

WRITING SKILLS

Teacher's notes

Brainstorm



Warm up

Introduce the idea of word association. Write the following on the board:

internet → mobile phone → games → fun → ...

Have students suggest the next word. Work around the classroom, and encourage speed. Explain that there are no right or wrong answers, but that you are getting ideas flowing. Once you have a few more words, put the class into small groups and have the students do the same activity in their groups, using different prompts.

Practice

1  In pairs, look at the task below and think of four things you need to do before you write an essay.

- Put the students in pairs and have them read Exercise 1. Give them three minutes to discuss what to do before writing an essay, and then have them call out their ideas. Elicit the four stages of essay preparation – *collecting ideas*, *researching*, *planning* and *drafting* – and write them on the board.
- Explain that *brainstorming* means writing down all your ideas on a topic quickly, and should always be the first stage in collecting your ideas when preparing to write an essay.
- Draw attention to the essay question, and check for understanding. Ask what social media platforms they use. They might come up with: *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *Twitter*, *YouTube*. If students show a lot of enthusiasm, do a quick show of hands for who uses what.
- Explain to the class that they will work through all the stages from getting an essay question to writing the final draft.

2 Take a piece of paper and divide it down the middle. Put a plus (+) symbol on one side and a minus (–) symbol on the other. Write *social media* in the middle of the paper.

- Put a plus (+) symbol on the left-hand side of the board, and a minus (–) symbol on the right-hand side. Write the words *Social media* in the centre of the board and draw a box around them. Have students do the same on a piece of paper.
- Explain that the students are now ready to brainstorm their ideas about the effects of social media on young people. Point out that they should write positive (+) effects on the left-hand side of the paper, and negative (–) effects on the right.

3 In ten minutes, write down all your ideas about the effects of social media on young people.

- Draw students' attention to the tip.
- Get the students to brainstorm their ideas. Reassure them that all ideas are good ideas at this stage. Walk round the classroom, encouraging speed over accuracy and spelling, and quantity over quality.
- When most students seem to have stopped writing, give the class 30 more seconds to finish up. Do a quick show of hands to see how many ideas they came up with.
- At this stage, students will have something like the following:

share photos	+	make money/ start a business	don't have to talk in real life	–	fake news
gives people a voice		play games	harassment/stalking		strangers can see your details
keep in touch with old friends		influence others	cyber bullying		makes me lazy!
easier to organize parties, activities, etc.		engaging with world	school/university can see what I'm like		only see good sides of other people
			can't concentrate		addictive!

Social media

4 In pairs, compare your brainstorm from Exercise 3.

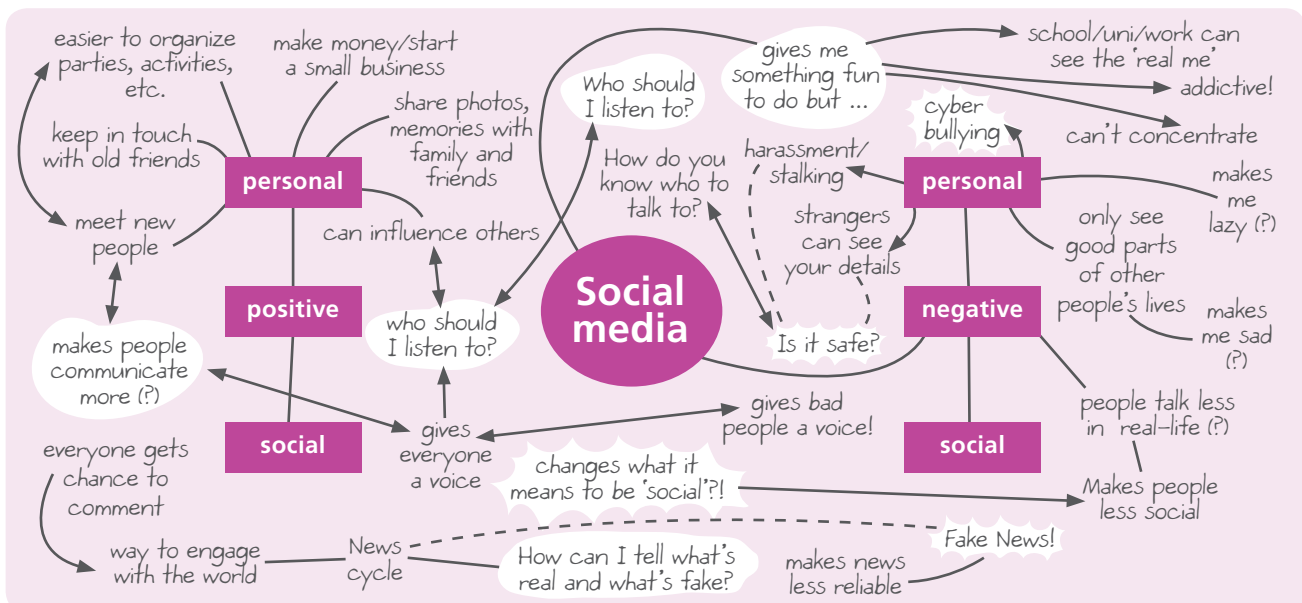
- Put the students into pairs, and have them work through the questions. Encourage them to look up any difficult words or phrases, if they can't help each other, and add the English to their sheet. Walk around the class, helping out where you can. Model the pronunciation of any new words or phrases.
- Have the students share their brainstorm sheets and explain a few of their ideas for two or three minutes.

5 Before you begin your mind map, decide:

- Explain that the next stage is for the students to organize their ideas into a more useful form.
- Focus students on the questions on the **Worksheet** about the use of lettering, etc. Emphasize that there is no right or wrong way to prepare a mind map. It's a matter of personal preference.
- After a suitable amount of time, have a classroom discussion about the questions.
- Give the students a few minutes to decide on their own approach to mind-mapping. Point out that mind-mapping is a process and students' initial approach will probably evolve as they create their mind maps.

6 Using your ideas from Exercise 2, create your mind map on a new piece of paper.

- Get the students to organize their ideas from their brainstorms into a mind map.
- Walk around the classroom commenting on the students' work and asking questions about their approach. Encourage creativity and the free flow of ideas. Allow plenty of time for this activity.
- When students seem to be flagging, bring the activity to a close. Point out that students will be able to add to their mind maps later.
- By the end of this activity, students will have created something like the mind map below. If it is useful to do so, share this mind map with your students.



Reflect

7 Think about the brainstorming and mind-mapping processes. Answer the following questions, and make notes.

- Encourage students to reflect on their own brainstorming and mind-mapping processes by answering the questions in Exercise 7.
- After a suitable length of time, encourage them to share their thoughts with their partners.
- At the end of the lesson, have a whole-class discussion about the processes of brainstorming and mind-mapping.

8 Read the following summary of how to brainstorm in a group. Refer to these notes as a reminder the next time you share ideas in a group.

- Encourage students to discuss the notes and add any ideas of their own if they want to.