

TeachingEnglish

Building writing through adventures with realia in the school environment

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www.britishcouncil.org



About the speaker

Iyabo Akintola studied English at Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and has taught for over twenty years in secondary schools. She now teaches at Baptist Girls' College Ogun state. She is a participant of BC Teacher Champions 2024 cohort, a former mentee of Africa ELTA FLMP, a fellow at Teach for Nigeria(2023). She is the convener of ELTAN in her state and organizes workshops for teachers. She is a remote learning volunteer teacher on Ogun Diper Diet anchored by Department of Planning Research Ministry of Education Science and Technology Ogun . Her passion for teaching is demonstrated through pragmatic simplicity, this has birthed impactful achievements in her students over the years.



Objectives

- **discover practical approaches to teach writing through story telling using realia**
- **recognise tasks to use to motivate students to do collaborative tasks to develop creative writing**
- **set up tangible and time bound goals to support students through the development of writing**



What is realia?

Can you define it?

And / or give examples?

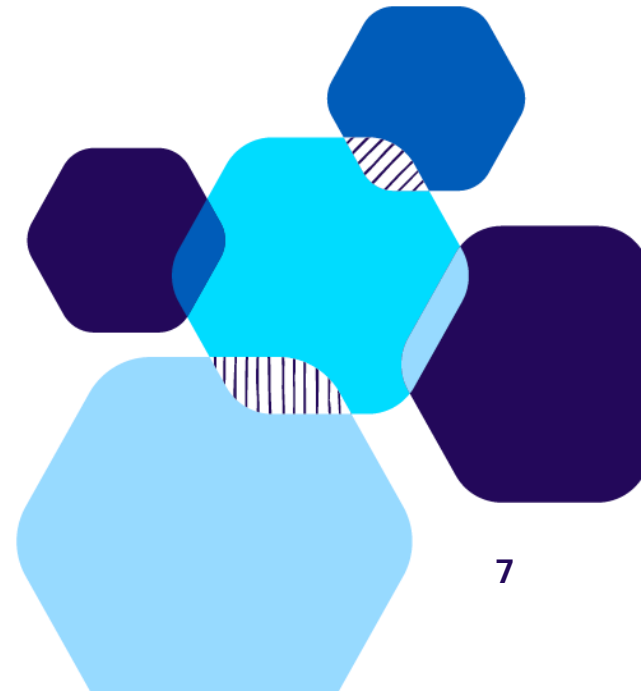
Please comment in the chat



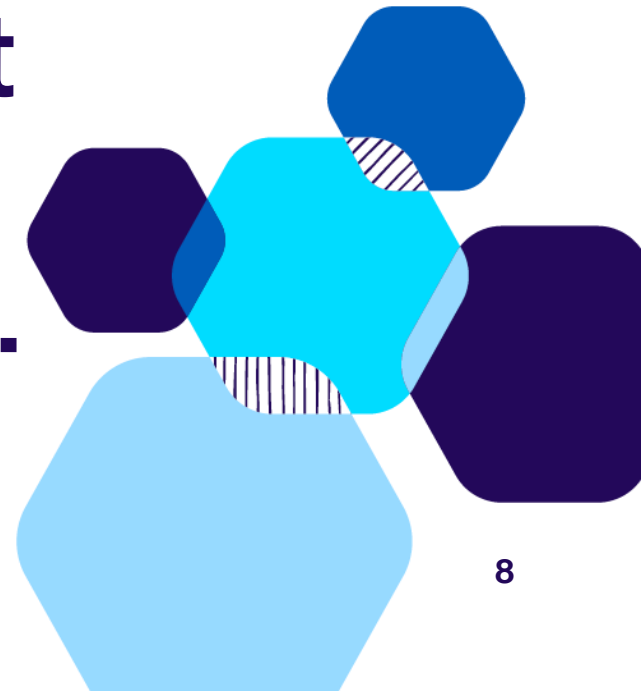
What is writing?

1. How often do you teach writing?
2. Give examples of writing tasks you use
3. Do your students like writing tasks?
4. What are their major challenges?

Again – please comment in the chat



You can use realia to create descriptive styles that appeal to the five senses, to give a clear picture. Observation of real objects can be used to teach writing in class, when students write a short narrative text eg. about the reusable worth of a plastic bottle.



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- 1. Do you use realia to teach writing?**
 - 2. How often do you use it?**
 - 3. Does it make your teaching more engaging?**

Kindly respond in the chat box

Realia:

Actual objects and items brought into classroom as aids.

These can be talked and written about in the classroom.

Why use realia to teach writing?

It makes learning memorable

It creates a connection between objects and words

It makes recall of information easier

It provides a visual aid to engage students and get them to participate

Add more reasons in the chat

Before we look at practical tasks for class, let's look at some British Council resources:

Teaching English Africa: teaching tips

<https://africa.teachingenglish.org.uk/skills/tips/using-whats-around-you>

TeachingEnglish: articles, blogs

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/teachers/knowing-subject/q-s/realia>

TeachingEnglish: 'Realia in the bag' – class activity for primary students:

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/teaching-resources/teaching-primary/activities/level-2/realia-bag>



Examples of realia

- a stone
- a statue
- newspapers
- things they see on a visit to a place of interest on the school premises



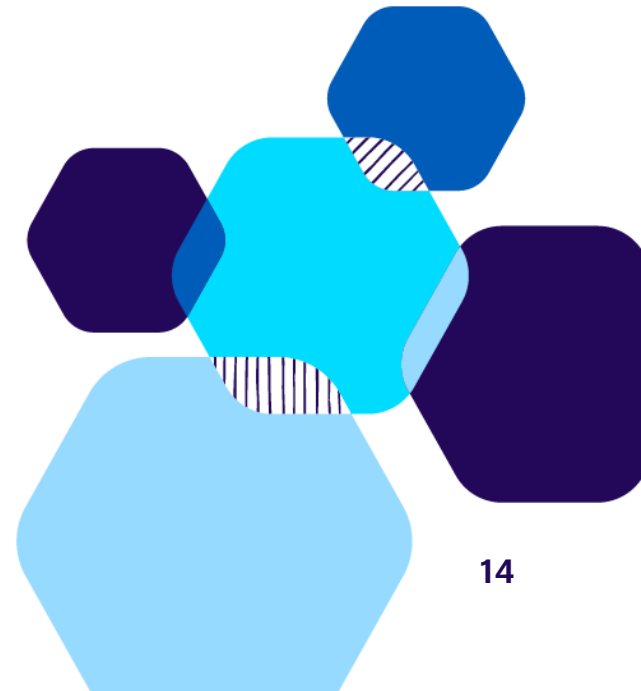
Tips on how to use realia to teach writing

Recreate
realia

Crafts can
be brought
into the
classroom

Creation of
school
magazine

Short
stories can
be pasted
on the
school
board



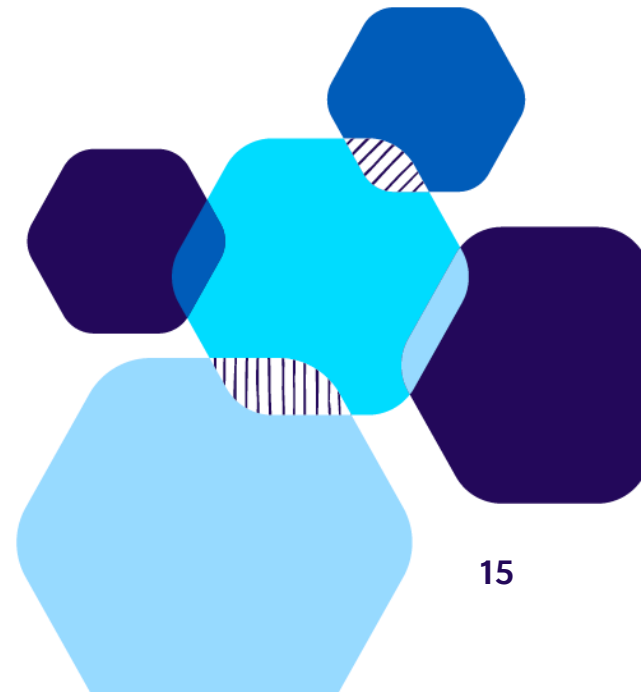
Story club

Motivate students to create short stories about things they see at school events.

This can be done in pairs/groups.

The teacher's edited versions could be used to create a compilation of stories.

How could you do this in your context?



Role play

Short fun activities with cultural artifacts (eg. baskets, brooms etc) for example, a market scene or a cultural display can be created.

Students will then write their observations as short stories.

Can you suggest more activities that can be role played in the chat box?

Keeping journals or diaries
Encourage students to write a journal on a visit to school farm. They can focus on specific realia eg. soil, plants, rakes and what they are for.

This could serve as reference to the development of the plants.



Following directions

Motivate learners to write a description of how to locate their school or house, based on landmarks eg. a large old mango tree, a wall.



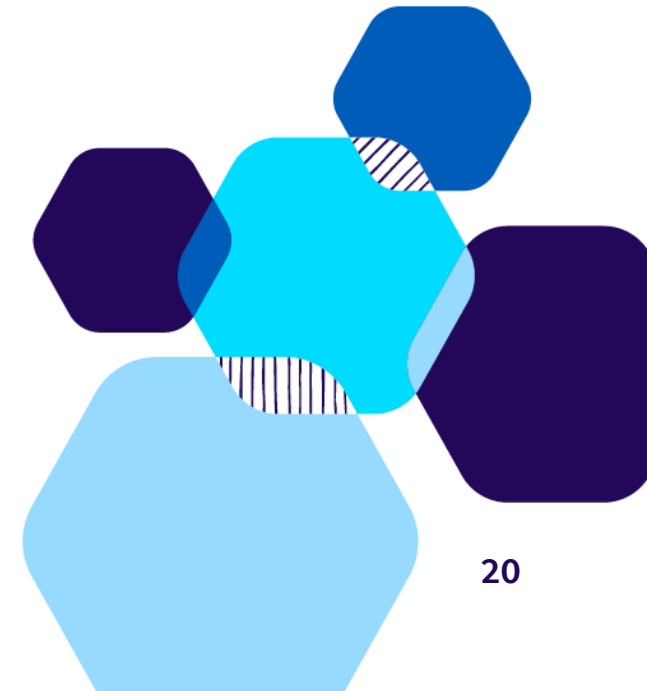
Students' realia (in their bag / or things they bring in):

Use this to create group writing activities in the classroom eg. 'I am an apple. I was born in ...'



Short trips in the school premises:

Students can be taken to the sport facility, the school clinic etc. for observation and be motivated to write about the realia they see in these contexts eg. medicines, bed, sports equipment



Island survival

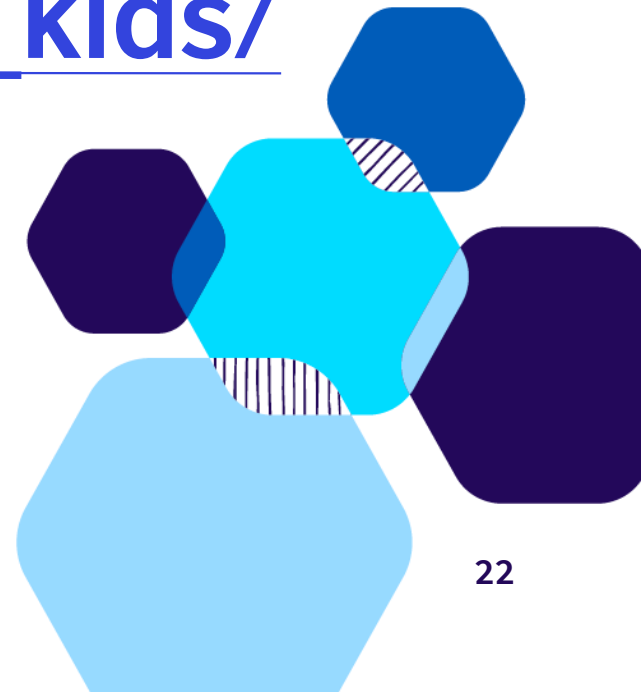
Give students a scenario to think critically about after a visit to a place on the school premises and write an imaginative story in pairs/group eg. 'Imagine this is an island and you and your group have been living here for a month

Bring into class a few items to remind them and support their imagination.

You could allow the fastest group to present.

More resources:

- <https://bridge.edu/tefl/blog/use-real-ia-esl-classroom/>
- https://stonesoup.com/post/teaching_detail_in_creative-writing_by_kids/
- <https://owl.excelsior.edu/>



Take-away tips

Please try out at least one activity in the next week with one of your classes, and report back in the EnglishConnects Telegram discussion on Friday.

Which will you try out?:

- The teacher bringing realia into class and students writing about it
- Students bringing realia into class and writing about it
- Using newspapers to spark writing activities
- Trips outside or around school to explore realia and write about it

Thank you!

Any questions?

