



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Assessing writing

Claire Ross



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Claire Ross

ELT since 2003: teacher, trainer, project manager, consultant.
Cambridge University Press and Assessment, British
Council, FutureLearn.

Partnering with Ministries of Education, international
organisations, teachers and trainers in many countries.

Design and creation of face to face and online courses.

Cambridge CELTA tutor, former DELTA local tutor.





CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Assessing writing 1:
How to assess writing. Wednesday
February 22, 3-4pm

Assessing writing 2:
Practical application.
Wednesday March 8, 3-4pm





Key questions for today

1. Why are formative and summative assessment of writing important?
2. How do we “do” formative and summative writing assessment?
3. What tools can we use to assess writing?





CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Word association!

Open the link

Type a word that you associate with **SUMMATIVE** assessment

<https://answergarden.ch/3054486>



Open
the link



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Word association!

Open the second link

Type a word that you associate with **FORMATIVE** assessment

<https://answergarden.ch/3054490>



Open
the link



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Why are formative and summative assessment of writing important?





CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Write a description of your own dream house.

Is this writing task:

- Formative?
- Summative?
- Could it be either?

Type in
the chat

Own It! 2 Student's Book, p.65

Describe your dream house
and win a digital camera!





CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Any writing task can be assessed
formatively or summatively.

It depends on how and when the
teacher does it.





Guess the
missing
words

Formative assessment

Observing/listening

Feedback

AIM: **i.....** learning
and teaching

Summative assessment

Testing

Grades

AIM: **e.....** how much
learning has taken place
over a certain period



Who benefits from assessment?

They get feedback on what they're doing well and how they can improve their language skills (formative).



- Learners
- Teachers
- Parents
- School leaders
- Policy makers



Who benefits from assessment?

They know how their children performed during the school year (summative).



- Learners
- Teachers
- ✓ Parents
- School leaders
- Policy makers



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Who benefits from assessment?

They get a snapshot of how well students in their school are performing in English (summative).



Learners

Teachers

Parents

✓ School leaders

Policy makers



Who benefits from assessment?

They can identify gaps in learning and adjust their teaching to help learners (formative).



- Learners
- ✓ Teachers
- Parents
- School leaders
- Policy makers



Who benefits from assessment?

They get regular feedback on their speaking and writing (formative).



- ✓ Learners
- Teachers
- Parents
- School leaders
- Policy makers



Who benefits from assessment?

They get a snapshot of student performance in English in different schools (summative).



Learners

Teachers

Parents

School leaders

✓ Policy makers



Who benefits from assessment?

They know their children are being supported to learn and improve every day (formative).



- Learners
- Teachers
- ✓ Parents
- School leaders
- Policy makers



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

How do we “do” formative and summative assessment?





Summative assessment: what order do you do these things in?

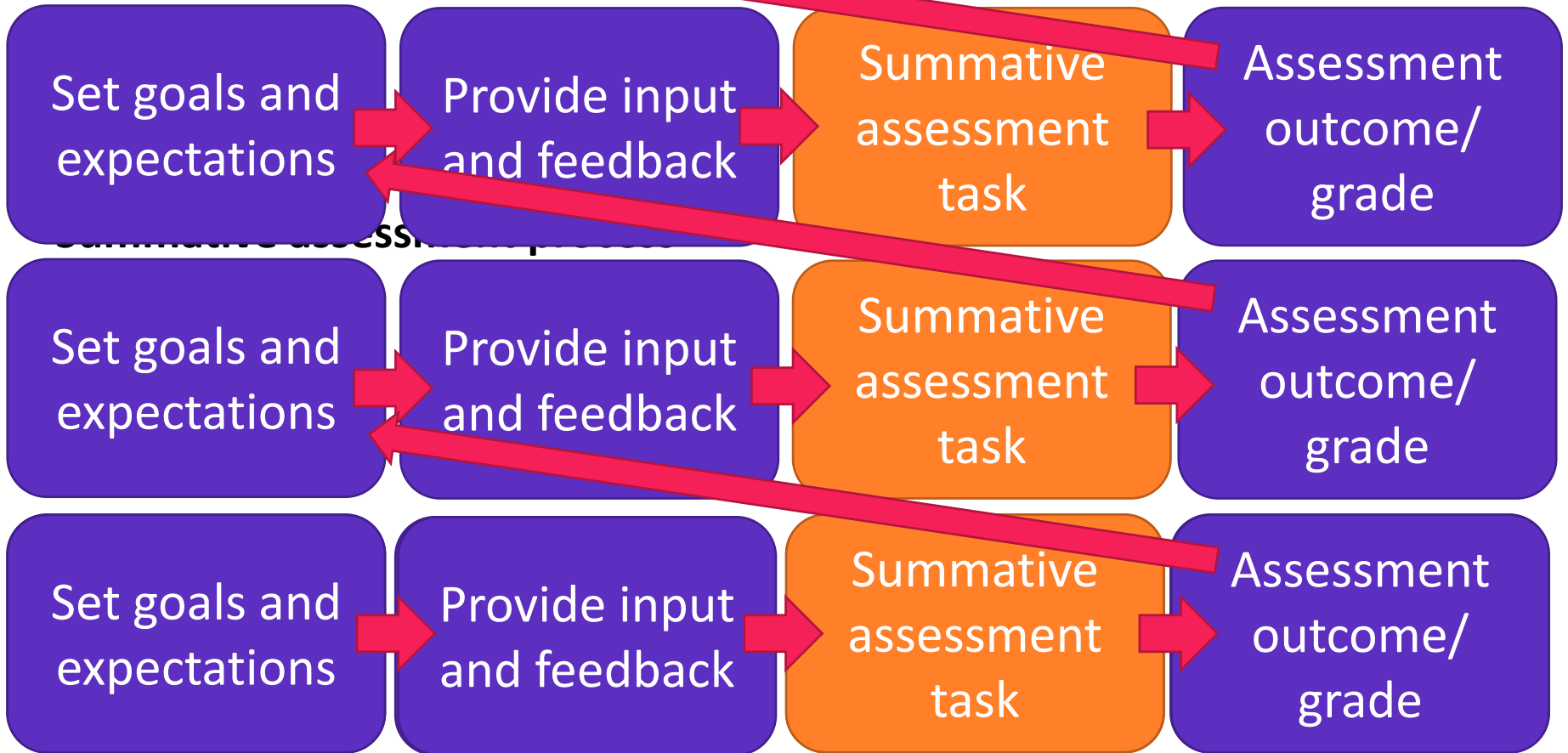
A. End of unit
test

B. Share
learning
outcomes for
unit

Type in
the chat

C. Teach the
unit content

D. Mark test,
award grades

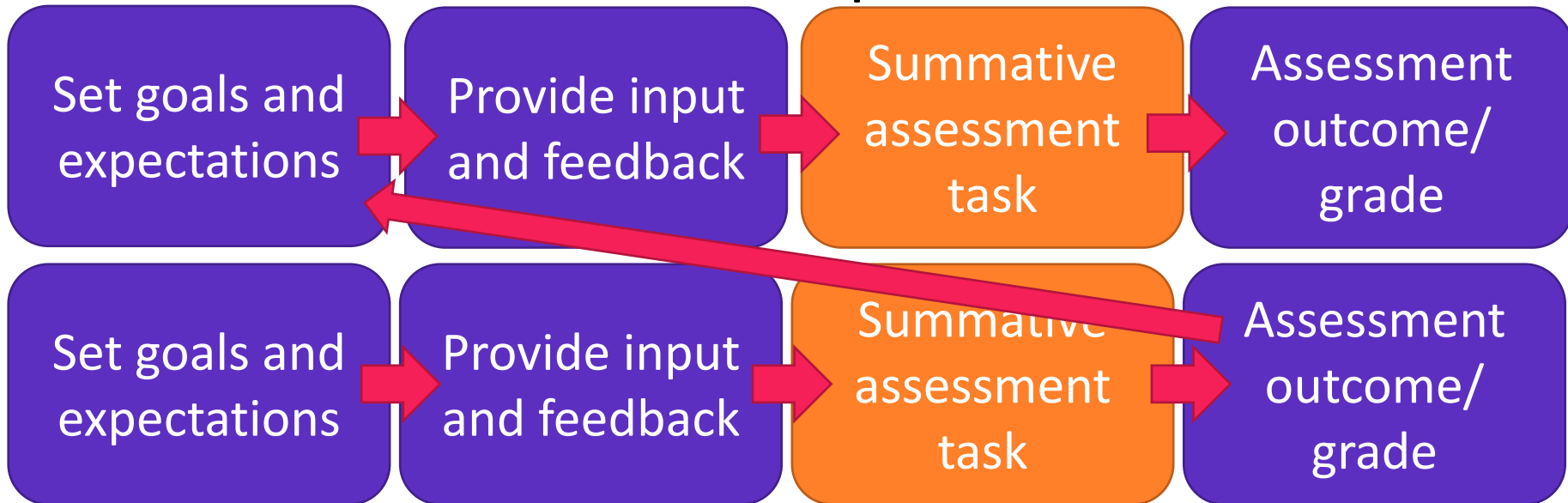


(B, C, A, D)



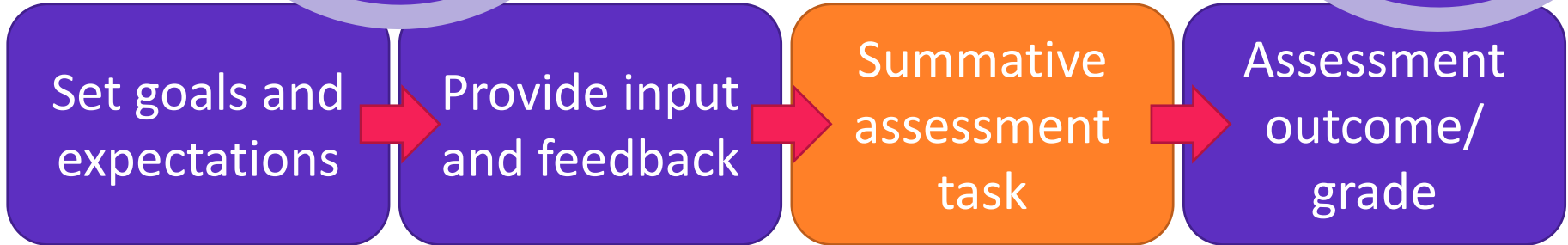
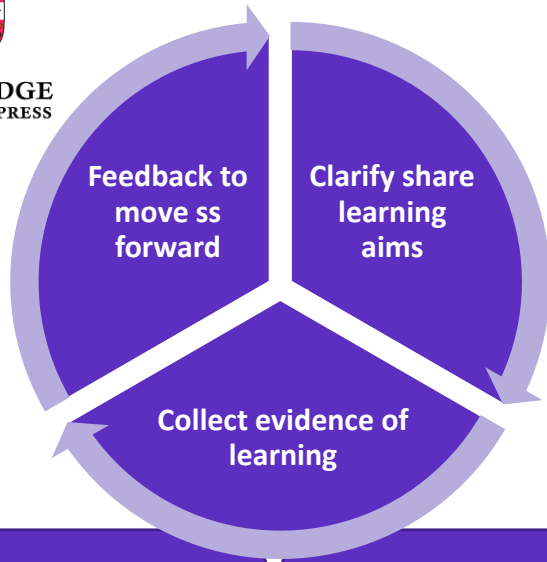
Where does formative assessment take place?

Type in
the chat





CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS





CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Formative assessment takes place throughout the learning process.

Even a summative test can be used formatively, if the teacher helps learners to learn from their writing performance and improve next time.

Formative assessment can help learners every time they write.

Summative assessment is less frequent.





CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

How often do you assess your learners' writing?

1. Once a term
2. Several times a term
3. At the end of a unit
4. Once a week
5. Every lesson
6. Every time they write

Type a
number in
the chat





CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Gymnasium A

Could you use this to assess your learners' writing?

Type Y or N

Own It! 1 Student's Book, p.53

© Cambridge University Press

Write a description of your favourite types of food.

PLAN

- 4 Make notes to describe your favourite types of food. Say where you get it from, what's in it and what it's like. Decide what information to include in each paragraph. Use the information in Exercise 2 to help you.

WRITE

- 5 Write your description. Remember to include four paragraphs, *there is/are*, countable and uncountable nouns and expressions from the *Useful language* box.

CHECK

- 6 Do you ...
- introduce yourself and say when/how often you eat your favourite foods?
 - use adjectives to describe food?
 - say why you like each type of food?



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Gymnasium A

Could you use this for formative or summative assessment or both?

Type F, S or B

Own It! 1 Student's Book, p.53

© Cambridge University Press

Write a description of your favourite types of food.

PLAN

- 4 Make notes to describe your favourite types of food. Say where you get it from, what's in it and what it's like. Decide what information to include in each paragraph. Use the information in Exercise 2 to help you.

WRITE

- 5 Write your description. Remember to include four paragraphs, *there is/are*, countable and uncountable nouns and expressions from the *Useful language* box.

CHECK

- 6 Do you ...
- introduce yourself and say when/how often you eat your favourite foods?
 - use adjectives to describe food?
 - say why you like each type of food?



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Gymnasium A

What about the
Workbook writing task?
Formative, summative
or both?

Type F, S or
both

Own It! 1 Student's Book, p.53

Own It! 1 Workbook, p.37

© Cambridge University Press

Write a description of your favourite types of food.

PLAN

4 Make notes to describe your favourite types of food. Say where you get them from and what it's like. Decide what information to include in each paragraph. Use the information in Exercise 2 to help you.

WRITE

5 Write your description. Remember to include four paragraphs, *there is/are*, countable and uncountable nouns and expressions from the *Useful language* box.

CHECK

- 6 Do you ...
- introduce yourself and say where you are from and the name of your favourite foods?
 - use adjectives to describe food?
 - say why you like each type of food?

Write a description of your favourite place to eat.

PLAN

5 ★★ Make notes about your favourite place to eat. Say where it is, when you go there and what it is like. Decide what information to include in each paragraph. Use the information in Exercise 4 to help you.

WRITE

6 ★★★ Write your description. Remember to include four paragraphs, *there is/are*, countable and uncountable nouns and expressions from the *Useful language* box (see Student's Book, p53).

CHECK

- 7 Do you ...
- introduce yourself and say where you are from and the name of your favourite place?
 - say what is your favourite type of food and drink?
 - use adjectives to describe food?



Assessment options

A. Do SB writing in class, WB writing at home (formative)

B. Do pre-writing in class, set SB writing for homework (formative)

C. At the end of the unit/term, set WB writing as a test (summative)

D. At the end of the unit/term, create your own writing test (summative)

Write a description of your favourite types of food.

PLAN

- 4 Make notes to describe your favourite types of food. Say where you get it from, what's in it and what it's like. Decide what information to include in each paragraph. Use the information in Exercise 2 to help you.

WRITE

- 5 Write your description in four paragraphs, *there is/are*, countable and uncountable nouns and adjectives. Use the *Useful language box* to help you.

CHECK

- 6 Do you ...
- introduce yourself and say where you are from and the name of your favourite place?
 - use adjectives to describe food and drink?
 - say why you like it?

Which do you do?

Write a description of your favourite place to eat.

PLAN

- 5 ★★ Make notes about your favourite place to eat. Say where it is, when you go there and what it is like. Decide what information to include in each paragraph. Use the information in Exercise 4 to help you.

WRITE

- 6 ★★★ Write your description. Remember to include four paragraphs, *there is/are*, countable and uncountable nouns and expressions from the *Useful language box* (see Student's Book, p.53).

CHECK

- 7 Do you ...
- introduce yourself and say where you are from and the name of your favourite place?
 - say what is your favourite type of food and drink?
 - use adjectives to describe food?



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Think

You want to create a similar writing task to assess your students' ability to write a description of food (Gymnasium A).

What task would you create?



Reminder:

Student's Book task: Write about your favourite food

Workbook task: Write about your favourite restaurant



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Writing assessment wording

Write a email to your friend describing an amazing meal you had.

You should:

- Say where you had the meal
- Describe the food you ate
- Say why you liked it

You should write about 100 words.



Writing assessment wording

Write a *description / email to your friend / story about...*

You should include:

- *This*
- *That*
- *The other*

You should write about *x* words.

Content

Length

Specifies
task type

Clear, concise
instructions.
Familiar



Gymnasium B

Have you used this for

- classwork?
- homework?

Type in
the chat

Have you assessed it

- formatively?
- summatively?

Type F, S
or both

Own It! 2 Student's Book, p.77

Own It! 2 Workbook, p.53

Write a description of your favourite internet or TV personality.

PLAN

6 Make notes about these things:

1 Who the person is: _____

What he/she does: _____

2 What he/she does in e

What he/she is doing

3 Why I like this person

WRITE

7 Write your description. Use three paragraphs, the correct present tenses and adverbs, and *and*, *but* and *or*.

CHECK

8 Do you ...

- use sentences with *and* and *or*.
- give information about the person in three paragraphs.

Write a description of your favourite comedian or comedy actor.

PLAN

5 ★★ Make notes about these things.

1 Who the person is: _____

What he/she does: _____

How many followers he/she has got: _____

2 What he/she usually does in his/her videos or films: _____

3 Why you like this person and his/her videos or films: _____

WRITE

6 ★★★ Write your description. Remember to include three paragraphs, the correct present tenses and adverbs, and *and*, *but* and *or*.

CHECK



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Think

You want to create a similar writing task to assess your students' ability to write a description of a person in an email or essay (Gymnasium B).

What task would you create?



Reminder:

Student's Book task: Write about your favourite internet or TV star

Workbook task: Write about your favourite comedian

TASK 3 – Question 16

Send Attach Save Draft Spelling Cancel

To: Show BCC

Cc:

Subject: Plain Text

Arial 12 B I U T

You recently met Jessica Cox. Write an email to a friend about it. In your email, you should

- say where you met her
- describe what she is like
- explain how the experience made you feel

Write your email in about 100 words.

TASK 4

(20 marks)

You recently bumped into your favourite youtuber at the shopping mall. Write an email to an English-speaking friend telling him/her all about it. In your email, you should:

- say who the person is and describe him/her
- talk about what he/she does in his/her videos
- explain why you like him/her



Source: <https://anglm.schools.ac.cy/index.php/el/material/supporting-material-gymnasium-b>



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Writing assessment wording

Write a *description / email to your friend / story about...*

You should include:

- *This*
- *That*
- *The other*

You should write about *x* words.



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Gymnasium C

Own It! 3 Student's Book, p.29

Own It! 3 Workbook, p.21

© Cambridge University Press

Write your own review of a performance

PLAN

- 5 Look at the *School of Rock* poster or think of a performance you have been to. Make notes.

Where did you see it? _____

Who was the performance for? _____

What was it like? _____

What did you like / not like about it? _____

- 6 Decide what information to include in each paragraph. Use the information in Exercise 3 to help you.

WRITE

- 7 Write your review. Remember to include four paragraphs, the present perfect and phrases from the *Useful language* box.

CHECK

- 8 Do you ...
- describe the event?
 - say who it is for?
 - say what you liked / didn't like about it?

Write your own review of a music concert.

PLAN

- 6 ★★ Make notes on a music concert you have been to or seen on TV.

Where did you see it? _____

Who was the concert for? _____

What was it like? _____

What did you like / not like about it? _____

- 7 Decide what information to include in each paragraph. Use the information in Exercise 3 to help you.

WRITE

- 8 ★★★ Write your review. Remember to include four paragraphs, the present perfect and phrases from the *Useful language* box (see Student's Book, p29).

CHECK

- 9 Do you ...
- describe the event?
 - say who it is for?
 - say what you liked / didn't like about it?



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Think

You want to create a similar writing task to assess your students' ability to write a review (Gymnasium C).

What task would you create?



Reminder:

Student's Book task: Write a review of a performance

Workbook task: Write a review of a music concert



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Writing assessment wording

Write a *review of a TV series / film / book / festival / ...*

You should include:

- *Where and when you saw it*
- *Who it is for*
- *What you liked/didn't like about it*

You should write about *x* words.



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

What tools can we use to assess writing?





How do you assess learner writing now?



1. Give grades (A, B, C or marks out of 10 or 20)
2. Underline mistakes.
3. Correct mistakes.
4. Write comments.
5. Say what they're doing well.
6. Say what they need to improve.
7. Give feedback against criteria.
8. Use a rubric.



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE
ESOL Examinations

Cambridge English Key for Schools



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE
ESOL Examinations

Cambridge English Preliminary for Schools

Assessment of Writing scale

Band	Content	Organisation	Language
5	All content is relevant to the task. Target reader is fully informed.	Text is connected and coherent, using basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices.	Uses everyday vocabulary generally appropriately, while occasionally overusing certain lexis. Uses simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control. While errors are noticeable, meaning can still be determined.
4	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.</i>		
3	Minor irrelevances and/or omissions may be present. Target reader is on the whole informed.	Text is connected using basic, high-frequency linking words.	Uses basic vocabulary reasonably appropriately. Uses simple grammatical forms with some degree of control. Errors may impede meaning at times.



Assessment rubrics - benefits

- ✓ Specific feedback against specific writing subskills
- ✓ Learners know where they are at:
 - Where they are doing well
 - Where and how they can improve
- ✓ Teachers have standardized approach to assessing different types of writing
- ✓ Once familiar with them – saves time! 😊



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

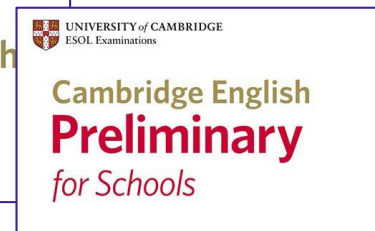
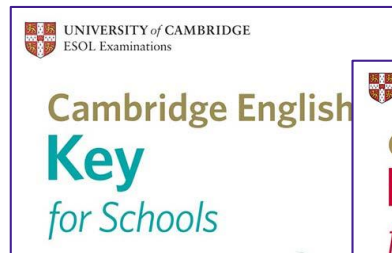
Assessment criteria for writing

Content

Language

Organisation

What do you expect to be included under each one?





CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Assessment criteria for writing

Which criterion does this relate to?

Punctuation

- Content
- Language
- ✓ Organisation

Type C, L
or O



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



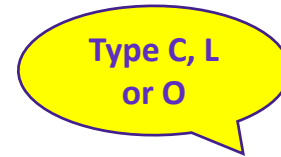
Assessment criteria for writing

Which criterion does this relate to?

Vocabulary
– range and accuracy



Content
Language
Organisation





CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Assessment criteria for writing

Which criterion does this relate to?

Linking words

- Content
- Language
- ✓ Organisation

Type C, L
or O



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Assessment criteria for writing

Which criterion does this relate to?

Has the learner answered the question?

- ✓ Content
- Language
- Organisation

Type C, L
or O



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Assessment criteria for writing

Which criterion does this relate to?

Grammar
– range and accuracy



Content
Language
Organisation

Type C, L
or O



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Assessment criteria for writing

Which criterion does this relate to?

Is all the information relevant?

- ✓ Content
- Language
- Organisation

Type C, L
or O



	A1+ (Gymnasium A)	A2 (Gymnasium B)	B1 (Gymnasium C)
Language	<p>Produces basic vocabulary of isolated words and phrases.</p> <p>Produces a few simple grammatical forms with only limited control.</p>	<p>Uses basic vocabulary reasonably appropriately.</p> <p>Uses simple grammatical forms with some degree of control.</p> <p>Errors may impede meaning at times.</p>	<p>Uses everyday vocabulary generally appropriately, while occasionally overusing certain lexis.</p> <p>Uses simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control.</p> <p>While errors are noticeable, meaning can still be determined.</p>

What are the differences between the levels?



	A1+ (Gymnasium A)	A2 (Gymnasium B)	B1 (Gymnasium C)
Language	<p>Produces basic vocabulary of isolated words and phrases.</p> <p>Produces a few simple grammatical forms with only limited control.</p>	<p>Uses basic vocabulary reasonably appropriately.</p> <p>Uses simple grammatical forms with some degree of control.</p> <p>Errors may impede meaning at times.</p>	<p>Uses everyday vocabulary generally appropriately, while occasionally overusing certain lexis.</p> <p>Uses simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control.</p> <p>While errors are noticeable, meaning can still be determined.</p>



	A1+ (Gymnasium A)	A2 (Gymnasium B)	B1 (Gymnasium C)
Organisation	<p>Some use of punctuation (e.g. capital letters at the beginning of a sentence, full stops at the end of a sentence).</p> <p>Simple connectors may be used (e.g. and, but).</p>	<p>Text is connected using basic high-frequency linking words (e.g. and, so because, first of all).</p>	<p>Text is connected and coherent, using basic linking words (e.g. and, so because, first of all) and a limited number of cohesive devices (e.g. pronouns she, theirs; relative clauses ...which...).</p>

What are the differences between the levels?



	A1+ (Gymnasium A)	A2 (Gymnasium B)	B1 (Gymnasium C)
Organisation	<p>Some use of punctuation (e.g. capital letters at the beginning of a sentence, full stops at the end of a sentence).</p> <p>Simple connectors may be used (e.g. and, but).</p>	<p>Text is connected using basic high-frequency linking words (e.g. and, so because, first of all).</p>	<p>Text is connected and coherent, using basic linking words (e.g. and, so because, first of all) and a limited number of cohesive devices (e.g. pronouns she, theirs; relative clauses ...which...).</p>



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

A1+ (Gymnasium A)

A2 (Gymnasium B)

B1 (Gymnasium C)

Content

Is the content relevant to the task?

e.g.

- If the task asks for an email, have they written an email?
- If they were asked to include 3 pieces of information, have they included all 3?



Example

A1+

Organisation criteria

	Organisation
5	Text is connected using basic high-frequency linking words.
4	
3	Some use of punctuation. Simple connectors may be used.
2	
1	Little or no use of punctuation and connectors.



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Summary





Guess the
missing words

1. Writing should be assessed BOTH formatively AND summatively throughout the school year. [redacted]
2. Formative assessment **improves** learning and teaching. [redacted]
3. Summative assessment **evaluates** learning performance. [redacted]
4. Tasks from the [redacted] can be used for either type of assessment.
5. Tasks can be easily adapted [redacted] to create new assessments.
6. Assessment criteria and rubrics for writing help teachers to give specific [redacted] writing subskills.
7. Assessment criteria for writing include content, language and organisation. [redacted]



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

What's next?





Before we meet again 😊

- Look at the assessment rubrics for A1+, A2 and B1.
- Assess the writing sample for each level using the appropriate rubric.
- Think about the feedback you would give.
- If you like, try assessing your students' writing using the appropriate rubric for their level.
- Be ready to share your experience in the next webinar 😊



A1+ Gymnasium A

Writing task
You would like to go to the park tomorrow. Write an **email** to your English friend Sammy.
In your email:

- ask Sammy to come to the park with you
- explain how you can both get there
- say what you can do there.

Student writing
I GOING TO THE PARK BECAUSE IT IS VERY BEAUTIFUL.
I GET THERE BECAUSE THEY'RE PLAY FOOTBALL, PLAY A KITE. I SEE THE BIRTH. IT'S RUNING.
I CAN BY BUS. IT'S VERY CHEAP BUT I CAN A TAXI
IT'S VERY EXPENSIVE

Your assessment (use the A1+ assessment rubric)

Content	
Organisation	
Language	

What feedback would you give?

	A1+	Content	Organisation	Language
A2 Gyn	5	All content is relevant to the task. Target reader is fully informed.	Text is connected using basic high-frequency linking words.	Uses basic vocabulary reasonably accurately. Uses simple grammar with some errors. Errors may in times.
Writing	4	Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5		
Look at	3	Minor irrelevances and/or omissions may be present. Target reader is on the whole informed	Some use of punctuation. Simple connectors may be used.	Produces basic isolated words and phrases. Produces a few grammatical errors.
Write a				
Write 3				



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Assessing writing 2: Practical application. Wednesday March 8, 3-4pm

- Assess writing samples at each level (Gymnasium A, B, C) using the rubrics
- Evaluate how to give feedback on writing as part of formative assessment





CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Thank you!

Any questions?

