

BLOGS: A SITUATED LEARNING EXPERIENCE TO ENHANCE STUDENTS'  
WRITING SKILLS

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## **Abstract**

The present document embodies the design of a proposal of pedagogical and didactic innovation based on situated writing activities and the use of blogs as learning tools within a framework of blended learning. The context in which this proposal seeks to be implemented is a group of eleventh graders at a public school in Bogotá, Colombia. After researching the context of the target population, it was possible to determine that decontextualized lessons and writing activities have triggered students' lack of interest and struggles when expressing themselves in their compositions. Hence, the objective of this didactic proposal is to foster students' written expression from a situated perspective. Nine lesson plans were designed to be carried out during 18 sessions of 60 minutes each. They aim at providing the teachers with the instructions and material to lead learners to foster their writing skills in L2 through the use of blogs.

Key words: Situated writing, Blogs, Webtools, Blended learning.

## **Resumen**

El presente documento encarna el diseño de una propuesta de innovación pedagógica basada en actividades de escritura situada y el uso de blogs como herramienta de aprendizaje dentro de un marco de trabajo de aprendizaje mixto. El contexto en el cual esta propuesta busca ser implementada es un grupo de estudiantes de grado 11° en un colegio público en Bogotá, Colombia. Después de investigar el contexto de la población objetivo, fue posible determinar que las clases y actividades de escritura descontextualizadas han causado falta de interés en los estudiantes y problemas para expresarse en sus textos. Por lo tanto, el objetivo de esta propuesta didáctica es fomentar la expresión escrita de los estudiantes desde una perspectiva situada. 9 planes de clase fueron diseñados para ser

llevados a cabo durante 18 sesiones de 60 minutos cada una. Estos buscan dotar a los profesores con el material y las instrucciones para ayudar a los estudiantes a mejorar sus habilidades de escritura en la segunda lengua a través del uso de blogs.

Palabras clave: Escritura situada, Blogs, Herramientas web, Aprendizaje remoto

## CHAPTER I: The problem

### Target population

This section is an attempt to characterize eleventh grade students at public high schools in Bogotá, Colombia since they are the target population for this pedagogical proposal. A thorough research was carried out to detail the expected participants and point out their main features as EFL learners and individuals. This characterization is based on previous research papers along the same line of thought and the same population carried out by Torres (2018), Molina (2018) and Giraldo, Gonzalez and Gonzalez (2016); the Basic standards of competences in foreign languages from *Programa Nacional de Bilinguismo* (2006) and the Basic Learning Rights for EFL proposed in the program *Colombia Bilingüe* (2016). Both legislative documents are established by the Colombian Ministry of Education (MEN).

As stated by the MEN, eleventh graders must be able to demonstrate the level of B1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2006). During 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade, students must work on comprehending basic commands, identifying the purpose of different texts, recognizing key words in several texts, and understanding the perspective and purpose of the authors. Moreover, in terms of writing, learners at this level are supposed to build meaningful compositions by showing cohesion, coherence, accurate syntax, and punctuation. They must be able to express the values of their culture, write different types of texts and elaborate paragraphs about their own interests and experiences. As stated in the current educational program *Colombia Bilingüe* with its Basic Learning Rights (DBA) (2016), at this point of high school, EFL learners must be able to identify and discuss the purpose of different types of texts and explain the

causes and consequences of different events. They might write simple and structured pieces by following the writing process of planning, writing, reviewing, and editing. Both documents detail what is expected from students' performance on the target language; additionally, they function as a guide to build the curricula at public and private institutions in the country. Nonetheless, previous research on the same population has portrayed a different reality where students not only fail to fulfill the abovementioned requirements but also struggle with expressing their own ideas or writing simple paragraphs (Torres, 2018).

Additionally, as stated by Castillo (2007), public eleventh grade courses normally have around 35 students or more, depending on the school and location. Their ages vary between 15 and 19; and, since they belong to public schools, they are typically of social stratifications 1 to 3. Most schools typically provide around 2 and a half hours of English class per week, which might be considered insufficient according to Giraldo, Gonzalez & Gonzalez (2016), but enough to other authors considering the other subjects students must take on a daily basis and their academic workload.

Molina (2018) highlights how difficult it is for public school learners to meet the requirements of the Colombian Ministry of Education and its National Bilingualism Program. The author points out that most of the components of the class syllabus in the course are linguistic rather than communicative, which means that considerable emphasis is put on the formal aspects of the language while the communicative elements are less present. Public-school-EFL teachers tend to prioritize these grammar-based guidelines by assigning worksheets and reading material that applies the structures. However, students seem to be uninterested in this type of activity as it is decontextualized and does not relate to their own experience. Although institutions and teachers attempt to develop an English



course to build students' communicative abilities, the actual class content for eleventh graders still draws attention to mainly linguistic aspects and fails to engage students in more conversational, expressive and situational environments.

Moreover, Torres (2018) claims that EFL eleventh graders might be characterized by their passiveness and lack of motivation which were identified through the surveys, observation and tests applied to determine their language level and commitment with the class. Students at this level of high school also struggled to comply with the requirements of the MEN and constantly asked for clarification when the instructions were given in English. Furthermore, they were not able to write clear texts and handle the vocabulary on the level they were expected to. The fact that the studies carried out by Torres (2018) and Molina (2018), were developed at different schools reveal a pattern in terms of behavior and attitude from eleventh graders of different schools towards English classes. Two elements to highlight at this point are: eleventh graders' inability to demonstrate the English level established by national standards and their lack of motivation and interest in the L2 writing classes.

Another aspect to mention might be some learners' apathy when it comes to English lessons. According to Giraldo, Gonzalez and Gonzalez (2016), eleventh grade teachers typically consider all students are in the same level and do not consider the specific needs they might have. There is no scaffolding process, which leads to students' frustration and apathy towards the language. As EFL is taught as part of the school curriculum and is mandatory, students do not consider its benefits; they only understand it as another school subject they must take. Recent international tests applied in Bogotá by Shepherd &

Ainsworth (2018) have shown how poor the English level in eleventh grade is and how students' attitude towards the language is sometimes indifferent or even apathetic.

In summary, typical eleventh graders take L2 classes as part of their curricula since it is established by the National Ministry of Education. They must also demonstrate a B1 level according to the CEFR as it is stated on its legislative documents. Nonetheless, issues like insufficient class time, lack of motivation, preparation, interest and even apathy are part of the eleventh graders' reality in public schools as it has been reviewed and researched by several authors.

### **Statement of the problem**

As stated in the CEFR (2001), learners at B1 level are expected to be independent users of the language, they must be able to communicate in ordinary contexts and “produce simple connected texts on topics which are familiar or of personal interest” (p.24). They must be able to talk about experiences and plans as well as maintain basic conversations about traveling, daily routines, past experiences or current issues. However, Colombian students at eleventh grade have not been able to demonstrate the aforesaid language level in speaking, reading and listening. Nonetheless, writing has proven to be the one they mainly struggle with.

The exam SABER 11 is the standard test to score eleventh graders' knowledge when finishing high school. In a report of the MEN (2016), 40.09% of the examinees manifest a level of A1 while only 8.53% demonstrate a level of B1. According to more recent reports (MEN, 2021), most of the L2 results remain on similar levels and have not changed significantly. Furthermore, Shepherd & Ainsworth (2018), in a study carried out in

Bogotá for the British Council, reported that only 3.8 % of the students over age 15 manifest a B1 level; on the other hand, most learners (73%) are A1, as shown in the results of the tests that were implemented.

The outcomes previously mentioned prove the inconsistency with the National standards established by the MEN. Nevertheless, in agreement with Shepherd & Ainsworth (2018), L2 writing skills are even more underdeveloped than the rest of the abilities. Only 3.3% of the learners above 15 years old are B1 in writing while a 3.4% of them are B1 in speaking, 7.3% in reading and 23.3% are so in listening. Subsequently and, according to Torres (2018), the students at this level of high school manifest a lack of written expression and English writing levels that are evidently inferior to the expected. Besides, public schools tend to prioritize grammar practice and language comprehension over spoken and written production. This results in L2 students who are not able to develop well-written texts, struggle to build meaningful paragraphs and find it difficult to communicate written messages effectively. Public high schools attempt to fulfill the requirements of the Ministry of Education in terms of EFL, yet it is still essential to foster students' written skills.

The present educational program *Colombia Bilingüe* (MEN, 2016), claims that students have certain rights when learning a foreign language. These Basic Learning Rights (DBA *in Spanish*) state that when learners graduate from high school, they must be able to express themselves by composing argumentative texts following clear instructions and feedback on the accuracy of their compositions. Educational standards detail how writing helps learners reach a language level that permits them to communicate, interact, produce, and share knowledge effectively; however, the realities found in EFL classrooms demonstrate how these standards are not satisfactorily fulfilled.

Furthermore, according to Torres (2018), eleventh graders are unable to express themselves in the target language as it is expected because they do not find any interest in what is taught or the class content seems to be decontextualized since it does not deal with issues related to their realities. There might be potentially interesting topics in the curricula, yet students need to address them as related to their immediate reality and not as something far from their lives and circle of influence. Giraldo, Gonzalez & Gonzalez (2016, p. 22) argue that teachers need to apply more contextualized and engaging activities in their L2 classes; however, they tend to bring long translations, questionnaires and words to look up in the dictionary; their methodologies do not vary. Both facts reveal the need for more situated class environments in L2 classes. This might help students and teachers reach the class objectives while increasing learners' interest and commitment with the subject.

To sum up, although EFL curricula and national standards for Colombian public institutions aim at promoting learners' written expression, the different dynamics found in L2 classrooms show that its development is insufficient. Eleventh grade students are not able to successfully express themselves when writing because of their lack of interest and the decontextualized material teachers tend to integrate in their lessons. It is true that students need to work out all the L2 skills; however, as Hyland (2009) claims, writing consists in a set of complex operations that require not only mental but also physical dexterity. Therefore, it is the most challenging skill for eleventh grade students to develop and, thus, a thorough work and innovative didactic are needed to achieve the class writing goals successfully.

## **Rationale**

Classroom work is more than mere information sharing, it involves several situations in which teachers and learners might play different roles. Teachers may play the role of instructor, adviser or even researcher since it is the way they can address several problems or needs that take place in their classes. Inquiry is needed, especially during critical periods for the education field such as the lockdown in several countries due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Taking the role of researcher helps teachers to reflect on their exercise and to constantly enhance teaching techniques (Hopkins, 2008). As for writing, it is not only a language skill, but it is also a way to approach the world and express one's ideas in more elaborated ways. Hence, it is essential to foster writing skills in L2 classes by applying a contextualized set of activities which might encourage students' participation and engagement. Learners and institutions struggle with fulfilling the requirements of the MEN and the COVID-19 pandemic has triggered communication difficulties in many class contexts. Nonetheless, the use of blogs as L2 teaching tools and the implementation of situated writing activities might lessen the negative impact of emergency virtual classes and enhance students' writing abilities. The reasons for implementing situated writing and blogs as learning tools along with the benefits they might carry will be presented in this section.

In the first place, the current educational program: *Colombia Bilingüe* with its Basic Learning Rights (DBA) (2016), illustrate the relevance of writing skills. They argue that the process of writing in a new language allows students to exceed the linguistic realm and access other types of learning. Therefore, this ability expands their understanding and the development of critical thinking. Learners who manage to write in the target language

might develop more abstract ideas about the world, themselves, and their reality. In addition, the Basic Standards of Competences in Foreign Languages (2006) establish several guidelines that may be directly accomplished by implementing situated learning strategies. As stated by the MEN (2006), eleventh grade students must be able to talk about culture, express who they are, what they know, and write about topics they like. Situated writing can provide them with the tools for achieving these parameters more effectively as it is directly related to the context of students and not a foreign reality they cannot relate to. Contextual or situated writing, as detailed by Chapetón & Chala (2012), is a “socio-situated practice which connects language to what socially situated individuals do both at the broader level of culture and in specific situations” (p. 27). Students can meet the aforementioned standards by applying this type of situated activities and expressing themselves about topics of their interest and immediate reality.

Another aspect to mention is how classes have been changing around the world due to the quarantine that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused. Students must now take virtual classes and all the educational community has had to adapt to new e-learning strategies most were not accustomed to (Murphy, 2020). It is evident that the lockdown forced many teachers to change their methods and to implement technological elements in their classes. Consequently, blended learning, understood as the combination of F2F classes and online interaction, is now an alternative to traditional teaching strategies. Furthermore, the use of blogs might strengthen this virtual practice and enhance L2 writing abilities as they are “authentically communicative (...). *Indeed*, the students are using the language to actually construct meaning and to communicate something” (Quintero, 2008, p. 17). Blogs become an adequate tool to communicate ideas and perceptions rather than focusing on the formal

aspects of language as traditional classes normally do. The use of online platforms within a framework of blended learning is becoming more and more essential as days pass and the application of webtools like blogs may be highly beneficial for teachers and learners who seek to foster writing abilities with real interaction and communication.

In summary, the salient need of promoting students' written production and engagement in EFL classes makes it congruent to propose new didactic techniques that might contribute to their performance. Since eleventh grade lessons are based on isolated topics and mere information sharing, students have not been able to meet the academic standards according to the MEN. It means that more contextualized writing practice is needed and situated writing activities might be implemented as an alternative for students to attain better results, write more and reach the language level they are expected to. Situated writing activities may foster learners' interest towards classwork and class content while the use of blogs implies more meaningful interaction within the context of blended learning which is the reality most schools are currently facing.

### **Objectives**

1. To foster the development of writing skills from a situated learning perspective.
2. To design a set of writing activities to be carried out through blogs as learning tools within a framework of blended learning.

## CHAPTER II: Lit. Review and Theoretical Framework

This chapter deals with the lit. review which consists of the state of the art and the theoretical framework that support this proposal. The purpose of this section is to define and characterize the three constructs that underpin the present project: *Situated writing*, *Blogs as learning tools* and *Blended learning*. The state of the art describes how the three concepts have been addressed nationally and internationally in different research documents while, in the theoretical framework, the constructs are detailed in depth.

### State of the art

This section aims at detailing how situated writing, blogs as learning tools and blended learning have been part of different research studies, nationally and internationally, and how they contribute to the present proposal as research background and theoretical reference.

The first research paper considered relevant for this proposal is named: *Co-constructing Realities: Fostering Literacy in EFL 11th Graders as a Situated Social Practice*. It is an action-research study carried out by Natalia Andrea Torres (2018). It portrayed how decontextualized materials and grammar-based writing activities triggered a sort of apathy towards EFL writing in a group of 24 Colombian eleventh graders. Consequently, the objective of this research was to co-construct students' reading and writing abilities through social situated practices. The researcher developed the study in three stages: the proposal, the application and the results analysis. The application stage consisted in several writing and reading micro-tasks based on social concerns; the students also applied peer-feedback and peer-editing during their writing assignments. As a result,



they showed significant improvements when reading their reality and expressing themselves through their texts. They also accomplished their writing tasks more satisfactorily, and applied coherence and cohesion effectively. Additionally, awareness of different social issues was promoted since the tasks were mainly based on social concerns.

The aforementioned research contributes to the present proposal due to the insights obtained on the effectiveness of situated literacy activities when applied in L2 classrooms. Furthermore, the teacher involved in the above-named study implemented writing activities that were related to the social context and interest of the students instead of the traditional non-contextualized practices. That is directly related to the objectives of the present project which aims at implementing situated writing activities in EFL classes. However, the situated writing activities mentioned in the research were not developed through blogs, so they did not integrate blended learning tools as it is planned in this proposal. Webtools might facilitate students and teacher's interaction and provide significant outcomes from a more technological perspective.

The second research study considered in this project is *Undertaking the Act of Writing as a Situated Social Practice: Going beyond the Linguistic and the Textual*. It consists of an action research carried out by Claudia Marcela Chapetón and Pedro Antonio Chala (2012). The authors studied how writing as a situated social practice goes beyond the formal aspects of language and provides students with the tools to approach writing more meaningfully. The objective of this research was to detail how the students dealt with argumentative essay writing when it was considered a situated social practice. It meant an attempt to transcend the traditional-decontextualized practices that prevail in writing lessons and to obtain insights into the application of more innovative teaching techniques. The study was carried out at a Colombian private university with a group of intermediate-

level-EFL students, and the researchers gathered data through interviews, recordings, and class artifacts. For the pedagogical intervention, the participants developed a set of activities based on situated writing and the genre-based approach going through the writing process of drafting, revising, editing, and submitting a final version.

The results of this research portray how students approached writing in more significant ways, expressing their feelings, points of view and perceptions towards social issues instead of focusing on the formal aspects of language and sentence formation. This research is relevant for the present proposal since it details the positive outcomes that situated writing activities cause in students' lack of interest, which is one of the main issues found in the target population. Moreover, it proves how situated writing activities allow students to develop partnership and strengthen social interactions. Nevertheless, writing activities in the pedagogical implementation did not imply technology. Since technology is a current need in most educational contexts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this project aims at implementing it and achieve further results in L2 classes mediated by webtools.

Furthermore, Tsui and Ng (2010) developed a follow-up study entitled *Cultural Contexts and Situated Possibilities in the Teaching of Second Language Writing*. It is the third research considered for this proposal, and it consisted in analyzing the strategies of two EFL writing teachers with a group of eleventh graders at a secondary school in Hong Kong. This follow-up study attempted to describe the situated teaching practices of the two EFL writing instructors and the students' perceptions towards them. It involved class observations and interviews for teachers and learners. The teachers implemented a new way to evaluate writing tasks in which students themselves were able to evaluate their peers and provide feedback. Additionally, the pedagogical theory they are based on highlights the

importance of students' cultural values and beliefs which influence the way they learn and themselves express in a second language. According to the authors, the positive influence of students' social and local context might enhance their academic achievements in L2 since the writing process involves the way one interacts with the world, the culture, and others. The study's findings show that students can be a meaningful source of learning although sometimes they do not consider themselves skilled enough to provide accurate feedback. The inquiry also suggests that pedagogical success relies on more contextualized classroom practices and that teachers should be ready to respond to their local context to attain better outcomes and more motivated students.

The relevance of this research for the present proposal relies on its findings since L2 learners demonstrated their ability to evaluate each other and how they are highly influenced by their reality outside the classroom. It evidences the necessity for more contextualized L2 classes in which other learners and the context of the students might empower them to achieve better compositions and language learning levels that exceed the traditional class objectives. The present proposal implies the application of social and local context as a means to enhance students' participation and interaction. Additionally, it attempted to promote their awareness of social concerns and their cultural values through their own texts.

*Blogging: A way to foster EFL writing* is the fourth inquiry considered for this proposal. It was written by Luz Mary Quintero (2008), and it analyzed how technology has become an important ally for ESL teachers when improving pedagogical practices and achieving more interactive and dialogical classrooms. This action-research study, carried out at a Colombian public university, is intended to comprehend in depth how the use of

blogs can foster students' interest in the target language and how it can enhance their writing skills. Technical aspects of blogs like content editing and synchronic organization, plus their easy access from anywhere, make them highly useful for EFL writing lessons. The study implemented blogs as a method of communication between students from Canada and Colombia with the objective of improving their writing skills and communicating cultural aspects of their own countries. Consequently, blogs became an opportunity for them to share their inner selves and express their interests freely. Moreover, writing with the purpose of communicating what mattered to students encouraged them to use appropriate structures and vocabulary so that their entries were not misunderstood. The application of blogs resulted in significant outcomes for the EFL learners who seemed very engaged in their blogging activities and improved the quality of their texts.

The outcomes of the previous research provide a solid evidence of the positive results that the use of blogs as learning tools might carry. It is significant for the present proposal as it seeks to foster students' writing abilities through these webtools. Additionally, this study poses a reference on the application of blog-based activities that are directly related to the local context of the L2 learners. Bearing in mind this theoretical and practical background, it is possible to go further and claim that situated writing, as applied through blogs, might pose a highly effective set of writing activities to be integrated in EFL classes.

Hameed & Kanvbar (2018), from the Cihan University of Sulaimaniyah, Iraq, developed a literary research named *The Effects of Blogs on E-learning*. They analyzed 68 articles on blogging to determine the importance, the outcomes and effectiveness of the use of blogs in e-learning and blended learning environments. As reported by the authors,

teachers might use blogs to communicate important information, provide feedback, complement, and provide class material, and promote students' interaction. The types of learning in which the implementation of blogs seems more effective are social constructivism, interactive learning communities and, indeed, blended learning. According to the authors, teachers should provide simple and clear instructions during the class time so that students can develop their tasks effectively while they are online. Blogs can also empower learners to develop more authentic, autonomous, and meaningful knowledge that might not always emerge in typical face-to-face sessions. In addition, blogs might strengthen students' interaction and performance while they obtain more structured and permanent feedback from their teacher and classmates. This study poses a salient basis for the present pedagogical proposal as it details the effective application of blogs in classes within a framework of blended learning and suggests that clear instructions and planning are needed to achieve the desired improvements.

The studies previously named portray the implementation and positive results of situated writing, blogs as pedagogical tools, and blended learning. Furthermore, they highlight the importance of constantly applying new strategies to enhance teaching practices in EFL classrooms. However, not enough has been said related to how the three constructs may complement each other. The present proposal aims at designing a pedagogical intervention that integrates the effectiveness of situated writing and blended learning and the usefulness of blogs to build community, write freely and foster writing skills. The implementation of situated writing activities has contributed to students' motivation and critical skills. Nonetheless, these factors can be strengthened by integrating

them into a blended learning environment through blogs, a setting where L2 learners might build community, interact and provide meaningful feedback.

## **Theoretical framework**

### **Situated Writing**

In defining situated writing, it is important to start by detailing how writing and EFL writing are understood in this project. As stated by Quintero (2008), writing can be defined as the ability individuals have to construct meaning and put it into written words. It is a systematic process that requires more than only syntactic and lexical knowledge, but also demands the ability to express one's ideas and thoughts in more coherent and organized ways. According to Richards (1990), writers need to follow a set of complex mental operations to move from concepts and ideas to written texts. That means, writing is not just grammar and syntax application, but a compilation of processes that take place in the author's mind and that constantly overlap while producing a single text. Thus, for this proposal, writing will be understood as a series of actions that writers execute so that they might build meaning and express themselves in structured texts.

Additionally, it is essential to highlight that writing, as stated by Fareed, Ashraf, & Bilal (2016), is the most difficult skill to develop when learning a second language since the expression of one's ideas in written compositions involves memory, thinking ability and verbal command. Because of this intricacy, there have been several approaches to address L2 writing in EFL classes. Hyland (2019) points out that these methods are structural, functional, expressive, process, content and genre. Considering the complexity of EFL writing and the different ways in which it can be addressed in classroom environments, this proposal considers writing as a process. As above-mentioned, composing texts is a set of

complex stages that involves several factors, it is not just the product of following certain schemata.

To illustrate the writing process, the next model, adapted from Hyland (2003) and Wirantaka (2016), depicts the general stages writers go through when working on their compositions. It also details the different activities that writers perform at each stage, such as outlining data, classifying information and redefining ideas. For the present proposal, brainstorming, planning, drafting, revising and editing are processes that do not follow a linear order, but they overlap. Therefore, writers might constantly move forward or backwards several times until they get to a final version of their text. Understanding writing as a process rather than as a product provides meaningful outcomes when addressing the subject and allows students and teachers to comprehend the skill from more perspectives than the grammar-syntax correction and the mechanical ability of jotting down well-structured sentences.

**Figure 1.**

*The process of writing.*

Brainstorming	Collecting data, note taking, gathering ideas, objectives.
Planning	Outlining ideas, organizing, classifying information.
Drafting	Getting ideas down on paper, discovering further ideas.
Revising	Reorganizing, style, adjusting, redefining ideas, evolving.
Editing	Proofreading, response to revisions, correcting style and syntax.

Furthermore, Pipkin and Reynoso (2010) elucidate the concept of situated writing by claiming that writing is a symbolic means that is attached to political, economic and ideological representations that belong to different communities and social groups. This means it is manifested through a conventional notation system common to the speakers of the language, but it contains a whole background directly attached to the writer's perspectives, ideologies and beliefs. Patton (2004) goes further stating that writing skills cannot be generalized. Instead, their development and assessment depend on the environment in which they take place. It is necessary to understand that "writing is not one set of generalizable skills and that most criteria for 'good writing' are constrained by the occasion, the audience, purpose, and context" (p.2). Writing and context are not separable. Hence, the present project comprehends writing as a social practice which is developed in contact with other writers and a certain worldview. Learning how to write in a second language is a process that is highly influenced by the sociocultural context of the authors and their interpersonal relationships. It involves the background of the learner and implies more than following patterns and copying grammar structures. In addition, the way teachers evaluate writing must not be isolated from the context in which the composition takes place since it influences the quality of the text and the way it is understood.

According to Ramirez (2007), writing is a social practice because it emerges from the writer's need to communicate, learn and express. Additionally, Chapetón & Chala (2012) conclude that the writer's own experiences and previous knowledge, plus their inherent features, such as gender and race are two main aspects that make their compositions situated. As seen in the present document, writing is not an activity one does only by himself, but it is the result of a set of decisions permeated by the author's environment, origin and necessity to interact. Furthermore, it is essential to recognize that writing takes



place within a specific time and space, and its meaning relies on the contexts where it occurs. What might sound interesting for a certain group of readers, could be nonsense for others.

Hamilton (2010) defined three main features of situated writing. Firstly, literacy is a set of social practices since human interaction is commonly mediated by different types of texts. Learners' immediate reality is fundamental here as it is the first approach they have to literacy, and it is not always mediated by the school or any other academic context. Consequently, this proposal aims at addressing topics that the learners are already familiar with and that may probably take place outside the classroom.

Secondly, literacies are related to different aspects of life which means that students play different roles in their daily activities, and they are also influenced by those realities. This feature of literacy is key in the implementation of this pedagogical proposal as the design takes into account the different roles that students might play and the experiences they have had in their lives on a daily basis.

Thirdly, literacies have sociocultural aims because individuals read and write for different purposes such as pleasure, education and communication. This previous factor is also essential for this proposal as it interprets writing as a non-mechanical skill, but rather a set of intentions that surround the L2 learners' reality and affect the way they perceive and build texts.

### **Blended learning**

Blended learning has been applied and researched greatly all around the world during the last two decades since it is a relatively new concept in teaching. As seen by Ratheeswari (2018), it is an approach to teaching that combines face-to-face classes with

online environments and solutions. That is the general definition that many authors have come to when defining what blended learning is. However, as stated by Bartolomé-Pina, García-Ruiz, & Aguaded (2018), blended learning has evolved from the mere combination of online and offline elements to more elaborate pedagogical designs which require the implementation of webtools to develop certain activities. As seen in this proposal, blended learning consists in a series of online elements that are strategically integrated into the traditional F2F classes to attain class objectives effectively and promote students and teacher's interaction.

In addition, several studies have shown the effectiveness of applying this type of webtools in traditional classes to foster L2 performance. Nonetheless, Bartolomé-Pina, García-Ruiz, & Aguaded (2018) assert that there are some other factors that influence the development of this type of pedagogical instruction such as students' attitudes and class content. Bearing this in mind, this proposal seeks to integrate situated activities and blended learning environments with the aim of potentiating their effectiveness at fostering students' interest in L2 classes and their writing skills simultaneously.

Furthermore, for some learners, the implementation of multimedia materials and web-based environments creates a sense of usefulness and practicality that cannot be found in traditional F2F courses. Webtools like wikis, webpages, blogs, videoconferencing apps, among others, have greatly contributed to the development and efficiency of blended learning courses. In addition, they prove to be beneficial for learners' and teachers' performance. Ratheeswari (2018) highlights the importance of understanding the role that these tools play in education since they are not just tools used when teaching, but they have become more and more necessary at enhancing students' performance, engagement and

participation. According to Kulkarni (2020), the Internet and webtools might help teachers in areas such as evaluating, preparing classes, promoting group work and tutoring. The structured and well-designed integration of webtools in F2F classes is what makes blended learning possible.

In terms of blended learning and language teaching, Bartolomé-Pina, García-Ruiz, & Aguaded (2018) affirm that blended learning has been applied to strengthen linguistic abilities and develop students' autonomy through the use of webtools. Students seem to be more willing to develop certain online activities in which they are able to demonstrate their technological and linguistic proficiency instead of jotting down ideas on a paper. As stated by Bikowski & Vithanage (2016), blended learning in L2 teaching has contributed to the way teachers enhance classroom practices and develop more integrated and interactive writing lessons. When students find themselves in a technological environment in which they can interact and find information easily, they reach a level of commitment with their compositions that cannot be achieved through traditional paper-based activities.

In addition, blended language learning classrooms promote more communicative and student-centered environments, which results in more meaningful language learning and interactions that exceed the classroom setting and go beyond traditional class standards. Consequently, this project understands blended learning as a way to foster students' motivation and their autonomy at achieving language objectives that pose a challenge for them: not only regarding L2 learning, but also in technological proficiency. Blended learning also empowers the usefulness of situated activities when it is applied in the design of a pedagogical proposal like the one presented in this document.

As stated by Kulkarni (2020), there are some significant contributions to language learning that are mainly achieved through blended class environments. The first contribution is experiential learning which is the possibility for students to interact with real-life situations through the World Wide Web. This feature contributes to the current proposal since students can attain a real interaction with the world related to the second language they are learning. Additionally, they can use the language to communicate their own experiences with the world through their compositions so that they can achieve a situational kind of learning.

The second contribution of applying blended learning in L2 classes are the authentic sources for study that learners can find online. The author claims that students can easily find different types of material originally developed in the target language. This contribution is essential for the present project since when students access the Internet, they can find innumerable sources of information to enrich their compositions and even clarify their doubts; this enriches their prior knowledge and promotes their autonomy.

The greater interaction that students can achieve through emails, chats, and blogs is the third contribution stated by the author. As above-mentioned, situational learning is one of the focuses of this proposal. For this reason, interaction with students' peers and their teachers is very essential and is one of the objectives at designing the present project.

The final contribution of blended learning is global understanding since language learning also implies learning about the culture where this language is spoken. This global awareness can be fulfilled by accessing the Internet and being given a wider perspective on other worldviews. It is also the way the target population of this project might interact with the world associated with English language.

## **Blogs as learning tools**

The author Ward (2004) defines blogs as websites that can be updated constantly and that follow a chronological order. They are organized according to the date and have a decentralized access, which means they can have different authors. Blogs or weblogs have been used as learning tools since 2003, and they have spread all over the world as a means of communication and interaction that fosters language learning. On the other hand, Fattah (2016) proposes a less technical definition which affirms that blogs are a kind of online journal which is constructed and updated by their author and that allows the writer to express opinions, beliefs, feelings and thoughts. The present project integrates both definitions: it considers blogs as systematic webtools to post different entries chronologically, and it also understands that blogs might function as a sort of diary that the authors update frequently and in which they can reflect their personality. Each entry contains evidence of the emotions and outlooks of the writers, which means that although blogs are systematic, they are also an instrument to express oneself.

Furthermore, Quintero (2008) argues that weblogs are not only isolated online platforms, but a personal space for the writers to express themselves and share the content they are interested in. Additionally, they portray the character and writing style of their authors; they encourage writing learners to share their voices through the web and spread relevant messages from individual points of view. Learners' interests are essential for the present proposal as they permeate the way students express their ideas and commit to class activities. From a situated perspective, students might write blog entries that portray their interests and their background. Through these blog entries, students can exercise their practical and critical ability to interpret the world.

Besides the function of blogs as means of self-expression, Quintero (2008) points out several advantages of implementing them as learning tools. The first refers to the authentic audience that reads the entries. That being the case, the teacher will not be the only reader of the composition, which transcends the boundaries of academic environments. This meets the need for learning outcomes outside the F2F traditional class environment that was previously mentioned as one of the issues that this proposal seeks to address.

The second asset, according to the author, is that blogs are authentic communicative scenarios. Students do not write their entries simply to follow accurate grammar patterns, but to really communicate a message. This positive outcome is considered for the present project due to its attempt to forego decontextualized, grammar-based class practice and foster students' interest.

One third element that emerges from the application of blogs as L2 learning tools is the ease blogs provide when developing writing as a process. As aforementioned, this proposal understands writing as a set of stages that learners undergo when jotting down their ideas. The editing functions of blogs permit the authors to edit and rewrite whatever they consider necessary based on the feedback provided.

A final advantage, as stated by Reina (2019), is the interaction through blogging, which is not only possible, but also efficient and necessary. This is especially true in contexts where blended learning is required due to time limitations or when innovation is needed. For teachers, blogs have become a useful tool to implement in classes where interaction outside the classroom is needed and F2F class time is limited. This factor is especially useful within the current transition to online classes in which the present proposal takes place.

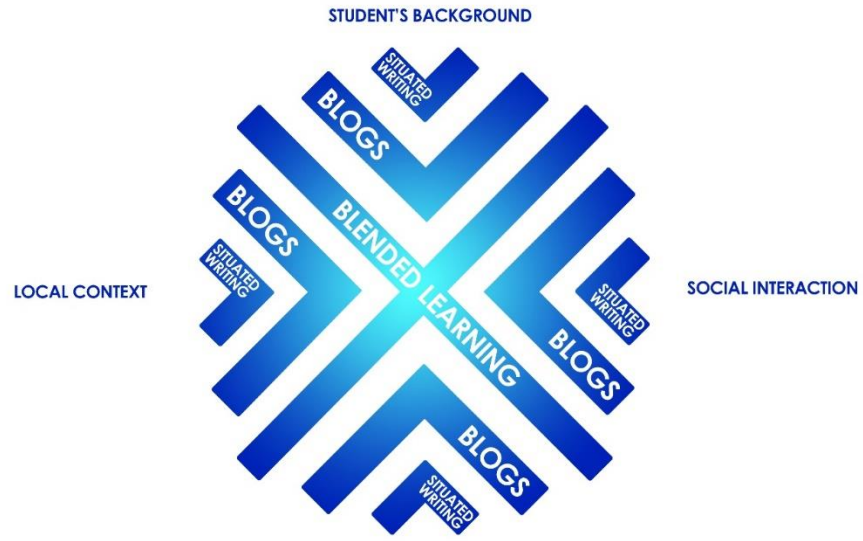
Campbell (as referenced by Fattah, 2016) defines three types of blogs for learning. First, there are *tutor blogs* which are created and managed by the teacher to share and update relevant class information. Second, there are *class blogs* which are the result of the participation of all students, and the third kind are *learner blogs* in which the students can jot down their personal experiences and thoughts and share them with their classmates. The type of blog that is applied in this pedagogical proposal is the *class blog* since only one blog will be created with the purpose of developing interaction and engagement among the teacher and the students through just one website.

In summary, this chapter has detailed how situated writing, blended learning and blogs as learning tools have been addressed and researched by several authors and how those concepts are integrated in this pedagogical proposal in order to attain an innovative design that might promote students' interest and impact their writing skills positively.

The figure 2, based on a Muisca symbol that represents authority and unity, portrays how the three constructs relate and complement each other for the present proposal. Since classes have turned to mainly online interaction due to the pandemic, blended learning is the axis upon which the other constructs stand. On a second level, blogs as learning tools represent the means through which situated writing activities will be developed. On the third level, the tasks of this pedagogical proposal are all based on situated learning and their content is directly related to the student's background, social interaction and local context.

**Figure 2.**

*Visual representation of the constructs*





### **CHAPTER III: Methodological design**

This section details what a proposal of pedagogical and didactic innovation is and describes its main characteristics. Additionally, it defines the visions of curriculum, language, learning and classroom that were applied in the pedagogical instruction and its lessons plans.

#### **Proposal of pedagogical and didactic innovation**

Recent studies like the ones carried out by Giraldo, Gonzalez & Gonzalez (2016), Torres (2018) and Molina (2018) have shown how urgent it is to propose new teaching strategies in EFL classrooms since traditional methods tend to constrain students' creativity and engagement. A proposal of didactic innovation points at establishing new ways to approach teaching and transcend the conventional class methodologies and their outcomes. As claimed by Walder (2014), innovation is not only about bringing new material to the classroom, but it is also a systematic process in which teachers plan, design, implement and revise a set of strategies and resources to renew class dynamics and achieve better class results. Therefore, this proposal of didactic innovation seeks to integrate new methodological strategies based on situated writing and blended learning with the aim of fostering students' writing skills, interaction, and class commitment.

According to Béchard (as cited by Walder, 2014), didactic and pedagogical innovation might be defined as a sort of change, which is “an intentional action that aims to introduce something original into a given context, and it is pedagogical as it seeks to substantially improve students' learning in a situation of interaction and interactivity” (p. 196). As understood in the present document, a proposal of pedagogical and didactic innovation attempts to enhance teaching practice and, consequently, students' learning. It is

a transformation that does not occur randomly, but it is planned and intentionally implemented in order to get better results by applying new elements in a conventional class context. The application of situated writing and blogs as learning tools in this proposal seeks to introduce these new elements to the traditional high school class so that students' writing can be addressed differently.

Furthermore, pedagogical innovation is also understood as an integrated process and not only a sudden change of teaching techniques. Jaatinen & Lindfors (2019) state that “the pedagogical innovation process is a creative and reflective problem-solving, design, manufacturing and testing process for developing new solutions for various contexts” (p.46). Teachers start innovating by identifying an evident or underlying issue which they seek to deal with in a different way. Then, they research, reflect, and build a plan to fulfil the students' needs and bring significant changes to traditional class settings. Consequently, the present didactic and pedagogical proposal does not imply an instant application of new tools, but a process of reflection, planning and design that seeks to provide more effective writing tasks for eleventh graders to achieve improvements in their L2 level.

### **Vision of curriculum**

The concept of curriculum has been widely discussed in the educational fields since curricula are considered the core of educational institutions and the guide for teachers to develop their lessons and courses. Nonetheless, this proposal understands curriculum as an opportunity to fulfil students' needs. According to Campbell (2020), curricula are not just established to guide teaching programs, but they are designed to meet the students' educational needs and enhance relationships between instructors and learners. The emphasis of a successful curriculum must be on the students' necessities; every aspect

within curricular design must be planned and organized with aims to address those needs and prepare students for adult life. Accordingly, this proposal seeks to design a set of lesson plans that might satisfy students' educational needs by integrating writing activities that are closely related to their realities, interests and expectations.

Another concept of curricula that is considered for this proposal is curricula as a social practice. According to Bobbit (as cited by Campbell, 2020), the purpose of curricula is learners' development, and it must include learners' social interaction with others and with the teacher. Along the same line of thought, Tudor (2001) argues that learning occurs within a context of legitimate engagement and participation with others. Therefore, this proposal integrates the use of blogs as learning tools to promote student-student and student-teacher interaction.

In addition, curriculum is considered a situated practice since its design seeks to deal with learners' reality. The concept of situated curriculum "emphasizes the fact that its content is closely related to the specific set of local, material, economic and social characteristics of a system of practices and work activities" (Gherardi, Nicolini & Odella, 1998, p.285). This vision of curriculum bases its content and practice on students' personal experience. It is the type of design and methodology that helps them adapt to new concepts, understand new information and express themselves based on their immediate context and not a foreign worldview which they do not relate to.

### **Vision of language**

The vision of language embraced in this proposal understands language as an experiential practice. This concept means that language and experience are not separable, but they are strongly related. Abdallah (2015) states that L2 skills are best acquired through

realistic contexts and authentic scenarios in which language can be used for real purposes and within real situations. Context and experience play an essential role in this vision of language since they shape and foster language learning and encourage students' commitment with the different class activities.

The vision of language as experiential means that L2 learners can “use and manipulate language in a natural language environment” (Knutson, 2003, p.56) and not with decontextualized forms, grammar exercises or long translation tasks. Understanding language this way corresponds to the objectives of the proposal design as it seeks to engage students in writing activities that might increase their interest and, consequently, improve their performance. The situated writing activities implemented in this document attempt to being meaningful for the learners and, as maintained by Knutson (2003), “provide opportunities for student ownership and participation in their own language-learning” (p. 56).

### **Vision of learning**

The vision of learning, as applied in this proposal, is the one of learning as a situated practice. As stated by Besar (2018), learning takes place in authentic contexts; young pupils start by engaging in real-life situations and constant interaction with a “community of practice”, which is the environment where they can develop social relationships and cognition. Learning is a process that is built by the interaction of the learner with their immediate reality. Contrary to the traditional concept of learning as information sharing and transmission, the vision of situated learning centers on the idea that learning occurs when students participate actively as part of a community. Learning, then,

“is a process of social participation in everyday situations rather than the acquisition of knowledge by individuals”.

In the same fashion, Abdallah (2015) claims that knowledge is co-constructed and takes place in specific contexts with particular social and physical scenarios. The elements that take part in situated learning and with which the student interacts are the learner’s community, its history, cultural values, rules, technology, relationships languages, among others. Therefore, the activities implemented in this proposal are focused on students’ context and interests. The objective is to have students develop contextualized writing activities that affect or express who they are and what they believe.

### **Vision of classroom**

The vision of classroom plays a fundamental role in the design of any pedagogical proposal since it is the place where action occurs and where students and teachers mostly interact. This project considers classrooms as a social experience. Students tend to spend several hours a week in the classroom and, thus, the activities that take place there should be understood as an essential element of their reality. Decontextualized classroom practices are an unfruitful effort to achieve course objectives and student proficiency since “all classroom activities form a part of student experience” (Knutson, 2003, p.53), and they should be related to what students conceive as relevant for their personal and educational goals. According to Chapetón and Contreras (2016), “there should be a link between the communicative activities being developed in classes and participants' real worlds” (p.131).

Classrooms are also a social experience because they reflect different aspects of the society they belong to. According to the authors, they are social environments that are permeated by their participants’ beliefs and values. Moreover, they portray part of each

learner's context outside the classes, the real world that students face on a daily basis. This conception of classroom triggers a better understanding of class dynamics as social and experiential. Additionally, it helps develop more student-centered activities which may attract their attention and keep them as active agents in their learning process. Therefore, the situated writing activities (blog entries) that are implemented in this proposal point at developing students' self-expression and reflection within a social and experiential classroom setting.

#### **CHAPTER IV: Proposal of pedagogical and didactic innovation**

This innovative didactic proposal consists in a series of situated writing activities in which students may write about their immediate reality, interests, and social environment through the use of blogs within a blended learning framework. Thus, it incorporates a set of classes in which learners may review the grammar and vocabulary necessary to write situated texts in blog entries through the platform Blogger. The objective of these classes is to enhance writing skills and provide the students with the bases to compose more elaborate texts with meaningful content. The didactic and pedagogical project is divided into 3 cycles of 3 lesson plans to be developed during 18 classes. That is, 1 lesson plan for 2 sessions of 60 minutes each.

Eleventh graders are expected to write a total of 9 blog entries whose content is merely focused on their history, context, likes, dreams, social and physical environments. Although the focus is to develop writing skills, the lesson plans imply more than just writing practice. They include other abilities, such as speaking and reading since EFL in Colombian high schools must integrate the four language skills, and learners typically develop more than only one ability simultaneously. Throughout the lessons, students are expected to be able to express their opinions, participate actively and redefine some aspects found in their contexts.

The next table (figure 3) details how the three cycles are planned. It defines the name of each cycle and the lessons that compound it. It also determines the objectives, the blog entries that correspond to each lesson and the grammar and vocabulary that will be addressed. Subsequently, the lesson plans of cycles one, two and three will be described briefly.

**Figure 3**

*Instructional design*

Cycle	Lessons	Objectives	Blog entries (Situating writing task)	Vocabulary and grammar
<p><b>Cycle 1:</b> What about yourself?</p> <p><b>Duration:</b> 3 lesson plans for 6 classes.</p>	<p><b>1. This is who I was</b> <i>Talking about life experiences and important life events.</i></p> <p><b>2. This is who I am</b> <i>Talking about likes, hobbies, and personality.</i></p> <p><b>3. This is who I will be</b> <i>Talking about plans for the future and possible outcomes.</i></p>	<p>GENERAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To recognize the elements that build my own story and my identity as an individual.</li> </ul> <p>SPECIFIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify the most important factors in my life so far and what makes me who I am.</li> <li>To express my story, dreams and objectives in life.</li> <li>To write 3 blog entries using past, present and future, respectively, to talk about myself.</li> <li>To find out more about my classmates by reading and commenting on their work.</li> </ul>	<p>1. Entry 1: Short paragraph about the most important events in your life.</p> <p>2. Entry 2: One or two paragraphs describing daily activities, likes, dislikes and personality traits.</p> <p>3. Entry 3: Text about short, medium- and long-term plans.</p>	<p>VOCABULARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life events</li> <li>Time expressions for present, past and future</li> <li>Hobbies, likes and dislikes</li> <li>Personality traits</li> <li>Goals</li> <li>Careers</li> <li>Traveling</li> </ul> <p>GRAMMAR</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic patterns for past, present and future tenses</li> <li>Simple past (verb to be and other verbs)</li> <li>Be going to</li> <li>Modal verbs will and May</li> </ol>



Cycle	Lessons	Objectives	Blog entries (Situating writing task)	Vocabulary and grammar
<p><b>Cycle 2: My two gangs</b></p> <p><b>Duration:</b> 3 lesson plans for 6 classes</p>	<p><b>1. My relatives rock!</b> <i>Defining and describing family members.</i></p> <p><b>2. My crew</b> <i>Identifying and describing friends and close people.</i></p> <p><b>3. The people I love</b> <i>Giving reasons and defining relationships.</i></p>	<p><b>GENERAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To communicate about the important people in my context and circle of influence.</li> </ul> <p><b>SPECIFIC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To define family members and their roles.</li> <li>To identify important people around me and characterize them.</li> <li>To detail routines in third person.</li> <li>To contrast people and personalities.</li> </ul>	<p>1. Entry 1: “My crazy family”. Write about your relatives.</p> <p>2. Entry 2: “My crew’s lit”. Write about your friends and their abilities.</p> <p>3. Entry 3: “The people I love”. Write about your family and friends and compare them.</p>	<p><b>VOCABULARY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family members</li> <li>Adjectives of personality and physical descriptions</li> <li>Very, so and too</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>GRAMMAR</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comparatives and superlatives</li> <li>Simple present</li> <li>Questions with who</li> <li>Giving reasons with because</li> <li>Asking for reasons with why</li> <li>Modal verbs can and be able to</li> </ol>

Cycle	Lessons	Objectives	Blog entries (Situating writing task)	Vocabulary and grammar
<p><b>Cycle 3:</b> My place, my rules</p> <p><b>Duration:</b> 3 lesson plans for 4 classes.</p>	<p><b>1. This is community</b> <i>Describing my neighborhood and pointing out what characterizes it.</i></p> <p><b>2. Welcome to the jungle</b> <i>Describing the city where I live and finding solutions to issues.</i></p> <p><b>3. From Colombia to the world</b> <i>Redefining my country and traveling around its most beautiful features.</i></p>	<p><b>GENERAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To recognize the essential features of my community and some solutions to prominent issues</li> </ul> <p><b>SPECIFIC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To characterize my neighborhood, my city and my country.</li> <li>• To highlight the most important aspects of my community</li> <li>• To identify issues and possible solutions</li> <li>• To express the positive elements of the country to a wider community.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Entry 1: Write about your neighborhood and an experience lived there.</li> <li>2. Entry 2: Write about your city, features, problems and possible solutions.</li> <li>3. Entry 3: Write about your country, its main characteristics and invite people to come to visit.</li> </ol>	<p><b>VOCABULARY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Places in the city or neighborhood</li> <li>• Location</li> <li>• Geographical settings</li> <li>• Adjectives for places</li> <li>• Intensifiers</li> <li>• Traveling expressions</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>GRAMMAR</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is/ are</li> <li>2. Prepositions of place</li> <li>3. Adjective placement</li> <li>4. Participle adjectives (-ing)</li> <li>5. Simple past and simple present (affirmative and negative).</li> <li>6. Modal verb can</li> <li>7. Imperatives</li> <li>8. Future conditional</li> </ol>

## Cycle 1: what about yourself?

The first cycle of this proposal consists of a set of activities where students can express ideas about themselves, review basic grammar patterns and learn how to communicate their life events, interests and plans. The three lesson plans are designed so as to review the vocabulary and basic grammar tenses (past, present, future) and have students brainstorm, draft, revise, edit and post their blog entries.

The first lesson plan “*This is who I was*” attempts to review vocabulary for life events and recognize the most important life events for the students. They would also review the structures and rules of the simple past tense to express their ideas clearly and identify the most prominent aspects when writing about their life. They would brainstorm some ideas about themselves and their history and make their own blog entries where they describe those events and their influence in their lives.

The second class “*This is who I am*” points at developing students’ awareness about their present. Firstly, they will learn how to use the simple present to describe their routines, hobbies, likes and dislikes. Then, students will review grammatical aspects of the tense and will learn how to express themselves to talk about hobbies and daily activities. Hereafter, they will take the role of one of their favorite characters and describe their personality and habits. Finally, learners will be able to write their blog entry about themselves by considering the different aspects they can express about their current reality and daily life.

The final class of this proposal “*This is who I will be*” aims at understanding how to use modals for future and write about future plans. Students are expected to be able to

express their short-term, medium-term and long-term plans. This activity is especially significant for them since they are in the last level of high school and should be making plans for their future. They will analyze some blog entries from some famous Colombian *youtubers* and *instagramers* and relate their dreams to their own. Afterwards, they will plan their entries by discussing their plans with their partners to, subsequently, write the final blog entries of the first cycle.

### **Cycle 2: My two gangs**

The second cycle of this pedagogical proposal deals with the immediate contexts of students regarding their interpersonal relationships. Students will be able to review vocabulary aspects like family members, personality traits, and routines. They will also learn about the use of *can* for abilities and how to make comparisons. Additionally, they will understand and explain the reasons for doing certain things and relating to certain people. The three lesson plans are designed to enhance students' writing process and reflection about their social context.

The first lesson plan "My relatives rock" draws attention to family vocabulary, personality traits and habits. It is expected that students recognize vocabulary about family members and understand how to talk about personality and physical description. They will also learn how to conjugate simple present in third person. Additionally, they will have some listening practice and make organizers as part of the planning process of writing. Their blog entries must contain aspects like family members' physical and personality description, and habits.

The second lesson plan centers on students' friends and how they relate and describe them. Students are expected to use comparative adjectives and the modal verb

“can” to talk about their friends and their abilities. They will use a chart to organize their ideas about their friends, and then, they will write their own blog entries centered on the information found in the chart.

The third lesson plan consists of learning how to provide reasons for certain situations, preferences, and opinions. Students are expected to use the expressions *why* and *because* to reason about different aspects of their reality and their social relationships. In addition, students will learn how to use intensifiers and superlatives to enrich their descriptions about relatives and friends. Their blog entries must contain information about who is the most beautiful person of their family or who is the smartest of their friends and the reasons why they consider so.

### **Cycle 3: My place, my rules**

The third cycle of this didactic proposal deals with the physical context with which students interact on a daily basis, that is, their neighborhood, city and their country. Learners will be able to identify and describe the main features of these places and highlight the positive aspects they have. They will also try to propose solutions to problems they find in these environments.

The first lesson plan focuses on learners’ neighborhoods, the community where they grow up and their main characteristics. Students will learn how to express locations and describe places generally. They will also learn vocabulary about places in their neighborhood to enrich their texts with detailed descriptions. By the end of the lesson, students will write a blog entry where they describe their neighborhood and also mention one of the experiences they have lived there.

The second lesson plan “welcome to the jungle” draws attention to the city. Students will learn about geographic location and more vocabulary for places based on landmarks in Bogotá. They are expected to recognize the most important places and use the modal verb “can” to talk about the activities they are able to do there. Students will also think of a problem they would like to solve in the city and provide a possible solution to it. The description and the problem must be part of the final version in the blog entry.

The third lesson plan consists of talking about the country. Students will reflect on stereotypes about Colombia and will attempt to highlight its positive features instead. To do so, they will learn about connectors of contradiction. They will also review future conditionals and imperative statements implicitly intending to persuade a foreigner to come to the nation. The final entry would be an appealing text that highlights positive characteristics of the country and invites people to come and experience it by themselves.

In conclusion, all the lesson plans and the activities that compound them are an attempt at leading the learners to reflect on their reality and topics of their interest. Thus, they will be able to carry out a process of situated writing that will be evidenced in the blog entries.

### **Instructional design**

This section will present the lesson plans of cycles one and two, which were designed as part of a booklet with the guidelines to carry out this proposal. They include the material that will be used when addressing the classes and detailed instructions on how to develop each session.

It is important for the teacher to make a general review on what the writing process is before implementing the lesson plans. This way, students will have clarity on how to carry out a process of writing going through the stages of brainstorming, planning, drafting, revising and editing. Additionally, the teacher who wants to apply this proposal needs to carry out a diagnosis test in order to determine the actual students' L2 level and make the necessary adaptations to the activities.

The assessment of the blog entries will be carried out based on a rubric that was designed following the guidelines of the writing process as it will be seen below. Each lesson plan contains its own material organized in appendixes at the end. Cycle three will be integrated in detail in the annexes of the present document.

For access to the complete booklet with all the instructions, the rubric for evaluation, the three cycles and the lesson plans, go to this link:

<https://www.flipsnack.com/biographies12/pedagogical-instruction-booklet.html>

For access to the blog that was created for the application of this proposal, go to this link: <https://wetheauthorsofeleventhgrade.blogspot.com/>

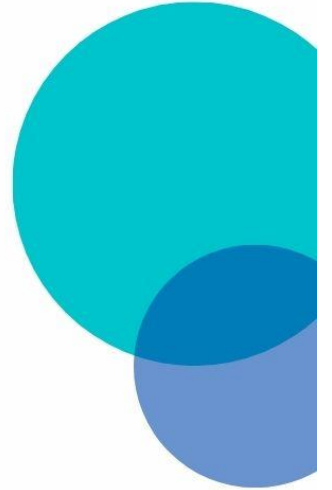


# **BLOGS: A SITUATED LEARNING EXPERIENCE TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS**

**INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN**

**LESSON PLANS - BOOKLET**





This booklet attempts to gather the instruction and materials to carry out a process of situated writing in a classroom of eleventh graders at a public school in Colombia. There is a total of 9 lesson plans, in which it is expected to cover topics related to the students' identity, social and physical environment. Each lesson plan seeks to provide the students with the vocabulary, grammar and reflection needed to compose a series of texts that will be posted on a class blog.



## **General instruction**

The lesson plans contain detailed instruction on how to carry out each session. They include several stages for the classes such as, warm up, objective discussion, instruct and model, guided practice, independent practice and a brief description on how the assessment might be carried out. However, it will be necessary to apply some adaptations depending on the population, class time and several factors that could not be considered in the design of this proposal. The teacher in charge of the application needs to apply a diagnosis test in order to determine the students' L2 level and adapt the lesson plans to their students.

## **The writing process**

Before implementing the lesson plans, it is essential to make sure the students recognize the writing process and its different components. There must be an introductory activity in which the teacher details the different stages of the writing process: *brainstorming, planning, drafting, revising and editing*. The teacher must describe the different activities that compound each stage and introduce these concepts for the students to be more aware of them while writing.

## **Assessment**

The assessment of each one of students' texts needs to be developed based on the writing process rather than only the grammar and syntax used in their final compositions. For that reason, it is suggested to use the rubric attached to this booklet. It was designed to evaluate the students' performance on each one of the stages of the writing process and the content and reflection portrayed in their blog entries.

Criteria	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Score
Brainstorming First Step in The Writing Process	Poor (4pts) Little to no time spent brainstorming and writing out general ideas for this piece of writing	Fair (6 pts) Some evidence that shows time spent brainstorming, and writing out general ideas for this piece of writing.	Good (8 pts) Evidence shows the use of brainstorming, setting objectives and writing out general ideas for this piece of writing	Excellent (10pts) Detailed evidence showing time spent brainstorming, setting objectives and writing out general ideas for this piece of writing.	
Planning Second step in The Writing process	Poor (4pts) Little to no time spent on planning, outlining and organizing information from the brainstorming activities.	Fair (6 pts) Little evidence that shows time spent planning, organizing, outlining information from the brainstorming activities.	Good (8 pts) Evidence shows the use of planning activities, organizing (use of graphic organizers) and outlining information.	Excellent (10pts) clear evidence showing time spent on planning, organizing (use of graphic organizers, and following the activities and instructions in class) and outlining information.	
Drafting Third step in The Writing Process	Poor (4pts) Draft includes little to no ideas from the planning and brainstorming sessions (that is, the activities previously developed).	Fair (6 pts) Draft includes limited ideas from the planning and brainstorming sessions (that is, the activities previously developed).	Good (8 pts) Draft includes ideas from planning and brainstorming sessions. Evidence shows that student used the information gathered and organized from previous activities.	Excellent (10pts) Draft clearly includes ideas that were brainstormed and organized during the previous activities.	
Revising Fourth step in The Writing Process	Poor (4pts) Student spent little to no time revising. Little to no changes were made to piece based upon the class directions. Student did not take revision seriously.	Fair (6 pts) Student attempted to make changes to their writing, however the changes were minimal. Few changes were made based upon teacher's revising	Good (8 pts) Student revision shows adequate changes made to content and ideas in writing. Evidence shows that student worked on personal revising goal. Details were added to enhance writing.	Excellent (10pts) Student made numerous changes to writing, changing/adding details and description to make writing more attractive to reader.	
Editing Fifth Step in The Writing Process	Poor (4pts) Numerous errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes, found in writing. These errors make it hard to understand the message of the text.	Fair (6 pts) Frequent errors made in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes. These errors make it more difficult to understand the message or meaning of the writing.	Good (8 pts) Few errors were made in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes. Student spent ample time working on identifying and correcting editing errors.	Excellent (10pts) No errors were made in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes. Student demonstrates time working on identifying and correcting editing errors.	
Content	Poor (5 pts) The class content (vocabulary and grammar) is not shown in the text.	Fair (10 pts) A few elements of the class content were taken into account to build the text.	Good (15 pts) The text developed by the student shows several elements (vocabulary and grammar) from the class content.	Excellent (20 pts) The text developed by the student shows enough elements (vocabulary and grammar) from the class content and integrates those elements clearly and accurately.	
Reflection	Poor (15) The text does not portray a clear reflection, thoughts, and a critical perspective of the student on the topics addressed in the class.	Fair (20 pts) The text shows a fairly clear reflection, thoughts, and the critical perspective of the student on the topics addressed in the class.	Good (25 pts) The text demonstrates the reflections, thoughts, and the critical perspective of the student on the topics addressed in the class.	Excellent (30 pts) The text shows details clearly the reflections, thoughts, and the critical perspective of the student on the topics addressed in the class.	
				FINAL SCORE	

# CYCLE 1

## LESSON PLAN 1 THIS IS WHO I WAS

**Time:** 120 minutes (two lessons of 60 minutes each)

**Vocabulary:** Life events, time expressions for past

**Grammar:** Simple past of be and other verbs

### Objectives:

- To recognize the use of simple past to describe life events.
- To express the most important events in one's life through short sentences and texts.
- To identify the most important elements in life experiences and express them.

### Business/materials:

- Screenshot from "Blog"
- Infographic on the parts of a blog
- Infographic on timeline and life events
- Blogger.com

### Warm up:

15 min

The teacher will ask a set of questions related to the past of the students so that they can participate. He will ask these questions randomly.

- Where, and when were you born?
- Where did you grow up?
- Did you study at a different school before?

Considering the above-mentioned questions, the teacher will write on the board some students' answers. Next to the answers, the teacher will paste on the board a photo (see appendix 1) that looks like a screenshot taken from a blog. It contains the photo of Adele, who is a famous person that students might recognize, and a little text where "she" talks about herself and her most important life events. The teacher will, then, explain that it was taken from the "blog" of Adele and will ask the students to say the life events (verbs) that they can identify in the text. Since they answered before, and they can see in the text, they are using simple past implicitly.

The teacher will now ask the students what they know about Adele. If they know her occupation, her age or any other piece of information about her. The teacher will write two or three sentences

with the information gathered from the students or his own ideas to clarify the identity of the character and make sure they know something about her.

The teacher and the students will now read together the blog entry. The teacher will clarify the verbs and point out that those verbs are in past because the writer is talking about her life events. On the board, the teacher will mention how those verbs look in the present and how they look in the past and will clarify their pronunciation in both tenses. Students will recognize and understand how they used the verbs in the past to answer the warm-up questions and how the blog entry also applies the same conjugation.

### Objective discussion:

5 min

The objective discussion helps students understand why the class content is important and how they can use it in real contexts.


The teacher will have students "rewrite" the text or the answers in their minds by changing the past tense verbs to present. Students might remember the present form of the verbs more easily than the past ones. There will be sentences like "I enjoy my childhood" instead of "I enjoyed my childhood". The teacher will ask students if that sentence, for example, sounds right to them; It might sound strange since it is a life event and not a present state. Consequently, students will recognize how important it is to conjugate the verbs correctly when it comes to using present or past tenses.

### Instruct and Model

30 min

Students will be asked whether they follow any blog, or blogger. Considering their comments, the teacher will tell students they are about to create a blog. He will ask them if they know how blogs are structured and what the components of blogs are. After gathering their comments, he will use a printed infographic (appendix 2) with the components of a blog so that students can get a picture of what a blog looks like and the most important elements it has.

The teacher will explain that, since the class environment will be mediated by technology, the blog



will be the element for them to practice writing and provide feedback to each other. It will also be a tool for evaluation and for them to see their own progress. The type of blog that will be implemented is a **class blog** where the students and the teacher can collaborate and contribute.

After explaining the elements of the blog, the teacher will show the students the same infographic, but with blank spaces (see appendix 3) and will challenge them to remember the parts of a blog. Students will participate by mentioning the parts of the blog and their function. The objective is to remember most of the components of the blog since they need to familiarize themselves with it and will use it in the next sessions.

Afterwards, the teacher will tell students how to structure basic sentences in the simple past based on the previously mentioned vocabulary. He will write on the board the verbs found in the blog entry and other verbs students might be familiar with. The verbs will be scattered on the board (see appendix 4) and students must classify them between regular or irregular in a table they can draw in the notebooks (see appendix 5).

The teacher will clarify the difference between regular and irregular verbs and will ask students to provide some more examples from their lives to check understanding.

#### **Guided Practice:**

**25 min**

The teacher will show the students an infographic which contains a timeline with different life events (see appendix 6). After reading it, pointing out the life events and mentioning what they mean, the students will make their own infographics about their lives based on that model. The students can draw and organize their life events in the timeline, they should only mention their life so far and nothing related to the future.

(The first session might close with this activity and the next class will start with it too, since it takes time for students to develop this guided practice, and they might need some more materials to decorate their

timelines as they want).

#### **Independent practice 1**

**20 min**

There will be two independent practice activities for this session.

The first will be the students' presentation of the timeline; they will show their timelines to their classmates and talk about their life events. The teacher and the other students can ask questions and make comments to promote communication or to clarify something they have said. This activity helps students internalize the concepts and relate them to their real-life experience.

#### **Independent practice 2**

**25 min**

For the second independent practice activity, students must write their own blog entries. Since writing is considered a process, the students should start by **brainstorming** and **planning** what their compositions will contain.

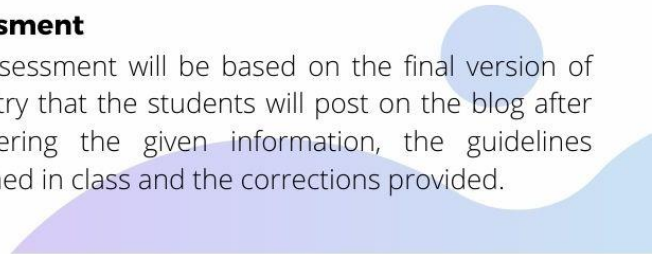
First, they will make a list of the most important or most memorable life events for them. The list should contain at least 10 events. After taking notes on the different life events, they should identify the agents or the people involved: themselves, their family or someone else. Then, they will take notes on when and where the events happened and how they affected their lives or why they are important. The teacher will provide them with a chart where they can organize their ideas (appendix 7).

After taking all this information into account, they can start **drafting** their first entry on a piece of paper. They can include whatever they prefer in the text and drop what they consider irrelevant.

When writing the text, the teacher might help them by **revising** their drafts, making some corrections and providing feedback. After the process of revising, students can start the **editing** stage and develop the **final version** to post on the class blog.

#### **Assessment**

The assessment will be based on the final version of the entry that the students will post on the blog after considering the given information, the guidelines explained in class and the corrections provided.



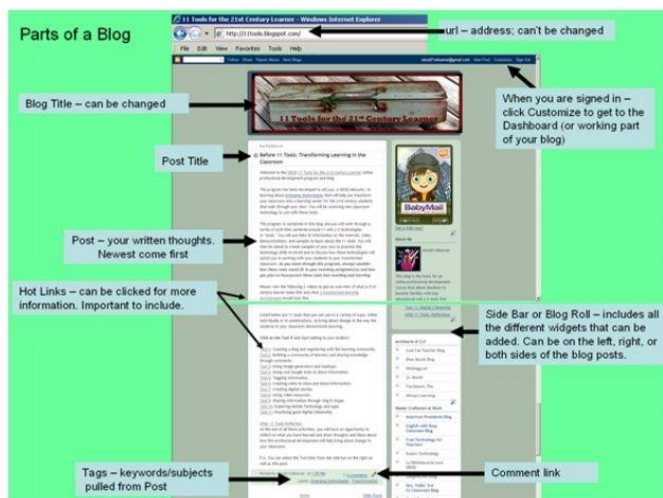
It will be carried out based on the rubric for evaluation provided in this booklet. The rubric details the requirements at each stage of the writing process and the criteria for assessment.

## Appendixes

### Appendix 1



### Appendix 2



### Appendix 3



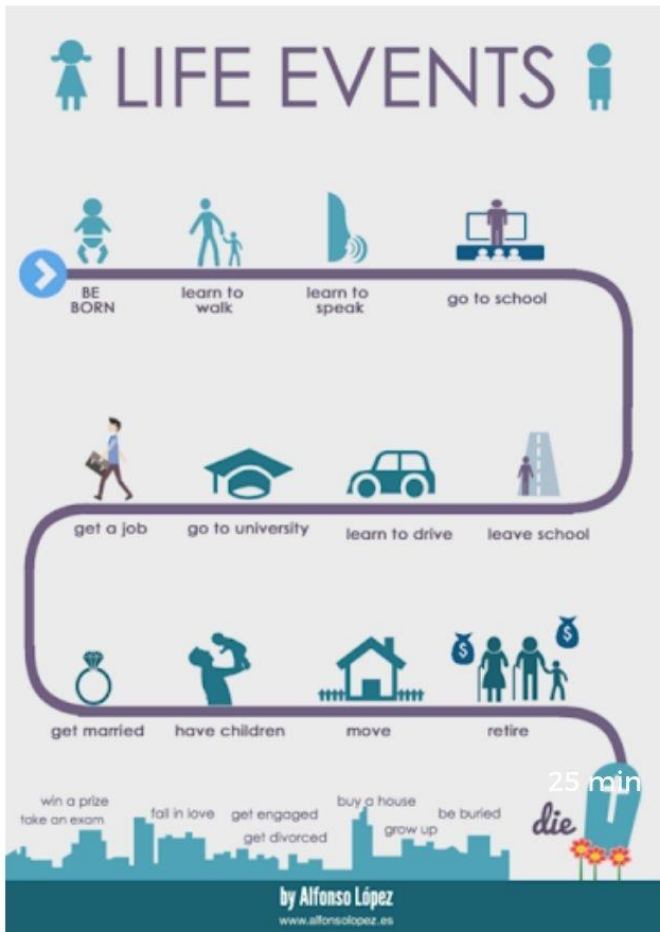
### Appendix 4



Appendix 5

REGULAR	IRREGULAR
Moved	Was
Graduated	Grew
Played	Sang
Supported	Met
Studied	

Appendix 6



Appendix 7

## MY LIFE EVENTS

EVENT	PEOPLE INVOLVED	WHEN	WHERE	WHY IS IT IMPORTANT

# CYCLE 1

## LESSON PLAN 2 THIS IS WHO I AM

**Time:** 120 minutes (two lessons of 60 minutes each)

**Vocabulary:** likes, hobbies, habits, personality

**Grammar:** Simple present, to be in present.

### Objectives:

- To recognize the use of the simple present to detail routines and daily activities
- To understand personality traits and describe them
- To express the frequency of different activities and their relevance in ones' life

### Business/ materials:

- Blogger.com
- Sheets of paper with questions (students A-B) and examples of simple present sentences
- Homer Simpson printed image
- Badges to write their names

### Warm up:

**20 min**

The teacher will give the students a sheet of paper (see appendix 1) with several questions regarding their personality and hobbies. There will be two sets of questions, one for student A and one for student B, and the teacher will distribute them equally. As they receive their paper, they should try to answer the questions mentally. If they need some help, the teacher can provide it, or they could check in their dictionaries and make some notes in their notebooks. They will have 5 minutes to understand and answer the 5 questions.

After answering their questions mentally, students will get together with another student from the opposite letter: A students will get together with B students. They will exchange papers and their partners will read the question out loud for them to give the answer they prepared earlier. The goal is to be able to use the previous knowledge they have regarding verbs, habits, hobbies and likes and to use the tenses implicitly.

### Objective discussion:

**5 min**

The objective discussion helps students understand why the class content is relevant and how they can use it in real life.

For the objective discussion, the teacher will write the next question on the board:

*What do you do in your free time?*

After writing the question on the board, the teacher will have the students participate by giving their answers. He will jot down on the board some answers in full sentences like: *I run in my free time, I like to dance, I play video games, etc.*


Then, the teacher will ask another student if they like to do any of the activities that are on the board, for example: *Do you like to play video games, too?* There might be some students who also like video games while others do not. The teacher will point out that hobbies are fundamental because they make us who we are, and they are an important part of our lives. Plus, it is essential to know how to talk about hobbies since they are common conversation topics.

### Instruct and Model

**25 min**

To start the instruction section, the teacher will talk about the functions of the verb to be and the functions of the simple present tense with other verbs. On the same sheet of paper used for the warm-up, the students will find a chart with some examples of be and other verbs in the present (see appendix 2). The teacher will ask some students to read the examples and will also ask students to identify them. For example, in the sentence *I am Andrés*, the teacher will point at the word Andrés and will ask students *What is this?* Students might say it is a name, so the first function of be is to talk about names. Following the same activity with the rest of the sentences, the teacher will write under the verb **to be** the words *name, occupation, characteristics and age*; while under the column of **other verbs** he will write the words *likes, habitual actions and facts*.





After clarifying the functions of the verb to be and other verbs in the present, the teacher will ask students to change the examples in the chart with their own. They must change the name, the occupation, the age; as well as replace the likes and habits with their own.

They can follow the model, or they can add other verbs they might know. The students will have some time to share their examples with the rest of the class orally.

Afterwards, the teacher will explain the negative forms of be and other verbs (don't) in order to show students that they can also make negative sentences about their lives. The teacher will ask them to provide some examples to check understanding.

#### **Guided Practice:**

**10 min**

The teacher will now paste the image of a famous cartoon on one side of the board (see appendix 3). Students might recognize Homer Simpson because he is very popular; thus, they might also know some of his characteristics and habits. In front of the character, the teacher will draw a chart (see appendix 4) where there will be some sentences related to his personality, habits, likes and dislikes. Considering the provided examples, students must give their own examples based on what they know about Homer Simpson. They can include the name, the age or any other element they consider relevant about the character. The teacher will take notes of their examples on the board.

(The first session might close with the chart about Homer Simpson, and the next class session will start with the students reviewing the previous lesson and making their own charts about other cartoons)

#### **Guided Practice 2:**

**15 min**

To start the next session, students will make their own charts about other cartoons they like. They must follow the same patterns of the previous guided practice and include all the information they consider relevant. They will make the sentences in first person to avoid confusions that might take longer to explain, such as third-person conjugation.

#### **Independent practice**

**20 min**

For the first activity, students will make hello-my-name-is badges with the names of their characters and will put them on a visible part of their clothes (see appendix 5). Then, they will stand up making two circles. One circle will be in the center and the other will be around it. The circles should have the same number of students so that each student will be in front of the other.

The students in the outer circle will talk to the classmates in front of them about their characters. They must personalize the information from the charts. For example, *"Hello, my name is Barbie, I am a doll, I like to sing and dance, etc"*. After the students in the outer circle speak, the students in the inner circle will share their information.

After they have talked, the outer circle will rotate to the right and keep introducing their characters and listening to their classmates one by one. The students in the inner circle will remain in the same positions to avoid repeating couples.

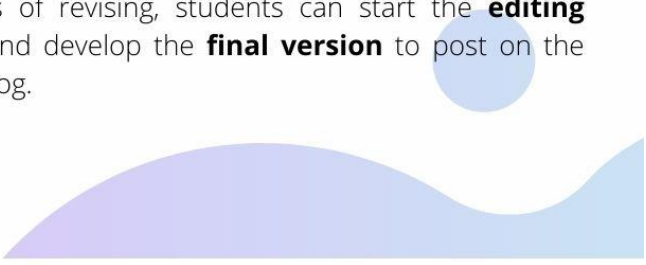
#### **Independent practice 2**

**25 min**

The second independent practice activity will be the composition of their blog entries. For the **brainstorming** and **planning** stage, the students will make the same chart from the previous activities, but about themselves. They must include as much information as possible in order to get enough material for their texts.

After taking the chart information into account, they should start **drafting** their texts. They must include some features of their personality, their names, occupations, habits and likes/dislikes.

They can also include their hobbies or any other topic of interest to them. When writing the text, the teacher might help them by **revising** their drafts, making some corrections and providing feedback. After the process of revising, students can start the **editing** stage and develop the **final version** to post on the class blog.



## Assessment

The assessment will be based on the final version of the entry that the students will post on the class blog after considering the given information, the guidelines explained in class and the corrections provided by the teacher.

It will be carried out based on the rubric for evaluation provided in this booklet. The rubric details the requirements at each stage of the writing process and the criteria for assessment.

## Appendixes

### Appendix 1

Student A	Student B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your favorite hobby?</li> <li>• Do you like to go dancing?</li> <li>• Tell me an activity that you never do</li> <li>• How would you describe your personality?</li> <li>• What do you usually do in the mornings?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you like pizza?</li> <li>• What is your favorite sport?</li> <li>• Tell me a characteristic that describes yourself</li> <li>• What do you usually do in the evening?</li> <li>• What do you always do before coming to school?</li> </ul>

### Appendix 2

BE	OTHER VERBS
<p>I am Andrés</p> <p>I am a student</p> <p>I am intelligent</p> <p>I am 17 years old</p>	<p>I like video games</p> <p>I study in high school</p> <p>I live in Bogotá</p> <p>I live with my mother, father and little sister.</p>

### Appendix 3



### Appendix 4

## DESCRIBE THE CHARACTER

HOMER SIMPSON	PERSONALITY	HABITS	LIKES / DISLIKES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am lazy</li> <li>• I am funny</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I work in the mornings</li> <li>• I watch TV at nights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I like donuts</li> <li>• I don't like to work</li> </ul>

### Appendix 5



# CYCLE 1

## LESSON PLAN 3 THIS IS WHO I WILL BE

**Time:** 120 minutes (two lessons of 60 minutes each)

**Vocabulary:** goals, dreams and plans for the future

**Grammar:** modal verbs will and might, be going to

### Objectives:

- To identify the use of modal verbs for future outcomes and possibilities
- To make and express predictions about the future.
- To identify and express short, medium and long-term plans

### Business/ materials:

- Blogger.com
- Cellphone with FaceApp
- Poster with screenshot taken from Kika's blog with wrong conjugation
- Poster with screenshot taken from Kika's blog with blank spaces
- Card with future expressions vocabulary
- El Brayan's blog entry on future plans
- Signs for short, medium and long-term goals

### Warm up:

**20 min**

The teacher will ask one student's permission to take a photo of them and edit it to make them look some years older. The teacher will use the application FaceApp (see appendix 1) to do so. In case no student wants to take the photo, the teacher might use his own or the photo of any celebrity. After the editing is made, the teacher will show it to the students and will ask them the next question:

*How do you see yourselves in 10 years?*

The teacher will write the question in the center of the board, and students will be asked to go there and write their own words or sentences answering the question. All students should participate, and the teacher might also write his own plans for the future there. When all the students have written on the board, the teacher will ask some of them to share their future plans with the rest of the class.

He will start by sharing one or two of his own plans and expressing it with *will*, E.g. I will get married in 10 years. The teacher will ask students to provide their own examples so that they can use "will" to talk about the future implicitly.

### Objective discussion:

**5 min**

The objective discussion is a way to help students understand why the class content is important and how they can use it in real contexts.

For the objective discussion, the teacher will paste a screenshot taken from a blog on the board (see appendix 2). The blog entry has the title "my plans for the future", but it is written in the present. The teacher will ask students to read the blog entry and find if there is something wrong with it or something they would correct. The objective is for students to realize that although the title of the text is referring to the future, the content is narrated in the present and does not sound like future plans but rather a set of routines or habits.


The teacher will point out the importance of describing future states with the modal verb "will" or future plans with "be going to" in order to avoid confusions or misunderstandings. Therefore, that is what they will be learning in class.

### Instruct and Model

**30 min**

To start the instruction section, the teacher will draw a 3-column table on the board (see appendix 3) for students to understand when they can use will, might and be going to. The teacher will provide some examples by specifying the functions of each grammar pattern.

"Will" is used for predictions and decisions like "it will rain tomorrow" or "I will pass the exam". "Might" is used for possibilities like "I might travel in December (maybe I will)". "Be going to" is for plans that are already made like "I am going to go out with my friends this weekend". All these examples and more will be provided by the teacher so that students can understand the different functions of the modal verbs and the expression "Be going to".



The teacher might ask students for their own examples to check understanding and proceed with the practice.

To get students to participate, the teacher will paste the same screenshot used for the objective discussion on the board. However, in this case, it will have blank spaces before the verbs so that they can fill them up with "will", "might" or "be going to" (see appendix 4). They can fill the blanks with any of the expressions depending on what they think about the actions, whether they consider they are predictions, possibilities or plans. The teacher will write students' ideas on the poster with the screenshot and will discuss the meaning with them. The teacher will clarify that grammatically, the three options are possible; but the use of either of them depends on the intention of the speaker.

After reviewing the use of "will", "might" and "going to", the teacher will give students a card with vocabulary about future expressions (see appendix 5). They will review the meaning of the expressions, and the teacher will ask them to use the vocabulary and make some examples based on it. E.g. *I will work next year*. The teacher will tell students that those expressions are a guide for them to talk about the future, but they can adapt some of them to their own objectives. The first session will end with the instruction and model activities and the examples provided by the students to talk about their goals in life. The next session will start with the guided practice.

### **Guided Practice:**

**20 min**

For the guided practice, students will read a short blog entry that describes future actions (see appendix 6). They might read it individually or out loud for all the group to listen.

The objective of this guided practice is for students to identify the use of the future tenses and relate the text to their reality. The text will look like a blog entry so that students can also see a model of what they will do in the situated writing activity afterwards. After reading the blog entry, they must classify the different future expressions.

To do so, they should highlight the predictions/decisions (will), the plans (be going to) and the possibilities (might) with different colors.

Next, the teacher will discuss the students' answers and provide feedback if necessary. He will ask students if they have similar or different dreams from the ones that they found in the text and will ask them about some of their goals in life.

### **Independent practice 1**

**20 min**

There will be two independent practice activities for this session.

For the first one, the teacher will make "stations" by posting signs with the words: "short-term goals", "medium-term goals" and "long-term goals" around the classroom (see appendix 7). The class will be divided in three so that there is one group of students for each station. They should **brainstorm** ideas of what they expect to achieve within a short, medium and long term, respectively. During the time at each station, they can discuss with their partners or the teacher about what they plan. They should jot down their ideas and try to use the vocabulary and grammar explained in class. There will be around 7 minutes for each station and after that time, they should rotate.

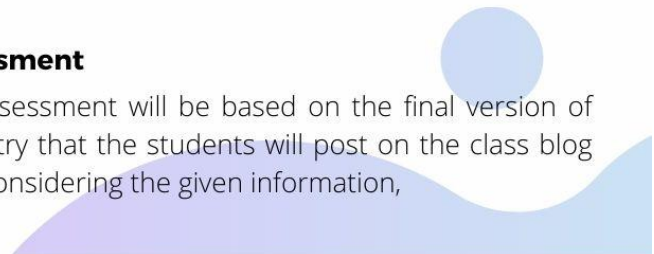
### **Independent practice 2**

**20 min**

The second independent practice activity deals with the **planning** stage, in which students will organize the ideas from the previous activity to select what they would like to include in the text. Then, they will start **drafting** their next blog entries by taking into account their own plans and goals and the class content.

While writing the text, the teacher might help them by **revising** their drafts, making some corrections and providing feedback. After the process of **revising**, students can start the editing stage and develop the final version to post on the class blog.

### **Assessment**



The assessment will be based on the final version of the entry that the students will post on the class blog after considering the given information,

the guidelines explained in class and the corrections provided by the teacher It will be carried out based on the rubric for evaluation provided in this booklet. The rubric details the requirements at each stage of the writing process and the criteria for assessment.

## Appendixes

### Appendix 1



### Appendix 2



### Appendix 3

HOW TO TALK ABOUT FUTURE		
WILL	MIGHT	GOING TO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Predictions or decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans (already made)</li> </ul>

### Appendix 4



Appendix 5



Appendix 6



Appendix 7



# CYCLE 2

## LESSON PLAN 1 MY RELATIVES ROCK!

**Time:** 120 minutes (two lessons of 60 minutes each)

**Vocabulary:** personality and physical adjectives, intensifiers, family members

**Grammar::** to be in present, simple present for 3rd person, question words

### **Objectives:**

- To identify the members of my family and their roles
- To recognize the role of my family in my personal development
- To detail personality traits and routines when talking about family members

### **Business/ materials:**

- Blogger.com
- List of adjectives of personality and physical description
- Video on family description by Pearson retrieved from <https://youtu.be/KTmxWLUBI>
- Poster about family members

### **Warm up:**

**15 min**

To start the lesson, the teacher will call some students to the front of the class and will give them a family role to represent. That is, mother, father, son, daughter, grandmother, grandfather. They must mimic the role by doing some actions their own family member would normally do. They can help themselves by drawing something on the board or picking other students to interact with them. Whatever they do, they cannot speak. The teacher will tell the rest of the class that they must guess what their classmates are representing. After every character is guessed, the teacher will review the meaning and pronunciation of the vocabulary.

### **Objective discussion:**

**5 min**

The objective discussion functions to help students understand the importance and usefulness of the class content.

For the objective discussion, the teacher will ask students if they have a photo of a family member with them.

He will ask them to try to describe the person in the photo by only using the target language. They might use the personality adjectives they learned during the cycle 2, lesson 2.

After two or three students participate and show the photo of their family member to the class, the teacher will also show the class one person of his family and describe him/her. Then, he will point out how essential it is to know how to talk about our families since they are the people we share with on a daily basis, and they represent an important part of who we are.


### **Instruct and Model**

**30 min**

To start the instruction section, the teacher will divide the class into two and will give a list of adjectives to each group (see appendix 1). One list contains personality adjectives and the other contains adjectives for physical description. Students will distribute the adjectives among the group so that each student has an adjective to represent. After that, the whole class will sit in a circle and, one by one, each student will go to the center of the class and represent their adjective. They will mimic so that the students of the other group can guess what they represent. Before representing the adjectives, they can clarify meaning and pronunciation with the teacher. By the end of the activity, all students should have participated and all of them should have in mind most of the adjectives. They may take notes if necessary. When the activity ends, the teacher will clarify meaning and answer possible students' questions.

To check students' understanding, the teacher will write on the board the question: *Who is ..... in your family?* The blank space will be filled with the adjectives they have just reviewed. E.g. *Who is grumpy in your family?* Students would answer by saying the vocabulary about family, *my mother, my father, my sister* might be some answers.

The teacher will review with the students the use of "to be" to describe people physically and emotionally. He will also point out that they can use it to talk about people's age. He can give students some examples for clarification.



After reviewing the use of "to be", the teacher will introduce the use of the simple present for the third person. He will mention the use of the -s, -es endings and give some examples by using the verbs for routines they learned in the previous cycle.

The teacher will now write on the board the verbs *like*, *work* and *live* and will ask students to provide some examples by talking about their family members using those verbs. *My mother likes pasta* and *My grandfather lives in a town* might be some examples.

The previous activities are the instruction and model for students to shape their understanding on personality and routines in the third person.

The session will end with the instruction and model activities and the examples provided by the students to talk about their family. The next session will start with the guided practice and students will be asked to bring a photo of one family member to the class.

### Guided Practice:

15 min

For the guided practice, students will watch a video about family members (see appendix 2). Before watching the video, the teacher will ask students to remember the adjectives for physical description, since the video contains some of those adjectives. After watching the video, the teacher will ask students the next comprehension questions:

*Who is handsome?*

*Who is the doctor?*

*Who is the university student?*

*Who is 58 years old?*


*Who is the short, old woman?*

The students might watch the video again to answer the questions. After answering the questions on their notebooks, the teacher will discuss the students' answers and provide necessary feedback.

### Independent practice

25 min

There will be two independent practice activities for this session. In the first, the teacher will ask students to **brainstorm** some ideas for their blog entry.



For the **brainstorming** process, they will make a poster with a comparative chart about one family member (Students should use the photo they were asked to bring in the previous session). The teacher will show them a model to make their posters (appendix 3) and will instruct them to include as much information as they consider necessary.

### Independent practice 2


20 min

The second independent practice activity deals with the **planning** stage in which students will fill a chart with the most important information about their family members (see appendix 4). They should include the actions they typically do, their personality and their physical description too. Students will start **drafting** their next blog entries by taking into account the information from the chart. Students should bear in mind that the title of the entry will be "my crazy family" so they should include funny facts about them in the chart and the final text.

After writing the text, the teacher might help them by **revising** their drafts, making some corrections and providing feedback. Then, students can start the **editing** stage and develop the **final version** to post on the class blog.

### Assessment

The assessment will be based on the final version of the entry that the students will post on the class blog after considering the given information, the guidelines explained in class and the corrections provided by the teacher. It will be carried out based on the rubric for evaluation provided in this booklet. The rubric details the requirements at each stage of the writing process and the criteria for assessment.





## Appendixes

### Appendix 1

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION	
Fat	
Attractive	
Bald	
Blonde	
Chubby	
Curvy	
Gorgeous	
Large	
Handsome (masc.)	
Ordinary	
Plain	
Tattooed	
Stocky	
Slender	
Skinny	
Brunet	
Ginger	
Short	
Ugly	
Young	
Old	

PERSONALITY	
AFFECTIONATE	
AMUSING	
BRAVE	
DETERMINED	
DYNAMIC	
CHARMING	
COMMUNICATIVE	
COMPASSIONATE	
CONSCIENTIOUS	
SHY	
STUBBORN	
CRUEL	
BAD TEMPERED	
CALM	
HONEST	
IMPATIENT	
INTELLECTUAL	
GRUMPY	
SMART	

### Appendix 2



The video contains a short funny scene where two friends talk about the family album. They mention family member and some adjectives about physical appearance.

<https://youtu.be/KTmxWLU>

### Appendix 3

Describing MY MOM		
PERSONALITY	PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION	HABITS
Funny Kind Humble Chatty Grumpy Honest	Curvy Tall Beautiful	Dance Exercise likes movies

### Appendix 4

DESCRIBING MY FAMILY				
Family member	Physical characteristics	Personality	Habits	Funny fact or extra information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grandfather (Isidoro)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Old,</li> <li>cute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funny,</li> <li>calm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listens to music</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>His name is funny and he plays his with ears</li> </ul>

# CYCLE 2

## LESSON PLAN 2 MY CREW

**Time:** 120 minutes (two lessons of 60 minutes each)

**Vocabulary:** Personality and physical adjectives, abilities

**Grammar:** be in present, simple present for third person, can, comparative adjectives

### Objectives:

- To express my opinions about my friends and classmates.
- To compare personality and physical traits.
- To communicate about my own and other people's abilities.

### Business/materials:

- Blogger.com
- Printed photo of superheroes
- Printed images to compare
- 3 Infographics with adjectives for students to make comparisons

### Warm up:

15 min

To start the first session, the teacher will paste on the board a photo with many superheroes (see appendix 1). Then, he will write on the board some verbs like: "fly", "jump high", "run fast", "break things", "fight very well", "change form", among others. The teacher will ask students what the superheroes can do so that the students can answer orally and make some sentences using the modal "can" implicitly. E.g. *Superman can fly, and Hulk can break things.*

After having the students give examples, the teacher will ask them what they can do or what their friends and classmates can do. Student should mention their abilities. If they know how to play any instrument, or they practice any sport, they might also mention them in their examples.

### Objective discussion:

15 min

The objective discussion functions as a means to help students understand why the class content is important and how they can use it in real contexts.

For the objective discussion of this lesson, the teacher will ask students to bear in mind the adjectives they reviewed in the previous session. They can use their notes if they consider them necessary.

The teacher will ask one student to volunteer to come to the front of the class. Then, he will ask the volunteer if he/she has some friend in the classroom and will call that friend to the front too. The friend should describe the volunteer with as many adjectives as he/she remembers. They can also mention hobbies and habits. In addition, the teacher will ask the friend to mention the abilities of the volunteer. "Can he/she fly?" "Can he/she run fast?", "Can he/she play the guitar?"

After the first participation, the teacher will call another couple of students in order to build participation and social interaction among them. With this activity, students will see how the class content is relevant for them and their context since friends are important in their daily life, plus they will be able to build social interaction with L2.

### Instruct and Model

15 min


To start the instruction section, the teacher will clarify the rules and structure of "can" to express abilities. To do so, he will write some of the examples the students mentioned at the beginning of the class or the ones said by their friends during the objective discussion. The teacher will clarify the topic in case there are questions.

After checking students' understanding, the teacher will ask them to make questions about their abilities orally. The teacher will start the round of questions with the closest student. He will ask the learner something like, "can you drive?". Then, the student must ask the classmate behind them another question about their abilities. The other student must answer and make another question to the one behind, and so on until everybody has talked. Now that they know some of their friends' abilities, that information can work for them to start brainstorming about the blog entry of this session.

### Instruct and model 2:

15 min

The second instruction section has to do with the use of comparative adjectives. The teacher will write on the board the adjective "young."



Then, he will make sure everybody knows the meaning of the adjective, and then, he will ask two students their age in order to make a sentence with the comparative adjective "younger" depending on their ages. The teacher will write on the board the example. E.g. *Andrés is younger than Miguel*. Then, the teacher will make the same example with the adjective "older" and will make sure students understand the sentence.

After that, the teacher will paste some photos on the board for students to make comparisons (see appendix 2). He will also explain the spelling rules for students to have them clear when writing their entries.

The session will end with the instruction and model activities, the examples provided by the students and the feedback provided by the teacher. The next session will start with the guided practice, in which the students will follow a model to **brainstorm** ideas for their blog entries.

### **Guided Practice:**

**10 min**

To start the second session, students will practice the use of comparative adjectives, which was explained in the previous session. In this case, they will be divided in three groups and will receive a card (see appendix 3) which they can use to make comparisons. There are four adjectives in the card, but they should include more. They must discuss the adjectives in groups and fill the information required. Then, they will present and explain their work to the rest of the class.

### **Independent practice**

**25 min**

For the first independent practice activity, learners will be asked to read the first 3 blog entries of 2 of their classmates and leave a positive comment on them. Since the next blog entry is about their friends, the objective of the activity is to get to know more about them and to **brainstorm** some ideas about their friends' lives for their own coming blog entry.

It is necessary to have access to the internet for this activity, so the teacher should require the language lab or any classroom where students might have access to the blog for, at least 20 minutes.

### **Independent practice 2**

**25 min**

The second independent practice activity deals with the **planning** stage in which students must start arranging what their entry will contain. The teacher will tell students that their new entry should have the title "my crew is lit", meaning their friends are cool. They are going to make a list of their friends and start characterizing them, mention their personalities, physical description and abilities. After they have made the descriptions, they must compare them. Two or three points of comparison should be fine for the text. Students can follow a chart to make their **planning** and review it with the teacher before drafting their texts (see appendix 4).

### **Assessment**

The assessment will be based on the final version of the entry that the students will post on the class blog after considering the given information, the guidelines explained in class and the corrections provided by the teacher. It will be carried out based on the rubric for evaluation provided in this booklet. The rubric details the requirements at each stage of the writing process and the criteria for assessment.





# CYCLE 2

## LESSON PLAN 3 THE PEOPLE I LOVE

**Time:** 120 minutes (two lessons of 60 minutes each)

**Vocabulary:** personality, intensifiers, why and because

**Grammar:** be in present, simple present, superlative adjectives

### Objectives:

- To recognize the impact of friends and family in my life.
- To detail the reasons for doing or thinking certain things.
- To use intensifiers and superlatives to enrich people's descriptions

### Business/ materials:

- Blogger.com
- Small papers with "why" questions
- Card with adjectives
- Questionnaire about family

### Warm up:

15 min

To start, the teacher will write on the board the next phrase "*family or friends?*" and will ask students to pick only one option. Then, they must explain why they made their choice so that they can use "because" implicitly. The teacher will have most of the students provide their answers in the target language. If they need planning, they can have some minutes to organize their ideas and explain what they think.

### Objective discussion:

15 min

The objective discussion functions for students to understand why the class content is important and how they can use it in real life.

The teacher will bring several little papers with "why" questions to the class (See appendix 1). He will put the papers in a box for students to pick one without looking at them. All students must pick one and answer the question they will find there. Some questions might be repeated depending on the number of students, and they can take some time to plan their answers in the target language.

The objective of this activity is to get students to participate and provide explanations or reasons for certain situations, likes or issues in their lives. They should explain the reasons by using "because" and making simple sentences.

### Instruct and Model

15 min

For the beginning of the first instruct and model section, the teacher will write some of the questions from the previous activity on the board and some of the students' answers as well. He will use a simple chart (see appendix 2) to exemplify how students can ask and answer "why" questions by using the verb to be. The objective is not to provide a long grammar structure explanation, but to give students a guide to express their ideas more clearly.

To finish the first instruction section, students will be asked to make two lines, one in front of the other. They should face each other and ask them a question using "why", they can use the chart or the papers from the previous activity as a guide/model. The other student should answer and then make another question. As soon as they finish, they will rotate and continue to ask and answer with the next person.

### Instruct and Model 2

15 min

For the second instructional activity of the lesson, students will be asked their ages. The teacher will write on the board the word "old". Then, he will take into account the oldest student to make an example and explain learners how to use superlatives. E.g. "*Andrés is the oldest student of the class.*"

After clarifying the use of superlatives, their functions and answering the students' questions, they will make groups of three or four. The teacher will give them a card with adjectives (see appendix 3). They should talk and decide who is the *tallest*, *the oldest*, *the most stubborn*, etc. The teacher will also mention that if they want to intensify a description, but not to make any comparison or use superlatives, they can use any of the words "very", "so", "quite" as intensifiers. E.g. "*Juan is very tall.*"

The first session ends with the activity on superlatives, the students modeled practice and the teacher's feedback. The next session that this lesson plan covers will start with the guided practice

### Guided Practice:

15 min

To start the second session, students will practice the use of superlatives by answering a short questionnaire they will be given (see appendix 4). They will have some minutes to answer the questions by themselves and then, they will walk around the classroom and make the questions to one or two of their classmates. They should discuss the answers and explain why they chose those people to answer the questions.

### Independent practice

20 min

For the first independent practice activity, students will take into account the information from the previous activity to make a poster about their family and friends. They will include all the information they consider essential to describe them. On one side, they will write about their friends, and, on the other side, they will write the information about their family members. They must use comparatives and provide reasons for their opinions with "because". After they have finished their posters, they will present them to the class. For decorating their poster, they can use images (photos of their friends and family) or any other decoration they like. This activity will help them **brainstorm** for their texts.

### Independent practice 2

25 min

The second independent practice activity deals with the **planning** stage, in which students must start arranging what their final version will contain. The teacher will tell students that their new entry should have the title "The people I love", meaning their friends and family. They should consider all the information from the poster and start **drafting** their ideas for their blog entry. The text should contain students' opinions about whom the *smartest* person of their family is or who the *funniest* of their friends is. In addition, they should explain why they consider so.

After writing the first text, the teacher might help them by **revising** their drafts, making some corrections and providing feedback. After that, students can start the **editing** stage and develop the **final version** to post on the class blog.

### Assessment

The assessment will be based on the final version of the entry that the students will post on the class blog after considering the given information, the guidelines explained in class and the corrections provided by the teacher. It will be carried out based on the rubric for evaluation provided in this booklet. The rubric details the requirements at each stage of the writing process and the criteria for assessment.

### Appendixes

#### Appendix 1

Why do you like your hobbies so much?	Why do you live where you live?	Why do you study where you study?	Why do you wake up early?
Why do you like your favorite food?	Why are you happy today?	Why do some people sleep well while other people do not sleep well?	Tell me about some good places to hang out. Why are they good?
Tell me your favorite color. Why is it your favorite color?	Tell me your favorite music. Why is it your favorite music?	Tell me your favorite singer. Why is he/she your favorite singer?	Tell me your favorite food. Why is it your favorite food?
Tell me your favorite movie. Why is it your film?	Tell me your favorite TV Series. Why is it your favorite TV series?	Tell me your favorite youtuber or instagramer. Why are they your favorite?	Tell me your favorite class. Why is it your favorite class?
Why are goals important?	Why is family important?	Why is water important?	Why are shoes important?
Why is the internet important?	you like the place where you are living? Why or why not?	Do you like school? why? Why not?	Do you exercise? Why? Why not?
Do you like your city? Why? Why not?	Do you like your neighborhood? Why? Why not?	Why is school important?	Why are you studying English?
Why is exercise important?	Why is there so much pollution on the earth?	Why do you Study?	Why are friends important?

## Appendix 2

	Be	Simple present
Why (questions)	Why is school important?	Why do you like school?
Because (answers)	Because it is important to learn new things.	Because I can see my friends

## Appendix 3

<p>YOUNG TALL SMART</p>	<p>OLD SHORT KIND</p>
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## Appendix 4

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

- Who is the smartest person in your family?
- Who is the shortest person in your family?
- Who is the most good-looking person in your family?
- Who is the smartest person of the classroom?
- Who is the most interesting person in your country?
- Who is the funniest person in your family?
- Who is the funniest person in your class?
- Who is the kindest person that you know?
- Who is the most responsible person you know?

## CHAPTER V: Conclusions and implications

The implementation of this type of didactic and pedagogical proposal triggers a number of outcomes and certain changes for the agents that are involved. Thus, this section details the implications that arise from designing and applying the present didactic proposal. These outcomes are directly related to EFL teaching, the institution where the proposal might take place, the teachers that would like to implement the project, the students that would be part of the classroom where the proposal is applied, and finally, the designer of the project himself.

In the first place, it is necessary to change the way English writing is understood in several EFL teaching settings. For many, English writing merely implies well-structured sentences jotted down in longer parts of speech. Nonetheless, as stated above, writing must be understood as a process and not only a set of well-written statements. According to (Hyland, 2009), “focusing on accuracy is exactly the wrong place to look for writing improvement as there is little evidence to show that either syntactic complexity or grammatical accuracy are the best measures of good writing. Many students can construct syntactically accurate sentences and yet are unable to produce appropriate written texts.” (p. 11). There are several mental stages that authors go through when composing a single paragraph: therefore, L2 writing implies several other factors besides syntax and vocabulary. This sort of proposal suggests a new perspective on traditional approaches to EFL teaching and EFL writing. Hence, before applying the project, it is essential to change the traditional mindset and consider writing practice as a set of actions in which the social



and local contexts of the writers play a fundamental role and in which the environment has a great influence.

Secondly, the implementation of this proposal represents several considerations for the institution where it might take place. Ratheeswari (2018) claims that technological devices play essential roles in class environments nowadays and have become more and more essential for school settings. Therefore, the institution must be equipped for students to be able to use computers and access stable Internet connection, which would allow them to type, edit and post their blogs entries easily. In addition, classrooms might be set so that students can have their own space to reflect, and organize their ideas, draft, write and use their devices. Another factor to bear in mind is the size of the classroom. For some activities in this proposal, it might be necessary to move around and discuss with classmates and with the teacher; thus, the school may provide a physical space that is comfortable for the teacher and the students to walk and interact freely.

Teachers are the third factor affected by the application of this didactic proposal. As aforementioned, a mindset change is needed so that it is possible to approach L2 writing differently. Hyland (2009) argues that teachers' evaluation should be based on students' experience and not only on the final version of the texts they compose. Henceforth, teachers might be ready to evaluate students' writing in terms of the process they followed from the first draft to the final version of their blog entries. Moreover, teachers should be trained to understand and handle webtools so that they are ready to administer the class blog, evaluate the students, and provide assistance if needed. Additionally, as the proposal is based on situated writing, the teacher must also show a sort of interest in his students' reality, not just for the activities, but for the students to understand how valuable context is for

improving their L2 skills. If the teachers want to keep working on situated learning, they must become researchers and work towards understanding their students' reality and interests so that they can implement and design this type of activities in further lessons.

The fourth agent influenced by the implementation of this proposal are the students. They need to have a certain level of language so that they can understand the activities and develop them successfully. According to Giraldo, Gonzalez & Gonzalez (2016), eleventh graders are expected to show some awareness of grammar structures and general vocabulary which is familiar to most students at secondary school. Thus, students must have a certain background in terms of grammar structures, verb conjugation and vocabulary since the classes will not be focused on grammar structures but they will only review them superficially so that students can share clearer messages in their compositions. Although they do not seem to have the language level expected by the MEN, they must have a sort of L2 knowledge from the previous courses.

Furthermore, the fifth agent that is affected by the elaboration and application of this proposal is its designer. The first thing the creator must bear in mind is that when applying the present didactic project there might be expected results, but some unexpected outcomes will also take place. He must consider them so as to adjust and enhance the design and lesson plans. Moreover, the creator must understand that research and didactic innovation are not finished processes, but they imply constant inquiry. Hopkins (2008) highlights the importance of regular research and didactic design intending to achieve better teaching techniques. Hence, the final version of the proposal is not the end but rather a starting point to research and articulate more elements that might contribute to the design

and implementation of other pedagogical and didactic projects along the same line of thought or other EFL fields.

### **Possible limitations**

Several restraints might also occur at implementing the present didactic proposal. Although it is not possible to determine these limitations completely, the students' language level, the institution's resources and class time might limit the achievement of this proposal's objectives. They may emerge as negative agents when trying to address the English classes or developing the writing tasks with a group of public school eleventh graders.

The first limitation that might occur when implementing this didactic proposal is the students' language level. As aforementioned, it is evident that eleventh graders' English level is not the one they are expected to have at this point of high school. This means that the knowledge of L2 grammar and vocabulary they have is limited and may represent a drawback when trying to develop the different class activities. Each lesson plan is intended to address certain vocabulary and grammar structures, yet they will not be thoroughly explained. They will only be reviewed superficially with a couple of exercises and the teacher's instructions. Nevertheless, it is difficult to attain the expected class results if students do not have enough previous knowledge on the language. This could trigger misunderstandings, delays and frustration for the students or the teachers themselves.

A second drawback might be the institution's resources since not all schools own the necessary equipment to develop e-learning activities. Some institutions are properly equipped to allow their students to work on their own laptops and participate in online classrooms or access material posted on the web. However, there are schools that do not

have the resources to provide their students with the necessary tools to carry out online activities such as, blog writing or commenting. As a result, there would not be online interaction or any sort of virtual community within the course.

Class time corresponds to the third expected limitation when applying this didactic proposal. Whereas the lesson plans are specifically organized in terms of timing, not all schools articulate EFL classes as planned. This means that the expected class time must be adapted depending on the institution, and it might lead to limiting or extending some activities. The omission or extension of some activities represents a limitation that teachers who apply this didactic proposal must cope with.

### **Further research suggestions**

This pedagogical and didactic proposal was designed based on situated learning experiences, particularly, situated writing through blogs. It is necessary, however, to implement this type of proposals in exploratory research or action research to comprehend deeply how their application affect high school settings and to determine their effectiveness. Not much has been researched regarding situated learning experiences. Therefore, it would be enriching to apply more contextualized activities not only in writing, but also in the other language skills. Situated speaking, reading and listening might transform traditional learning practices and foster language proficiency.

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## Annexes

## Annex 1: Cycle three



**Time:** 120 minutes (two lessons of 60 minutes each)

**Vocabulary:** Places in the neighborhood, location, geographical location.

**Grammar:** There is/are, simple past, prepositions of place, adjective placement.

**Objectives:**

- To identify the physical factors that build a community.
- To detail the main features of my community with appropriate vocabulary.
- To express location and characterize places.

**Business/ materials:**

- Blogger.com
- Poster with lost tourist
- List of places in the neighborhood
- Padlet.com <https://padlet.com/singerkev12/CLASSGALLERY>
- Form about my neighborhood

**Warm up:**

**10 min**

The teacher will start the lesson by drawing a compass on the board (see appendix 1). He will tell the students how to pronounce and talk about the cardinal points (north, east, south and west) by providing some examples. "Amazonas is to the south of Colombia"; "Santa Marta is to the north". After clarifying the meaning with the students, he will ask them, "where are we?". The teacher will gather the answers of the students and will ask them where other neighborhoods of the city are (see appendix 2 for guidance). They can also learn expressions such as: South-east, south-west, north-east and north-west if they want to be more precise.

**Objective discussion:**

**5 min**

The objective discussion functions as a means to help students understand why the class content is important and how they can use it in real contexts. The teacher will paste a poster of a lost tourist in front of the class (see appendix 3), and, in the speech bubble, he will write the question "Excuse me, where is the school (name of their school)?" the students

should try to answer the question with the vocabulary they know, or they can find on the internet/ in the dictionaries. This activity is useful to explain to them how important it is to locate oneself in the neighborhood, not only to guide others, but also not to lose when traveling to a foreign country.

**Instruct and Model**

**20 min**

There will be two instruct and model activities in the first session. Firstly, the teacher will give students a short list of places they can easily find in their neighborhood(s) (see appendix 4). Then, they will review meaning and pronunciation together with the teacher. After that, he will explain the students the use of the expression there is/are to talk about existence. He will make some examples with the places from the list. E.g., "There are 2 supermarkets in Restrepo", "There is a bus stop in front of the school", etc. After clarifying the use of "there is" and "there are" with the students, he will ask them to talk about the other places they can find around the school. *Stores, bookshops, other schools, bus stops. Etc.* They should say their examples out loud to practice pronunciation.

**Instruct and Model 2**

**25 min**

The second activity deals with the students' neighborhoods. They might be the same as the school or a different one (depending on the student). They will make a map of the neighborhood they live in and will point out the main places: *their house, parks, libraries, schools, grocery stores, etc.* While the students work on their maps, the teacher will also make a map on the board to later explain students how to talk about location in the target language. When they are ready, the teacher will explain basic vocabulary about locations by describing his neighborhood. E.g. "The pharmacy is around the corner", "my house is next to the supermarket". Etc. (see appendix 5 for guidance) As soon as the vocabulary and meaning are clear, students can make their own descriptions in their map. This will be the final activity of the first session.

### Guided Practice:

20 min

The teacher will start the session by writing some adjectives on the board (see appendix 6). Then, he will ask students to make groups where at least one person has a cellphone with them. They must go out and take a picture of something related to those adjectives on the board. They must, for instance, *find something beautiful, find something large. Etc.*

For this guided-practice activity, students need to bring their phones, not all of them have to have the devices, since they will work in groups. With the permission of the institution, the teacher will take the students somewhere out of the school for them to take the photos of the neighborhood that correspond to the assigned description. The purpose of the activity is to make a photo gallery on a webpage called padlet.com. (See appendix 7) Students will, then, understand the vocabulary and will be able to make accurate descriptions about places.

After taking the photos, they will post them on the class' padlet and participate by telling their descriptions: *"the field is large", "the park is beautiful". Etc.*

### Independent practice

20 min

For the first independent practice activity, students will start gathering their ideas on a form titled: *my neighborhood* (see appendix 8). They can make short sentences to describe it. Mention the different places they can find there and their location. They can describe the places as well and integrate all the class content on their paper. In the last section of the form, they must write about one of their most memorable experiences in their current neighborhood. They can jot down general ideas in the chart, since it is only for them to start **brainstorming** what they will post in the next blog entry.

### Independent practice 2

20 min

After finishing their form and jotting down general ideas, students will start **planning** their texts. The teacher will instruct students by telling them that this blog entry must contain a general description of their neighborhood and one experience they have lived in there. Since they already reviewed the use of simple past in the first cycle, they only have to recap that information to narrate that short anecdote. The teacher will be ready to provide guidance while students start **drafting** their texts.

The teacher might help them by **revising** their drafts, making some corrections and providing feedback. After the process of revising, students can start the **editing** stage and develop the **final version** to post on the class blog.

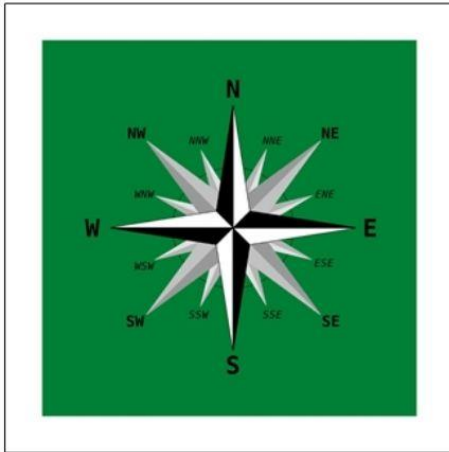
### Assessment

The assessment will be based on the final version of the entry that the students will post on the class blog after considering the given information, the guidelines explained in class and the corrections provided by the teacher.

It will be carried out based on the rubric for evaluation provided in this booklet. The rubric details the requirements at each stage of the writing process and the criteria for assessment.

## Appendixes

### Appendix 1



### Appendix 2

#### QUESTIONS

WHERE IS RESTREPO?

WHERE IS OLAYA?

WHERE IS USAQUÉN?

WHERE IS SOACHA?

WHERE IS DOWNTOWN?

WHERE IS EL BARRIO INGLÉS?

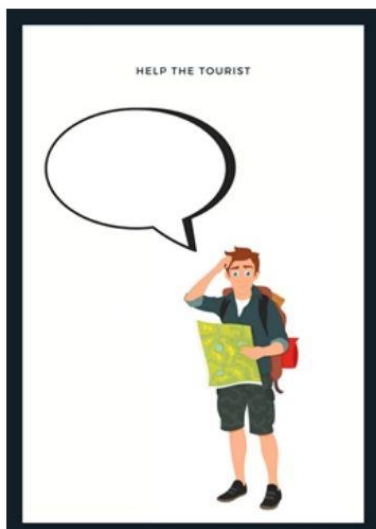
WHERE IS PEPE SIERRA?

WHERE IS CIUDAD BOLIVAR?

WHERE IS SUBA?

WHERE IS USME?

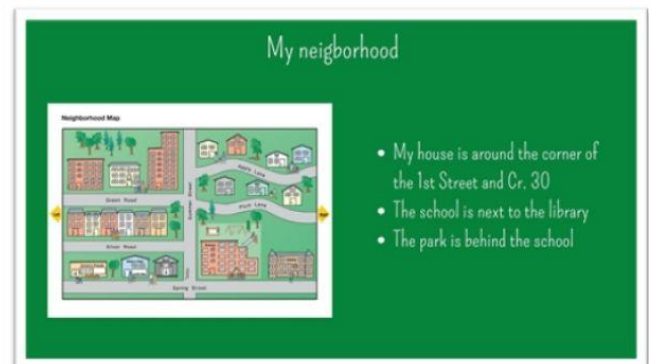
### Appendix 3



### Appendix 4



### Appendix 5



## Appendix 6

### ADJECTIVES TO DESCRIBE PLACES

- ALIVE
- AMAZING
- BEAUTIFUL
- BRIGHT
- CALM
- COLOURFUL
- CREEPY
- CROWDED
- DESERTED
- DIFFERENT
- DRY
- ENCHANTED
- FRESH
- HOT
- INCREDIBLE
- INTERESTING
- MAGNIFICENT
- MODERN
- FAIRYTALE-LIKE
- MYSTICAL
- ANCIENT
- MAJESTIC
- IMPRESSIVE
- SPACIOUS
- DAZZLING
- EVOCATIVE

## Appendix 7



Padlet is a webpage where it is possible to make collaborative galleries or boards and share them. The next link takes the students to the padlet created for this lesson.

<https://padlet.com/singerkev12/CLASSGALLERY>

## Appendix 8

### MY NEIGHBORHOOD

Places: mention the places and their location	Describe your neighborhood, use the adjective from the class	Describe a experience in your neighborhood

# CYCLE 3

## LESSON PLAN 2 WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE

**Time:** 120 minutes (two lessons of 60 minutes each)

**Vocabulary:** Places in the city, location, adjectives for places, intensifiers.

**Grammar:** Modal verb can, prepositions of place, adjective placement.

### Objectives:

- To recognize the most important places in my city and characterize them.
- To detail the main features of my city
- To express ideas and locations about the place I live in
- To reflect and find solutions to city issues

### Business/ materials:

- Poster with a map of the city
- Photographs of places in Bogotá
- Flashcards
- Photographs of students and teacher in some place in the city
- List of adjectives to describe places

### Warm up:

**10 min**

To start, the teacher will paste a poster with a map of the city in front of the class (see appendix 1). Students might recognize it is the city of Bogotá. Then, he will ask the students if they know where they are located and will also ask them to describe their city and their neighborhood. He will write the different adjectives around the map and will add some from their own examples by saying sentences like *"Bogotá is crowded"*, *"Bogotá is not small"*, etc. they can also make sentences with have, such as, *"Bogotá has many buses"* or *"Bogotá does not have subway"*.

### Objective discussion:

**10 min**

The objective discussion functions to help students understand why the class content is important and how they can use it in real life.

The teacher will give students a postcard with false information about New York (see appendix 2). They will read it in groups. After reading, he will ask them if they think that information is true or false.

When students identify the false information, the teacher will talk about the importance of knowing how to describe the place they live in and its main features.

### Instruct and Model

**20 min**

There will be two instruct and model activities in the first session. Firstly, the teacher will start by detailing vocabulary about places in the city. To do so, he will present a photo gallery (see appendix 3) with different representative places of Bogotá for students to recognize the vocabulary easily and with contextualized material. After showing each picture, the teacher will review the pronunciation and will ask the students which activities one can do at every place. E.g., *"At Monserrate you can climb or take the cable cab"*, *"In Cine Colombia you can watch movies"*.

He will paste each photo in a different place around the classroom, and ask students if they know other places apart from the ones that are in the pictures. *"Do you know other parks?"*, *"Are there other hospitals in the city?"*, *"Other movie theaters?"*. After completing the set of photographs, the teacher will review the pronunciation with the students.

### Instruct and Model

**20 min**

The second activity deals with adjectives to describe places. The students might be familiar with this vocabulary, but might not know some words they can use. The teacher will show students a list of adjectives to do so (see appendix 4). He will review the vocabulary with them, clarify doubts and check pronunciation. After overviewing all the vocabulary, he will give the students 3 small flashcards where they must write a short description of 3 of the places from the pictures around the classroom.

They might use the vocabulary previously explained or look for new adjectives to integrate in their description. The teacher will tell students that they must include expressions like *"very"*, *"quite"*, *"really"* and *"so"*, and that they can include the locations of the places to enrich their descriptions. After writing their descriptions, they must paste them next to the places they chose.

The teacher will read some of these descriptions for the whole class to conclude the session.

At the end of the session, the teacher will ask students to bring 3 photos they have taken in the city.

### **Guided Practice:**

**20 min**

To start the second session, students will have to bring photos they had taken in their city. They must bring two or three pictures to show their classmates and describe the different places they visited. During the class, the teacher will instruct them on adjective placement and prepositions of place by describing one of his pictures in a city as well (see example in appendix 5). The teacher might write on the board the different sentences he used to describe the photo so that students can have a guide to make their own descriptions. In groups of 3 or 4, students will discuss by making their own descriptions of their photographs.

### **Independent practice**

**15 min**

For the first independent practice, students will **brainstorm** by thinking of a problem they can find in the city. They can also express them by using negative sentences (as reviewed in the first cycle). Students will be asked to think of 2 or 3 problems they would like to solve in Bogotá. When they are ready, they must go to the board and write them down. They can participate as many times as they want. After writing down their ideas, the teacher will read, correct and clarify them, if necessary. Then, he will ask students if they know about some solutions to the problems they have just written.

### **Independent practice 2**

**25 min**

The second independent practice activity deals with the **planning** stage, in which students must start arranging what their texts will contain. They must describe the main features of the city by using the vocabulary of the last two classes.

The texts should include landmarks of Bogotá, their locations and the activities one can do there. When describing the city, they must include one problem from the ideas they mentioned in the previous activity and also write how they would solve it.

After writing the first text, the teacher might help them by **revising** their **drafts**, making some corrections and providing feedback. Students can, after the first revision, start the **editing** stage and develop the **final version** to post on the class blog.

### **Assessment**

The assessment will be based on the final version of the entry that the students will post on the class blog after considering the given information, the guidelines explained in class and the corrections provided by the teacher.

It will be carried out based on the rubric for evaluation provided in this booklet. The rubric details the requirements at each stage of the writing process and the criteria for assessment.

### **Appendixes**

#### Appendix 1





## Appendix 2



### Dear David

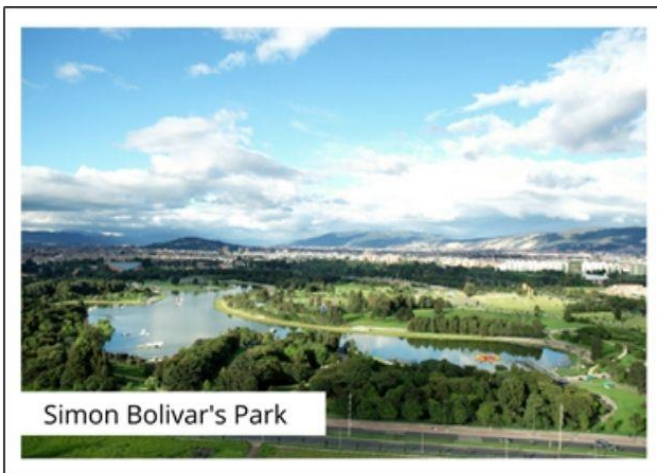
Hello dude, I want to tell you how my trip has been. New York is very beautiful, it is classic, old-fashioned and very small. I like it because it does not have any modern places or tall buildings-

New York is also full of nature, and you can camp everywhere! There are not many people, so I can walk around without problems. The air is clean, and I can relax here because it is not a big city.



Buildings: Torre Colpatría

## Appendix 3



Simon Bolivar's Park



Downtown



Library: Virgilio Barco



Mall



Kennedy's Hospital

Appendix 4

# LIST OF ADJECTIVES FOR PLACES

- Alive - Full of life
- Attractive - Pleasing; charming
- Beautiful - Having qualities that are pleasing or appealing
- Bustling - Full of life, energy
- Calm - Peaceful; free from stress
- Charming - Fascinating; likeable
- Cosmopolitan - Appealing to people from all across the globe
- Enchanting - Delightful; fascinating
- Fascinating - Alluring; captivating
- Fresh - Something newly made and full of vigor
- Homey - Cozy; inviting
- Inspiring - Enlivening; motivating
- Lively - Full of life and spirit
- Peaceful - Calm; friendly
- Picturesque - Scenic; beautiful
- Unspoiled - Untouched by man; pure
- Vibrant - Full of life; energy

Appendix 5

“ This is a picture of me when I was in Santa Marta. Santa Marta is beautiful and vibrant. It is crowded, specially in Downtown. It has many buildings and big white houses. Some streets are dirty, but the city is very interesting and lively. Most of the stores are IN downtown, but there are some ALONG the beach. The gold museum is NEXT TO the square and IN FRONT OF the beach

The day I was there, I went to the beach and swam for hours. In the afternoon I walked in downtown and enjoyed the atmosphere before coming back to Bogotá ”



# CYCLE 3

## LESSON PLAN 3 FROM COLOMBIA TO THE WORLD

**Time:** 120 minutes (two lessons of 60 minutes each)

**Vocabulary:** connectors of contradiction, participle adjectives (-ing)

**Grammar:** imperatives, future conditional, adjective placement.

### Objectives:

- To identify the negative and positive aspects of my country and express them.
- To redefine my country by highlighting its positive features.
- To be able to persuade someone to come to my country

### Business/ materials:

- Blogger.com
- Pictures of Colombia, *narco-traffic*, poverty and violence
- Sheet of paper to make a mind map
- List of connectors of contradiction
- List of participle adjectives (-ing)

### Warm up:

**10 min**

To start the lesson, the teacher will write this sentence on the board: "Colombia is a terrible place". Then, he will ask the students if they agree or disagree with that statement. First, he will ask the students who agree to try to explain why Colombia is a terrible place. He will divide the board into two and write the ideas of the students who agree on one side and the ideas of the students who disagree with the statement on the other side (see appendix 1 for guidance).

### Objective discussion:

**10 min**

The objective discussion helps students understand why the class content is important and how they can use it in real contexts.

For this activity, the teacher will paste on the board an image with the map of Colombia and some images related to violence, drug trafficking and poverty with an equal sign in the middle (see appendix 2). That is a common stereotype of the country that might annoy many Colombians,

so the teacher will ask students their opinion about it. If they think it is real or not and how they feel about that stereotype. This objective-discussion will guide the whole class to reflect on the negative image the country has around the world and how it could be changed.

### Instruct and Model

**20 min**

For the first instruct and model activity, the teacher will ask students how they would invite a foreigner to come to their country. He will write these ideas on the board and discuss them with the students. After that, he will explain them different statements they can use to instruct a person to do or not do to something (imperatives) plus some other expressions they can use (see appendix 3). After explaining, clarifying meaning and gathering some examples, the students will make two lines, one in front of the other so that they can face each other. They must try to invite their partners to their house by using the imperatives and the expressions previously explained. The teacher will model this activity with one of the students so that learners can understand how they will invite their partners (see appendix 4 for guidance). They can also describe their houses in order to convince their partners to come. After 1 minute or 1:30 they will rotate so that everyone gets to talk to most of their classmates.

### Instruct and Model 2

**20 min**

The second activity deals with the things people can find or do in the country if they come. The teacher will give students a sheet of paper with an incomplete statement in the middle "If you come to Colombia..." (See appendix 5). He will do the same in the middle of the board, and they all will make a mind map with the ideas of the students and the teacher (see appendix 6 for guidance). With this activity, students will learn the future conditional implicitly. They must already have some ideas on how to use will from the first cycle. This would be the end of the first session.

### Guided Practice:

20 min

The students will start the second session with the guided practice. Here, they will learn some vocabulary about connectors of contradiction. Students will be given a sheet of paper with connectors of contradiction written in the middle (see appendix 7) and will clarify meaning and use with the teacher. After that, the teacher will assign students a role: optimistic or pessimistic. Every other student will have a role, and then, they will have to write a positive or negative idea about the country. The pessimistic/negative ideas will be on the left side of the paper, and the optimistic students will write on the right side. They will write their ideas on their papers and then, they will rotate them (depending on the teacher's instruction). The objective is to fill the papers with negative opinions and their contradictory ideas. Using the connector in the middle. E.g., *"Colombia has a lot of poverty; however, Colombia has a lot of entrepreneurs"*. This activity helps students understand and use the connectors to later implement them in their texts. After finishing, the teacher will ask the students to share some ideas from the papers they ended up with.

### Independent practice

20 min

For the first independent practice, students will **brainstorm** positive features of the country. They must make a poster with something representative of the country: its map, its flag, etc. They can use adjectives with -ing from a list the teacher will provide (see appendix 8) and write some sentences that they think will attract people to come to visit Colombia. After making the poster, they must show it to the class, imagine they are foreigners and invite them to come to the country.

### Independent practice 2

20 min

The second independent-practice activity deals with the **planning** stage, in which students must arrange the information for their texts. They must write a text where they invite a person to come to the country. They have to describe its main features by using the vocabulary given throughout all the cycle.

Some popular destinations can be included as well. They must also talk about one issue or stereotype of the country and its respective contradictory idea so that their texts are more persuasive.

After writing the first text, the teacher might help them by **revising** their **drafts**, making some corrections and providing feedback. After the process of revising, students can start the **editing** stage and develop the final version to post on the class blog.

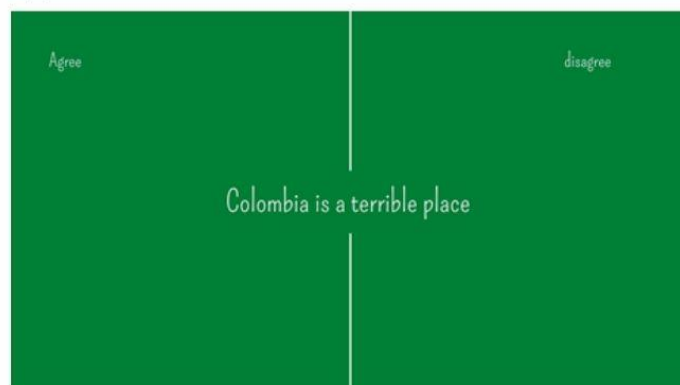
### Assessment

The assessment will be based on the final version of the entry that the students will post on the class blog after considering the given information, the guidelines explained in class and the corrections provided by the teacher

It will be carried out based on the rubric for evaluation provided in this booklet. The rubric details the requirements at each stage of the writing process and the criteria for assessment.

### Appendixes

#### Appendix 1



Appendix 2



Appendix 4

“  
 Would you like to visit a wonderful place?  
 Come to my house! I have many board  
 games and video games too. We can cook  
 something if you want or we can watch a  
 movie.  
 My house is spacious so if you want to stay  
 over, that's okay. It is also very illuminated  
 and modern. Come over!”

Appendix 3

# HOW TO MAKE INVITATIONS IN ENGLISH

- Come on
- Let's come
- Come to my country/house
- Don't wait more! come!
- Do you want to go to Colombia?
- Would you like to go to Colombia?
- Would you be interested in coming to my country?
- How about a trip to Colombia?
- I was just wondering if you would like to come over to this country
- We'd be delighted to have you over here

Appendix 5

if you come to Colombia....

Appendix 6

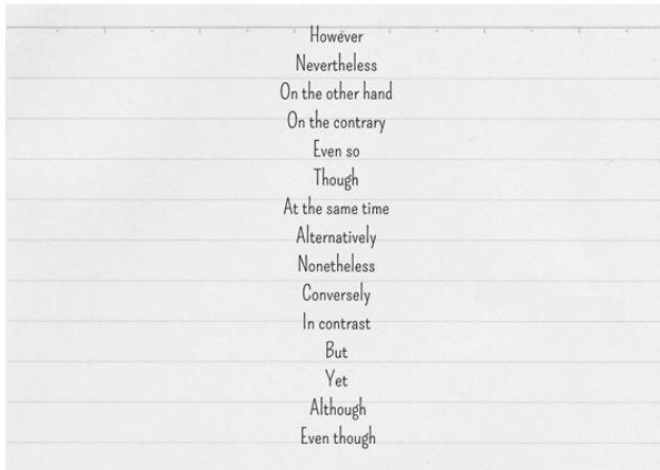
You will know many kind people.

if you come to Colombia....

You will discover many beautiful places



Appendix 7



Appendix 8

