

10 secrets that no one ever told you about materials writing

John Hughes

www.johnhugheselt.com

www.youtube.com/c/JohnHughesELT



1. Define your material

Progress test

Worksheet

Fill-the-blank exercise

Exam

Answer key

Coursebook

Board game

Quiz

Audio or video script

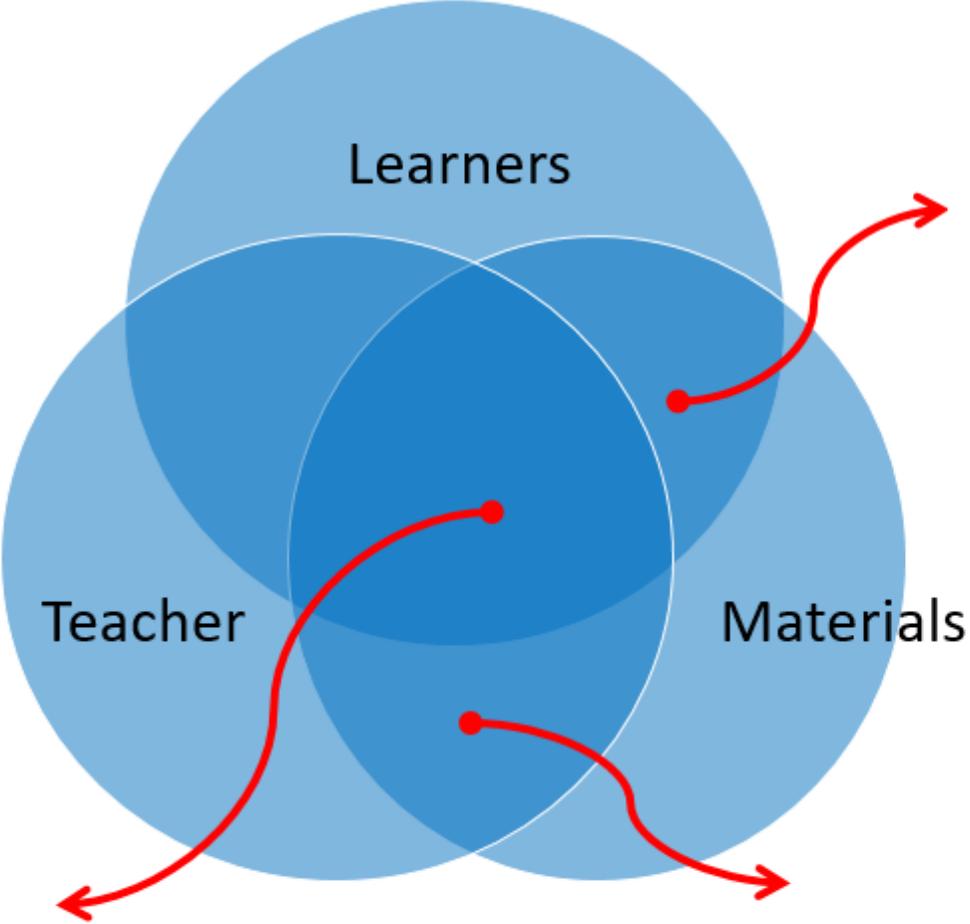
Language reference

Flashcards

Infographic

News article with questions

Teacher's notes



2. Apply basic principles

Complete these sentences in the past simple or present perfect using the verb in brackets.

Last week I (go) to Paris.

Yesterday I (meet) my friend Bill.

I (see) Rachel at the party last night.

I (be) to Japan twice before.

I never (play) lacrosse.

I (work) for this company since 1996.

I (join) the company in 1995.

Title/sub-heading

Past simple and present perfect

Short instructions

Complete these sentences in the past simple or present perfect.
Use the verb in brackets.

Example answer

1. Last week I **went** (go) to Paris.

Numbering

2. Yesterday she (meet) my friend Bill

3. you (see) Rach party last night?

An image?

I/he/she/we/they

4. He (be) to Japan twice before.

Questions

5. they ever (play) tennis?

Negatives

6. We (work) for this company since 1996.

7. We (not/join) the company in 1995.

Now write questions to ask your partner:

Personalisation

Did you ?

Have you ?

3. Select images



Unsplash, Compfight, Pixabay, Creative Commons, Google Images, DisabilityIn



Women chat on the station platform in Winterthur, Switzerland.

Where are they?
Who can you see?
What are they holding?

Can you compare the three women?
What do you think is the title of the photo?
Can you write three questions for one of the women?

4. Write effective questions

1. Description

What can you see?

What does the picture show?

What is happening?

Say three adjectives that describe this picture.

2. People

Where are the people in this picture?

What are they saying/thinking?

How do they feel?

How well do the people in the picture know each other?

3. Activity

What are they doing?

Do they like doing this?

How often do you think they do this?

What has just happened?

4. Imagine you are in the picture

What would you be doing?

What would you say to the other person/people?

Would you enjoy being here? Why? Why not?

What question would you like to ask the person/people in the picture?

5. Time

When do you think the picture was taken?

What year is it?

What time of day/year is it?

6. Personalisation

What does it remind you of?

Have you ever been in a similar situation?

7. Comparison

How is the place in the picture similar to or different from where you live?

Compare the people in the picture. Find three similarities and three differences.

8. Predicting and speculating

What do you think will happen next?

What do you think the person is going to say/do next?

What do you think is to the right-hand side of the picture?

9. Picture with a text

Look at the picture with this text. What is the text going to be about?

Which part of the text is about the action or place in the picture?

10. Reusing the image

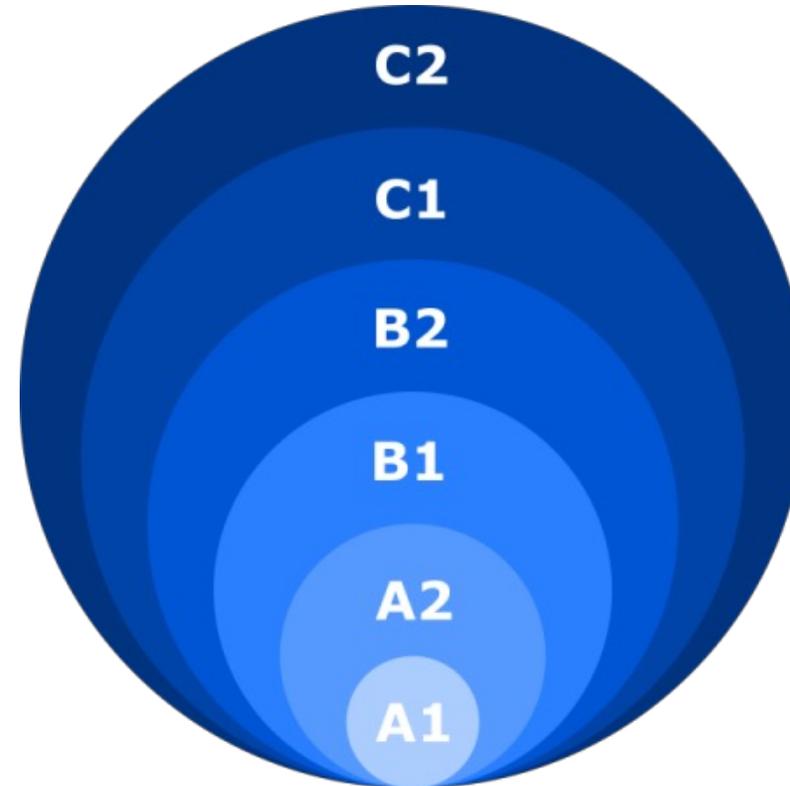
Imagine this picture is from a film poster. What is the title of the film? What kind of film is it?

Imagine this picture is the cover of a book. What is the title of the book? What kind of book is it?

Imagine this picture is the cover of a computer game. What is the title of the game? What kind of game is it?

Imagine this picture is from an advertisement. What is the product or service it is advertising?

5. Check the level of your texts



There's been a change in the weather. Extreme events like Hurricane Katrina in 2005, which hit the coast of Louisiana in the USA, killing 1,830 people, are happening more frequently than they used to. Again, in the US, in April 2011, around one hundred separate tornadoes hit six southern states, which led to the loss of life and damage to property. Record heat waves have also been recorded across the globe. 2010 saw Moscow temperatures soar, and forest wildfires burn out of control across Russia. Australia, too, has had its fair share of the heat, with summer temperatures reaching record highs and record droughts for the last decade.

Online tools for checking text:

Text Inspector

Oxford Text Checker

Vocab kitchen

English Vocabulary Profile

Sketch Engine

Oxford Text Checker

? Start again

Text

Results

Activities

Word list:

Oxford 5000



CEFR level:

A1

A2

B1

B2

C1

There's been a change in the weather. Extreme events like Hurricane Katrina in 2005, which hit the coast of Louisiana in the USA, killing 1,830 people, are happening more frequently than they used to. Again, in the US, in April 2011, around one hundred separate tornadoes hit six southern states, which led to the loss of life and damage to property. Record heat waves have also been recorded across the globe. 2010 saw Moscow temperatures soar, and forest wildfires burn out of control across Russia. Australia, too, has had its fair share of the heat, with summer temperatures reaching record highs and record droughts for the last decade.

6. Design and accessibility



Work in pairs. Match the online problems to the expressions for explaining and asking for help.

Problems

1. You can't see another participant.
2. No one can see you.
3. Your teacher's audio stopped working for a second.
4. You don't know how to watch in 'speaker view'.
5. Nothing is working properly!

Explaining and asking for help.

- a. "Can you repeat that? I didn't hear it."
- b. "My video isn't working."
- c. "Can you show me how to...?"
- d. "Have you turned on your video?"
- e. "Let's leave the meeting and log on again."

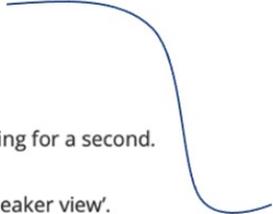
Work in pairs. Match the online problems to the expressions for explaining and asking for help.

Problems

1. You can't see another participant.
2. No one can see you.
3. Your teacher's audio stopped working for a second.
4. You don't know how to watch in 'speaker view'.
5. Nothing is working properly!

Explaining and asking for help.

- a. "Can you repeat that? I didn't hear it."
- b. "My video isn't working."
- c. "Can you show me how to...?"
- d. "Have you turned on your video?"
- e. "Let's leave the meeting and log on again."

- 
1. You can't see another participant.
 2. No one can see you.
 3. Your teacher's audio stopped working for a second.
 4. You don't know how to watch in 'speaker view'.
 5. Nothing is working properly!
- a. "Can you repeat that? I didn't hear it."
 - b. "My video isn't working."
 - c. "Can you show me how to...?"
 - d. "Have you turned on your video?"
 - e. "Let's leave the meeting and log on again."



My holiday

I had a brilliant holiday. My friend and I cycled 320 kilometres from Inverness to Glasgow. It took us three days. It rained every day. We stayed in hostels for two nights and camped for one night. We didn't cycle on roads. We cycled on paths. There were lots of stones and big hills. It was difficult but it was fun. We saw lots of beautiful places that you can't visit by car.

Read the text. Answer the questions.

- What did she do on holiday?
- Who did she go with?
- Where did she go?
- How was the weather?
- Where did they stay?
- Did she enjoy it?

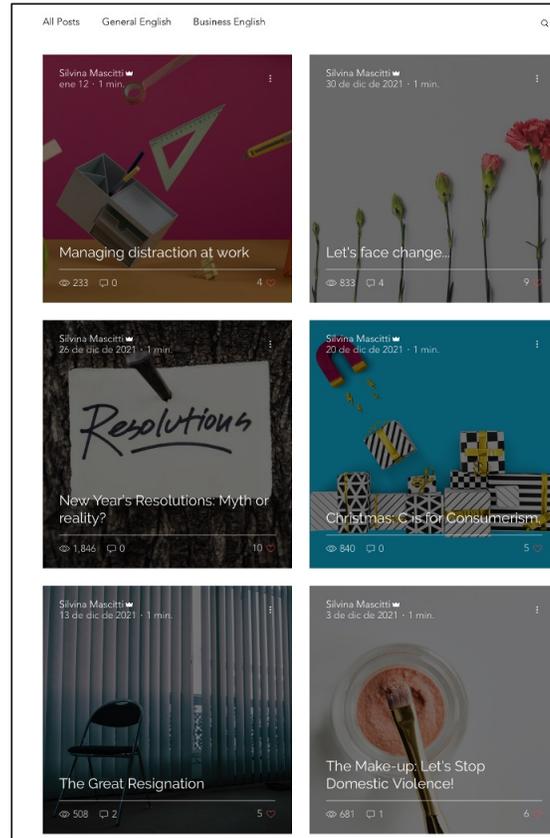
My holiday

I had a brilliant holiday. My friend and I cycled 320 kilometres from Inverness to Glasgow. It took us three days. It rained every day. We stayed in hostels for two nights and camped for one night. We didn't cycle on roads. We cycled on paths. There were lots of stones and big hills. It was difficult but it was fun. We saw lots of beautiful places that you can't visit by car.

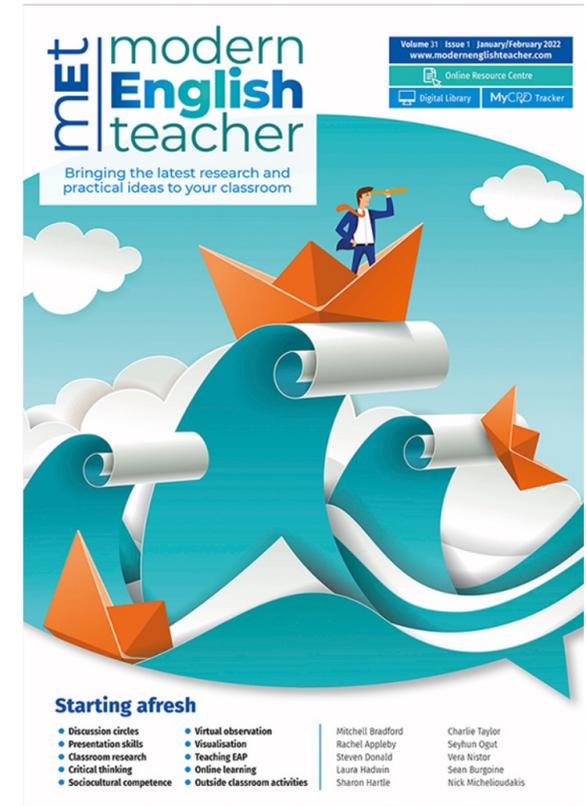


1. **Read the text. Answer the questions.**
 - a. What did she do on holiday?
 - b. Who did she go with?
 - c. Where did she go?
 - d. How was the weather?
 - e. Where did they stay?
 - f. Did she enjoy it?

7. Share and publish your materials

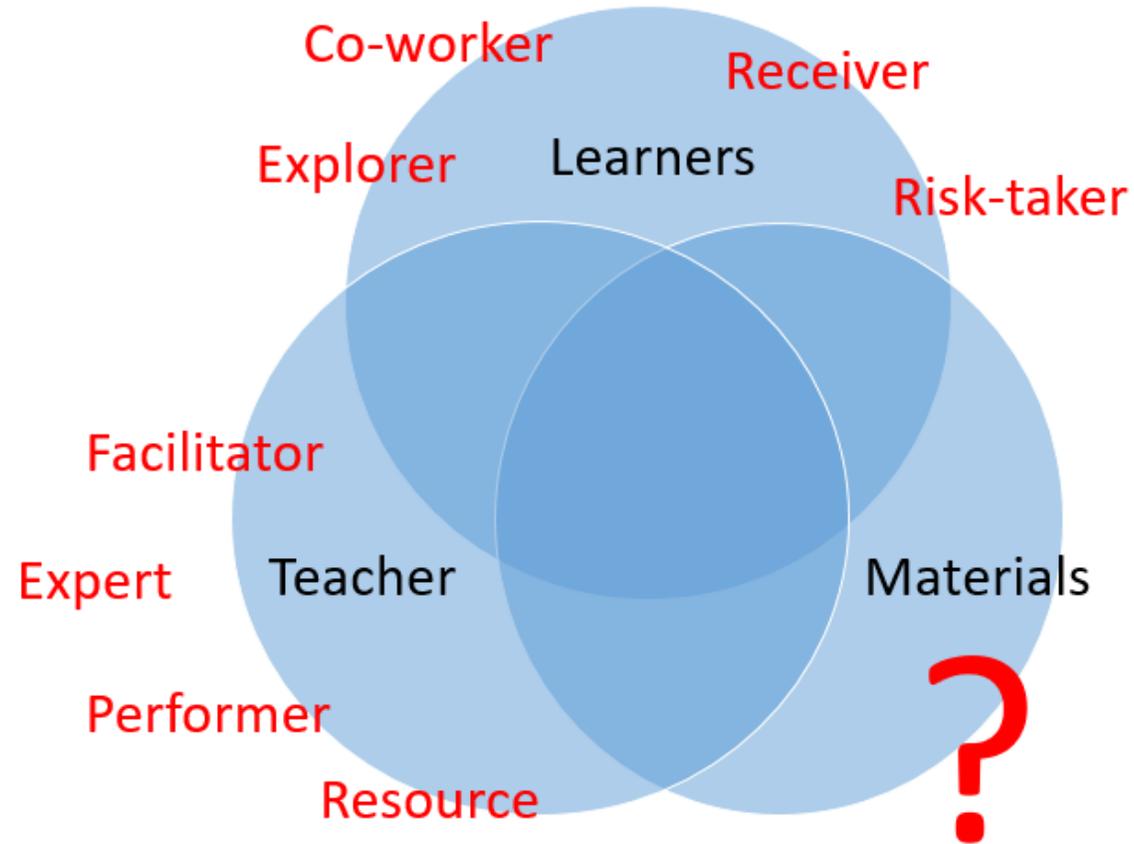


www.eflcreativeideas.com



www.modernenglishteacher.com

8. Understand how other teachers will use your materials





Teacher A

“**Backbone** was the word that I thought of. I suppose it’s a kind of provides a **framework**...I might adapt it quite a lot or I might adapt it just a little bit.”



Teacher B

“The role of the course book is to **provide you with the material** to teach in the classroom....Each activity should **flow** into the next.”



Teacher C

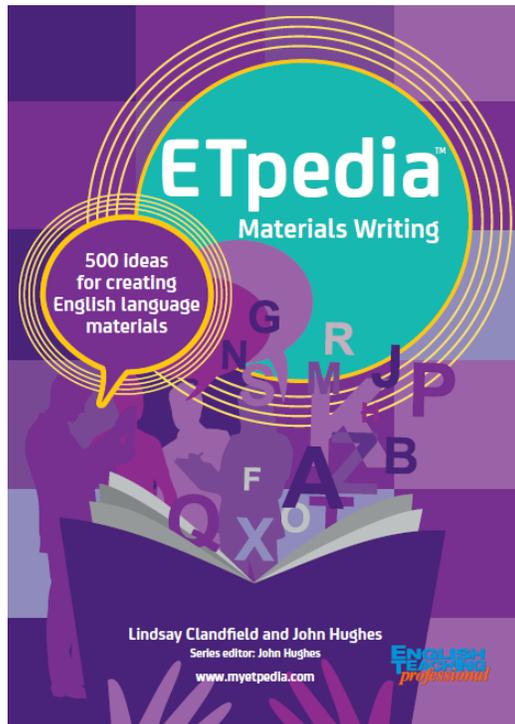
“It’s a **springboard** because it’s not something I use from one page to the next but it’s something I get **ideas** from...”

9. Write user-friendly “rubrics” (instructions)

Get into pairs and write three questions which are for another pair and when you finish, join another pair of students and ask them.

1. Work in pairs. Write three questions.
2. Join another pair. Ask and answer your questions.

10. Resources on materials writing



<https://www.pavpub.com/pavilion-elt/etpedia-series/etpedia-materials-writing>

www.johnhugheselt.com

www.youtube.com/c/JohnHughesELT

YouTube GB

Search

Home

Explore

Subscriptions

Library

How to self-publish a profitable book

PLAY ALL

ELT Materials Writing

18 videos • 275 views • Last updated on 15 Sept 2021

Public

Advice and tips on writing your own materials and English language teaching content creation

John Hughes ELT

SORT

- How to self-publish a profitable book - John Hughes ELT - 27:16
- Low level English with high level interest - John Hughes ELT - 2:37
- Adapting classroom materials for online teaching - John Hughes ELT - 1:07
- Backward Planning - John Hughes ELT - 1:30
- How to create board games for language teaching - John Hughes ELT - 6:14
- How do you create accessible learning materials? - John Hughes ELT - 21:50
- How Do I Get Into ELT Materials Writing? - John Hughes ELT - 2:01

