

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) – reading and writing

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Aim

To help students focus on redrafting written text.

Objectives: help students to:

- improve a written text
- proof read a written text
- summarize a text
- develop reading skills

Level of the exercises

The exercises may be used with pre-sessional students.

Materials

The materials (all PDFs) consist of:

- teacher's notes
- exercises 1–9
- PowerPoint slides 1–6 for presentation
- a key

Methodology

Exercise 1

- 1) Ask your students to do their own research on the web or in the library on the growing interest in using organic material as an alternative to petrol/oil.
- 2) Ask them to prepare a short presentation in PowerPoint. Limit the presentation to a maximum of 10/15 minutes and then allow time for questions and answers.
- 3) Alternatively, in class ask the students in groups to reorganize the points listed in Exercise 1 and put them onto PowerPoint slides. Or use the slides provided for Exercise 1.
- 4) Either approach will help students prepare for the work on the text in Exercises 2–8.

- 5) Encourage the students to use the PowerPoint presentation to help them deliver their talk. If you do not have access to PowerPoint, use an overhead projector if you have one.

- 6) Or you may want to give a brief talk during which the students take notes and then compare with the texts in Exercises 2–8. You can ask the students to expand the notes into sentences.

Exercise 2

You can use the instructions in either (i) or (ii) in the exercise. Allow the students as much freedom as possible if they try to redraft themselves. They can write the draft above the text or write out the whole text again.

You can vary the exercise from group to group by putting the students into pairs/groups, asking for a clean top copy, limiting the time, restricting/encouraging access to dictionaries, turning the exercise into a group competition, etc.

Exercise 3

This exercise helps show students how much they need to see to be able to get the gist of a text. Ask them first to read the text without working out the missing words. Then ask them to do it again and complete the missing text.

Exercise 4

Explain to students that the exercise helps them prepare for summarizing a text. Ask them to work in pairs and cross out the words that they think are not needed for them to understand the core information in a text. You may want to use other short texts for the students to practise with.

The exercise will also help students develop their reading speed. By showing what information can be removed while still giving the gist of a text, it will give the students the confidence to let go and not read every word.

You may wish to do this exercise before you do a reading exercise or as preparation for summarizing a text.

As a further study skills exercise you can ask the students to reduce the remaining text into note form. When they have done this they can reconstruct the text verbally from their notes. Or you can ask them to write out the text from their notes.

Exercise 5

See Exercise 4.

Exercise 6

Students can do the exercise in pairs/groups or on their own. More advanced students can cover the codes in the right-hand column. You can limit the time so that the students learn to make decisions quickly.

You might want to discuss different techniques for finding spelling mistakes. For example, have the students scan the text line by line for spelling mistakes only. However, ask them to start at the end of each line and scan backwards, looking at the word picture. If the students go from left to right, they tend to engage with the meaning of the text and do not see the spelling mistakes. Students will, however, need to read the text for meaning as well, in order to spot other mistakes, for example the incorrect use of the passive voice.

It is also useful to train students to look for one type of mistake at a time and then build up to two, three, four at a time.

Exercise 7

It is often difficult for students to see parts of their own writing that are not relevant to the development of a topic. Ask the students to find the irrelevancies in the text and decide why they are not relevant and why they might have been included.

Exercise 8

For advanced students, see how many they can complete without seeking your help. The text will give them clues.

For less advanced students, you may want to write the verbs used on a sheet of paper for the students to refer to or write them on the board.

Exercise 9

The jumbled text can be done by students at any level. The text has been split so that the grammar will help the students match the various sections.