TEACHING PACK

by Laura Storr

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RESOURCES YOU CAN TRUST

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Introduction

This teaching pack contains lesson ideas, student-facing resources and genuine student exemplar essays that are designed to help Key Stage 3 students develop writing skills they will need in GCSE English Literature. This pack is designed as a kind of 'toolkit' to help your students write about a class novel, non-fiction excerpts or a play.

The pack is organised into seven main sections, with each section targeting different essay writing skills. These are:

- Getting students started: imperative verbs and essay question styles
- Planning and structuring essays: key ideas, paragraphs and linking phrases
- Introductions and conclusions: engaging your reader and summarising
- Using quotations: selecting evidence and embedding quotations
- Inference and deduction: analysis and using the PEE structure
- Formal essay vocabulary: connectives in context, discursive writing techniques, developing sophisticated word and sentence choices
- Drafting and redrafting: improving vocabulary and structure, self and peer-assessment, identifying spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors.

The student-facing resources and integrated student exemplar materials can be found at the end of each section. The student exemplar essays are included in full as **Appendix 1** at the end of the pack.

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The student exemplar materials are based on:

- Wilfred Owen's poem 'Dulce et Decorum Est' (Student A-G)
- Fran Abrams' 'A single room at the Savoy costs £300 a night. A cleaner there earns £150 a week' (which the students call 'Night Cleaner at the Savoy Hotel') available here: www.theguardian.com/society/2002/jan/28/socialexclusion.g2
- two extracts from George Orwell's novel *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933): the first from Chapter 3 ('It is altogether curious, your first contact with poverty …' to 'You plan to grab a loaf and run, swallowing it before they catch you; and you refrain, from pure funk …') and the second from the start of Chapter 10 ('The Hôtel X was a vast, grandiose place with a classical façade…' to 'I realised that the curses I had met with were only a kind of probation.') (Student H-N).

The pack lends itself to being used in different ways. It could be used alongside your class novel or play, to begin embedding the essay writing skills required for GCSE. Alternatively, it could be dipped into on an ad hoc basis and used for intervention to help with the specific skills needed to write essays about texts.

This pack is designed for the 2014 Key Stage 3 curriculum, and specifically addresses the learning objectives below.

Students should be taught to:

- **write accurately, fluently, effectively and at length for pleasure and information through:**
  - writing for a wide range of purposes and audiences, including:
  - well-structured formal expository and narrative essays
  - summarising and organising material, and supporting ideas and arguments with any necessary factual detail
  - applying their growing knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and text structure to their writing and selecting the most appropriate form

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- drawing on literary and rhetorical devices from their reading and listening to enhance the impact of their writing.

- **plan, draft, edit and proof-read through:**

  - considering how their writing reflects the audiences and purposes for which it was intended
  - amending the vocabulary, grammar and structure of their writing to improve its coherence and overall effectiveness
  - paying attention to accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling.

We've included links to resources and interactive resources on the Teachit English site where applicable.

Our thanks go to contributor Laura Storr who has written this pack, to the year nine students who wrote the essays and to the writers of the resources used in this pack: Deborah Andrew, Lucy Cripps, Rhiannon Glover, Stephanie Hamman, Edna Hobbs, Joanne Irving, Helen Magner, Fiona Mansell, Sarah Moody, Lucy Meredith, Ruth Newbury, Alison Powell and Angela Topping.

We hope you enjoy using this pack. If you have any questions, please get in touch: email support@teachit.co.uk or call us on 01225 788850. Alternatively, you might like to give some feedback for other Teachit members – you can do this by adding a comment on the Essay writing teaching pack page on Teachit English.

A note from the writer

For students entering Key Stage 3, the essay is one of the greatest fears in English assessment. It's something that is not encountered in Key Stage 2, yet a skill that needs to be fully accomplished for the demands of the new 1-9 GCSE specifications.

With English Literature hoisting itself up the importance stakes to stand side by side with English Language in the Progress Eight performance measures, it is essential we are preparing students for the challenge and rigour demanded of them straight away. This pack is designed to allay some of the anxiety and build students' confidence in writing skills.

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Getting students started

Imperative verbs, recipes and … mmm, cake

For many students, the essay question itself poses the first stumbling block. The use of formal language and imperatives that make demands the students don't understand can lead to disengagement. This task helps students to start using the essay terminology in a way that makes the sometimes impenetrable language of an essay question fun and approachable.

Have a look at a recipe for a cake from any cookbook or website. As an initial activity, ask students to attempt to identify the imperative verbs before collating a class definition of the word type. When the imperatives have been identified, ask students to think about what these words have in common. Where else might we find similar types of words? Recipes, instructions for technology, games, homework tasks, craft activities etc. might be on the list.

Give students a range of these different texts and again get them to identify imperative verbs. Students should then rank the texts in the order of formality, from most formal to least formal. Do the types of imperative verbs change or are they fairly similar? Ask students to highlight words that indicate the level of formality. What other techniques have the writers used to make the text formal or informal?

Cut open her heart and sprinkle it with love …

Give her a cuddle and a nice warm glove … (or something less cheesy!)

When students are familiar with imperative verbs, they could write a poem about subjects such as: friendship, love, courage, ambition etc. They should aim to use the same structure and imperative verb choices as a recipe, instruction sheet for technology or game, homework task or craft activity.

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What do the Bloom's words mean?

Encouraging the use of Bloom's taxonomy within your ordinary classroom dialogue enables students to accept such terminology into their common usage. If you have a mixed ability class, you could split your class into groups to define the meaning of each of the key words, differentiating according to the level of challenge of each key word; alternatively if your class are all the same ability level, you could target the most relevant ability level of the question stem for your class.

The Bloom's vocabulary to explore is:

1. **Knowledge:** find and remember information.
2. **Comprehension:** understand information.
3. **Application:** use information in a different but similar way.
4. **Analysis:** look at the information in detail and find links.
5. **Synthesis:** change the information into a different form.
6. **Evaluation:** make judgements about the information.

Students should use a dictionary to write down a definition for the relevant word(s).

Provide students with the resource **'Bloom's examples'**, which asks them to match up a number of words from Bloom's taxonomy with example questions. This is a challenging activity, so you might want to give fewer example questions to match up to your lower ability students.

Second guessing essay questions

The Teachit English **Bloom's taxonomy** resource provides a great introduction to Bloom's, focusing its tasks on the 'Little Red Riding Hood' fairy tale. You could adapt the questions to suit any text for your students. This activity could be used in conjunction with the **What do the Bloom's words mean?** activity suggested above.

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Setting the questions

Provide students with an interesting image such as a busy city scene or a shopping centre. Give each student a slip of paper. They should write a question using one of the Blooms trigger verbs you have explored and then fold it up and put it in a hat/bag. You could provide students with suggestions for 'essay topics' such as: colour, the sky, speed, people, cars. Each student then chooses a question out of the hat/bag to answer.

Making light of tricky imperatives

In order for students to get used to the vocabulary in essay questions, and writing extended lengths, give them a range of non-literary based topics to write about. Below are some suggestions. As a quick starter or plenary activity, you could give them a couple of suggestions and ask them to add to the list of fictional essay questions.

- Analyse the experience of eating a square of chocolate.
- Evaluate the reasons why chocolate is more popular than broccoli.
- Compare the smells of a variety of different herbs and spices or fruit and vegetables.
- Identify five things in the classroom that are blue. Explain which shade of blue you prefer.

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Bloom's examples'

Match up the example questions with the level of understanding in Bloom's taxonomy.

Identify all the reasons the advert suggests you should buy an iPhone.	Evaluation
List the instructions for how to make a chocolate cake.	Analysis
Summarise the plot.	Knowledge
Watch the video clip and explain how to make a cup of tea.	Evaluation
Draw a number of pictures to show how to make a cup of tea.	Knowledge
Compare how making a cake differs to making a smoothie.	Synthesis
Categorise the pictures of cakes into different groups based on their colour.	Comprehension
Invent a new machine that speeds up the cake making process.	Application
Devise a new ending for last night's *Poldark*.	Synthesis
How would you rate last night's episode of *Poldark*?	Analysis
How would you decide where to go on holiday?	Comprehension

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Teaching notes - Answers

Example Question	Bloom's vocabulary
Identify all the reasons the advert suggests you should buy an iPhone.	Knowledge
List the instructions for how to make a chocolate cake.	Knowledge
Summarise the plot.	Comprehension
Watch the video clip and explain how to make a cup of tea.	Comprehension
Draw a number of pictures to show how to make a cup of tea.	Application
Compare how making a cake differs to making a smoothie.	Analysis
Categorise the pictures of cakes into different groups based on their colour.	Analysis
Invent a new machine that speeds up the cake making process.	Synthesis
Devise a new ending for last night's *Poldark*.	Synthesis
How would you rate last night's episode of *Poldark*?	Evaluation
How would you decide where to go on holiday?	Evaluation

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Outline	
Knowledge	The learner recalls information.
Comprehension	The learner understands what is being communicated.
Application	The learner uses abstractions (ideas learned) in particular and concrete situations.
Analysis	The learner can examine and break down information into parts.
Synthesis	The learner puts together elements or parts to form a whole, using old ideas to create new ones, generalising from given facts and relating knowledge from several areas.
Evaluation	The learner makes judgements about the value of the material or methods for a given purpose.

Examples throughout are based on the fairy tale *Little Red Riding Hood*.

Knowledge - Level 1

The learner recalls information.

Key vocabulary

define, describe, identify, list, match, name, tell, show, label, collect, examine, who, when, where, recall, recognise, record, underline, order, state

Sentence starters

- What is …?
- Can you recall …?
- Why did …?
- How did …?
- How is …?
- Who was …?
- Can you list three …?
- When did …?
- Where is …?
- Which one …?
- Who were the main …?

For example:

- Who was Little Red Riding Hood?
- Where did she live?
- Who did she live with?
- What did her mother ask her to do?

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Comprehension – Level 2

The learner demonstrates understanding of information.

Key vocabulary

estimate, explain, generalise, rewrite, summarise, describe, interpret, contrast, predict, associate, differentiate, discuss, extend, cite examples of, demonstrate use of, describe, determine, discuss, differentiate between, discriminate, express, identify, locate, pick, report, review, recognise, select, tell, translate, respond

Sentence starters

- How would you classify the type of …?
- In your own words explain …
- What facts or ideas show …?
- Which statements support …?
- What can you say about …?
- How would you compare/contrast …?
- Rephrase …
- What is the main idea of …?
- Can you explain what is happening …?
- How would you summarise …?

For example:

- Why did her mother want her to go to the forest?
- What did Little Red Riding Hood look like?
- What do we learn about her?

Application – Level 3

The learner uses abstractions or skills in new situations, applying rules, laws, methods, and theories to solve problems.

Key vocabulary

compute, demonstrate, show, use, solve, apply, calculate, complete, illustrate, examine, modify, relate, change, classify, experiment, discover, dramatise, employ, generalise, interpret, operate, practise, use, utilise, initiate, choose, sketch, solve, write

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Sentence starters

- How would you organise … to show …?
- How would you apply what you have learned to develop …?
- Can you make use of the facts to …?
- What facts would you select to show …?
- How would you show your understanding of …?
- What would result if …?
- What elements would you choose to change …?

For example:

- How was the wolf like a real person?
- Why did Little Red Riding Hood go into the little house?
- Write a sign that should be placed near the edge of the forest.
- Draw a picture of what the grandmother's house looked like.
- Draw a map showing Little Red Riding Hood's house, the path in the forest and the grandmother's house.
- Show through action how Little Red Riding Hood behaved when she arrived at her grandmother's house.

Analysis - Level 4

The learner can examine and break down information into parts.

Key vocabulary

analyse, separate, order, explain, connect, classify, arrange, divide, compare, select, explain, infer, categorise, classify, compare, contrast, discover, dissect, examine, inspect, simplify, survey, take part in, test for, distinguish

Sentence starters

- How is … related to …?
- What inference can you make …?
- What evidence can you find …?
- Can you make a distinction between …?
- What ideas justify …?
- What motive is there …?
- What conclusions can you draw …?
- What is the relationship between …?
- What is the function of …?

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For example:

- How did the wolf react to Little Red Riding Hood?
- Why didn't Little Red Riding Hood follow her mother's advice?

Synthesis - Level 5

The learner puts together elements or parts to form a whole, using old ideas to create new ones, generalising from given facts and relating knowledge from several areas.

Key vocabulary

build, choose, combine, compile, compose, construct, create, design, develop, estimate, formulate, imagine, invent, make up, plan, predict, propose, solve, suppose, discuss, modify, change, improve, adapt, delete, theorise, elaborate, test, improve

Sentence starters

- What changes would you make to solve …?
- What would happen if …?
- How would you adapt … to create a different …?
- What could be combined to improve …?
- Suppose you could … what would you do?
- Can you think of an original way to …?

For example:

- What happened after Little Red Riding Hood discovered that her grandmother was actually the wolf in disguise?
- What happened before Little Red Riding Hood went into the forest? What is the first thing she did when she went into the house?
- Draw a cartoon or write a story about wolves.
- Do you know any other stories about children who escape from danger?
- Make a puppet out of one of the characters. Using the puppet, act out his/her part in the story.
- Make a picture/model of the grandmother's house and the forest.

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Evaluation – Level 6

The learner makes judgments about the value of the material or methods.

Key vocabulary

rate, recommend, explain, appraise, prioritise, assess, influence, award, choose, conclude, criticise, decide, defend, determine, dispute, evaluate, judge, justify, measure, compare, mark, perceive, value, estimate, influence

Sentence starters

- What is your opinion of …?
- Can you assess the value or importance of …?
- Would it be better if …?
- What would you cite to defend the actions of …?
- What would you select …?
- How would you prioritise …?
- What information would you use to support the view …?
- How would you justify …?

For example:

- What do you think of Little Red Riding Hood's behaviour?
- How important is the woodcutter to the outcome of the story?
- What value do stories like this have for children?

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