# Introduction

Recently, some colleagues have said they would not use models to help their learners write saying they constrict and limit the learners. In my experience, though, I have found models tend to help learners with both the process of writing and in creating a reasonable product. However, my colleagues’ comments raised doubts in my mind. So, I have decided to research the use of models to determine how useful they actually are and to discover more uses of them to improve my ability to help my learners write more effectively.

## A brief background: Models and four approaches to teaching and learning writing

Models are essential in product writing, which focuses on a final product and where ‘the learner is engaged in imitating, copying and transforming models of correct language’ (Nunan, 1991: 87). Process writing recognizes ‘that competent writers do not produce final texts at their first attempt’ and thus the priority of using models was reduced in favor of the skills that learners would need to write, i.e., a focus on ‘how’ to write, rather than just ‘what’ to write (summary of Nunan, 1991: 87). The genre approach revived the use of models, as focusing on ‘what makes’ a genre (a type of written discourse) became prioritized. The process/genre approach combines the benefits of the others, making it inclusive and versatile (Badger/White, 2000). *Table One* shows how models and samples fit into these approaches:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Use of models</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product</strong></td>
<td>• Familiarizes learners with features of a text&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Learning is assisted</strong> imitation of input from model texts&lt;br&gt;• Models texts often made specifically for the classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td>• Learners ‘develop, rather than consciously learn’ (Badger/White, 2000: 154), so&lt;br&gt;• Using models is considered less important&lt;br&gt;• Product is not ‘preconceived’; models may be used ‘only after the students have written something of their own’ White/Arndt, 1991: 5-6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Genre</strong></td>
<td>• Learners get exposed to authentic examples of the focus genre through models and samples&lt;br&gt;• These are analyzed and discussed, ‘but not for slavish imitation’ (Tribble, 1996: 58)&lt;br&gt;• Social context is important and can be determined from analysis&lt;br&gt;• Any ‘[i]mitation is only a first stage, however, designed as much to inform as to enforce adherence to strict genre rules.’ (Harmer, 2001: 259)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Process/Genre</strong></td>
<td>• ‘Writing development happens by drawing out the learners’ potential and by providing input to which learners respond (Badger/White, 2000: 158)&lt;br&gt;• Learner-centered: ‘what input is needed will depend on [the] particular group of learners’ (Badger/White, 2000:158)&lt;br&gt;• Input may be model/sample texts</td>
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*Table One* (summarized from Badger/White, 2000, except where noted)

## Effectively using models
Teacher’s attitude

In my experience, the most fundamental consideration when using models is the teacher’s attitude. If a teacher only sees the model as what the learners must aim for, the learners will be unnecessarily limited and even frustrated as they try to reach perfection. They could also lose motivation, feeling that they cannot draw on their own ideas for content or form. However, if the teacher views the models as a helpful aid, a tool that complements the learner’s ideas, the learners tend to exploit models rather than attempt to mimic them. Models should be seen as ‘a resource rather than an ideal’ (Watson in Raimes, 1983: 127). Raimes clearly identifies their appropriate use: ‘The model becomes *not* what [the learner] *should* do but only an example of what [the learner] *could* do’ (Raimes, 1983: 127, my italics). Importantly, as examples, we do not need to see them as ideal samples of the genre — models fall on a continuum from inappropriate and ineffective samples to highly appropriate and effective; models may also be full texts or parts of texts.

Helping us understand

Quite simply, models help teachers and learners understand. They are concrete, observable, analyzable, comparable, improvable, and breakable. Hedge explains, ‘In order to appreciate the skills needed for successful crafting it is useful to look at finished pieces of writing and to see how ideas are put together and developed’ (Hedge, 1988: 89). She says ‘analysing the *products* leads to greater understanding of what features a piece of writing has,’ ‘the range of writing and the way one form differs from another,’ and how ‘one form of writing... can vary in overall organization and development according to the specific purpose for which it is written’ (Hedge, 1988: 89).

Nunan agrees: ‘...Creativity, and creative freedom can only exist within certain boundaries and conventions if communication is to be effective, and a major task confronting the learner of a second or foreign language is to identify the boundaries of his or her new language.’ (Nunan, 1991:88) Without models learners would be less able to identify these boundaries and conventions, i.e., less able to understand what they are writing.

Encouragement and comfort

I believe the classroom should promote a comforting and encouraging atmosphere. Unfortunately, writing can be intimidating. Some learners may not be very effective writers in their first language. Others may fear, as Rosen says, that they will be ‘a lonely figure cut off from the stimulus and corrective of listeners’ (Rosen in Hedge, 1988:5).

Richards addresses this: ‘the effective writing teacher is not one who has developed a ‘method’ for the teaching of writing, but one who can create an effective environment for learning, in which novice writers feel comfortable about writing and can explore the nature of writing -- and in so doing discover their own strengths and weaknesses as writers.’ (Richards, 1990: 114-115). Models can help create this 'effective environment' by not leaving learners in the dark and reducing confusion about expectations. Here are three such situations.

Learners may have the genre in their Li, but they may not have personal contact or experience with it. For example, White discusses a Polish student whose task was to write a reply to a complaint. This particular learner had ‘been raised on a diet of essays and literary criticism’ (White, 2000: 63). The learner’s teacher also lacked experience with writing a reply to a complaint. ‘The student’s solution was to make use of a model text from a published source’ (White, 2000: 64). In the end, using the model was the *only* help the learner had. There was no guidance nor any other resource utilized, so the learner was not as successful as possible. However, importantly, the learner sought comfort and encouragement from a model in this situation. It is reasonable to say that many learners, even native speakers (e.g., myself), would do the same. Flowerdew observes, ‘Many native speakers make use of others’ writing or speech to model their own work in their native language where the genre is unfamiliar. It is time that this skill was...exploited as an aid for learning’ (Flowerdew, 1993:313). Thus, teachers can use models to meet this natural and logical choice learners may otherwise make on their own, keeping in mind models are not the only solution.

Learners may not approach a particular genre in the same way in their Li. For example, writing SMS text messages on mobile phones is a rather new genre with a distinct style of shortening and informality reflecting the limited space per message and spoken language. Even when shortening and informality are aspects of messaging done in a learner’s Li (for example, Spanish or Czech text messaging), it is unfair to expect a learner to know that ‘btw c u b4 nx cls’ means, ‘By the way, I’ll see you before my next class.’ In a recent advanced class, my learners were both motivated by and appreciative of the authentic models that I showed them on my mobile phone before asking them to attempt some. They reported they would not have been able to do the task as successfully without that help. Asking learners to write a text message first, and then to compare it with authentic ones, as suggested by the process writing approach, might unnecessarily frustrate learners when they see how different their attempt and the authentic one are.

Learners may not have a particular genre in their Li. For example, Czechs do not write thank you *letters/notes* ‘to each other. They are surprised to hear that many people whose Li is English do. A model here would help learners gain an appreciation for the genre, and Thirly introduce them to what they may be expected to write in real life.

Utilizing models allows and encourages learners to investigate genres that differ or do not exist in their Li and thereby more realistically enables them to succeed. Expecting learners to write, or even to prepare to write, what they do not have a concept of seems both unrealistic and unfair.

Examination training

Models and samples can help inform learners about text types they will be expected to produce on proficiency examinations, including UCLES examinations, IELTS, and TOEFL. Learners offer pay for courses specially designed to prepare them for these. Models are extremely valuable resources for examination preparation because they specifically identify the examination expectations in which ‘[s]uccess usually requires completing the tasks set with accurate granular, spelling, and punctuation; adequate vocabulary; suitable layout and clear handwriting; cohesion within the text and a style appropriate to the context’ (May, 1996:61). Learners need to develop strategies and an ability to quickly and effectively write many genres for these exams. I have noticed that published examThtion preparation material typically includes varying forms of models to help learners prepare for examinations. One modern coursebook exploiting models and samples is Advanced Gold (CAE preparation). ‘Many writing sections focus on the analysis of sample answers or texts of the same type.’ (Burgess, 2001:5) Not using models of examination tasks would be a disservice to learners on these courses.
The reader

Models not only help the writer feel comfortable, but also the reader, who is an extremely important influence on how the piece should be written. Hedge says, For every piece of writing undertaken, a student needs to answer these questions: Who is my reader? What do I need to say? How can I make it unambiguous and accessible to my reader? It is a clear sense of audience which enables a writer to select appropriate content and express it in an appropriate form and style...’ (Hedge, 1988: 63). If writing is meant to be communicative, we must communicate in an appropriate way. This can be difficult for learners who are unfamiliar with a type of writing because readers often have ‘specific expectations of what a text should be like if it is to achieve its effect’ (Tribble, 1996:57). Models address this because when learners read models they can gain an empathetic perspective toward their fixture readers. With guided tasks such as discussing one’s personal reaction, analyzing style or register, and analyzing effectiveness, the learner gets first-hand experience being the reader, and can exploit this experience and empathy when writing.

Language awareness

Models often contain useful language for a particular genre. Learners can do noticing tasks, i.e., find useful language and record it for later use. ‘A primary purpose of teaching is to help learners make better use, for acquisition purposes, of all the language which they meet Accurate noticing of lexical chunks, grammatical or phonological patterns all help convert input into intake’ (Lewis, 1997:53). Guiding and training learners to notice language in texts thus helps both the immediate need of having useful language to include in the writing that they are preparing for, and also for their longterm expansion of language tools and refinement of their interlanguage. Three noticing tasks are:

• simply noticing,
• noticing and comparing,
• noticing and changing.

Models also inform learners about cohesive devises in a text (I-ledge, 1988: 91). For example, clear usage of reference markers and their referents can give learners a deeper understanding of texts and how to manipulate words for better cohesion when they write.

Observing layout

Similarly, we can analyze a particular genre’s layout through models because layout is the most immediately noticeable feature’ of a piece of writing (Hedge, 1988: 90). Again, the reader has expectations, so it is useful to help learners fill it them. These models can be pre-made, or involve the learners reconstructing the text. I personally like the efficient and tidy ‘X-ed out’ model, which, by eliminating content focuses learners only on layout.

Learner-centeredness

Teachers favoring a learner-centered classroom may fear that models are only creations or discoveries of teachers. However, the creation of a ‘model need not be a totally teacher-centered activity, and can involve contributions from all the class’ (Vince, 2004: 5).

What sort of contributions can be made? Vince suggests ‘an all-purpose email outline’, in which some of the text already exists, but the learners fill in the rest. I have experimented with asking learners to gather models and samples themselves from Internet research, documents at work, and authentic published material (magazines, newspapers). They can have assignments, for example, to find a letter to the editor or a book review in a magazine and bring it to class. What they find tends to be as valuable as coursebook models or models I have. This has helped motivate learners to want to write. Another way that I have recently experimented with for this assignment is to ask a higher-level learner to write a sample answer to a task that lower level learners are assigned. Writing film reviews is a task in both the CAE and WE examinations, so I asked a CAL learner if I could use his highly effective review with an FCE class. He felt highly praised. His review has benefited the FCE learners in turn, as they saw the source of The model as encouragement and empathy, realizing that the writer, although at a higher level, is still developing his English skills, too. Similarly, teachers can get permission from learners to keep some writing samples and –se them for analysis in future courses. Also, Willis suggests having learners analyze models to find target language and then make homemade concordance charts for comparing that language (Tribble, 1996: 59-60). To me, though, this seems quite time consuming.

Models of planning

A crucial stage in the writing process is planning. This may involve brainstorming ideas, organizing ideas, or discussing ideas with peers (White/Arndt, 1991:33-34). Many learners reach a high level of English, but still struggle with writing because they lack effective planning skills. Teachers can help learners discover useful planning techniques through using a wide range of plan models. Teachers can encourage learners to experiment with both structured (inclusion of nominated headings to help with organization) and unstructured (just the ideas) note taking. But having a scheme or form of organization right at the start may help a writer to produce ideas, whereas a completely open-ended approach ‘may offer too much freedom to some students’ (White/Arndt, 1991: 33). Suppling models that show learners the potential of structured planning before writing can help encourage them to take the time to plan, which in my experience learners often overlook when left to their own devices.

Conclusion

For me, the biggest discovery in researching this topic is the Process/Genre approach. Beforehand I had no idea it existed but am now instinctively drawn toward it by its inclusive post-methods approach.

It must be reiterated that using models alone will not help learners to become effective writers. However, I have discovered that using models has several benefits for our learners, including raising awareness of audience, preparing for exams, prompting to plan and assess their writing, analyzing form, and exposure to genres, content, language and features of discourse. I have noticed in the reading that models that guide, inform, instruct, or motivate learners need not be shunned, but rather thoughtfully exploited as a useful resource.
Lesson Plan

Preliminary Information

Level: Advanced (CAE)

Main Aims:

- To enable the learners to write an information sheet (for homework) by sensitizing them to the appropriate language (Stage 7,8), form/structure/style (Stage 3,5), and content (Stage 4,6,7,8) that the CAE expects for this type of writing.

- By the end of the lesson the learners will have written an outline/plan for the CAE information sheet type of writing. (Stage 8)
Subsidiary Aims:

- To be able to use their worldly knowledge to assess a situation involving cultural interaction in a film (Stage 1).
- To brainstorm topics that could lead to cultural gaffes. (Stage 4)
- Learners will practice their noticing skills by looking for inappropriate language in an information sheet and by comparing that by looking for appropriate language in a second information sheet. (Stage 7)
- To encourage learners to have confidence in writing what is likely a new genre of writing for them. (Stage 3, 5, 7, 8)

Timetable Fit:

This will be the sixth week of the school year. We are just finishing Unit 2 in the CAE Gold course book.

For the CAE exam, there are many particular types of writing that students must learn to do effectively. One of these is the 'Information Sheet'. In Unit 1, the students focused on writing a formal complaint letter and an informal note. The note was a type of writing not part of the FCE, as is this Information Sheet. By the end of Unit 2, the students will therefore have experienced two 'new' types of writing. This is important to do focus on early in the course so that the new types of writing are not left until the
end. As students have some room for choice in the Writing Paper of the CAE, it is important that the students experience writing all the types of papers they may be asked to do, but also to think about which ones they are more comfortable writing so that they feel confident when taking the exam.

This particular lesson focuses more on the planning/generating stages in the process writing cycle. This is not to downplay the other stages, but 60 minutes is just not enough for all of the process stages for such a long composition. Drafting will be focused on in the following lessons in this manner: first, the students will make a draft at home thinking about the five guided questions for drafting in Unit 2; then, they will bring the homework in and I will check it for errors, register, style, format and write some questions for each student; then, I will bring those back in and the students will help each other address the issues that I guide them to. The students will then have the choice to rewrite the information sheet at home. They are very busy, so I feel that giving them this choice caters to their busy work or student lifestyles (we must be realistic and understand that English class is not the only thing in our students’ lives) and also encourages them to take more control of their learning. In this way, also, the drafting process becomes a thread through several lessons and helps the students keep in mind that they may have to write an information sheet in the exam, thus minimizing the problem that students and teachers sometimes seem to focus on something for a day, only to forget about it for months.

**Assumptions:**

1. The students are interested in finding out a little bit about what I know about the Czech Republic and Prague from my experience of living there. They have mentioned this to me before, and we have had little chats here and there about a few aspects of that experience.

2. The students will know about important cultural aspects of Madrid and/or Spain and/or a region or town in Spain.

3. The students are willing to help each other in pair work and group work.

4. The students will feel successful because there will be enough that is challenging but that the tasks will be achievable as well.
Anticipated Problems:

Skills:

- Some students may not be used to writing out a plan before they write, so they may have some difficulty or be hesitant when they write their planning ideas in Stage 8.

Solution:

- I can tell these students that the plan will help them a great deal when it comes time to write their Information Sheet at home.

Language:

- Students may not notice the inappropriate language on the first information sheet they read.

Solution:

- Be ready to guide them with hints and line number references. Learners will be working in pairs, so they can help guide each other to the language.

- On the other hand, learners may have trouble ‘softening’ the language once they find the ‘harsher’, inappropriate language.

Solution:

- Some exercises focusing on ‘softening’ expressions can be done before this lesson to help enable the learners to have some success in the activity.

Activities:

- Students may not understand everything in the short video clip. This could lead to frustration.

Solution:

- I can tell them that it’s fine if they do not understand everything, because that is not essential for the task. The visual input from the video should be able to make up for any words that the learners do not hear or understand and prompt discussion nonetheless.

- Students may struggle to generate ideas in the planning phase.

Solution:

- By monitoring I will be able to notice who may need a prompt for an idea. Also, as learners will be working in pairs, they may get some help and ideas from their partner.

- Some students may finish before others.

Solution:

- I need to remain aware of this and either prompt these students to continue discussing, prompt them to help the students who are still working, or have another brief activity ready for them.

Affective Factors:

- The room is small and gets quite...
• The room is small and gets quite hot at times, so some learners may become physically uncomfortable. **Solution:** I can remain aware of this and open the door when it seems too warm. I can ask the learners if it is too hot.

• The students are not used to having an observer in the back of the room and as a result may feel uncomfortable. **Solution:** I have told them ahead of time and assured them that the observer’s focus will be primarily on the teacher. I have told them that having an observer in the room will be helpful for my teaching and result in more effective lessons in the future.

• The class will be held on a Monday before a holiday, so some learners may not be as focused as they otherwise might be. **Solution:** The content of the lesson should be interesting and motivating. The pace of the lesson should be snappy to keep the learners active and motivated.

• As the following day (Tuesday, November 9th) is a holiday in Madrid, there will likely be only 5 to 7 students instead of the usual 8 to 10. This may affect the student’s comfort level in the classroom because they are used to being in a larger group. **Solution:** Have a relaxed, friendly, yet hard-working atmosphere in the classroom as usual, and they will likely not worry about missing classmates.

**Others:**

• The ‘cultural differences’ theme could tempt some learners to make inappropriate comments about other cultures. **Solution:** I will be ready to quickly clarify ‘stereotype’ and the potential problems of over-generalizing about cultures and types of people. This group of learners is generally mature, though, so I am confident that offensive remarks will not likely be made.

**Class Profile:**

• **The class** – As a whole, the class has developed good rapport and relaxed yet motivated atmosphere that is conducive to learning English. They help each other and try their best on tasks in class. Overall, they are punctual and attend frequently. Rarely are there days with less than 8 out of 10 students. They are generally timely with their
generally timely with their homework and understand that a lot of exam-focused homework is necessary and extremely helpful for CAE preparation.

- **Elena** – Elena is taking English lessons primarily to improve her speaking ability. At the beginning of the year she expressed that she was not that interested in taking the CAE, but recently has hinted at reconsidering. Last year she was at the pre-intermediate level, but after traveling in Britain for several months, she was strong enough to jump several levels. Because of this, at times she lacks a bit of confidence because her vocabulary is not as broad as most of the other students in class. Elena is the only class member to fail the first practice CAE reading paper (from October) but both she and I agree that her 59% (1 below passing) was a mighty achievement considering she has jumped up several levels.

- **Elena O.** – Elena O. is an unassuming anchor in class. She does, however, have a tendency to come about 10 or 15 minutes late sometimes due to outside circumstances. Her skills are quite solid but she surprisingly did rather poorly on her practice CAE English in Use homework paper. Although many students find that paper of the exam to be extremely challenging, I really thought she would get above 60%. This was helpful, though, because otherwise I think both she and I would have taken that part of the exam for granted and now we know that a little more work than we thought might be necessary will be.

- **Theresa** – Theresa is a pleasure to have in class. She is hard-working with a sense of humor and very willing to actively take part in tasks. Her German skills are also very good as she has been working for a German company and traveling to Germany for work. She is a little bit older than most of the other students but this is never an issue.

- **Javier** – Javier quietly and methodically does most things extremely well. At times, he need a little time to think and generate what he wants to say. Javier scored above a 90% last year on the FCE, so is well grounded and confident. He is
already scoring high marks on his CAE practice tests.

- **Javier** -- Javier is loves to take part in class and his favorite thing is to speak, albeit not as accurately as he would like and at times, creatively inventing new ‘words’ along the way. Although this means he takes part actively in group/pair work, it also means that at times he can dominate a little bit. Javier was a late addition to the class, joining us in the second week. He fit right in, though, without losing a beat. Like, Theresa, he is a little older than the others, but age difference is not a problem in any way.

- **Belen** -- Belen and Isabel are good friends from outside class and tend to work well together. Belen is confident, out-spoken when she wants to be, and very helpful with her peers. Her writing is very accurate but I think she could challenge herself a little bit more with the type of language she uses in her writing.

- **Isabel** -- Isabel and Belen are good friends from outside class. Isabel is quieter and not as sure of herself, but an active participant nonetheless. She tends to make everything into one sentence in her writing, so as the course progresses she will need to work on punctuation and when to start and end sentences, and just how much to include in each.

- **David** -- David works at the mint across the street from the school. While many of his colleagues take business English courses, David, like many others, prefers to take the general courses with an exam focus. His smile is contagious. David is a little bit weaker grammatically than the rest of the class, but this does not generally impede their ability to understand him.

- **Christina** -- Christina is probably the weakest student in the class. She sometimes needs something a peer or the teacher says to be repeated or rephrased, whereas the others almost never do. She has yet to turn in her October practice exam homework, whereas everyone else has. I have talked to her about this, and she says, ‘Yes, yes, I will do it. But, I don’t have time.’ Over the first several weeks of class, it seems while the others are improving and...
the others are improving and starting to take control of their own learning, she is holding herself back a bit. There is still plenty of time (7 ½ months) left in the school year to develop her willingness to learn. That said, when she is in class she has a positive attitude and is never disruptive or a drag on her peers.

- **Victor** – Victor is of the ‘let’s talk and talk, and not worry about grammar’ attitude. So, he is quite fluent but makes seemingly more mistakes than his peers. With Victor a little more than the others, more accuracy is a long-term goal. Victor really helped with the rapport of the class from the first day of classes, when he came in a few minutes early and smilingly started chatting in English to one of his new peers. This really helped to set the mood and atmosphere of the class.

**Classroom Aids:**
- White board
- Board pens
- Tape recorder
- Tape with background music
- Czech flag
- Spanish flag
- Mind map plan: model version
- Mind map plan: blank version
- Planning information sheet
- questions worksheet
- Planning information sheet ‘suggested answers’ worksheet
- ‘Bad’ Info Sheet for language work
- ‘Good’ Info Sheet for language work comparison
- Do/Don’t suggestion worksheet
- Advanced Gold Coursebook/Teacher’s Book
- Chair for teacher to sit in
- DVD – Lost in Translation
- DVD player
- Remote control
- Monitoring notebook
- Ballpoint pen
- OHP
- OHP transparency: Form of an Information Sheet

**Lesson Rationale**

In general

These learners have taken the FCE and are therefore familiar with typical ECE writing tasks, some of which cross over into The CAL. However, writing information sheets and leaflets is a possible CAE task that is not in the FCE. Therefore, I feel it is important to focus on this genre early in the course to have time throughout the course to come back several times and for learners to develop high levels of confidence, comfort and skill.

While researching using models for the background assignment, I discovered the Process/Genre approach to teaching and learning writing.
This approach has advantages I would like to exploit in this lesson. It is more inclusive, giving importance to genre—process, and even products. Because this is an exam-focused course, focusing on all three is important — genre because learners quickly need to recognize and produce various types of writing for the exam; process because throughout the course we will have time to develop planning, structuring, drafting, editing, and evaluating skills needed for effective writing; product because ultimately the learners will have 90 minutes to write two effective products under pressurized exam conditions. This approach allows for immediate, long-term and changing learner needs.

Specific stages

Stage 1 incorporates video to activate schemata and elicit learners’ abilities at assessing what is culturally relevant acceptable and possibly offensive. The visual and auditory nature of video should engage most learners.

- Stage 2 is a personalized speaking activity. Even though the lesson’s main focus is writing, learners still need opportunities to practice free speaking and develop fluency.

Stage 3 introduces the information sheet/leaflet task in a broad way focusing on types of information to include. The learners work in pairs to prompt more learner interaction and speaking.

I believe it is important early in a course to develop good habits regarding planning for writing tasks. Many learners start writing without carefully considering effective strategies or planning and re-thinking possibilities. The following stages focus on developing good planning habits.

Stage 4 exploits an ‘X-ed out’ model and guided questions so learners have a self-discovery opportunity in analyzing a possible layout for this genre.

Stage 5 focuses learners on catchy titles, sub-sections, style of writing and appropriate language. Learners use an extract from the teacher’s book to compare their ideas thus letting them in on our secrets and developing learner autonomy.

Stage 6 introduces mind-mapping as a possible planning and organizing strategy. In case learners have not seen mind maps before, they discuss a model of one that I used in writing information sheet models (in stage 7).

Stage 7 exploits comparing two model information sheets for noticing appropriate and inappropriate language and to reinforce how planning ideas transform into coherent and cohesive text.

Stage 8 encourages learners to plan before they write. Learners are encouraged to use on the necessary amount of detail and to help each other brainstorm ideas. This way, when they leave class, they will have a possible plan to help them write their draft.

Lesson procedure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Aids</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>Lead-in stage and Lesson Outline</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
<td>1A. The teacher tells the learners brief background information about the film clip they will see. (See Board 1). Learners are given the task to watch and assess the character’s success at being culturally sensitive in the situation. Interaction pattern: T-class (plenary/lockstep).</td>
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<td>1B. The learners watch a brief clip from 'Lost in Translation'. (Starting at 00:01.53 for about 30-45 seconds.) Interaction pattern: class-dvd.</td>
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<td>1C. In pairs, learners complete the task of assessing the character’s success. Interaction pattern: closed pairs.</td>
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<td>1D. Class feedback. As a class, the learners compare what they’ve decided. This discussion is guided by the to introduce the topic of cultural differences. To activate students’ schemata. To increase learners’ motivation by using a recent film. Learners will be able to use their worldly knowledge to assess a situation involving cultural interaction in a film. For learners to feel comfortable about where the lesson is heading.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>DVD player, DVD (Lost in Translation), white board, board pens</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1. Teacher gives the learners a brief outline of the day’s lesson.

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2. **4 minutes**

**Personalized Speaking**

| 2A. Teacher instructs learners to tell each other about any or all of these: cultural gaffes they have committed, cultural gaffes they have seen foreigners commit here in Spain, cultural gaffes they have heard about (from a friend, relative, etc.). Interaction pattern: plenary.

2B. Learners speak about cultural gaffes with their partner. Interaction pattern: closed pairs.

2C. Feedback. T asks pairs what they discussed. Learners tell the T and the class. Interaction pattern: T-class (S-S).

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3. To encourage learners to personally relate to the topic; to encourage an affective response to the topic.

4. To maintain learners’ motivation by making the topic personally relevant, interesting, and fun.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3</th>
<th>3 minutes</th>
<th>Introduction to the CAE Information Sheet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3A. Leading out of the feedback in 3C, teacher elicits from students where they can find information about how to behave in a foreign country/culture. If students do not mention 'information sheet', teacher will tell them and relate it to the exam. Interaction pattern: T-class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3B. Use of the OHP to help show students what an information sheet looks like, focusing on the basic structure, students complete Do's and Don'ts sheet. Interaction pattern: S-S closed pairs with focus on OHP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To show students what the CAE information sheet 'looks' like. This will be important because this is a type of writing that is not part of the FCE and students may not be familiar with it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4-5 minutes</td>
<td>Brainstorming Topics for an Information Sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher instructs students to think of as many topics as they can that could be included in this style of information sheet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4B</td>
<td></td>
<td>Students carry out brainstorming task. Interaction pattern: closed pairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4C</td>
<td></td>
<td>Feedback. Students tell the teacher which topics they've thought of and the teacher writes them on the board in a list. Interaction pattern: S-T. (See Board 2) (The list can be referred to by the students later.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5-6 minutes</td>
<td>Main Considerations for planning a CAE Information Sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5A. The teacher instructs the students to discuss the questions about planning an information sheet. There are five questions, and the teacher will instruct half the class to start at the top, and half the class to start at the bottom. Interaction pattern: T-class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5B. The students discuss their ideas for the questions about planning an information sheet. (Note: depending on time, the students will either discuss all five questions, or when they 'meet in the middle' they will be asked to stop. Interaction pattern: S-S closed pairs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5C. Feedback. The students offer their ideas about some of the questions to the whole class and the teacher. Interaction pattern: S-class, S-T.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5D. The teacher gives learners the 'answers' from the Teacher's Book and the students read the answers and compare them with their own ideas. Interaction pattern: T-class, S-T.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Questions sheet, Answer sheet**

To raise students’ awareness of the primary considerations when planning an information sheet: use of a title, useful sections, style of writing, the type of language to be used, and how topics can be introduced.

To ‘invite’ students into the traditional teacher’s realm by giving them notes from the Teacher’s Book.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>Looking at and Thinking about a Plan 6A. The teacher shows the model of the plan to the students, and asks students to use the ideas on the mind map to make predictions about the information sheet they will soon read, considering why some of the traditions may exist and which may be similar or different to the customs in Spain. 6B. The students make predictions and discuss similarities and differences. 6C. Feedback. Very quick feedback to round off the activity and move into the following stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>10-12 minutes</td>
<td>Focusing on Useful Language for an Information Sheet 7A. The teacher instructs the students to read the information sheet and compare what they read with their predictions. 7B. The students read the information sheet and compare. 7C. Discussion about what their predictions and what they read, similarities and differences, and any surprises. 7D. Teacher instructs students to read the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7E. The students read the text and notice harsh language and make changes to soften it.

7F. Feedback. Snappy verbal feedback for a few changes.

7G. The teacher instructs the students to read the ‘better’ information sheet and compare their changes with what the more appropriately softened expressions that they notice.

7H. Feedback to round off the activity (See board 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8</th>
<th>10-12 minutes</th>
<th>Planning an Information Sheet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8A. The teacher instructs the students to make a plan for the information sheet that they will write for homework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8B. The students help each other plan their information sheets, including a title, three topics, some notes for each topic and useful language. This is done in mind map format.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8C. Feedback. Students can tell each other a few of their ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8G. For students to make a useful plan that they can take home with them and use to help write their information sheet.

9 | 1-2 minutes | Round up: For students to know what Student's Book.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>9A. Homework is reclarified (writing the information sheet.) Show students pages 27 and 203 in the Student’s Book.</td>
<td>To know what to do for homework. For students to get clarification on what they still may not be so sure about.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9B. Students have the opportunity to ask any pending questions.</td>
<td>To be prepared with extra material that suitably fits the lesson.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Back up stages: The following stages are available if there is time remaining after Stage 8. The following stages may or may not be used and may not follow the order below, depending on just how much</td>
<td>To be prepared with extra material that suitably fits the lesson.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>10A. Students write the introduction of their information sheet. 10B. Students swap with a partner and help make corrections and give suggestions.</td>
<td>To effectively use any extra time at the end of the lesson. For students to collaboratively help each other with drafting.</td>
<td>(Students need paper and pen/pencil.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11A. Students correct their own mistakes from earlier in the lesson.</td>
<td>To sensitize students to the mistakes they make. To focus students on accuracy.</td>
<td>Correction notebook.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Board 1, Stage 1**

the situation:
- a famous American actor goes to Japan to make advertisements
- he’s meeting his Japanese hosts at the hotel

Note: An area at the bottom of the board will be reserved for emerging collocations/expressions and vocabulary

**Board 2, Stage 4**

Avoiding cultural gaffes

Topics:
- greetings
- restaurants
Avoiding cultural gaffes

Topics: Useful Language:
- greetings
  It would be a good idea to...
- restaurants
  Here are some suggestions to...
- transportation
  Here are some helpful hints ...
- clothing/attire
  ...is an essential feature of life in...
- at someone's home
  It is important to consider ...
- (other ideas from students)
  The following is a list of ...

Traditionally ...
These days ...
Historically ...
Nowadays ...
When + V ing

Info Sheet activities

Read the advice for writing an information sheet. Decide if you SHOULD do each or if you SHOULDN'T. Write 'DO' or 'DON'T'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do or Don't</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Use section headings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Use bullet point lists.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Think of a title for your sheet that will provoke the reader's interest.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Avoid a conclusion. It's not necessary for an information sheet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Avoid writing an introduction. This isn't necessary either.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Provide illustrations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now, with a partner, discuss why you should or shouldn't do these things.

Read the advice for writing an information sheet. Decide if you SHOULD do each or if you SHOULDN'T. Write 'DO' or 'DON'T'.

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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Provide illustrations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Now, with a partner, discuss why you should or shouldn’t do these things.

Here are some questions to consider when you are planning your information sheet. Please discuss them with your partner. Jot down notes here to help.

1. What title will you give your information sheet so as to make it interesting and attractive to your audience?
2. How many sections will you have in your information sheet and what headings will you use for each one?
3. Will you need to use a more formal or informal style with the audience you are writing for?
4. What is the purpose of your information sheet?
   Answer: to inform, warn and advise
   - How will this affect the language you use? (Remember, you don’t want to put visitors off coming to your country!)

5. How will you introduce the topics you cover in each section? (Remember, you don’t want to make your customs and values seem illogical to visitors.)

'Suggested Answers’ from the teacher’s book.

Now, compare your ideas with the suggested answers from my teacher’s book.

1. (possible titles) ‘How to be the “perfect visitor” or ‘Etiquette tips for travellers’.
2. Five or six; and introduction and conclusion plus sections for each of the three or four areas.
3. Relatively formal and polite as the visitors could be any age and the subject matter is slightly delicate.
4. It will be necessary to use a lot of modal verbs to soften what is expressed in the sheet. For example, ‘people might be offended’ rather than ‘people get offended’. Not too much ‘You should/shouldn’t/must/mustn’t’. Alternate with ‘You can… You needn’t/don’t have to…’. Use a variety of expressions and language so that it doesn’t seem repetitive.
5. With a brief explanation of the reason for the custom.

'Suggested Answers’ from the teacher’s book.

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More Info Sheet activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Czech This Out!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We hope your visit to the Prague will be pleasurable and without incident. Here are some suggestions to help you avoid any uncomfortable cultural gaffes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When greeting people it is important to consider who you are meeting. When women meet other women, they tend to kiss on the cheek once. Men meeting men tend to shake hands. Women meeting men can either shake hands or kiss on the cheek only once. Ear contact is</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Greetings

When greeting people you have to consider who you are meeting. Eye contact is especially important as many Czechs may consider it rude to avert your eyes.

Riding public transportation

Buses and trams are an essential feature of life in our country. The following is a list of etiquette tips:

- Stand for pregnant women and the elderly.
- Help women with their strollers (prams) getting on and off.
- Smile at the dogs. (Dogs are almost as important as children here!)
- When someone stares at you, it is not a problem to stare back. No harm is meant by this.

Restaurants and pubs

Much of Czech life revolves around pubs and restaurants. Historically, Czech pubs and restaurants could be rather rough so chivalrous men would go in ahead of accompanying women to make sure the establishment was safe. Although calmer and safe nowadays, the tradition still holds.

Traditionally, almost everyone drank beer so ordering drinks was not an issue. These days, when ordering, it would be a good idea to be ready to place your drink order before deciding what you want to eat.

The following are more helpful hints:

- Use a coat rack when supplied.
- Refrain from calling for the waiter’s attention.
- When tipping, just round up. If you leave too much the staff may get offended.
- Always maintain eye contact when toasting and crossing arms with someone is considered bad luck.
- Compliment Czechs on their beer. It’s their national pride.

We hope your stay in the Czech Republic meets all your expectations and we hope to see you again.

Czech This Out!

We hope your visit to the Prague will be pleasurable and without incident. You should avoid offending local Czechs while you are here. Don’t forget the following information.

Greetings

When greeting people you have to consider who you are meeting.
When women meet other women, they tend to kiss on the cheek once. Men meeting men tend to shake hands. Women meeting men can either shake hands or kiss on the cheek only once. You better make eye contact or you will be considered incredibly rude and insensitive.

**Riding public transportation**

You must ride buses and trams in our country. Always remember:

- Stand for pregnant women and the elderly.
- Help women with their strollers (prams) getting on and off.
- Smile at the dogs. (Dogs are almost as important as children here!)
- When someone stares at you, it is not a problem to stare back. No harm is meant by this.

**Restaurants and pubs**

Much of Czech life revolves around pubs and restaurants. Historically, Czech pubs and restaurants could be rather rough so chivalrous men would go in ahead of accompanying women to make sure the establishment was safe. Although calmer and safe nowadays, the tradition still holds.

Traditionally, everyone drank beer so ordering drinks was not an issue. These days, you must be ready to order your drink right away or else!

Only an idiot wouldn’t remember these suggestions:

- Use a coat rack when supplied.
- Refrain from calling for the waiter’s attention.
- When tipping, just round up. If you leave too much the wait staff may get offended.
- Always maintain eye contact when toasting and crossing arms with someone is considered bad luck.
- Compliment Czechs on their beer. It’s their national pride.

We hope your stay in the Czech Republic meets all your expectations and we hope to see you again.

*************

Useful language for CAE Information Sheets Giving cultural advice:

**Expressions:**

It would be a good idea to …
Here are some helpful hints:
The following is a list of ...
Traditionally / Historically ... These days / Nowadays ...
Here are some suggestions to ...
... is an essential feature of life in ...
It is important to consider ...

When + V-ing

**Collocations:**
etiquette tips
helpful hints
cultural gaffes
essential feature

*Note: It’s natural to use imperatives in bullet point lists.*

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When + V-ing

**Collocations:**
etiquette tips
helpful hints
cultural gaffes
essential feature

*Note: It’s natural to use imperatives in bullet point lists.*

---------

**Transform these sentences using the word provided.**

1. You should ask if a chair is free. **good**
   
   It would ________________ ask if the chair is free.

2. Here are things you should know about. **helpful**
   
   Here ________________ hints.

3. You should think about being polite when traveling abroad. **consider**
   
   It ________________ being polite when traveling abroad.

4. You must eat paella in Spain. **feature**
   
   Paella is ________________ in Spain.
5. If you travel, you should be aware of cultural differences. **traveling**
________________________, it is helpful to know about cultural differences.

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4. You must eat paella in Spain. **feature**

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**To the original article**

**To the original plan**

**To the articles index**