

This workshop centered on teaching for the SPM 2012 paper – English. The guidelines, however, can be applied generally.

LEARNING (EVEN FOR SPM!) CAN BE FUN

1. WARM-UP ACTIVITIES

- *Reconstruct a model essay*
- *Correct a piece of writing*
- *Describe people:*
 - i. appearance*
 - ii. character*
- *Detail the parts of the SPM exam!*

Aim: to help students to begin to focus in a fun way on the subjects they need to cover in preparing for the SPM exam.

2. DIRECTED WRITING EXAMPLE

(SPM Paper 1 Section A)

- *20 minutes*
- *Small group discussion*
- *Categorize different types of writing (e.g. letter, speech, article, report, advertisement)*
- *Analyze the register and vocabulary of each*
- *Each individual to note findings*

Aim: To think analytically about the types of writing, registers and vocabulary you might find in the exam e.g. a letter will be more informal than a scientific report, which, in turn, will need subject specific vocabulary.

3. CONTINUOUS WRITING EXAMPLE

(SPM Paper 1 Section B)

- 20 minutes
- Individual work
- Choose one topic
- Plan the structure e.g. an essay plan (T.I.P.S.)
- Write the essay/story/description for homework (25 minutes)

Aim: To teach individuals how to plan a composition/essay

N.B. TIPS (read the Title; brainstorm Ideas; make a Plan; and Start!)

4. COMPREHENSION ACTIVITY EXAMPLE (1)

(SPM Paper 2 Section A)

Multiple choice and cloze (= gap-filling) exercise

- 25 minutes
- Individual working alone
- Hand in to teacher

Aim: - To give individual practice in the form and timing of an exam.

5. COMPREHENSION ACTIVITY EXAMPLE (2)

- (SPM Paper 2 Section B) 25 minutes
- In pairs/groups of 3
- Read a copy of a newspaper article

- *Cut up the article and fit onto a graphic organiser*
- *Could be competitive*

Aim: - To show the structure of the exam. Group work helps everyone to pool understanding of exam vocabulary...

N.B. Make this fun by working in groups and making it into a competition

6. COMPREHENSION ACTIVITY EXAMPLE (3)

(SPM Paper 2 Section C)

- *Whole lesson*
- *Individuals to be given questions only from a comprehension passage*
- *5 minutes for individuals to note predictions of passage content*
- *Teacher-led brainstorming (notes on board)*
- *Students to complete the comprehension and summary to give in*

Aim: - To help pupils understand the importance of answering the questions and to show them how looking quickly at the questions can help them to read the passage with more purpose and focus.

7. LITERARY APPRECIATION (1) POETRY See separately **WRITING ABOUT POETRY GUIDELINES**

(SPM Paper 2 Section D)

- *30 minutes*
- *Whole class discussion*
- *Look at the titles of two poems*
- *What do you think they are about?*
- *Now read the poems (individuals to volunteer/be chosen)*

- *Is there a message or theme, in your opinion?*
- *How is the poet feeling, in your opinion?*
- *Find as many metaphors as you can (on board)*
- Aim: - To prepare students for likely exam questions and also make the point that poems are generally made to be read aloud and that it is the sounds of the words and their organisation (punctuation, length of lines etc..) as well as their meaning which is important.

Try Chorus Poetry Exercise in **WRITING ABOUT POETRY GUIDELINES**

8. LITERARY APPRECIATION (2) NOVELS

(SPM Paper 2 Section D)

- *Pairs or small groups*
- *Using a grid:*
 - i. Summarise a) the main theme(s) b) the plot*
 - ii. Describe a) the setting b) the main characters*
- *Individuals to write book reviews based on the grid (to hand in at end of lesson)*

Aim: - Again to prepare for likely exam questions on plot, characters, themes in the set texts.

Tip: Imagine that you are a character in the novel and either writing about yourself or another character; alternatively, one could suggest such scenarios as '*what if X had happened instead of Y?*' or set students the task of changing the ending of the novel...