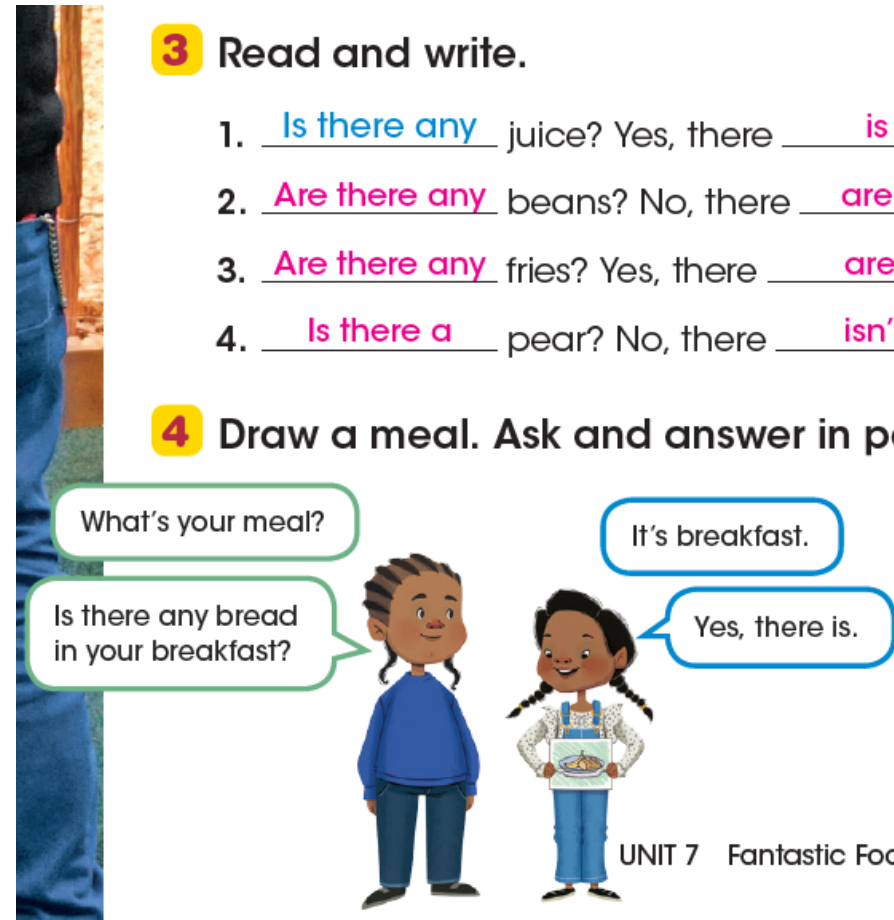
Orthography

Order of information

3 Read and write.

1. Is there any juice? Yes, there is .
2. Are there any beans? No, there aren't .
3. Are there any fries? Yes, there are .
4. Is there a pear? No, there isn't .

4 Draw a meal. Ask and answer in pairs.



How can we use: reading activities?

Focus on Integrated Skills: reading into writing

Activity

Write notes -> convert to sentences

Put in order

Check with another pair – can they add/rewrite?

Assess

Speed

Ordering

Completeness/extension

3 Listen and read. TR: 165

On Top of the World

Meet Jade Hameister. She's from Melbourne in Australia, but in this photo she is a long way from home!

Where did she go? First, she went to the Arctic. She became the youngest person to **ski** to the North Pole. She skied more than 150 km in eleven days.

That isn't very fast. Was it difficult? Yes, very! It was very cold—about -25°C. Jade lost feeling in her hands. Her **sled** was very heavy—50 kg, the same as her! She pulled it over snow and ice. It was very difficult, but she never stopped.

Who did she go with? She went with her dad, Paul. He's an **explorer**, too.

When did she go on this adventure? In April of 2016, when she was fourteen. After that, she skied across Greenland in May of 2017, and to the South Pole six months later. She traveled a total of 2,000 km before she was seventeen!

4 Read again. Complete.

father + North Pole fourteen + difficult
North Pole + cold snow + sled two + three

- Jade Hameister was only **fourteen**, but she did very exciting and **difficult** things.
- She went with her **father** to the Arctic and skied to the **North Pole**.
- It was difficult because of the weather and the **snow**, and because she had to pull a **sled**.
- After Jade went to the **North Pole**, she had more adventures in **cold** places.
- In 2016 and 2017, she skied **two** thousand km in **three** different places.

How can we use: listening activities?

Focus on Integrated Skills: listening into writing

Activity

Act out to embed

Write instructions

Assess

Clarity

Ordering

Completeness

- **Listening Strategy: Understanding the Speaker's Attitude**
When students listen to a person talking, they should pay attention to what the speaker says and how he/she says it. Noticing the speaker's tone of voice, intonation, and any pauses or hesitations can help students understand his/her attitude, as well as the relationship between speakers.

Script for TR: 83

A: *This robot is really cool. Look. It's in a school.*

B: *Is it helping the teacher in class?*

A: *No. It's one of the students.*

B: *Really? Are they teaching robots at this school?*

A: *No. One of the students is sick, so she can't go to school for a few weeks. She uses a tablet and a special app to connect to the robot.*

B: *So she can see and hear what is happening the classroom? Is that right?*

A: *Yes! The robot has a camera and a microphone. She can move the robot's head, too!*

B: *That's amazing! Can she speak in the lesson, too?*

A: *Yes, she can ask the teacher or other students questions. When she wants to speak, the light on the robot's head starts to flash.*

B: *That is so cool! This will help a lot of students.*

A: *Yes. They won't miss lessons when they can't go to school ... oh, and they can watch their friends play, too.*

B: *What do you mean?*

A: *Students can take the robot onto the playground, too!*

How can we use: speaking activities?

Focus on Integrated skills: speaking into writing

Activity

Poem

Assess

Enthusiasm

Collaboration

No of attempts

Use of wider knowledge

Where Are They From?

We can find out all about the world.
We don't have to go far away.
Let's look at the things at home and at school
and think about where they are made.

Look at this silver necklace.
I know silver comes from the ground.
But there's no silver in my garden.
So where is silver found?

Let's have a cup of coffee.
It's a delicious drink, you know.
Coffee comes from coffee beans.
But where are coffee beans grown?

I borrowed my brother's smartphone.
I want to play a game.
His phone came from a phone store.
But where are phones made?

This black pearl ring is my mother's.
It isn't really black, it's dark blue.
I know pearls come from oysters.
But where is this ring produced?

How can we use functional language?

Focus on: context

Activity

Write 'regret' story

Assess

Logic

Linking

Speed?

3 Read and complete the wishes.

1. Emily and Sarah want to stay up late, but they have school tomorrow.

Emily and Sarah: We wish we didn't have school tomorrow.

2. Martin would like to take a photo of a beautiful sunset, but he doesn't have his camera.

Martin: I wish I had my camera.

3. Sandra is on a beach. She's watching another girl waterski. She can't waterski.

Sandra: I wish I could waterski.

4. Layla wants to go to the beach with her friends, but she feels sick.

Layla: I wish I didn't feel sick / could go to the beach.

5. Tom is very short and would like to be taller.

Tom: I wish I was taller / wasn't/weren't so short.

6. Carla and Manuel's friends are having a party, but they live too far away to go.

Carla and Manuel: I wish we lived closer to our friends / didn't live so far away from our friends.

What can we assess?

Criterion	Suitable for Young Learners?	Best for ...
grammar	✓	discrete sentences
vocabulary	✓	discrete sentences
task completion/message	✓ ✓	messages/emails
organisation	✓ ✓	stories, dialogues
appropriate to reader	✓ ✓	messages/emails
complexity	✓	descriptions, points of view
legibility	✓ ✓ ✓	short writing tasks in early years
punctuation	✓ ✓ ✓	short writing tasks, emails
Speed of tackling task	✓ ✓ ✓	organisation focus
Number of attempts	✓ ✓ ✓	audience focus
Ability/willingness to improve	✓ ✓ ✓	integrated tasks
attitude/behaviour	✓ ✓ ✓	all
Use of wider knowledge	✓ ✓ ✓	context focus; audience focus

Summary: using coursebook materials for assessing writing

- Think about timing of writing assessment after original activity
- Allow planning time
- Always prepare orally (e.g. in class or pairs)
- Give 'improvement' chances BEFORE writing – orally or written
- Agree with learners what you are going to assess
- Give repeat success chances after first writing attempt
- Feedback holistically: focus on writing purpose

Look

A seven-level series for young learners of English

Pre-A1 to B1





YOUR CHANCE TO BE IN A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT BOOK

Learning takes place in many ways, and this October we invite teachers to learn from their peers, as part of our *Learning Moments 2020 Showcase*. We're asking teachers of English to share an online teaching story – something you did in one of your classes and you want other teachers to know about it.

REFLECT

How have you been keeping your students motivated and engaged during your online or blended learning lessons? What teaching tips would you like to share with other teachers? Be sure your submission fits one of the eight categories shown below.

SHARE

Share your *Learning Moment* in one of two ways.

OPTION 1: Record a short video of yourself sharing the ways you are keeping students motivated in your online or blended learning classroom.

OPTION 2: Write a description of how you are keeping your students motivated in your online or blended learning classroom. Be sure to share a photo to accompany the description.

UPLOAD

Upload your submission to: ELTNGL.com/LearningMoments2020



Bringing the world to the classroom and the classroom to life

The *Learning Moments* submission categories are:

- Engaging content
- Interactive tasks
- Real-life communication
- Project work
- Assessing learners
- Giving feedback
- Personalizing instruction
- Building online community

All *Learning Moments* will be shared on our website to inspire other teachers globally. Every teacher who sends in a submission will receive a certificate of participation and a Teaching Resource Download with tips and suggestions on how to keep students interested in online and blended English language classrooms.

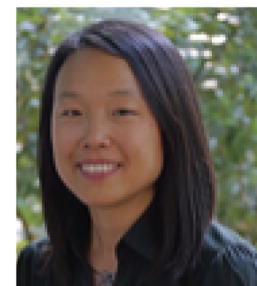
At the end of the showcase, *Learning Moments* Ambassadors Drs. Joan Kang Shin and Jered Borup will spotlight a few *Learning Moments* to share with the community. A selection of *Learning Moments* will also be featured in their upcoming professional development book *Breaking Through the Screen*.

Learn more at [ELTNGL.com/LearningMoments2020](https://eltngl.com/LearningMoments2020)

#LearningMoments2020

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Dr. Joan Kang Shin

Meet the *Learning Moments* Ambassadors

Dr. Joan Kang Shin is an Associate Professor of Education at George Mason University and the Academic Program Coordinator of the Teaching Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Exceptional Learners (TCLDEL) program. Dr. Shin specializes in teaching ESL/EFL to young learners and teenagers and has provided professional development programs and workshops to EFL teachers in over 100 countries around the world.



Dr. Jered Borup

Dr. Jered Borup is an Associate Professor in the Division of Learning Technologies at George Mason University. In his current position, he is the professor-in-charge of the Blended and Online Learning in Schools Master's and Certificate programs that are devoted to improving teacher practices in online and blended learning environments.

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