

***Writing* (2nd ed.)** by Tricia Hedge. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, 154 pp.

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Writing, one of the Resource Books for Teachers published by Oxford University Press, provides teachers with a practical, non-technical approach to the teaching of writing. The 2nd edition of this highly influential, widely used book takes into account feedback from teachers around the world, recent developments in the pedagogy and teaching of writing, and also the development of the Internet, as there are numerous net-related activities and references.

The book consists of a foreword by the series editor, Alan Maley, an introduction, four main parts, an appendix on useful websites, a bibliography, and further reading. The four parts are structured in a way to reflect the stages of the writing process itself; namely, communicating, composing, crafting, and improving. Each part consists of 13-15 activities, which are organized according to the following categories: level of learners, time, preparation, procedure, comments, and variations.

Four fundamental questions constitute the framework of the book: First, how do we ensure that writing is not just a mechanical exercise but that it fulfils some real communicative purpose for a real audience of readers? Second, how can we help students to better understand and develop the writing process? Third, how can we guide students to shape and polish what they have written so that it conforms to discourse and genre requirements? And finally, how can we give feedback on students' writing which is helpful, non-threatening, and supportive?

The four main parts of the book are designed to answer these four fundamental questions. Part One, communicating, helps the teacher create context for classroom writing. Specifically, it focuses on the need to develop a strong sense of audience, and show students how writing styles differ according to the purpose of the writing and the audience. The activities in Part Two, composing, concentrate on the pre-writing and drafting stages, especially on how writers organize their ideas, how they make plans or formulate mental outlines, and how they develop a sense of direction. The activities in this part present a wide range of pre-writing and drafting techniques and strategies. Part Three, crafting, concentrates on the skills needed for the production of a coherent and appropriate text. The activities in this part help students develop paragraphs coherently, develop a wide range of appropriate vocabulary, use cohesive devices appropriately, and use a range of semantic structures. Finally, Part Four, improving, addresses ways in which teachers and students can work together to improve the clarity and quality of writing, including

reviewing the writing, revising it, and then editing the final draft.

According to the author, “the purpose of this resource book is to look at writers and writing in the English language classroom and to offer suggestions for helping students overcome the difficulties they experience in developing clear, effective writing in English” (p. 8). The book clearly achieves this objective. Indeed the most important feature of the book is the practicality of its suggestions. It offers practical suggestions on a wide range of writing purposes and styles that include, for instance, exchanging letters with students, sharing journals with students, keeping a reading journal, sharing information, freewriting, and poetry writing.

Similarly, the suggestions offered cover almost all stages and aspects of writing, including brainstorming, making linear notes, editing, feedback, revising, and preparing the final draft. Each stage is also treated quite thoroughly. For example, the book provides easy-to-follow activities, checklists, and demonstrations that cover all aspects of peer feedback, comparing it with other sources of feedback (teacher-, self-, or other-directed) using different settings, formations, and procedures. Additionally, given that groupwork is now a well established practice in many L2 writing classrooms, the book offers simple, clear, and straightforward suggestions and activities that relate to collaborative writing, group dynamics, various types of group formations, and how groups function in peer review tasks.

Another way *Writing* achieves its objectives is through its flexibility. The book offers activities that are flexible and easy to use, which can be set up with minimal resources (just a blackboard and paper for students to write on). Also, the activities can be tailored to suit different class sizes and contexts. Finally, the activities offer students a structured and non-threatening approach to writing, while, at the same time, they are designed to take students’ personal experiences and preferences into account.

Overall, this resource book is essential for both pre-service and in-service ESL teacher training courses, for graduate programmes, and for teachers of writing everywhere. *Writing*, like the other Oxford University Press’s Resource Books for Teachers, is written in a reader-friendly and accessible way, which makes it handy for both novice and more experienced teachers. Finally, this resource book is supported by a website solely devoted to the Resource Book for Teachers series, to be found at <http://www.oup.com/elt/teacher/rbt> where one can also find extra activities, downloadable worksheets, and author articles.