

Language Learning and Skill Assessment : Writing

Nature of Writing

- Writing is a medium of communication using letters and symbols to convey information.
- Writing can be viewed as proof of reading and listening comprehension.
- Writing is a productive skill like speaking but it cannot replace speaking.



Nature of Writing

- Writing is a tool for recording events, knowledge and information.
- Writing requires artistic use of language like speaking for communication success.



- Test your writing
- Write a short essay about food and good health



Microskills

Language knowledge : What does a student need to learn in order to write?

1. Grapheme and orthographic pattern discrimination

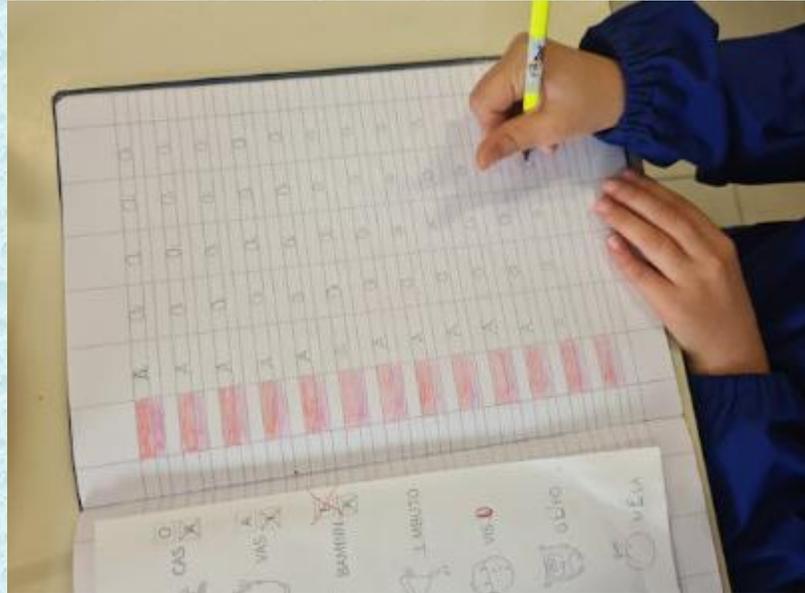
2. Reduced word forms
(from their normal form)

3. Grammatical boundaries/core of words/

more grammar rules (tense, pluralization, comparison and etc.)

4. Word order pattern/ semantic modification (linguistic significance)

*interpretation and usage

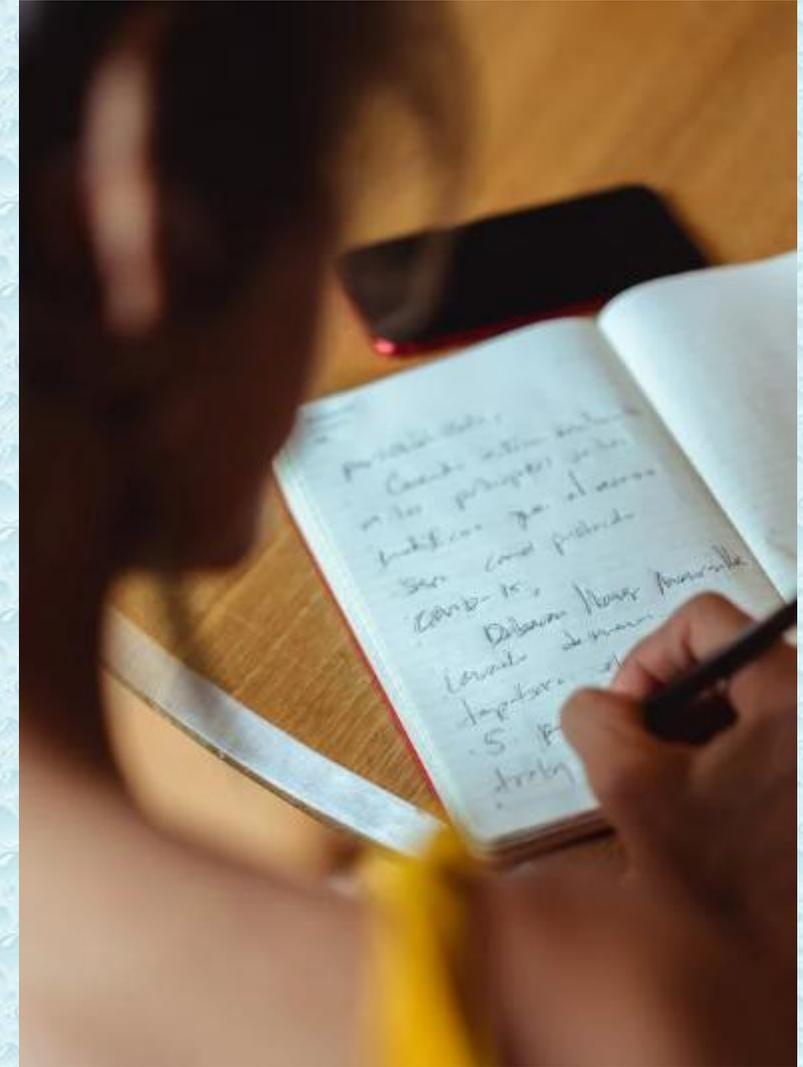


5. Major and minor constituents in sentence formation

6. Meanings in different word categories

7. Methods of using cohesive devices in a reading text (Idea link among information parts)

8. Efficient writing speed rate for a purpose (not too time consuming for a simple task)



Macroskills

Communicative functions: What does a student need to learn in order to write?

1. Rhetoric discourse and interpretation from styles and art of communication
2. Appropriate use of language according to forms and functions
3. Awareness of literal and implied meanings when writing a discourse



4. Relationship among information parts (main idea, supporting details, techniques of idea linking: exemplification, comparison and contrast, chronological order)

5. Roles of culture

6. A battery of writing strategies (free writing, idea organization, paraphrase, synonyms, analyzing target readers, first draft feedback)



Types of Writing

Imitative



Intensive



Responsive



Extensive



Writing Assessment/Evaluation

1. Imitative writing

Able to write letters, words, phrases, sentences with a correct use of punctuation and spelling

Hand writing task

Test-takers hear: Fill in the blanks with words.

Test-takers see:

9:00

5:45

Tues.

5/3

726 S. Main St. _____

Spelling task

Test-takers read:

Choose the word with the correct spelling to fit the sentence, then write the word in the space provided.

1. He washed his hands with _____.

- A. soap
- B. sope
- C. sop
- D. soup

2. I tried to stop the car, but the _____ didn't work.

- A. braicks
- B. brecks
- C. brakes
- D. bracks

3. The doorbell rang, but when I went to the door, no one was _____

- A. their
- B. there
- C. they're
- D. thair

2.Intensive writing

Intensive: Able to write with a good use of word and language structure to meet appropriate meanings in a formulaic condition

Dicto-comp

A test taker listens to a short paragraph two or three times and rewrites. Language accuracy needs to be taken care of in this controlled writing. This is a combination between dictation and composition.

Grammatical transformation

- Changes tenses in a provided passage
- Reduce verb forms
- Change sentence types (question/affirmative)
- Connect sentences together
- Change voices of sentences

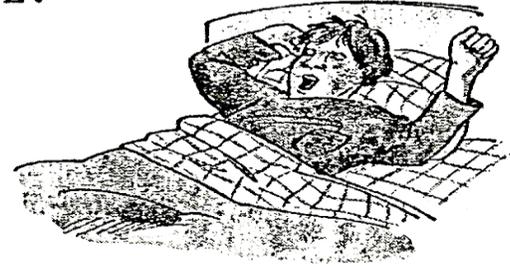
Picture cued task

Test-takers see the following pictures:

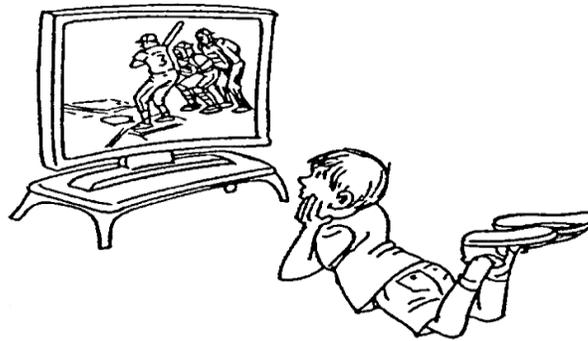
1.



2.



3.



Test-takers read:

1. What is the woman doing?
2. What is the man doing?
3. What is the boy doing?

Test-takers write:

1. She is eating. She is eating her dinner. She is holding a spoon. etc.

Vocabulary assessment

- test knowledge of meaning
- test the use of collocation
- test knowledge of morphology

Test-takers read:

1. Write two sentences, A and B. In each sentence, use the two words given.

A. interpret, experiment _____.

B. interpret, language _____.

2. Write three words that can fill in the blank.

To interpret a(n) _____ i. _____

ii. _____

iii. _____

Ordering

Test-takers read:

Put the words below into a possible order to make a grammatical sentence:

1. cold / winter / is / weather / the / in / the
2. studying / what / you / are
3. next / clock / the / the / is / picture / to

Test-takers write:

1. The weather is cold in the winter. (or) In the winter the weather is cold.
2. What are you studying?
3. The clock is next to the picture. (or) The picture is next to the clock.

Short answer

Test-takers see:

1. Alicia: Who's that?

Tony: _____ Gina.

Alicia: Where's she from?

Tony: _____ Italy.

2. Jennifer: _____?

Kathy: I'm studying English.

3. Restate the following sentences in your own words, using the underlined word.

You may need to change the meaning of the sentence a little.

3a. I never miss a day of school. always

3b. I'm pretty healthy most of the time. seldom

3c. I play tennis twice a week. sometimes

3.Responsive

Able write a paragraph or more with grammatically appropriate and meaningful linking to communicate logically in a variety of writing styles and types

Paraphrasing: write in one's own words and various or different expressions are acceptable to use

Guided question and answer: a test designed as an implied outline of writing structure

1. Where did this story take place? [setting]
2. Who were the people in the story? [characters]
3. What happened first? and then? and then? [sequence of events]
4. Why did _____ do _____? [reasons, causes]
5. What did _____ think about _____? [opinion]
6. What happened at the end? [climax]
7. What is the moral of this story? [evaluation]

4. Extensive writing

It sets more conditions, increasing complexity, or assigning students to organize their ideas in writing.

In this relation, a paragraph construction task or test can be extended:

- Topic sentence writing
- Topic development (main points, minor points in individual paragraphs)
- Relationship among paragraphs (extensive ideas in a systematized and cohesive writing piece)



References and Supplementary Texts

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- Manser, M. H. 2006. Guide to Good Writing. New York: Facts on File.
- Nodoushan, M. A. S. 2014. Assessing Writing: A Review of the Main Trends. 1 (2): 119-129.