



Activity 5: Snowball Self-assessment of a writing task from the Handbook

Aims

To familiarise learners with the assessment criteria and help them recognise these in a sample text, to make learners aware of how their own writing could be improved.

Level

Adaptable for stronger A2 learners and from B1 to C2.

Note

This task works well when you have set your mock test with the questions provided in the Handbook or from the guide for Assessing Writing for Cambridge English Qualifications because you have access to examiner grades and comments.

Step 1

Provide learners with a copy of one of the sample Writing task answers. This activity works well if the sample answer got a good score, but don't give learners the scores at this stage.

Give learners a list of the assessment criteria. A good tip is to give them one of the blank teacher writing assessment templates provided in the Assessing Writing for Cambridge English Qualifications where they can write comments against each of the criteria.

Ask learners to work in pairs to decide a grade for each of the assessment criteria before you show them the examiner's grades and comments. Discuss any differences in their ideas.

Step 2

Give learners time to note down any examples of good vocabulary, grammar or other ideas that they want to 'steal' from the example.

Step 3

Hand back the learners' writing tasks without your comments first. Ask them to repeat Step 1 and assess their own writing task.

Now give learners your feedback, so they can compare their assessment with yours. To round off the activity, ask learners to note down something they did well and something they would do differently if they did the task again.