

**UNIT STRUCTURE**  
**Teaching the Mechanics of writing**  
**CLASS – III**

Unit Over-view	Rationale	Unit Outcomes				Methodology Support					Additional Reading		
		Learning Outcomes	Learning Gaps to be addressed	Related Lessons	Unit Objectives	Introduction	Case Study 1	Activity 1	Case Study 2	Activity 2		Summary	Suggested Questions
<p>What this unit is about</p> <p>Gunotsav / NAS performance</p>													Teaching resources, links & ideas
<p>Overview of the language skill</p> <p>What the Gunotsav assessment shows us</p>		<p><b>LO 3.07</b> : The learner writes/types dictation of words/phrases/sentences</p> <p><b>LO 3.11</b> : The learner uses punctuation such as question mark, full stop and capital letters appropriately</p>	<p><b>Sub Area: i.</b> write (maintaining space and using capital letters in print)</p> <p><b>Sub Area:ii.</b> compose (short and simple sentences having full stops and question marks)</p>	<p><b>Unit 3</b> : Little by Little</p> <p>The Enormous Turnip</p> <p><b>Unit 4</b> Sea Song</p> <p>A Little Fish Story</p> <p><b>Unit 5</b> The Balloon Man</p> <p>The Yellow Butterfly</p>	<p>In this unit you will read ways of helping learners to:</p> <p>⇒practise maintaining space in between words and sentences and also writing capital letters in print</p> <p>⇒practise writing short and simple sentences with full stops and question marks</p>	<p>What this unit will teach you</p>	<p>Mechanics of writing</p>	<p>Dictation</p>	<p>Composition</p>	<p>Making writing an interesting activity</p>	<p>What you learnt in this unit</p>	<p><b>Sample Question</b> : Here are a few sentences about Rakesh's father. Write similar sentences about your father. I am Rakesh. The name of my father is Ramesh Borah . He is a teacher. He is a tall man . He likes to read newspaper.</p>	<p>↪ www.tess-india.edu.in</p> <p>↪ Paragraphs for dictation</p>

## Overview

Writing, like Speaking, is a ‘productive’ skills that requires several operations of the brain, including brain-hand coordination. The ability to write includes not just the knowledge of the words of a language; but the knowledge of grammar, punctuation and language functions. To write means to be able to use the script and punctuation of a language in a way so that one’s thoughts and ideas are clearly communicated. This requires the ability to spell words correctly and arrange words in a sentence grammatically. It also requires using writing rules such as space between words, capitalization at the beginning of a sentence and a full stop at the end. To help students acquire these skills, teachers need to make students write in the class as much as possible. Only through regular practice can students develop speed and flow in writing. Only through regular writing activities can students learn to choose appropriate words and arrange them in a logical sequence in sentences. In this unit, we will read about ways in which students’ writing skills in English at primary level can be developed.

## Rationale

The assessment of learning of primary level students conducted through the recent Gunotsav and National Assessment Survey (NAS) have reported unhappy performances of students in many key areas. Several of the learning outcomes specified for each class so not seem to have been met. Students have scored 0 or 1 marks in many areas, one of which is their ability to perform simple writing tasks. The gaps or ‘grey areas’ identified for Language 2 (English) of Class III students include their inability to write sentences using proper space between words and appropriate punctuation. The Gunotsav assessment analysis has also shown that students of Class III are unable to compose simple two or three sentence written texts.

In this unit, we hope to show you some ways in which you can address these learning gaps and enable your students to write English confidently and meaningfully.

## Introduction

This unit is about strategies you can use to improve student's writing in English in your classroom. The main focus is on supporting your students in taking dictation and guided composition of simple sentences. Here spelling, handwriting and punctuation are also given importance. Students will be practising the mechanical skills at the same time. When you ask your students write or to take dictation they develop their listening and reading skill too.

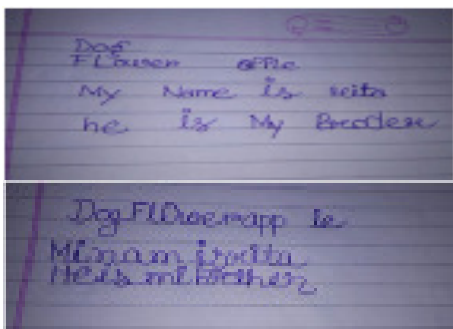
## Unit Objectives

In this unit you will read ways of helping learners to:

- ★ practise maintaining space in between words and sentences and also writing capital letters in print
- ★ practise writing short and simple sentences with full stops and question marks

### Case Study 1 : Mechanics of writing (space maintaining and use of capital letters in print)

Jayanta Pathak is a teacher educator. He had the opportunity to visit Lekhapani LP school of Karbi Anglong District as an External Evaluator in the recent Gunotsav programme. While checking the student's notebooks to evaluate the writing section, he found that many of the students were making interesting mistakes. Some of the answers of the students were like this-



Mr. Pathak observed that these two students were mixing up capital and small letters between words as well as in sentences. They were, mixing up cursive and print forms of letters, and were also making spelling mistakes. The second answer sheet also shows that the student has not put space between words. Mr. Pathak discussed the problems with the teachers. From the discussion he found that although they were making certain mistakes in spelling, these students do have the basic knowledge of words. Their mistakes relate to conceptual issues such as-

- ★ where to use capital letters and small letters
- ★ maintaining space between words
- ★ writing in cursive letters etc.

Mr Pathak realized that the students were not getting enough practice in writing that would help them overcome these problems. So he made a few suggestions to the teachers. He asked them to try out the following error correction activities:

- ★ On the blackboard, put up a sentence with no space between words. Get students to come up to the board and rewrite them correctly. Repeat this exercise with four or five sentences. Then make them copy down the sentences in their notebooks. Keep reminding them about space, and check their writing by going around the class.
- ★ Repeat the activity with sentences where capital letters are used in the middle of the sentence incorrectly. Ask students to come and correct the mistakes by rubbing out the capital letters and replacing them with small letters. Then ask them to copy down the same sentences in their notebooks.

- ★ After class practice, set a home exercise on this. For this you may have to use separate sheets of paper to write the wrong sentences. You can use carbon sheets to make copies or cheap photocopy options. Children love to work with sheets, and it is likely that they will be able to bring back the correct homework in the next class.

### Let's stop and think

- ★ Do your students make similar mistakes? What do you do to remove such mistakes?
- ★ What are the other kinds of mistakes that your students make while writing?

### Activity 1 : Mechanics of writing:space maintaining

Here is an activity on space maintenance that you can try out with your students. This is more like a counting game, but it will make your students remember the space rule.

Tell your students they will play a space game today. You will write a sentence on the blackboard, with all the words joined, and they will have to count how many words and how many spaces there are in the sentence. Each bench will be one group, and the group who says the correct answer first wins the point.

Practise the game with them first, by using a sentence like this:

lwenttoschooltoday.

They have to guess the correct answers: 5 words and 4 spaces

When the game is over, make them write down the sentences correctly, using space.

### Let's stop and think

- ★ Do you students like to play games in the class? Will you be able to use the above game and make it interesting for your students??
- ★ Why is it important to make the students note down the sentences in their own hand? Do you agree that seeing the correct form is the first step, and doing it themselves in the next and more important step of learning?

### Case study 2 : Composition (short and simple sentence construction having full stop and question mark)

Md. Anowar Hussain is an elementary teacher in a riverine (char) area of Barpeta district. He is basically a Science graduate who has to teach his students all subjects, including English. Here he describes how he motivated the students to write short and simple sentences with the help of a simple scientific experiment.

Though I am basically from a Science background, I have always had an interest in the English language. When I had to teach English in Class III I was quite excited. In April, as per the academic calendar, I had to teach Unit III and in that unit there was a poem 'Little by Little' and a lesson 'The Enormous Turnip'. The poem talks about how a little acorn grew big. To develop their writing skills, I took the help of one activity: Grow a plant - prescribed in the lesson.. For the activity, I collected a glass, some blotting paper, some sand, and a few bean seeds. I decided to involve the students in a simple Science project that would not only teach them how plants grow, but help them prepare to write on it. For the experiment, I asked the students to-

- ★ Line the blotting paper inside the glass
- ★ Place the sand in the glass

- ★ Wet the sand in the glass
- ★ Place a few seeds between the blotting paper and the glass
- ★ See that the seeds are separate from each other
- ★ See how the roots and shoots of the seeds grow.

The total number of students was sixteen. That is why I divided the whole class into two groups. On the first day, one group observed the seeds and noted some questions in their copies about the growth of the seeds .e.g. What do we see on the sand today? Can we see a plant growing? What is a little plant called? What colour is the plant today? etc. The other group's task was to write some statements on what they saw, e.g. Today I can see the tip of a leaf. The little plant is growing. It is called a shoot. etc. The next day, groups changed their roles: the first group wrote statements while the second group wrote questions.

When they started doing the activity, they wanted to do it in their home language. They did not know many words in English, and mixed up their home languages with English. Rather than forcing them to write in English on their own, I helped them by providing the English words when they did not know it.

After a few days, their improvement in writing simple sentences was clearly visible. The students did this activity at any time during their school time, wrote their questions and statements on a chart paper hanging in their classroom and informed me when I was in their classroom.

At the end of ten days, when the plants had grown, the children were very excited. They had also become so motivated that they wanted to make a proper class poster on the Science project. With my help, they made a poster, drawing the different stages of the plant's growth. They also added questions and sentences to the pictures. The poster looked really nice, and all the other teachers, including the Headmaster, was very happy with it. When the term ended, we showed the pictures to the parents, and they were very happy to see that their children were able to write English so well.

### Let's stop and think

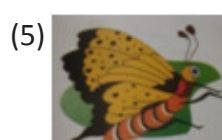
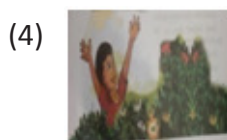
- ★ How would you adapt this activity for a large classroom? What steps will you take to make sure all the children are learning to write?
- ★ Md Hussain took time to improve the students' writing skill. Do you think this was a good use of his time? Md. Hussain selected an experiment to improve his students' writing skill. What do you do generally for your students to improve this skill?

### Activity 2 : Composing very short paragraphs

A popular 'formula' for teaching students the process of writing is W.R.I.T.E. which is an acronym for Write, Revise, Inform, Think, and Edit.

Here is an activity based on the WRITE strategy that you may like to try out in your classroom. (MARIGOLD : Unit V:The Yellow Butterfly)

- ★ You can draw or collect some pictures based on the lesson-The Yellow Butterfly.
- ★ The pictures may be like this in sequence.



- ★ Now make five groups and give one picture to each group.  
( N.B. if you have a large class room you may prepare three or four sets of pictures)
- ★ You can help the students by giving them key words for each picture and writing the words on the back side of each picture. For example, you can have  
**For picture 1:**a butterfly, rose, bed, came, closer, etc.  
**For picture 2:**pink flowers, lotus, swam, flew etc  
**For picture 3:** key wordsbig spider’s web, caught,etc.  
**For picture 4:** ran, freed, happy etc.  
**For picture 5:** flew away, happily etc.
- ★ Give a demonstration first, by picking up words related to one sentence and making students compose sentences with your help
- ★ Ask each group to write two or three simple sentences with the help of the picture and key words. If necessary, give a few phrases on the board that can be used to begin sentences, such as ‘*This is a ...*’, ‘*It has ...*’, ‘*It is....*’ Etc.
- ★ When each group completes its task, you may help them to convert it into a simple story by using their sentences.
- ★ You can then ask the students to write out the story on a sheet of chart paper and hang it on the classroom wall.

Students need to know whether their writing is accurately and appropriately conveying its message. You can help them by making them edit their own work, with your feedback . Their peers may also be encouraged to participate in the feedback.

### Let’s stop and think

- ★ How will you organize your students for this activity?
- ★ Would you need to give any different instructions to your students?
- ★ How will you help the quieter and weaker students during this activity?
- ★ Is this activity simple and easy to follow? Why, or why not? If not, how should it be modified?

### Unit Summary

In this unit we discussed some ways of helping your students to improve their writing abilities. The case studies showed how children can be involved in activities that make them learn both the mechanics of writing and simple compositions. The activities gave you an idea of simple practice exercises on writing that can be done in the classroom with the lessons.

The situation may be different from school to school and class to class, and you may need to adapt and modify the suggested activities to suit your own classroom. If your class size is big, you can involve the better students as your assistants while giving tasks. When students are given responsibility, they take their learning more seriously. They will even be able to motivate the quieter and weaker students. One thing that you should know is that you do not have to give them new writing activities every day. Once or twice a week, you can give them new writing tasks based on their lessons. During other periods, you can make them revise what they have learnt. Once your students develop confidence to read and write independently, their English will improve greatly.

### Additional Reading

#### Resources: Paragraphs for dictation:

- 1) Rohit and his mother went for shopping yesterday. He bought a shirt, two trousers and a hat. His mother brought some kitchen items. They brought some fruits too. They spent two hours in the market.
- 2) Do you like to drink milk? Milk is very good for health. I drink a glass of milk every day. It gives me strength. Sometimes I take it with chocolate.

- 3) Rita, Gita and Nitu are good friends. They live in the same village. They go to school together. They read in the same class. How many friends do you have?
- 4) It's a hot sunny day. I wanted to play outside but I couldn't. I was sweating very much. I took a glass of water. I waited till evening.
- 5) Hello! I'm Rahul Das. I read in class III. The name of my school is Rupahi LP School. I love my school very much. What is the name of your school?

**Writing :**

Writing is often regarded as the visual representation of speech. All good writing is reader-directed; its success lies in conveying intended meanings to expected readers.

- ★ What is involved in writing composition : ideas, organization of ideas, right use of structures, appropriate vocabulary, spellings, punctuation.
- ★ The work of composition can be divided into two groups-guided or controlled and free composition.
- ★ For the first three /four years the students should be taught guided composition only. It enables the students to practise the needed structures and vocabulary items. It is easier for the students to do.
- ★ The following are few exercises in guided composition that the teacher may take up with students:  
Writing from substitution tables, writing from the blackboard, filling in blanks, writing parallel sentences, transforming paragraphs, answering questions, developing composition from pictures etc.
- ★ In spite of all the initial oral preparation and blackboard work, students may make mistakes. Teachers should correct them in a way beneficial to the students. It is no doubt , but is rewarding if done methodically.

In order to improve the skill of writing, students should be assigned a variety of writing tasks, depending on the level of the students. A wrong approach will be to leave out writing in the early stages , thinking it to be unnecessary and then start it in higher classes . This will be doing a great injustice to the students. A skill cannot be developed by starting it at mid-stream.

**Suggested Questions**

1. Complete the following sentences by using capital letters,question mark and full stop wher ever necessary : (EASY)

- a) can we fly
- b) the turnip seeds grew
- c) a yellow butterfly flew around in sonu's garden
- d) why are you crying
- e) he always comes on market days

2. Change the following sentences into questions . One has been done for you. (EASY)

- a) Deepa can write a story.  
Can Deepa write a story ?
- b) It is hot today.  
-----
- c) Shamim will come soon.  
-----

3. Look at the following tables and frame four questions: (Easy)

Is	it	a tree ? a balloon ? a turnip ? a butterfly ?
----	----	--

4. Read the story given below and answer the following questions : (Average)

Once there was a little girl named Rita, who never kept her things tidily whether at home or at school. Her clothes and books were thrown all over. The unit test was to start the next day. On the day of the test, she looked for her pencil bag but could not find it. She kept on looking everywhere making her room more untidy. By the time she found the pencil bag, she realized she was late for the test. Then she made up her mind to keep everything neat and tidy in future.

- a) What was the name of the little girl ?
- b) The girl was very neat and clean. Is it true ?
- c) Why did she look for her pencil bag?

5. Match column A with column B (AVERAGE)

- | A               | B            |
|-----------------|--------------|
| a) What do you  | a) a song    |
| b) The sea      | b) give me ? |
| c) Mahesh sings | c) help you. |
| d) I will       | d) fly ?     |
| e) Can we       | e) is big.   |

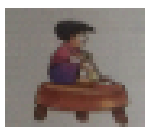
6. Rewrite the following words to make meaningful sentences. (Average)

- a) He butterfly the chased.
- b) picked it I up.
- c) An came old woman.

7. Write about the pictures. Take help from the help box. The first one has been done for you. (AVERAGE)

Sit, swim, run, jump

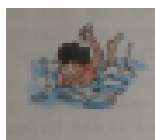
- a) A boy is sitting.



- b) -----.



- c) -----.



- d) -----.



8. Here are a few sentences about Rakesh's father. Write similar sentences about your father.

(Difficult)

I am Rakesh. The name of my father is Ramesh Borah . He is a teacher. He is a tall man . He likes to read newspaper.

9. Write the sentences in proper order.

(Difficult)

- a) It slowly grows into a big tree.
- b) The seed lies in the soil.
- c) Thin shoots rise out of the soil.
- d) Small tread-like roots develop.

10. Complete the questions to these answers. One has been done for you. (Difficult)

- a) Can Radha play a piano ?  
No, she can't play a piano.
- b) Do you -----?  
Yes, I like football.
- c) Does Dinesh -----?  
No, he doesn't have a new shirt.
- d) Is it -----?  
Yes, it is raining today.
- e) Are they -----?  
Yes, they are going together to the market.

