

CONTROLLED WRITING

NESAMANY KULASINGAM & MANO SATHASIVAM

Controlled Composition has been receiving increasing attention in lower secondary classes as the medium of instruction has changed to Malay. There is a growing awareness that many pupils who have been studying English for years have enormous difficulties when it comes to writing. Many L2 teachers have recognized the need for a carefully planned and graded writing course that would benefit the pupil, who should feel and realize that he is actually making progress. Moreover, controlled writing reduces the teacher's marking to a minimum and therefore he can use his time more constructively in giving individual attention to pupils with particular problems while the more able pupils work independently.

Let us now look at some of the ways in which we can teach composition writing.

Example 1

This approach stresses grammatical knowledge which will assist in the development of the writing process. One good example of this approach to writing is the "Ananse Tales" by G. Dykstra, Richard and Antonette Port. Here we give an example of the same approach but using Malaysian tales.

1. FRUITS FOR SANG KANCHIL

¹One bright evening Sang Kanchil saw some fruit trees. ²But the fruits were too high for him to reach. ³Disappointed, he tried to jump but he still couldn't reach them. ⁴Then he saw some monkeys on the trees and suddenly he had a bright idea. ⁵He collected some stones and threw them at the monkeys. ⁶Naturally, the monkeys got angry. ⁷They plucked the fruits and threw them at Sang Kanchil. ⁸Sang Kanchil was indeed very pleased. ⁹He picked up the fruits and ate till he had his fill.

Steps

1. Copy
2. Rewrite the entire passage changing Sang Kanchil to Sang Kanchil's wife. Remember to change the pronouns where necessary.
3. Rewrite the entire passage changing Sang Kanchil to "all the mousedeer". Remember to change the pronouns wherever it is necessary.
4. Pretend you are a fortune-teller. Rewrite the entire passage changing "One bright evening" to "Next Year". Begin:
Next year, Sang Kanchil will see
Remember to change the tense of the verbs to the future wherever it is necessary.
5. Rewrite the entire passage as if you were Sang Kanchil. Begin: One bright evening I saw

2. SANG KANCHIL AND THE SAMBUR-DOE

¹One day Sang Kanchil saw the red-shooted shrub, lamah-lamah. ²Sang Kanchil loved this shrub very much. ³He ate some and went on his way, his mouth dripping with red saliva. ⁴By and by a Sambur-doe met him and asked, "Why is your mouth so red?" ⁵"Ah!" said Sang Kanchil, "Some kind folks gave me some betel to eat and they are inviting all newcomers. ⁶You had better go too." ⁷Now Sambur-deer love betel. ⁸The doe dashed off as fast as he could to get the betel. ⁹But the folks had set a trap to catch anyone who came to steal their betel. ¹⁰The sambur deer was caught and killed for stealing.

Rewrite the entire passage changing all the verbs to the present. Begin: One day Sang Kanchil sees the red-shooted shrub, lamah-lamah. (Do not make any changes within quotations.)

Rewrite the entire passage changing One day..... to Last year Sang Kanchil had seen.....

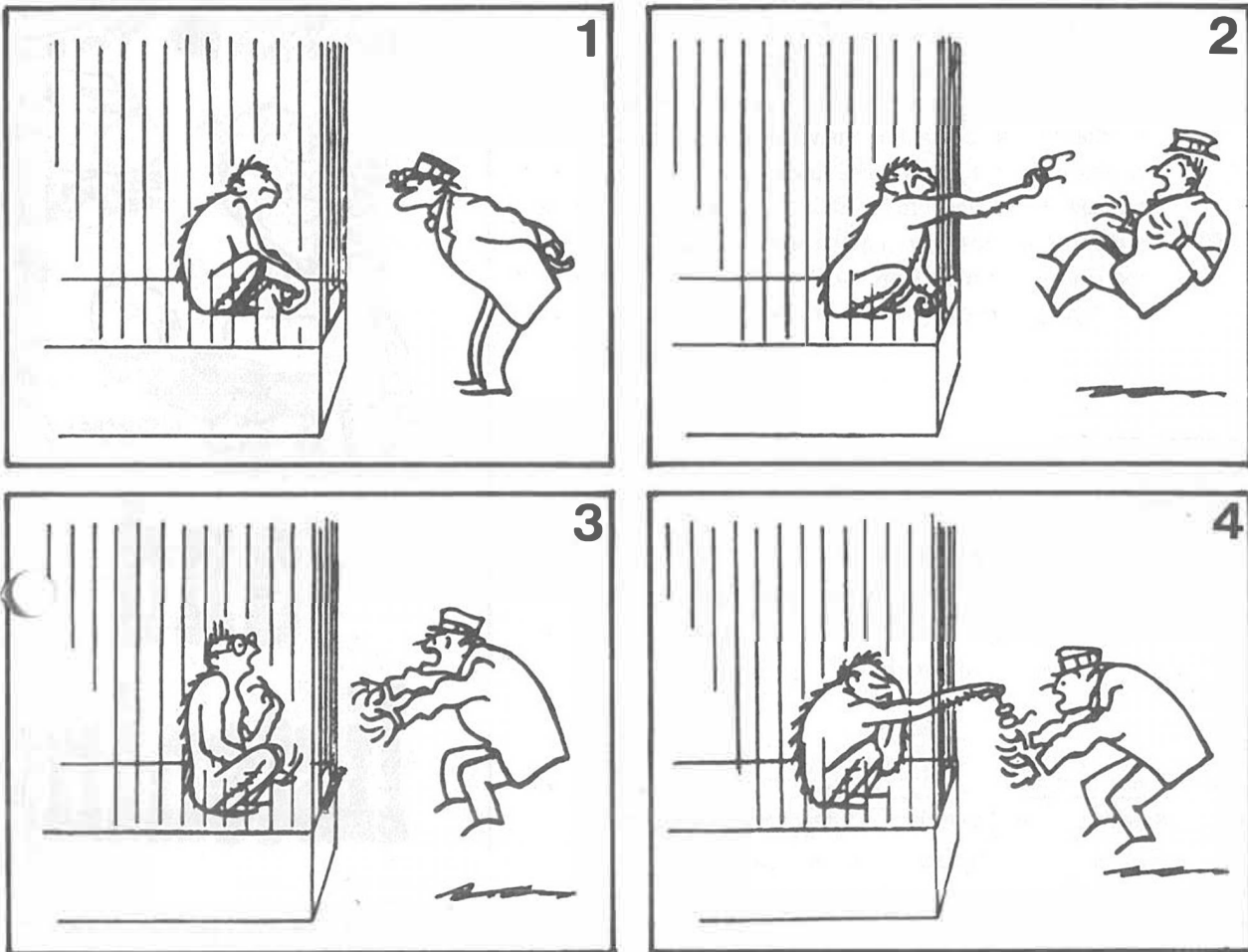
Remember to change the tense of verbs to the past perfect wherever it is necessary. (Do not make any changes within the quotations.)

Rewrite the entire passage adding prepositional phrases after six of the following words: shrub, sent. 1; way, sent. 3; sambur-doe, sent. 4; Sang Kanchil, new-comers, sent. 5; folks, betel, trap sent. 9.

9. Rewrite the entire passage supplying your own verbal phrases after the following words: (Begin your phrase with the verb form given here.) sent. 1 Sang Kanchil (walking); sent. 3, he (being) sent. 4, Sambur-doe (playing); sent. 5, folks (living), betel (growing).
10. Rewrite the entire passage adding adjective clauses beginning with who, which, that after the following words: Sang Kanchil, shrub, sent. 1; sambur-doe, sent. 4; folks, new-comers, sent. 5; betel, sent. 8; trap, sent. 9.
11. Rewrite the entire passage in your own words without looking at the model.

Blank Filling

Example 2



outside
monkey
at
return

spectacles
snatched
put on
down

annoyed
funny
stared

One day a man stood an animal's cage and made of the monkey inside. Suddenly, the stretched out its arm and the man's his nose. Surprised, the man jumped backwards.

The monkey, the man's glasses and at the man. The man was very He shouted the monkey to his glasses.

The man looked so jumping up and that the surprised monkey laughed to himself and the spectacles.

Example 3

Jumbled sentences

- a) Using the same set of pictures, the teacher could jumble the sentences of the above story and then ask the pupils to write them out in correct sequence.
- b) A variation on the above approach is to divide the class into groups. Each group is given a set of cards (prepared by the teacher) containing the words which make up each sentence in the story. The pupils work in groups to arrange the words to form correct sentences. These sentences are then put on the sentence-maker and later rearranged in correct sequence to tell a story. The pupils finally copy the story into their exercise books.

Example 4

Parallel paragraphs

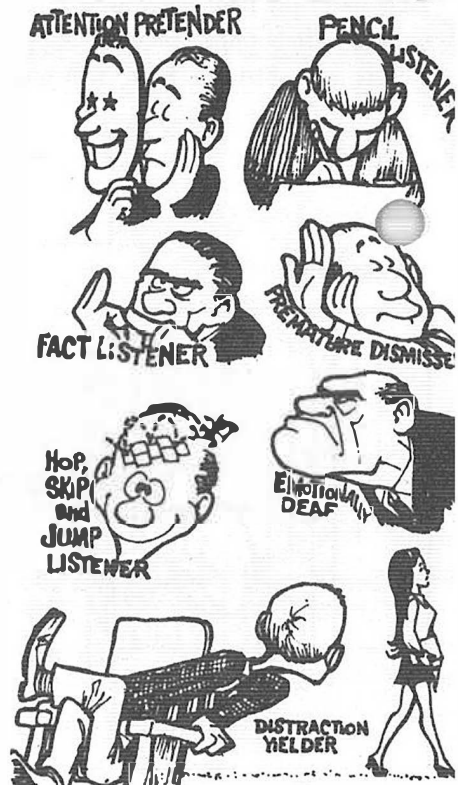
In this approach the teacher gives the model and a number of alternatives which the pupil substitutes for the underlined words and phrases.

e.g. I was cycling along High Street when I was knocked down by a car. I was thrown a few yards and I landed on a heap of durians along the side of the road.

My sister was walking a busy street She truck. She a short distance She a pile of dirty crockery.

The methods outlined above are some of the approaches used in teaching guided composition.

WANTED ALIVE!



and listening

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