



Discursive writing

Lesson plan		
Learning objectives:	To understand the purpose and structure of discursive / discussion-based writing. To explore a balanced approach to presenting multiple viewpoints.	
Lesson objectives:	To practise planning and writing a discursive response.	
Vocabulary:	Balance / tone	
Previous learning:	This lesson is done before persuade and argue lessons.	
Plan		
Activities		Resources
Beginning (5 mins)	What makes a good discussion? Objective is for learners to build awareness of the balanced nature and reflective tone of discursive writing. Display this question: <i>‘Should animals be kept in zoos?’</i> In pairs or small groups, learners list: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advantages of zoos• Disadvantages of zoos Take quick feedback and introduce the idea of discursive writing: they are not arguing for a side but exploring different sides objectively and reflectively.	Power point slides. Could use mini white boards for learners to make notes on.
Middle (50 mins)	Explicit teaching of how to structure discursive writing (10 minutes) Use the slides to introduce a common structure for discursive essays: 1. Introduction outlining the issue	Power Point slides.

Lesson plan

2. Paragraphs for each side 2 or 3 (Point > Evidence > Reflection/consideration)
3. Consideration of grey areas/issues/problems
4. Conclusion: balanced reflection (not necessarily a firm stance on either side)

Emphasise **tone** as formal and neutral.

Emphasise connectives to guide balance (e.g., 'on the one hand...', 'it could be argued...', 'a further consideration...'), and fair reasoning.

Scaffold planning (15 minutes)

Give learners the discursive statement: *'Is technology making us less social?'*

Individually or in pairs, learners complete the discussion planner worksheet:

- For / Against
- Notes on examples and consequences

Take short feedback – encourage less obvious, more thoughtful and sophisticated points.

Individual writing (20 minutes).

Use planning notes to write the introduction and one paragraph from each perspective

Encourage use of neutral, thoughtful language.

Circulate for support and feedback.

Discussion planner worksheet.

End (5 mins)

Review and reflect.

Swap work with peer. Read example of writing and then leave feedback using the prompts on the slides. Finally leave a 'What worked well' and 'Even better if...') comment.

Slide review prompt.

Additional Information

Lesson plan

Differentiation

Circulate during writing to support and monitor.
Learners could extend their work by completing the whole written piece.

Assessment

Give feedback for development during circulation/writing time.
Learners can use the peer feedback 'What worked well' and 'Even better if to develop own writing.

Reflection and evaluation

Reflection:

Were the lesson objectives realistic?

What did the learners learn today?

What was the learning atmosphere like? Did my planned differentiation work well? Did I stick to timings?

What changes did I make from my plan and why?

Summary evaluation

What two things went really well? (Consider both teaching and learning.)

- 1.
- 2.

What two things would have improved the lesson? (Consider both teaching and learning.)

- 1.
- 2.

What have I learned from this lesson about the class or individuals that will inform my next lesson?

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