

UNIT 3 DEVELOPMENT OF WRITING SKILL

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3.1 INTRODUCTION

Writing skill, as you know, are among the basic language skills. But of the four language skills, writing is the most difficult. It can be said that writing is nothing but putting down signs and symbols on paper to represent the sounds that we speak. But, as a matter of fact, this is just the first stage in the process of writing. A number of subskills are involved in the skill of writing. The learner has to acquire certain mechanical abilities like forming the letters of the alphabet correctly. Writing words and sentences neatly and legibly leaving space between words, etc., writing in straight lines over the indicated space, using punctuation marks and so on. But this is not all. All this may be termed as mechanics of writing. Effective writing demand much more than this. After acquiring the above mentioned mechanical abilities, a writer also has to think and plan mentally what s/he is going to say and how best s/he can say it.

Writing, like speaking, is also a medium of communication. Writing, however, is a more difficult exercise than speaking. In speaking, the listener is present before us and thus, we can observe his/her reaction and modify our speech accordingly. But in writing, since the reader is not present before us, there is no instant interaction and feedback, and thus we are not in a position to clarify our ideas beyond what we have written. Further, in writing we have to pay greater attention to constructing grammatically correct and meaningful sentences and to organising and presenting our ideas in a sequential, logical and coherent manner. Then only will we be able to express ourselves clearly, precisely and explicitly through our writing.

In view of the above considerations, teaching of writing skills calls for much care and attention on the part of the teacher; more so from the teacher of the primary classes, as it is there that the foundation for effective writing skill is laid.

In this unit, therefore, we have discussed ways and means by which you will be able to help your pupils develop the desired skills to communicate effectively through the various forms of written expression.

3.2 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- write neatly, legibly and correctly the words, phrases and sentences;
- write grammatically correct sentences;
- write simple descriptive sentences, compositions, informal letters and dialogues; use appropriate words and phrases to express their ideas accurately; and
- express in writing their thoughts logically, clearly and precisely.

3.3 WRITING READINESS

Like reading, the skill of writing also requires acquiring certain experiences and some competencies by the learner to enable him/her to be "ready" for writing. By being "ready" what is meant is that before starting on formal writing, the learners have developed the following abilities/skills:

- i) eye-hand coordination.
- ii) finger muscle coordination and control,
- iii) visual discrimination (letter perception), i.e., competence to differentiate between different shapes and forms, and
- iv) directionality-habit of writing from left to right.

When the child is mature and ready for writing, he can be given certain specific experiences like drawing, painting, clay-modelling, cutting and pasting for collage etc., in addition to activities like threading beads or stringing leaves together. This should be followed by the making of various shapes i.e., circles, half-circles, strokes, slanting strokes, connected strokes and so on. All such activities will promote finer muscular control and eye-hand coordination leading to writing readiness.

These activities may be followed by such fun activities as joining dots, tracing shapes, copying different forms, colouring enclosed spaces, pattern making and writing within an indicated space.

In a classroom, children are making circles, half circles and strokes and also colouring enclosed spaces, etc.

Initially chalk and crayons should be used for these activities. Pencils are difficult to control and should be the last material children learn to hold.

Check Your Progress

Note: Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1. Given below are some incomplete statements. Under each statement three sentences are given. One of them completes the statement most appropriately. Choose the most appropriate sentence and encircle the alphabet (a), (b) or (c) given at the beginning of each of these sentences.
 - i) Writing is one of the language skills, that involves
 - a) a way which is almost all equal to the way of speaking.

- b) putting down on paper, signs and symbols to represent the sounds that we use in speaking, and
- c) the same procedure like reading skills.
- ii) Speaking is relatively easier than writing a language, because
 - a) speaking appears earlier than writing;
 - b) what we speak, we do not write it in our day to day life; and
 - c) speaking is easy to learn.
- iii) Writing involves thinking in a way of.....
 - a) fixing a particular time to write
 - b) determining the style of writing
 - c) planning mentally what we are going to express.
- iv) While we write, we think of writing something sequentially because ...
 - a) we usually write for a reader who in another person.
 - b) writing sequentially appears good
 - c) it requires more pages to write.

3.4 ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPING WRITING SKILLS

It has already been mentioned that in helping students learn to write, we need to assist them to develop certain subskills. There are several activities and games that we help in this regard especially in the early stages. In order to develop writing skills among your students you will have to adopt certain teaching learning strategies. These strategies are being presented here in the form of a few activities which could be practiced directly or by developing a few supplementary activities on your own. But these activities should be essentially enjoyable so that more interest can be generated.

3.4.1 Learning to Write Letters

As discussed earlier, in the development of writing skills, the primary stage goes basically through two phases:

- i) Development of ability and skill in the mechanical aspects of writing such as in:
 - a) Form and appearance
 - b) Hand-writing
 - c) Spelling; and
 - d) Punctuation (and in language like English capitalization also)
- ii) Development of skills to communicate in writing according to the need of the situation in grammatically correct language and in an explicit, coherent and logical manner.

Once the learner has been helped to get ready for writing, your next task is to help him/her acquire the above mentioned mechanical abilities in writing.

Suppose, you have to develop in them the following competence as listed in the Minimum Level of Learning (MLL) statement for language for Class I.

- a) Copy vowels, consonants, matras, conjunct letters,
- b) Writing (from dictation) consonants, vowels, matras and conjunct letters, and
- c) Write simple familiar words and simple sentences.

It is assumed that during the stage of writing readiness, learners have been given enough practice in making of various shapes i.e. circles, half-circles, strokes (horizontal, vertical, slanting and connected), etc.

In case the pupils have not gone through the stage of writing readiness (children who have not received preschool education), train them to master the different strokes mentioned above as all letter figures are combinations of such strokes.

Now analyse the alphabets of the language being taught by you (LI) in terms of shape, simplicity and complexity and on that basis develop an order of teaching them.

After you have decided the teaching order, give a demonstration on the blackboard showing them how the letter is formed. For this you may adopt the following strategy:

Stage 1

- a) Draw lines on the board, then write the letter (say "n") large enough for everyone to see.
- b) Tell the learners the sound for the letter and give some words in which the letter comes and ask them to repeat the name and sound of the letter.
- c) Show how to form the letter. Write it two or three times and describe the direction this way: look, it starts here, then down, back up again, then round and down. See that it stands on the line.
- d) The learners copy the letter in their notebooks. Ask them to write it several times (separately) along the line from left to right. Move around the class checking their work quickly. Initially students may be asked to draw the letter in the air. This will help them to feel the shape of the letter.

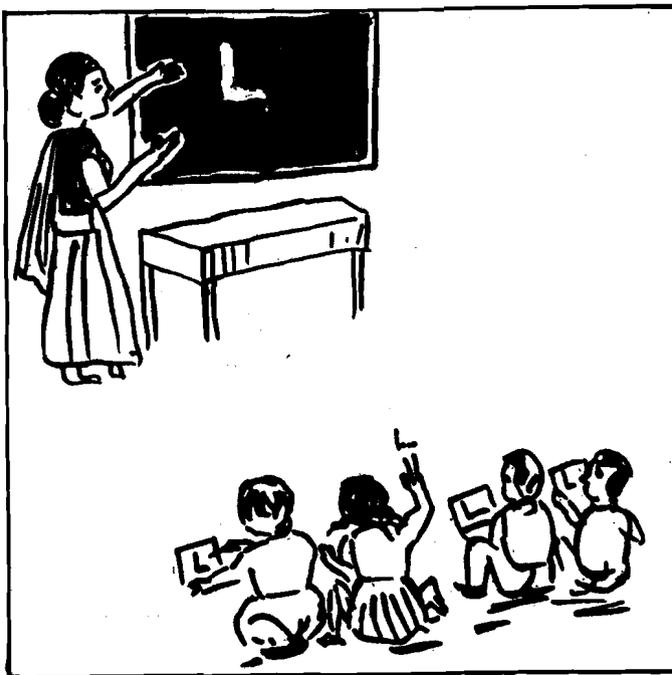


Fig. 3.1: The teacher is showing how to form L on the blackboard. Students are also trying to copy it in their notebooks and some children are drawing the letter in the air.

- e) Insist on regular transcription work—transcription on a model with bold lines first and dotted lines next. Which part of the letter should be confined to the middle line, which should go up and which should come down—check these aspects carefully.
- f) Help them learn to form other letters, proceeding from the simple to complex formations.

Stage 2

Once the learners have learnt the formation of vowels and consonants, give them practice of joining one letter to the other or writing the conjunct letters and the matras (vowel symbols). It can be done in the same way as individual letters.

Draw the joined letters, conjunct letters and the letters with the matras several times and describe the shape by demonstrating the formation movements. Ask the learners to copy several times, you should move round the class for checking.

Stage 3

After the learners have acquired enough practice in writing consonants, vowels, matras and conjunct letters, you can now proceed to the writing of words. Progressively increasing the level of difficulty. The simplest and most controlled form of practice is copying, as copying is a useful exercise where the focus is entirely on writing the words and producing words of their own.

Techniques like the following can make the task of copying interesting and challenging:

- Write a word on the board or show it on a flash card.
- Spell the words.
- Ask the students to write the word from memory.
- Go round the class quickly and check, making sure that the students have joined the letters together.
- Repeat the procedure with other words, and
- As a cross check, ask the individual student to come and write the word on the blackboard.

In this way the learners will have to think what they are writing and they will have to think of the word as a whole and not just as a series of letters.

Another way to make copying more interesting is to write the names of fruits and vegetables, animals and birds on the blackboard and ask the students to write them under separate heads as shown below:

	Fruits	Vegetables
Grape, Orange, Carrot, Potato, Brinjal, Tomato, Banana, Cabbage, Mango, Pea.	Orange	Potato
	Animals	Birds
Cow, Parrot, Buffalo, Goat, Sparrow, Pigeon, Hen, Elephant.	Cow	Parrot

In order to evaluate the pupils' learning you may make use of dictation. Initially give dictation of words with simple letters. Then with matras and then words with-conjunct letters. At a later stage sentences can be introduced where emphasis is being given to spacing as well as to the uniform size of the letters.

3.4.2 Developing a Neat and Legible Handwriting

Handwriting is the principal tool of written expression. As such it is obvious that for adequate communication the handwriting used must be legible.

Handwriting is formed in school life. You should, therefore, be particular about the handwriting of your students.

To develop a neat and legible handwriting, first of all you should give attention to the way they sit, hold pencil or pen and keep the paper/notebook on which they have to write. A good posture, correct holding of the pencil or pen and free and rhythmical arm and hand movements contribute significantly to a good handwriting.

Apart from the above, You should advise your students to keep in mind the following aspects:

- i) Correct formation of letters,
- ii) Uniform and adequate spacing between letters and words, and
- iii) Uniform slant of all letters.

As with any other aspect of teaching, the teaching of handwriting is most effective when both the teacher and the students have a favourable attitude towards handwriting. You as a teacher can help instil this attitude in your students by making certain that you form letters correctly and neatly, by holding the pen, pencil or chalk correctly, by writing smoothly and rhythmically and by being in a good posture.

In addition to this, the following suggestions may also be helpful:

- i) Provide practice frequently but for short durations,
- ii) Insist on neatness in writing. Proper margins, centering of headings, proper use of erasers should be emphasised,
- iii) Children should learn to evaluate their own performance,
- iv) Samples of children's writing should be collected at intervals for analysis of their errors by the other students and by the teachers, and
- v) Constant attention to all details by you is necessary for forming the habit of neat handwriting.

3.4.3 Mechanical Elements of Writing

You have to be careful about the mechanical elements of writing. There is no specific way to teach the mechanical elements of writing. There are a few essential principles which your students must remember. Mechanical elements of writing could be categorised into various parts and some of them are being discussed below:

- i) punctuation;
- ii) capitalization and titles; and
- iii) abbreviations and numbers.

i) Punctuation

Punctuation items are such marks as the comma, the full-stop, the apostrophe, hyphens, quotation marks, the question mark, the colon, the semi-colon, parentheses, and the dash, etc. Writing grammatical sentences makes no sense, unless your students know where to put a question mark or a colon or a semi-colon. Some exercises are given below to help you teach such marks to the primary grades.

Activity 1

Below are some of the punctuation marks. Ask your students to speak orally while making these marks in their copies.

- | | |
|---|---------|
| a) Full stop | (.) |
| b) Comma | (,) |
| c) Interrogation mark | (?) |
| d) Exclamation mark | (!) |
| e) Colon | (:) |
| f) Semi-colon | (;) |
| g) Parentheses | (()) |
| h) Dash | (—) |
| i) Quotation marks (quotes and em quotes) | (" ") |
| j) Hyphen | (-) |
| k) Apostrophe as in | (Ram's) |

Activity 2

Explain to the students in a tabular form (as given below) where to put the following marks. For example —

Punctuation	Where to put	Example
1) Full stop	At the end of an assertive sentence or to write an abbreviation.	Hari Road—Rd. Mister—Mr.
2) Comma	To separate a series of words in the same constructon.	He writes essay neatly, quickly and correctly.
3) Interrogation mark	At the end of a sentence in which some question has asked.	Is he coming?
4) Exclamation mark	At the end of a statement showing exclamation.	What a beautiful place!

Activity 3

Students of upper primary level can be asked to rewrite the following paragraph by putting punctuation marks in the appropriate places.

Mohan come here shouted the class teacher inside the class room Mohan could suddenly guess why he is called by the class teacher He stood up and went to the teacher Why did not you come to school yesterday asked the

teacher I was ill Sir replied Mohan Why are you lying teacher shouted again Your mother had rung me up and asked whether you were in school or not As I could not find you in the school I replied accordingly to your mother class teacher added I'm sorry sir I promise not to do so in the near future Mohan apologised It's all right You can go now class teacher said

ii) Capitalization and Titles

Students should be taught where to capitalize a letter or a letter of a word and how to write titles. You will experience your students' progress, if you can conduct the following activities in an effective way.

Activity 4

Ask students to write down each sentence at least once in the space given to the right side of the sentence.

The old-man is walking.

I am writing with a pencil.

Shyam gave a book to Madhu.

Activity 5

Ask students to rewrite the following paragraph with capitalization and title in the appropriate place.

"hey-binu! where are you going?" asked raju." I am just going down to the market:' binu said. "what for?" raju questioned. "I need an exercise copy for mathematics:' binu replied. "come with me to my house. I would give you a new one:' raju said.

Clue: Raju and Binu are the names of two persons.

Activity 6

Ask your students to put a cross inside the boxes given against each statement where capitalization is required.

- a) The first letter in a sentence. (.....)
- b) The first letter of any proper noun. (.....)
- c) The first letter of some important words. (.....)
- d) If any title is written, the first letter of the title. (.....)

iii) Abbreviations and Numbers

Students should be made aware of certain abbreviations or short forms of some words which are frequently used in writing. This is done since writing the full form of the word may take more space and time. Also, the abbreviation may be convenient to write. Here are some activities in this connection.

Activity 7

Ask your students to rewrite (and repeat orally) the following abbreviations:

Department - Deptt.

Example - My friend Mohan is doing B.Ed. from the Deptt. of Education, Roorkee University.

Deputy - Dy.

- Example - Mr. Ram is working as Dy. Registrar in a university.
 District - Distt.
 Example - My home town is in Distt. Gulbarga of Karnataka.
 Mister - Mr.
 Example - Mr. Ashok is Mohan's father.

Remember, students should not be encouraged to use the short form of the words (abbreviations) frequently. Rather they should be encouraged to use abbreviations in some specific cases such as writing something within a limited space or within a limited time.

If a question is asked "How many people died in the road mishap?" Some young students may write "50 people died in the mishap." This type of answer may not be applicable everywhere. It is definitely not done to start a sentence with numerals. Anyone starting a sentence with numerals should be asked to write starting the sentence with words. Example: "Fifty people died in the mishap".

3.4.4 Learning to Spell Correctly

The ability to spell is surely needed by children in order to carry on their school work successfully and as a preparation for their later study and for their adult life.

All elementary schools should give attention to spelling. How well children learn to spell depends primarily upon their attitude toward spelling. When an attitude of concern for correct spelling has been developed, the children will make efforts to spell words correctly. Therefore as an elementary teacher, your main goal in spelling teaching should be to give your pupils both a consciousness of correct spelling and a spelling conscience—a 'kind of compulsion for correct written expression'. In the words of Tomkinson, 'spellings are caught rather than taught'. Attitudes may be improved if you follow the practices given below:

- i) Having the children study only those words which testing has shown them to be unable to spell. This implies a pretest before spelling instruction.
- ii) Regarding spelling as something important for good communication. This regard may be shown by your own correct spelling and your insistence upon correct spelling of words in children's written work.
- iii) Making children individually, and as a class, aware of their progress in learning spelling. This means the keeping of progress charts so that each child may know his and his class's achievement level.
- iv) Teaching no more words in a given period than a child can successfully learn to spell. Repeated failures simply bring on more failures and frustration.
- v) Making sure that the words the children are learning to spell are words that are important to them in their own writing. You should make your students also aware of the importance of these words by making them realise the frequency of their use in the reading material and written work meant for students.

Spellings, it must be remembered, are more a matter of the eye than of the ear. The eye must get used to the details of a word and detect the mistake, if there is any. The ability to detect a mistake by eye comes through familiarity, and familiarity comes through repeated association with words. You, as a teacher, should collect the common mistakes of your pupils and make them familiar with them by constantly writing them on the blackboard and making the pupils practise them in their notebooks. It is a good practice to ask the students to write the mis-spelt words a number of times. But, remember, never write a wrong spelling on the blackboard to inquire which of the two spellings is correct, because the wrong spelling has as much chance of sticking in

the memory as the correct one. Every effort should be made that correct habits of spellings are formed and incorrect avoided.

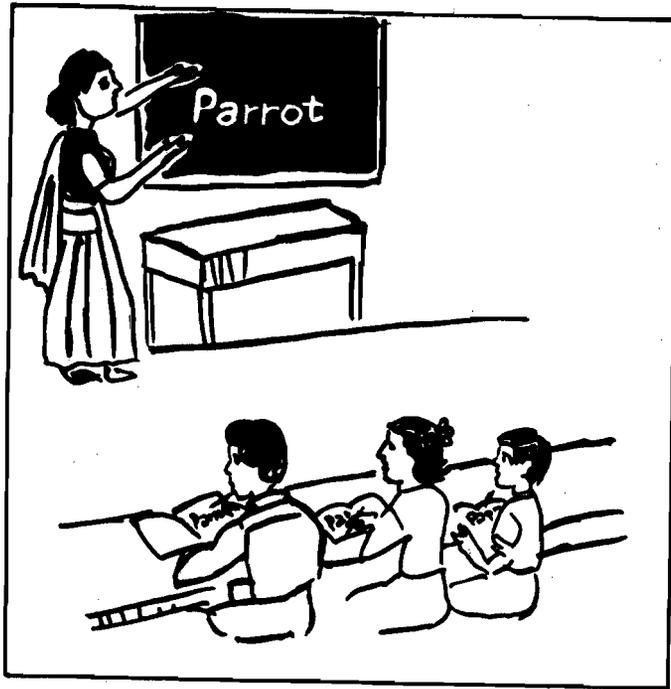


Fig. 3.2: A Teacher is writing 'Parrot' on the Blackboard and the Children are also writing in their Copies

3.4.5 Dictation as a Technique for Developing Writing Skills

Once upon a time, dictation was regarded as a means of improving the spellings of the pupils. It may be true of some schools even now. But now, by and large, it is being accepted that "dictation does not and cannot teach spellings". Dictation nowadays has been regarded as a technique to train pupils to listen carefully, concentrate for the time being and retain what is being spoken and reproduce it in good handwriting at a reasonable speed. Listening to dictation demands concentration on the part of pupils. Besides concentration, it is an exercise in retention and writing neatly and legibly with a good speed.

In dictation, adopting the following procedure would be helpful:

- i) Before dictating a passage, the main idea of the passage should be briefly explained. If the passage is taken from their book, you should point out the story or the lesson from which it is taken. This helps prepare the pupils' minds for what is coming.
- ii) Now read the passage once.
- iii) Write the difficult words on the blackboard. Allow pupils to look carefully at them for two to three minutes before you rub them out. In case of classes I and II where, instead of a passage, vowels and consonants and words are to be dictated, you should write the letters and words on the blackboard. Ask the students to observe them carefully and, then remove them from the board and dictate. The purpose is to help them remember the letter formations.
- iv) While dictating a passage you should carefully group the words you are going to speak at one time. These words should be neither too few nor too many in number. They should be spoken once or at the most twice with small children. The habit of repeating them several times should be avoided. One purpose is to train the children to listen carefully.

- v) In the end, read the passage/words once again so that any omissions that there might have been may be made good.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Write your answer in the space given below.
b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit

2. Write down four major activities that are meant for developing writing skills.

- i)
- ii)
- iii)
- iv)

3. Write down one sentence each where the interrogation mark and the exclamation mark are to be used.

.....

.....

.....

.....

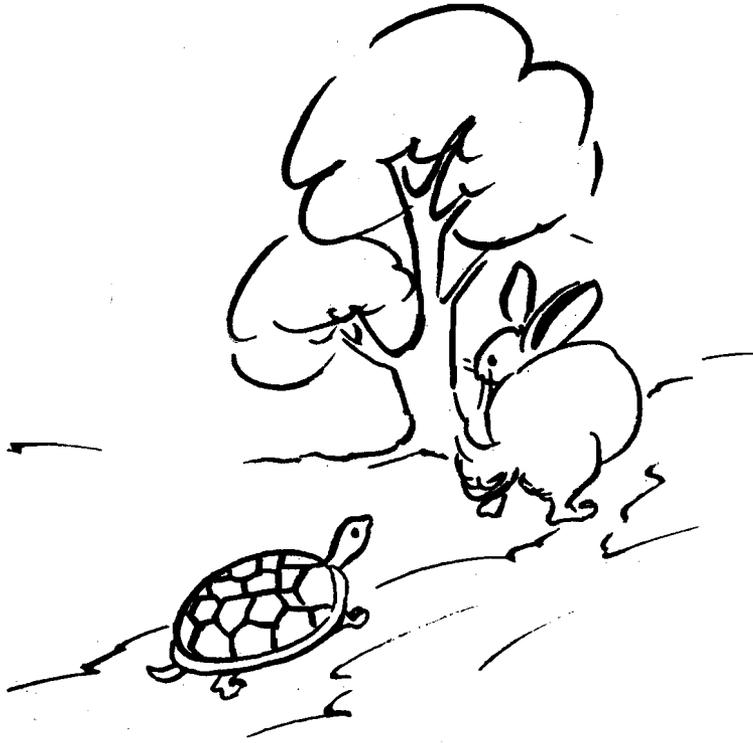
3.5 WRITTEN COMPOSITION

Written composition includes paragraphing, story writing, comprehension, essay writing, letter-writing and dialogue writing. When we talk about developing students' ability for written composition, we essentially focus on their ability to write a paragraph or a story, comprehend ideas, and write an essay, letter or dialogues in the elementary grades. As such it is desirable that you should help your students to develop their ability in all these areas of written composition. Of course, as in other activities, there are linkages among the activities that are meant for developing students' ability for any type of written composition.

3.5.1 Paragraphing

In a paragraph, students are expected to write a few sentences which would introduce the subject matter, then the supportive details, i.e., more ideas or information to be written and finally a few sentences must be written to conclude the paragraph. You can start paragraph writing by showing a picture to your students and asking them to write a paragraph on the picture. Students can be asked to write paragraphs on parents, friends and the class-teacher. In upper primary classes, children can be asked to write paragraphs on the places they have seen. If you ever go with your students to any place on a trip or tour, ask them to write a paragraph about the place on the spot. Some such activities are discussed below.

Ask your students to write a paragraph on the picture shown below:



Activity 9

Ask your students to write a paragraph about their mother, father, the postman, and animals (e.g. the cow, the goat, the cat, pet dogs).

3.5.2 Story

A story essentially talks about a person, things, places, personalities etc. Students may vary from one another in writing a story but there must be unity and order among the paragraphs of the story written.

In story writing, the students' previous knowledge plays a major role. Whenever we write a story, we essentially think of our own knowledge and experience of the particular story; then we select the ideas and put them in the form of a few paragraphs. Hence, when you ask your students to write a story, check whether the topic (on which you have asked them to write) is familiar to them. In the language learning classes, our main focus is on the achievement of competence among the learners. If you have chosen a topic like "Village Life" for your students then those who have come from an urban background may not be able to depict a real picture of village life in comparison to the students with a rural background. Students who are able to write might have seen or read from books about village life. So, whatever they have written, you have to check whether they have come up with valid information about village life and how they have maintained unity and order and how realistic their stories are.

3.5.3 Comprehension of Written Material

Another aspect of composition concerns comprehension of something written. To develop students' ability to comprehend a given paragraph is one of the writing skills.

A comprehension exercise consists of a passage on which a few questions are asked. Comprehension exercises are designed to assess students' ability to understand the content of a passage to infer information from the passage and to write the answers.

Hence it is a common activity for developing both reading and writing skills. In writing comprehension, students essentially read the given passage and then answer. It is of equal importance to both the skills of reading and writing skills.

Students in these type of activities generally copy the lines or statements as it is from the given passage. But once they are able to make out the meaning from a text it will not be a problem for them to write the answers on their own instead of simply copying from the passage. Encourage your students to answer in their own words.

Before you start with written comprehension exercises among your students, check whether they are able to:

- i) construct grammatical sentences;
- ii) put punctuation marks in the appropriate place;
- iii) infer information or ideas from a text;
- iv) write answers on their own; and
- v) write answers in their own language (they must not copy the language written in the passage or text).

You are well aware with the comprehension exercises at the elementary grade. What we do in comprehension activities is we generally select a few interesting passages and ask students to read them one by one and write answers to the questions. We also consider the complexity level of the text in comparison with the level of the students. At the elementary level you should select those passages which are very easy to understand as well as familiar to the students. Initially you should start by giving simple texts to read and asking students to answer questions related to "who" "when", "what" and "where"

We have discussed an activity below for written comprehension, where you have to see the differences in terms of answers.

Activity 10

Ask students to read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow:

Passage

"Amar saw a snake on the road while he was going to school. He was about to reach market. Oh! "This snake is coming towards me and it is a wild cobra", Amar thought. He turned back and started running. Mohammed was coming with his bullock-cart loaded with sand from the Salandi river. "Hey, Amar! why are you running?"

Mohammed asked, "There is a snake running behind me, I am afraid of it", Amar replied.

"Come up and sit on my cart; I will help you reach your school," Mohammed said. Amar was late in reaching the school that day.

Set A

- Q.1 Who saw the snake?
- Q.2 What did Amar see on the road?
- Q.3 Who was coming in his bullock-cart?
- Q.4 What is the name of the river?
- Q.5 What is the name of the snake?

Q.1 Why was Amar late in reaching school that day?

OR

How did Mohammed help Amar reach school?

OR

What did Amar do when he saw a snake on the road?

Students' answer on both sets of questions will definitely vary. And it is much easier for the students to answer set-A questions because these questions do not demand long answers like Set-B questions.

3.5.4 Essay

Essay writing is also a written composition activity where students are to express their personal ideas and opinions on a given topic.

As we have discussed earlier the skills are interrelated. You can guess this from the fact that those students who cannot write a paragraph will not be able to write an essay.

Developing students' ability to write an essay emphasizes first of all their thinking ability. How well do your students think, how well they recall the related pieces of information, and how well do they organise their thoughts and information and express them are some of the aspects to be given importance while guiding your students to write an essay on a given topic.

At the primary stage, when you select topics on which you expect your students to write an essay, you must be sure that the topic is :

- i) known or familiar to the students;
- ii) related to their common life experiences;
- iii) being seen, observed, or felt by the students;
- iv) being read somewhere; and
- v) interesting for students.

3.5.5 Letter

By and large all of us agree that the most important written language activity anyone of us engages in is letter-writing. At some time or the other everyone needs to write informal or formal letters. You, as a teacher, must teach your students how to write a letter. Initially they are to be taught how to write a letter to a friend, the parents, the teachers, the relatives etc. Later on they may be given training in writing formal letters.

A letter can be written in various ways, but there are some standard norms on the basis of which we can say it is a letter. These norms are discussed below:

i) Writing the Heading

The Heading of a letter provides the information almost "the place" and "the date". Heading is generally written at the top right corner of the paper. It should be well punctuated, so that the reader can understand the address. A written format of a heading is given below:

September 17, 1997

Dear Prof. Gautam,

This is to inform you that a meeting is being convened on September 28, 1997 at 11.30 a.m. to finalise the format of Self-Instructional Material for distance learners. The venue will be the Conference Room. It is therefore requested to confirm your participation in this meeting.

With regards.

Yours sincerely,

(Neha Mathur)

Prof. Y. S. Gautam
A-99, Azad Apartments
I.I.T. Gate
New Delhi.

ii) How to Address

When we write a letter to somebody we must call him/her "something" in a written form.

a) Letters to family members should be addressed like

- Dear Father/My dear Father
- Dear Mother/My dear Mother
- Dear Uncle

b) Letters to your friend should be addressed like

- Dear Madhu
- Dear Shri Mohan
- Dear Shri Das
- Dear Padmini

c) Letters to teachers –

- Dear Sir

iii) How to End a letter

A letter must not be ended just by writing the writer's name, rather it should be ended in one of the following manners:

- Yours affectionately (to parents and elder relatives)
- Your affectionate friend, Your sincere friend
- Yours truly, Truly Yours, Yours very truly
- Yours sincerely. Sincerely yours
- Yours faithfully.

A dialogue means talk between two persons. At the primary stage, students should be guided to practise dialogue writing because it is one of the interesting strategies to develop written composition capability. You can help your students write dialogues on the basis of some such activities.

Activity 11

Ask students to rewrite the following sentences.

- a) Mother said, "Drink the milk",
- b) Father said, "Do not jump like that"
- c) Hari said, "My father is at Bangalore"

Activity 12

Ask students to write the following instructions by adding "Teacher said" at the beginning. For example: Teacher said, "Keep your houseclean".

- a) Keep your dress clean.
- b) Keep your teeth clean.
- c) Cross the road safely.
- d) Do not laugh at blind people.

Activity 13

Ask two students to stand in front of the whole class and prompt them to say the following dialogues. At the end ask your students to write the statements made by both of them.

A Dialogue

- Rahul — Hello, Pooja! Where are you coming from?
 Pooja — Hello, Rahul ! I'm getting back from market.
 Rahul — What's that Pooja!
 Pooja — Where?
 Rahul — In your left hand.
 Pooja — Oh! It's a pencil.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Write your answer in the space given below.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

4. Write four topics on which you may ask your students to write stories.

- i)
- ii)
- iii)
- iv)

5. Read the following statements carefully. Put a (✓) mark against the statement you think is correct and a (×) mark against the one you think incorrect
- i) In paragraph writing students need not write sentences while concluding the paragraph.
 - ii) In story writing students' previous knowledge plays a major role.
 - iii) There is no linkage among the activities that are meant for developing students ability in writing composition.
 - iv) At the end of a letter it is enough to write just the name of the writer.

3.6 CORRECTION WORK AND EVALUATION

The correction of written work is a major problem that a teacher faces. Being a teacher you cannot avoid it, rather you should try to check as much as you can. Some of the solutions have been discussed below:

- i) One solution would be to ask the learners to exchange note-books. This would serve very well, where the exercise requires something like filling in the blanks, dictation or a spelling exercise, or is based on usage.
- ii) The learners can work in groups. Cooperative activity with guidance from the teacher encourages students to do their best. The weaker learners are assisted by their more advanced colleagues. There are also fewer note books to be corrected.
- iii) Free composition and letter writing require individual correction, but the amount of correction work required will be significantly reduced if these are introduced to them in a phased manner and are preceded by oral work.
- iv) All written work whether guided or free must be preceded by oral drilling. This will help the writer to be clear in his mind about what he wants to write and how he is going to arrange his matter.

Traditional or routine methods of evaluation take a great deal of time and, as a result, teachers are hesitant to assign written work. This of course only compounds the problem, because no one can learn to write without writing.

There are, however, certain ways in which correction of written work can not only be simplified but made more effective.

- Our primary focus in evaluating written work should NOT be the detection and correction of errors alone. Of course mistakes should not be ignored entirely, but if we point out how a piece of writing is defective, we should also point out where the writer has been successful.
- In a real life situation, even good writers examine, evaluate and improve their own written work. It is important, therefore, to train students to identify and correct their own mistakes. It is also helpful to make students work in groups or pairs, so that they can discuss what they are writing.
- Students can be trained to diagnose and correct their own mistakes by gradual stages. To help them, the teacher can follow this procedure.
 - a) Underline the mistake and mention what it is.
 - b) Underline the mistake and let them work out what is wrong.
 - c) Mention in the margin that there is a mistake but do not point it out.
 - d) Put a cross in the margin for each mistake.

- You should, however, correct the mistakes that the students cannot correct for themselves.
- A mistake should not only be corrected but explained also. Explain a mistake.
- Use the mistake as a basis for remedial teaching.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Write your answer in the space given below.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

6. Complete the following incomplete statements. The first one has been done for you as an example.

i) Although correction of written work is a major problem, **it must not be avoided.**

ii) One solution would be to ask learners

.....

iii) Learners can work in groups where

.....

iv) Free composition and letter-writing are to be introduced in a phased manner to

.....

v) All written work whether guided or free must be

.....

vi) Traditional or routine methods of evaluation

.....

vii) Our primary focus in evaluating written work should not be

.....

3.7 LET US SUM UP

We have discussed, in brief, the importance of writing skills and writing readiness, different activities for developing writing skills, written composition, and correction work and evaluation in writing at elementary grade. While discussing different activities for developing writing skills among the elementary grade students, activities that are legible handwriting, learning to spell correctly and use of dictation were discussed. Under written composition activities on paragraph-writing, story-writing, essay-writing

have also been discussed. Being a teacher, how you can solve your day-to-day problem of correcting students written work had also been attended to by giving some solutions.

3.8 UNIT-END EXERCISES

1. What do you mean by writing readiness?
2. Why is it important to teach the writing skills?
3. What activities you should conduct among the students for developing writing skills?
4. What guidance will you give learners in Class IV, who are writing a paragraph on "My Summer Holidays"?
5. How can you help students develop written composition?
6. Write down the ways on which you make correction work?

ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. (i) b. (ii) a. (iii) c. (iv) a.
2. i) Learning to write letters.
ii) Developing neat and legible handwriting.
iii) Learning to spell correctly.
iv) Mechanical elements of writing.
3. Interrogation mark —
i) What is your name?
ii) Where are you going?
Exclamation mark —
i) What a lovely day!
ii) Hurray! We have won the match.
4. i) Faithfulness ii) Herdwork iii) Equality iv) Unity
5. i) (×), ii) (√) iii) (√) iv) (×)
6. ii) to exchange their note book.
iii) weaker learners are to be assisted by their more advanced colleagues
iv) reduce the burden of individual correction.
v) preceded by oral drilling.
vi) take a great deal of time.
vii) detection and correction of errors alone.