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Making the Impossible Possible

Getting students writing in the language classroom

Gareth Davies

Words, Words, Words

- Shoes
- Output
- Interlanguage
- Secret Santa
- Caterpillar
- Paris
- PEA
- I believe
- Cento

Aims

In this talk we will look at

- why students don’t like writing?
- some teaching ideas that might help to generate ideas for writing.
- Something old, something new, something borrow, something blue.



Put yourself in their shoes.

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Why don’t your students like writing?

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?



Why is it important?

Comprehensible Input

- Level +1
- Students challenged
- Acquire language naturally

Not – learn it consciously.

Stephen D. Krashen

But is this enough

Why is it important?

Merril Swain argues for Comprehensible Output.

output pushes learners to process language more deeply - with more mental effort – than does input. With output, the learner is in control. In speaking or writing, learners can ‘stretch’ their interlanguage to meet communicative goals.

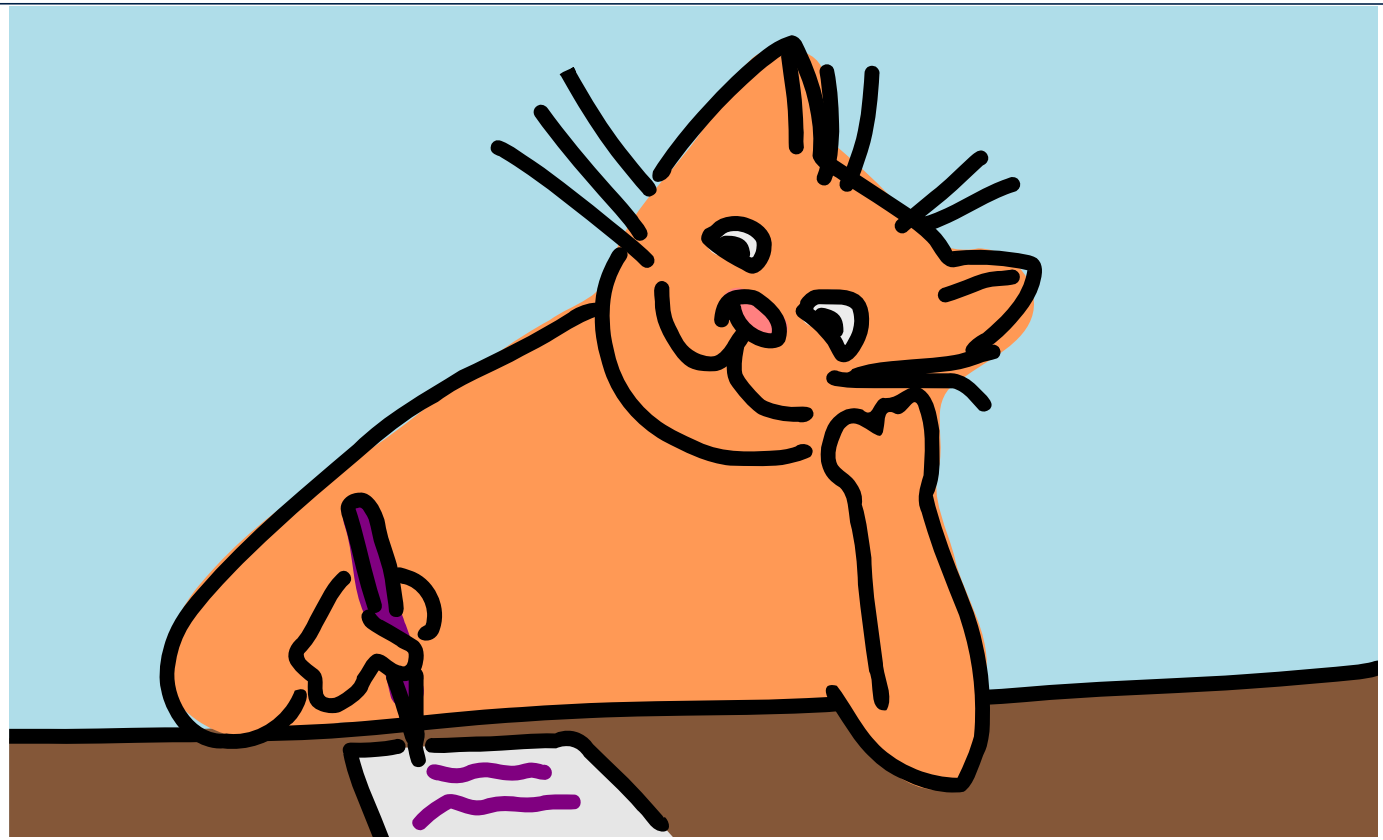
- The output hypothesis and beyond : Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. Merril Swain. 97- 114
- In Sociocultural theory and second language acquisition Ed James P. Lantolf, OUP Oxford 2000 p.99

Three areas

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- Providing motivation
- Getting ideas
- Being Creative

Providing Motivation



Picture from openclipart.org by Rones

Secret Santa

- Write the numbers 1 – 16 on sheets of paper.
- Shuffle them
- Give each student a sheet of paper (they need to make a note of their number)
- Tell sts they are going to try to find out two things about a someone in the class. So they need to write two questions.
- Collect in the paper, shuffle and give them out again.
- Tell sts to write answers to the questions.
- Collect in the paper and give them back to the question writers.

Secret Santa – Find Someone Who

- Now the students have their original papers back ask them to go around the class and ask questions to try to find who their secret partner is?

What should I write?



Picture from openclipart.org by pietluk

Getting Ideas

Task:
You are on a shopping trip to a big city with friends. Write a blog entry about your experience.

From
Solutions Pre-Int 2nd Edition (OUP)



Ideas Brainstorm

'All advertising campaigns are dishonest, not just stealth marketing ones.'

Are all advertising campaigns dishonest?

Yes No

Think PEA



Think PEA

P oint

E xample

A nalysis



Ideas Brainstorm – Flow Chart



YES

NO

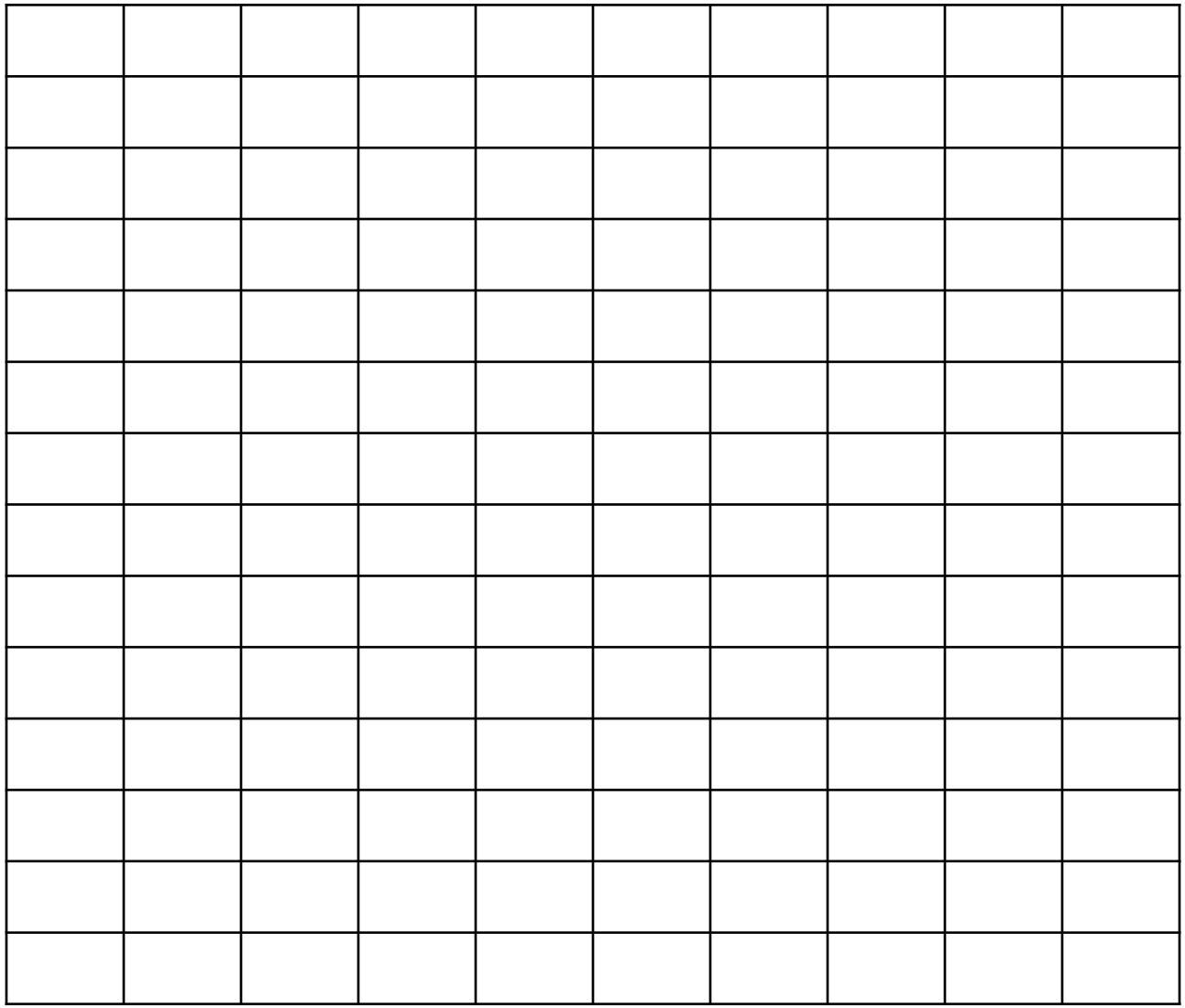
Are all advertising campaigns dishonest?

Why? do you have reasons?

Why? do you have reasons?

Do you have evidence e.g. personal experience.

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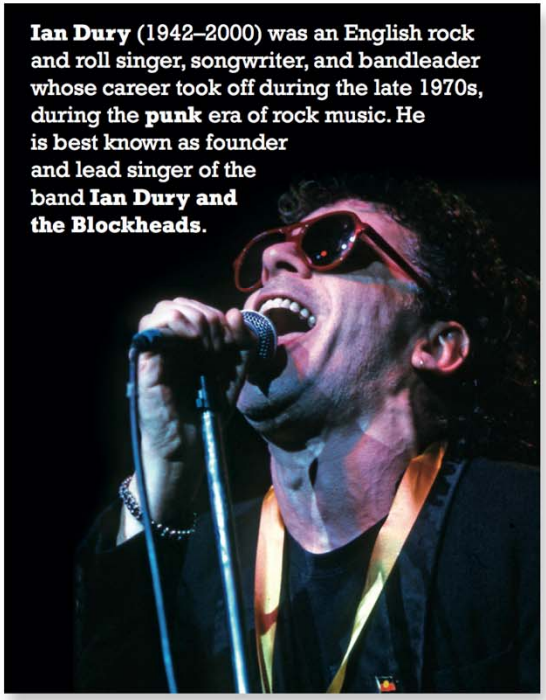
Being Creative



Rewriting Songs

Song – "I Believe"

3 Look at the photo and read about Ian Dury. Who was he?



6 CD1 45 Listen again and check your answers. Which of the things in 1–8 does he believe in?

1 Recycling trash.
2 Healthy outdoor activities.
3 Having a lot to eat and drink.
4 Being truthful and kind.
5 Having strong opinions about everything.
6 Good manners.
7 Putting yourself first.
8 Peace, not war, is possible.

Headway 4th Edition
Intermediate
page 33/150

Rewriting Songs

I believe in _____ _____
And beauty from within
I believe in saying _____
And fresh _____ on the skin

I believe in healthy _____
As tonic for the feet
I believe in serious talks
And _____ _____ to eat

Chorus
That's what I believe
Surprising as it seems
I believe that happiness
Is well within our dreams

Headway 4th Edition
Intermediate
page 33/150

Rewriting Songs

I believe in bottle banks
and beauty from within
I believe in saying thanks
and fresh air on the skin.
I believe in healthy walks
as tonic for the feet.
I believe in serious talks
and just enough to eat.

Headway 4th Edition
Intermediate
page 33/150

Erasure, Cento and Found Poems

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- In Erasure poetry, you erase words to create a verse. It can be fun if students claim they don't know what to write.

- In Cento poetry you construct poems using others sources. Collect lines. A line from one poem and a line from a story or song and put them together to make verse.

Erasure and Cento Poems

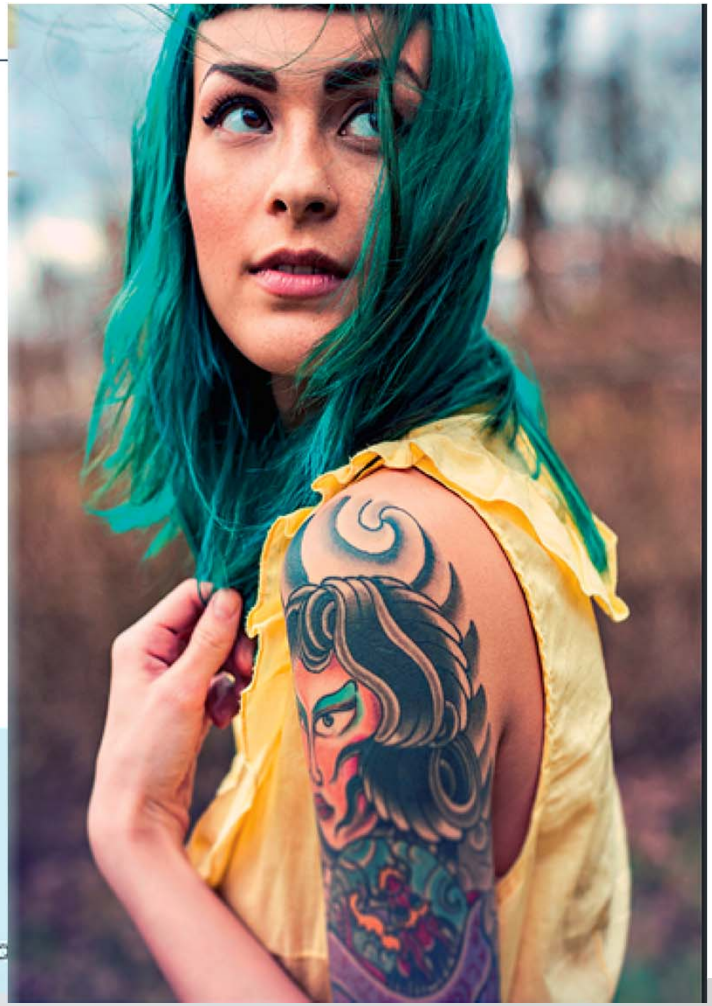
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- poetry, erase to create. .
  fun to write

- poetry.
  Collect poem and line
  together make verse.

Insight
Intermediate
page 114





The Lost Generation

by Jonathan Reed

Oxford Solutions
Intermediate page 77

Composite poem

I can change the world

I tell you this

Failure to do this daily

But who am I to judge

I've forgotten what that feels like

But with 3000 friends online

Experts Tell me

This is a quick fix society

Money will make me happy

There's an app for that

My world has become so digital

I update my status

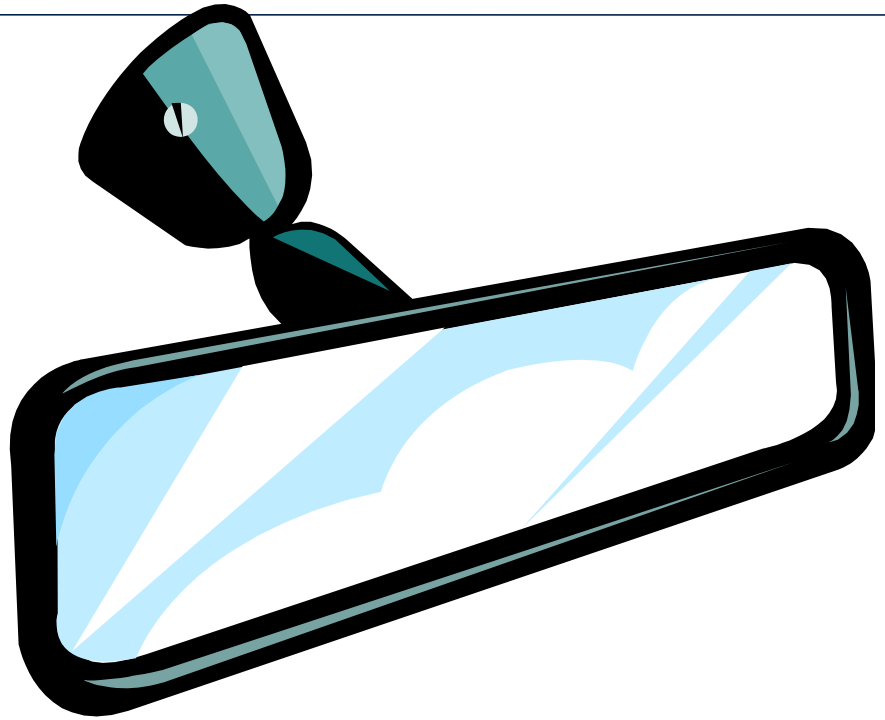
Thirty years from now

To prove I'm still breathing

I have my priorities straight.

Can't hear the sound of mother nature speaking

Reflection



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Thank You

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