

Teaching Writing for the Russian State Exam

Tatyana Kuznetsova



What have you written?

- In pairs or small groups make a list of all the things you have written in the last week
- Discuss the following questions:
- Who were you writing the items to or for?
- Were there differences in the way you wrote each of them?
- How were they different from speaking?

Good writing skills

Here are some subskills required for effective writing. Can you add more?

- Spelling
- Punctuation
- Layout
- More?



What is special about writing for the exam?

- The students are more motivated
- Task-based activity
- The ability to reading and analysing the rubric and task input or underlining key words
- Target reader
- How will it be assessed?
- How to get the highest point?

Planning a writing lesson

- Generating ideas
- Focusing ideas
- Focus on a model text
- Organising ideas
- Writing
- Peer evaluation
- Reviewing

Opinion essay

Opinion essay is a formal piece of essay which presents the author's point of view on a particular subject supported by reasons and examples. The opposing viewpoint is also suggested, it goes with arguments that show that it is unconvincing.

Fact or opinion?

- Write two facts about a pop group
- Write two opinions about a pop group
- Write two facts about school
- Write two facts about school

A 5 sentence paragraph

- The explanation
 1. Topic sentence gives the idea you are going to read about
 2. 3 detailed sentences about the first
 3. The ending sentence with the same idea of the first but in different words
- The application
- The production

Good vs bad idea activity

This essay is going to look at whether should school uniform be worn at school

- I think that school uniform.....

Good idea:

Bad idea....

A successful opinion essay

- An introduction where the topic and the author's opinion are stated clearly
- Viewpoints are supported by reasons
- Opposing viewpoints
- In conclusion the main points of view are summarized and the author's opinion is related to other words.

Useful tips

- Decide your opinion as for the topic discussed and paraphrasing the statement
- Make a list of viewpoints and reasons supporting your point of view
- Write well developed paragraphs
- Use linking words
- Start each paragraph with a topic sentence

How to express your opinion

- In my opinion
- It seems to me
- The way I see it
- To my mind
- I strongly agree/disagree
- My opinion is that
- As far as I am concerned
- I strongly believe

To list points

- First of all
- Firstly, secondly, lastly
- To start with
- To begin with
- On the one hand

To add more points

- Also
- Moreover
- Furthermore
- In addition
- Besides
- Apart from this
- Another major reason

Contrasting viewpoints

- On the other hand
- However
- It is argued that
- Opponents of this way say
- Although
- In contrast

To introduce examples

- For example
- For instance
- Such as
- In particular
- Especially

To conclude

- To sum up
- In conclusion
- All in all
- All things considered
- Taking everything into account

Dos and don'ts

- Write in a formal style
- Introduce the topic clearly
- State clear topic sentences
- Use generalizations
- Use quotations
- Don't use colloquial expressions
- Don't use short forms
- Don't use emotive vocabulary
- Don't use overgeneralizations
- Don't use statistics without proper referencing
- Don't give personal examples

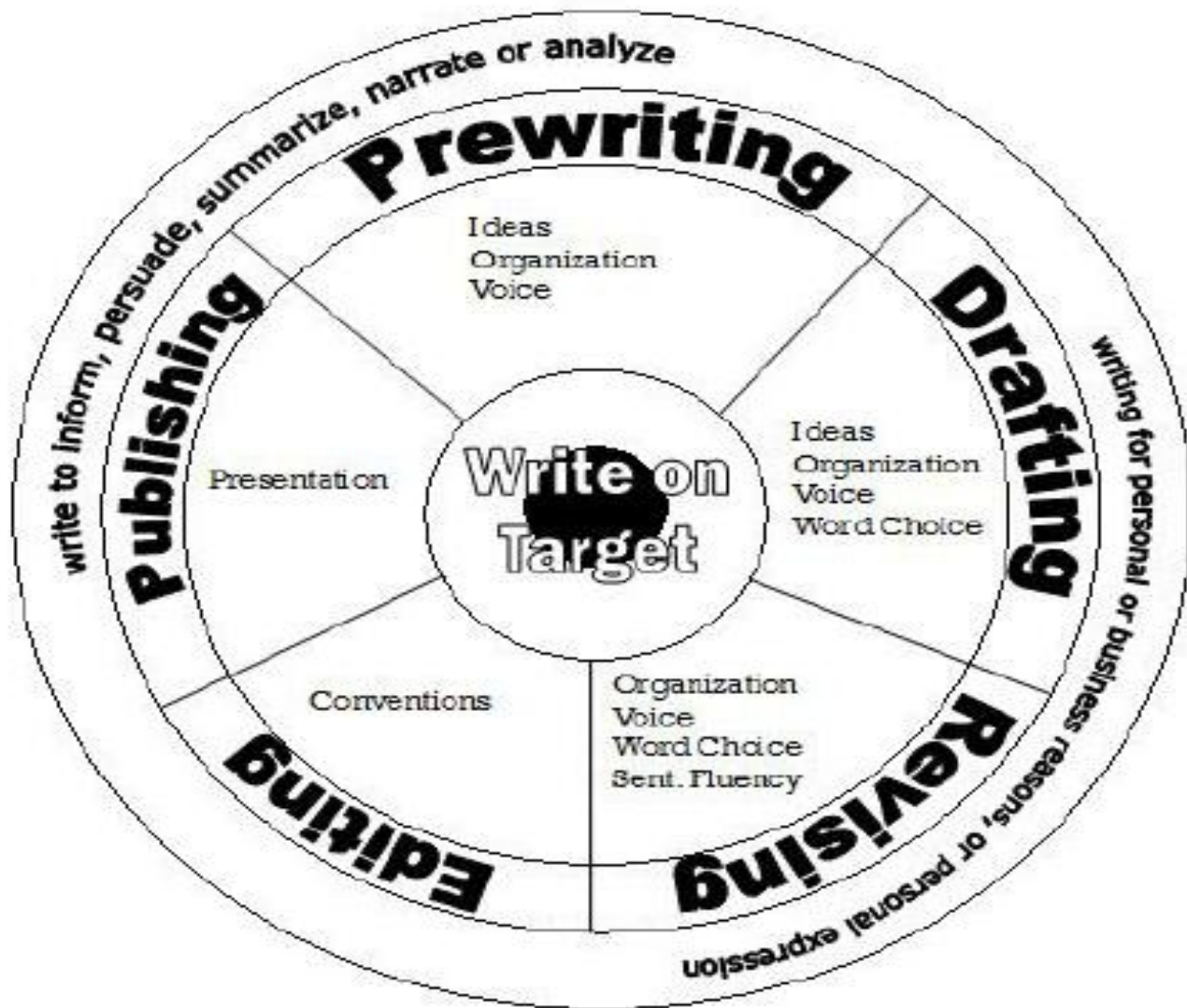
Writer's checklist

- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Organization
- Overall effect

The Northern Nevada Writing Project's

Secondary Writing Guide

resources and ideas for teachers who use writing as a means to promote student thinking



Useful sites

- www.teachingenglish.org.uk
- <http://writingfix.com/>
- <http://www.colorincolorado.org/educators/teach>

Good luck !