

Unit 7: Migration

Lesson 7.1: Reading and understanding writing

Note: The topic matter of this unit may be sensitive for some students in terms of their own personal history. As such, you may need to be careful about how you approach this subject in the class.

Part 1: Introducing the topic

Task 1

Following on from the above, this may clearly be an emotive issue; it is, however, a very important one. Depending on your classes, you could do this as a whole class, which may help you manage it better. If your students find it difficult – or are unwilling – to discuss the topic, you may need to be more directive and teacher-centred.

Part 2: Preparing for the text

Task 2

You could introduce this activity by eliciting from students why it is better to use fewer and more specific/focused words in academic writing (i.e., academic texts tend to have a higher 'lexical density' than other texts, meaning that the average word length is longer).

Before students begin the activity, ensure that they are clear on the instructions. You might want to ask an instruction-checking question such as *How many letters are there in question 1? (=5)*.

Students should do this activity individually, and then check their answers in pairs. Then take class feedback.

Afterwards, with higher-level groups, you might also talk about the difference between a word's *denotation* and *connotation*.

Answers

1. issue
2. significantly
3. ongoing
4. colleagues
5. income
6. persistent

Task 3

Elicit from students the reason why these kind of prediction activities are important (e.g., it can help students get a better idea of a text and read more actively; it can give students more confidence when reading an unfamiliar text).

Do not take detailed feedback at this stage. Tell students that they should check their predictions when they read the text to see if they are right. This may be something which you briefly discuss in a whole-class situation once students have completed Task 4 and have read the text.

Part 3: Reading the text

Task 4

Note: This text is also available as a downloadable audio file (Track 7) at garneteducation.com/caw.

Allow students 5–7 minutes to read this text, depending on their level.

Part 4: Understanding the text

Tasks 5, 6 and 7

Students should have a maximum of 10 minutes to complete these questions. To keep the lesson moving, and so that students do not become demotivated, you can pause after each task and do feedback immediately after each. Alternatively, students could do all the comprehension questions at once, and then take feedback.

Once students have completed the questions by themselves, they should check their answers with a partner. Then take class feedback.

In feedback, ask students to predict/guess the way you would describe your father's mother (i.e., paternal grandmother), to show them patterns of language.

If you have time, and you think the class would be interested, you could discuss the final question in more detail, either as a small group or whole-class activity. Students should discuss whether they agree with the writer or not. Emphasize that students can have any view they like, but that they should support it with evidence and good argumentation.

Task 5 Answers

1. a. True b. True c. False
2. They are small and irrelevant in comparison to many others.
3. Mother's mother
4. Loud group of noises all mixed together

Task 6 Answers

1. She read her diary and talked to her.
2. She studied hard in the refugee camp school, then went to the local school before getting a job.

Task 7 Answers

1. She lives in a stable society.
2. These are very emotive and gave a strong sense of the scene and what was going on.
3. They saw that she was keen to work and do her job well in order to benefit herself and her family.
4. *Suggested answer:* She believes that governments have a moral duty to help people because it is not their fault that they are in this situation.

Part 5: Understanding the writing point

Task 8

Emphasize that students should refer back to the text to answer these questions. They should go through a logical process of looking for evidence (or counter-evidence) to answer each of these points accurately.

If you think that some of your class will struggle with the language in this activity, you might elicit/pre-teach some of the words (e.g., *thesis statement*, *anecdote*, *dynamic*).

After students have answered the questions by themselves, do not take feedback yet. This will happen after the next task.

Answers

- a. False. Descriptive essays require a thesis statement; you are still presenting an argument.
- b. True
- c. False. They should be ‘fully rounded’ and contain multiple viewpoints.
- d. True
- e. True

Task 9

In pairs, students should come up with a collective set of answers, i.e., if they have different answers, they should discuss their different positions and agree on their answer.

When taking class feedback, ensure that students explain and justify their answer, ideally by referring directly back to the text. If students in the class have different opinions, try to get them to debate and argue about the question. If there is a big difference of opinion, you could take a class vote before stating the answer.

Task 10

Give students 2–3 minutes to read the information about descriptive essays. Tell them that afterwards, in pairs, they will have a short quiz about the key points. This will help to motivate them to read accurately and to try to remember information. The kind of questions you might ask include:

- What is the structure of a descriptive essay?
- What kind of things does a descriptive essay talk about?
- Why is subjective language used more often in descriptive essays?
- What kind of language would you use in a descriptive essay?

You might also discuss whether students are required to write descriptive essays and in what circumstances. They are generally more common in arts-type subjects than science-type subjects.

Part 6: Checking your understanding

Task 11

It is important that students choose carefully what they are going to write about. There is a danger that some students will just begin writing in order to finish the activity as quickly as possible. If it is possible, it would be good to get all students to tell you what they want to write about, and that you agree, before they start writing. This will be the most effective use of their time.

If you have time in the lesson, get students to present their outlines to a partner. Their partner should give constructive, critical feedback on the outline. Students should revise their outlines in the light of the feedback from their partner.

Ideally, students will write the introduction to this essay for homework. This would enable them to think more deeply about the characteristics of a descriptive essay.

Lesson 7.2: Vocabulary, grammar and practising writing

Part 7: Recapping the last lesson

Task 12

This could be done in different ways – e.g., students could write down 3–4 key points which they can remember, or one student could be the ‘knower’ (with the textbook open) asking questions to the other student, to check their understanding.

Part 8: Understanding the grammar point

Task 13

Introduce the activity by discussing with students the importance of punctuation, especially in academic writing. This may be something which students are not that familiar with, since punctuation is not as common in some modern forms of communication as it has been historically. You might explain it as follows: *When we speak, there are many different ways in which we can add emphasis (e.g., speaking louder), show that something is important (e.g., pausing before saying it) or indicate that we have finished making a point (e.g., changing our tone). To do the same in writing, punctuation is needed. Clear punctuation can help a reader understand you more easily.*

In this activity, emphasize that students are not expected to know the functions of all these different punctuation marks, but that they should be able to work out the function of most of them from the text. If the punctuation mark appears more than once (as many of them do), they may have a pattern of information which can help them. Students might also write down the name of the punctuation mark, if they know it.

If you are worried about how much time you have, you could get students to work on this in pairs – with one student doing half the punctuation marks and the other student doing the other half.

Do not take feedback in class after this activity – students should check by themselves, looking at page 76.

Task 14

Take class feedback once students have read through this information. They can also check understanding with their partner if they need anything clarified. It is important to state that the information here is not all the uses of these pieces of punctuation, but rather the two most important ones.

Part 9: Understanding the language point

Task 15

Students are not expected to ‘know’ the answer to this. Instead, they should try to predict from their own knowledge and experience of reading academic writing. Students should individually make their decision and then compare with a partner. Together, they should come up with a list of eight which they think are the most commonly used in academic writing.

If you have time, this could be done as a class ‘snowball’ activity – groups become increasingly large, (e.g., 2 – 4 – 8 – 16 – whole class), and each time they have to agree

(by discussion or voting) which eight words they think are the most academic. Each time, they should give their reasons.

In feedback, you might explain that all these words are on the Academic Word List, meaning that they are commonly used in academic writing. This will lead in to the next activity.

Answers

depressing, academic, despite, images, focused, majority, illustration, positive

Task 16

Students should take 4–5 minutes to read through the information about the Academic Word List. Although the term may be unfamiliar, students should be able to get the idea of it reasonably quickly. When students have read through, ask a few concept-checking questions to see what they can remember. For example:

- Briefly summarize what the AWL is and why it is important.
- Why is the AWL relevant?

You should emphasize to students that if they are interested in developing their ability to write in English and to sound academic, the AWL is a very good place to start.

Task 17

This is a relatively simple activity, designed to get the students seeing how they can use the AWL in their own writing. If they finish this quickly, or if some students finish sooner than others, get them to create their own sentences using the language.

Answers

1. In terms of extracting the oil, the **method** was very complicated.
2. The **evidence** demonstrates that Shaw (2013) was correct.
3. Jones (2012) presents a **similar** argument.
4. The **procedure** for the experiment was difficult to follow.
5. My professor was responsible for a **major** breakthrough in his field.

Part 10: Creating your own text

Task 18

You will need around 25 minutes to do this task properly in class. Students should refer back closely to the outline which they produced in Task 11. If they did not do that activity, it will be difficult for them to do Task 18, and instead they should probably create the outline first. This task could then be done for homework.

Students should choose the paragraph which they would most like to write here – the one which they are most interested in and know most about.

Students will probably need around 15 minutes to write a paragraph sufficiently well. When they have done this, they should work with a partner and give feedback on their paragraph. They should begin with general comments about the style and genre (and whether it is appropriate for a descriptive essay) before looking at the specific grammar and language issues which are raised here.

Part 11: Consolidating your knowledge

Task 19

Once students have discussed together, take brief general feedback to ensure that all members of the class are clear about these key points. Where possible, try to get students to explain the points to each other, rather than you doing it. This could also be done as a piece of written homework as well.