

10 reasons for using this resource

1. Supporting day-to-day materials writing

All English language teachers need to create their own materials at some stage in their working lives. Sometimes it's a quick gap-fill exercise to check if the students remember what they did in the previous lesson, or it might be an end-of-term test. Teachers write worksheets to go with videos and songs, and some even write whole sets of materials for use during the term by all the teachers in a school. Or perhaps they want to write and publish their own materials to share with the rest of the ELT world.

Given the vast range of materials that ELT teachers produce daily, it's perhaps surprising that there is so little support and guidance in the form of books and online resources. We hope that this book in the ETpedia series of teacher resources will provide that support.

2. From basic principles to extensive materials writing

This resource contains 50 units, covering everything an ELT teacher needs to know about getting started with writing materials – from the basics of creating sentence-level exercises to ways of exploiting longer texts, creating entire worksheets and producing whole sets of lesson materials.

3. Units of 10

Each unit contains 10 points. These can take the form of tips, ideas, examples of question types or checklists of general guidelines. Why 10? Because we believe that a list of 10 provides enough information both to inspire you and encourage you to develop your skills further.

4. New teachers

If you are just starting out in English language teaching, you may not have the confidence to produce large amounts of your own material, and you may be teaching from a coursebook or materials provided by more experienced colleagues. However, you may still encounter occasions when you wish to try out your own ideas or produce some material to supplement your coursebook. You will find lots of ideas here to help you and provide you with the building blocks to start creating (and later sharing) your own classroom and self-study materials.

5. Experienced teachers

If you have been teaching for a while, this resource may both remind you of the techniques needed for materials writing and also give you some fresh ideas for developing your materials writing skills.

6. Studying for an ELT qualification

Perhaps you are planning to take the Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT), or studying for another teaching qualification, such as a CELTA or Cert TESOL. On these kinds of courses, you will need to demonstrate your ability to create some basic materials, such as grammar or vocabulary exercises. For teachers taking higher-level qualifications, such as the DELTA, Diploma in TESOL or even an MA with a component in materials design and development, this book will be an invaluable reference.

7. Published ELT materials writers

For people who already have their materials published and who earn money from writing, this resource offers a useful set of checklists which you can turn to when you're in need of a few extra ideas or looking for a quick alternative way to design an exercise. It will help to remind you of the key points that you need to bear in mind when starting out on a new writing project. In addition, you may want to create your own set of tips to refer to, using the 'Write your own tips' pages at the end of the book.

8. Teacher trainers

If you are a teacher trainer, senior teacher or director of studies who delivers staff training on a range of topics, then the ideas that this resource offers could form the basis for sessions related to materials writing. You could choose one or two lists of tips from a particular section as the focus for a single training session.

9. Additional photocopiables and quotes

At the end of this book, you will find an Appendix with additional photocopiable materials. These can be used as they are or adapted and developed to suit your own context. Throughout the book you will also find quotes from experienced writers, sharing their views, ideas and experiences on producing ELT materials.

10. More time

If you are familiar with the other ETpedia resource books, you'll know that the books aim to save you time. The one thing that all teachers (and full-time materials writers) say that they lack is time. We hope that by sharing this collection of ideas, based on our many years of experience of writing for our own classes and, later, as published authors, we can save you time when it comes to producing your own materials.

"I'm a big fan of the ETpedia books as they offer a wealth of information. They are very easy to dip into as a reference as they are clearly labelled and divided into different categories. Perfect for novice teachers finding their feet in the world of EFL, experienced teachers who need a quick refresher on a certain subject or even for teacher trainers to use during input sessions. All in all, the ETpedia books have quickly become an EFL teacher's best companion!"

Glenn Standish, Director of Studies, International House, Toruń, Poland