

## Pre-writing Skills

Writing is a problematic area for many students at all the levels of language proficiency. Some of these problems are:

- not knowing what to write “writer’s block”
- not knowing how to organize the work
- failing to structure the ideas effectively
- poor grammar and syntax skills
- being self-conscious and feeling afraid of producing incorrect language
- lack of vocabulary
- weak argumentation.

Pre-writing activities might solve these problems and make the process of writing easier to the learners. The general aim for pre-writing can be summed-up in this way: 'the goals are to stimulate and motivate learners to generate materials to write on' (Oluwadiya 1992: 13). In the same article, Oluwadiya states that learners actually write better if they do pre-writing activities.

You have to design a pre-writing activity to the following writing task. Please notice which type of activity you have to design **A,B,C** or **D**

Enas and Yara	A
Oula and Ahmad	B
Abdullah	C
Ameen	D

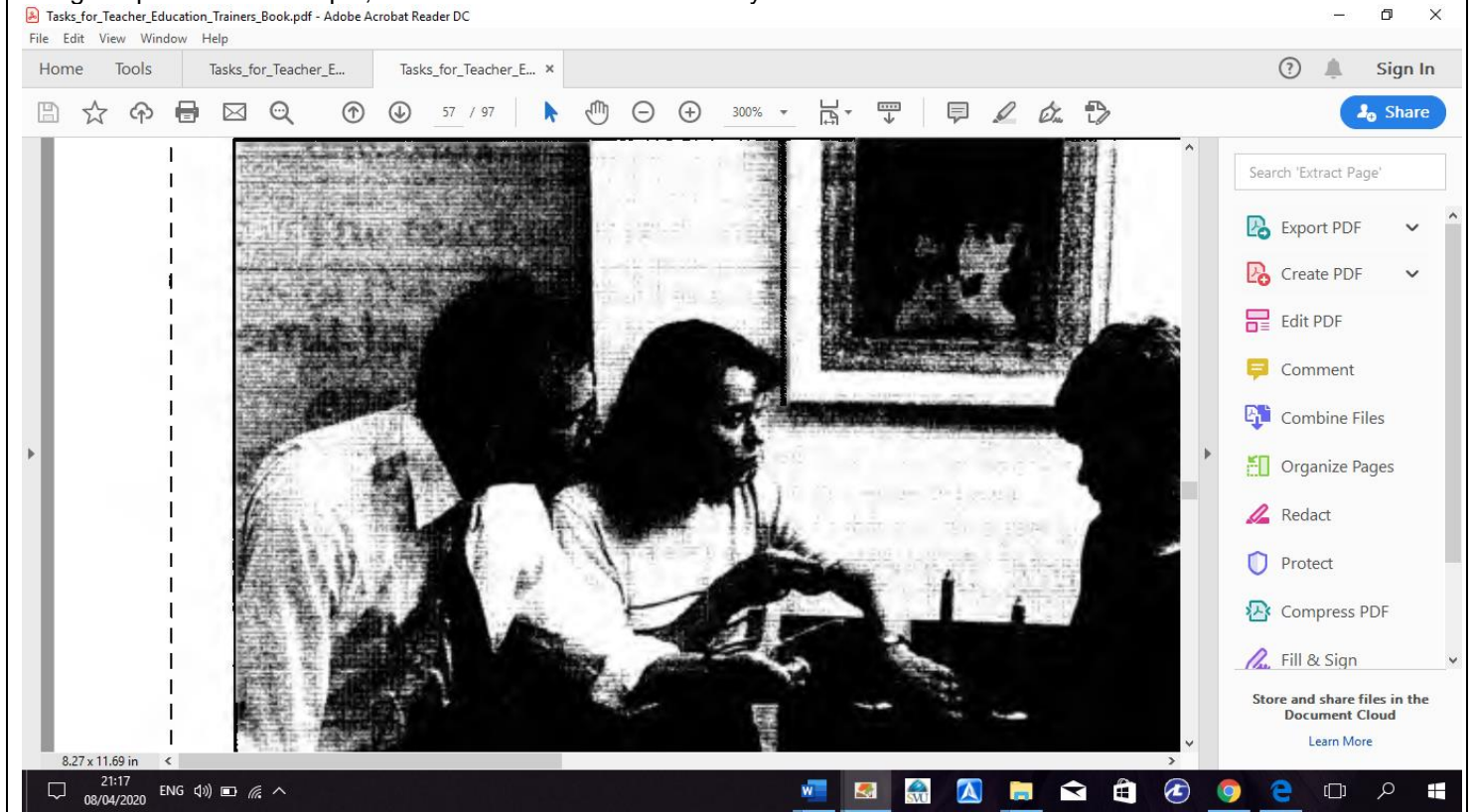
### Writing Task:

#### Coming Home

Jerry, a 14-year-old, arrives home. His parents told him to be home by 7 o'clock and it is now 11 o'clock. Write the dialogue between Jerry and his parents, just after he comes in the door.

### Pre-writing activity A: Using a picture Enas and Yara

You want to arouse your class's interest in the writing topic, by using a photograph. Create some questions for your class using the photo. For example, What time is it? Where has Jerry been?



### Pre-writing activity B: Listening Oula and Ahmad

You want your class to listen to the conversation that the parents are having just before the teenager arrives home. Invent a dialogue you think they might have, and record it on to a cassette or write it down to read out later. Then decide exactly how you will use the conversation as a pre-writing activity, by creating an activity for your class. Begin like this:

**Father:** I'm going to call the police.

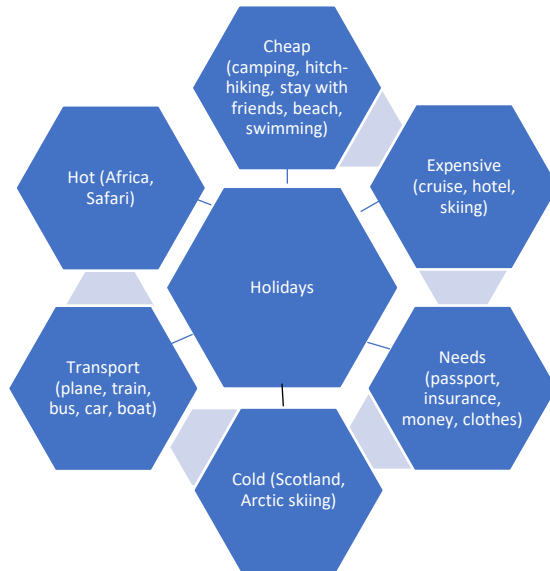
**Mother:** No, not yet. Let's just wait a few minutes longer.

### Pre-writing activity C: Brainstorming Abdullah

You want the class to think about some possible topics in the conversation between the teenager and his parents, in other words to brainstorm as many ideas as possible. Design some questions which will help the class to think about the topics of the conversation between the family members. For example, When you come home late, what questions do your parents ask you? or How do parents react when a teenager comes home late?

### Pre-writing activity D: Clustering Ameen

You want your class to brainstorm possible vocabulary that will be used in the conversation, using a technique called clustering or mind mapping. Here is an example of a mind map, using the word **holidays**. Think of a key word (or phrase) which you hope will produce vocabulary linked to your writing topic and which learners can use in their dialogue. Write the word up in the middle of the board and ask the class to shout out associated words or phrases. Accept any responses and put them on the mind map, grouping associated words together, until the board or page is covered with words.



**Send the activity you designed to my email by Sunday.**

#### Focus Questions to help you in this task:

- 1 What activity will the learners do?
- 2 How exactly will you set up your activity?
- 3 Will the learners work individually, in pairs, in small groups or as a whole class?
- 4 Which language skill(s) will they practise?
- 5 How long will your activity be?
- 6 What are the precise aims of your activity?