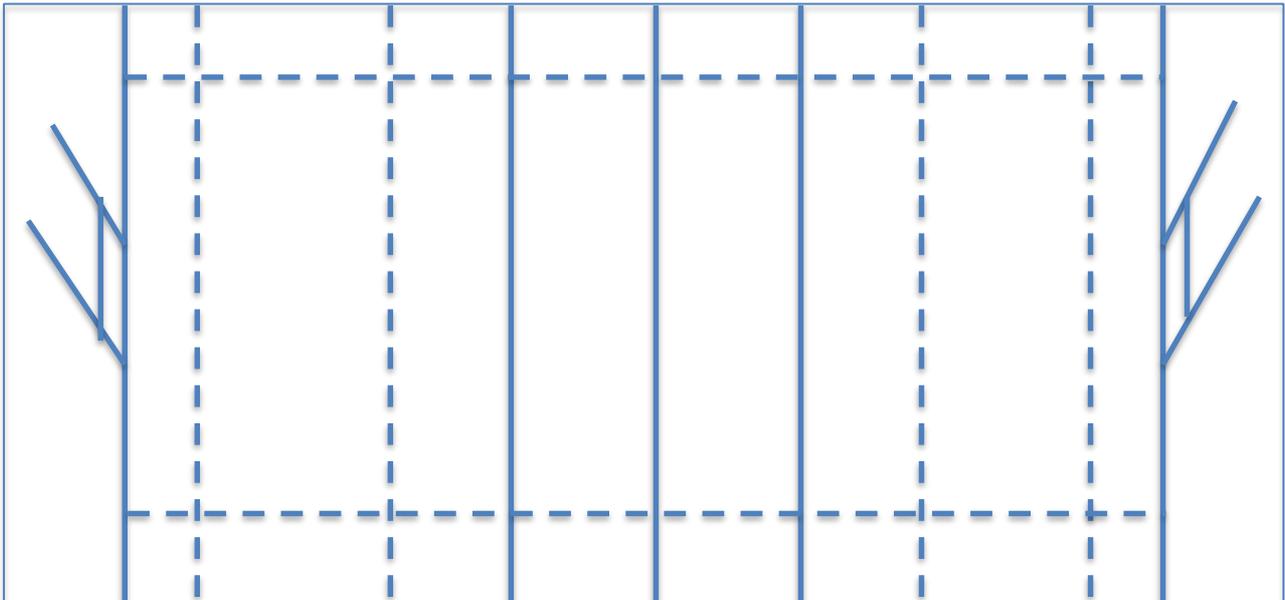


Simon Williams is at Queen Charlotte College. He has shared two strategies. The first he calls Rugby! It's a quiz game that develops subject specific vocabulary and knowledge. He suggests it also helps build positive relationships and provides opportunities to review previous learning.

Rugby

To prepare draw a rugby field on your board and set the teams up as if there is a scrum on the halfway line, towards one of the touchlines.



To 'play':

- Set Scrum on half way
- Have both sets of backs lined up ready to receive the ball – one winger on their own for a blindside move
- Have a whole class question to see which side wins “possession of the ball” from the scrum – hands up, no shouting (penalty three points to opposition if you shout).
- The team that wins the ball can choose to either have a 5-part answer – pass along the line – or a harder blindside question with one answer
 - **The 5-part answers can be keywords from a topic/synonyms & antonyms/character names from a studied text, etc.**
 - **The blindside move would be a question defining or describing a subject/topic specific idea/technique, etc.**
- If they answer correctly they score a try – 5pts
- *If they get an answer wrong – knock-on, the opposition have a chance to pick the ball up and score themselves by completing the answers*
- After scoring a try, a spelling question is used for a conversion
- A team can go for a drop-goal, a spelling question, once they win possession

You can allocate positions to students so they have to answer specific questions, or you can use hands up but no one can answer more than once during a round, or use hands up and you can't answer twice in a row...the choice is yours!

Simon's second strategy is called Automatic Writing. It's an adaptation of two ideas. Simon has used it for descriptive writing and also to help students prepare for exam writing.

Automatic Writing:

Give the topic of the writing to the student – initially this will be a piece of descriptive writing, e.g. a character is going on a journey [literal or metaphorical]. Give the students a moment or two to consider the topic.

Tell the students that you are going to introduce random words and phrases that they have to incorporate into their story – with the story still making sense, naturally.

Give the students the number of words or phrases – so they know how many to expect AND inform them that the last word/phrase will be the last words of the story. (I usually go with 8 as a general rule – this leads to between 10-15mins of writing – depending on how far you space your timings out.)

When given the instruction to start, all students MUST start writing their story. If they have not thought of something to write about they MUST write “blah blah blah...” until something comes to mind – reason why below.

As you introduce the word/phrase be specific:

“Start your next sentence with...”

“The next sentence must include...”

“Finish the sentence you are writing with...” etc.

Once you have given them their last word/phrase and they have finished writing – get them to count how many words they have written (blahs included).

Outcomes:

1. The students will be amazed at how much they write.
2. Students will want to share their amazing creativity with you and the class.
3. As they write and incorporate the words/phrases they are thinking about the correct verb/tense match, use of pronouns, pre- and suffixes – you will get questions like, “Can I use she instead of he?” “Can I use running instead of ran?” “Can I used threw instead of throw?” etc. –

This is easily adaptable as a writing strategy to help get students engaged with exam topics and texts, etc.... just give them a question instead of a topic and introduce key words, themes, characters, ideas etc. as they go.

I've really enjoyed this strategy to get students writing – it's an exercise that gets students thinking about composition, sequence, narrative structure and accurate written expression.