

FIRST (FCE): WRITING

Task: Students need to raise their awareness of real-world situations and extend their social cultural knowledge. For many candidates it is difficult to imagine given situations as they are so far removed from their own everyday lives. By having classroom discussions and using awareness-raising activities, this will develop the candidates' ability to have a greater choice when choosing questions to answer. Start by showing a photograph e.g. of a rubbish dump and brainstorm words related to the picture. Move onto a discussion on environmental waste, then plan an essay on the dangers waste poses to the environment. Finally put discourse markers on the board and give students 30 minutes to write an answer. This activity encourages ideas and provides a structure in which to write an answer.

Task: Once the candidates know each other it is useful to get them to mark a partner's script. A good way to do this is by taking the four points on which writing is marked and getting them to look at one of the areas: *Task response, Coherence & Cohesion, Lexical Resource, Grammatical range and Accuracy.*

The most common faults to notice when marking scripts for First (FCE):

- Not answering the question. Ensure that candidates have a highlighter and remind them before writing to mark the content points and think about the target reader.
- Forgetting to plan when carrying out a writing assignment. Make sure that a plan is shown. If it is inadequate, write some comments on the plan as to why it is useful and how it could be improved. Get candidates to realise that plans **DO** save time when writing and produce well- thought-out writing, which earns marks.
- Try thinking like an examiner.