

COLLEGE ENGLISH

Creative Writing

Book 2 *Teacher's Book*

Ian Smallwood
Li Po Lung



大学英语创意写作

第二册

教师用书



上海外语教育出版社

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Introduction

In Chinese universities and colleges there is an increasing emphasis on students' practical ability to write in English for both academic and general purposes. It is recognized that their writing skills in English also need to be linked to the development of a creative spirit, to cultural awareness and skills in intercultural communication, and to active application of thinking and problem-solving skills.

The *College English Creative Writing* series of College English textbooks is aimed at helping students develop the writing skills and language competence necessary for their tertiary studies and other writing needs. The series systematically analyzes English texts covering a wide range of topics and text types at the sentence, paragraph and text levels, and provides comprehensive notes about the grammar and vocabulary items commonly used. The series also encourages students to be creative, to be aware of intercultural aspects of using English, and to be able to express their own thoughts and feelings when writing. The *College English Creative Writing* series complements the four books in the *College English Creative Communication* series and the six books in the *College English Creative Reading* series.

Although the *College English Creative Writing* series is particularly suitable for students who will study at tertiary institutions, other learners who need to develop foundation writing skills and build up basic language competence necessary for written communication in daily life and/or the workplace will also find the books to be very useful.

This book is at Level Two. There are further books at Level Three and Level Four.

Special Features of Book Two

Book Two of the series focuses on the analysis of English Texts at the text level. The main features of the book are:

Carefully selecting grammar, punctuation and vocabulary items to cater for students' standards and needs
Raising students' awareness of foreign cultures, which helps them write with an appropriate style and tone

Enhancing students' knowledge and understanding of how the English language works with well-constructed grammar, punctuation and vocabulary exercises

Analyzing authentic written texts at the sentence, paragraph and text levels, which enables students to thoroughly understand the fundamental elements that facilitate text processing

Training students to proofread and edit their writing

In-depth grammar, vocabulary and punctuation notes which help students understand the language systems
Variety of extracts and passages on a wide range of topics to cater for students' interests and experience, and more importantly, to maximize their exposure to various text types
Expanding students' creativity by providing them with contextualized tasks which require them to write on a wide range of topics for various authentic purposes

The Structure of Book Two

Book Two consists of 16 chapters, each focusing on one particular genre such as "Descriptive Writing I: Places" (Chapter 1) and "Narrative Writing" (Chapter 16). In each chapter, there are four parts:

- Part One: Looking at texts
- Part Two: Advanced grammar and usage
- Part Three: Punctuation review
- Part Four: Expanding your creativity

Part One: Looking at texts

The first part in each chapter focuses on the analysis of English texts. Extracts on a wide range of topics are analysed so as to enhance students' understanding about the:

- writing process;
- sentence writing;
- paragraph development.

To reinforce what they have learned in this part and to prepare them for the writing tasks in Part Four, students are encouraged to complete various tasks, including:

- sentence completion;
- sentence writing;
- blank filling;
- proofreading;
- editing;
- paragraph writing;
- construction of mind maps;
- making comparisons and contrasts; etc.

In this part, there is a vocabulary section which is aimed to help students improve their vocabulary knowledge by:

- familiarizing them with commonly used prefixes and suffixes;
- explaining how to form nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs;
- introducing them to commonly used signpost words and phrases;
- presenting words and phrases for particular purposes such as formal writing and writing

- instructions;
- discussing words used for different purposes.

Part Two: Advanced grammar and usage

The second part of each chapter is aimed to help students understand how the English language works. This will enhance students' comprehension of texts, and more importantly, with such knowledge they can improve their own writing. To achieve this, there are detailed notes about commonly used grammar items, including:

- the gerund;
- defining and non-defining relative clauses;
- comparison of adjectives;
- present time, past time, present continuous time, past continuous time;
- clauses of reason and result;
- reference;
- absolute adjectives and adjectives expressing degrees;
- phrasal verbs;
- noun clauses;
- *that* clauses; etc.

Extracts are referred to when illustrating the usage of these grammar items. Given these contexts, students can understand the usage better. To consolidate their grammar knowledge, a wide range of grammar activities and exercises are available.

Part Three: Punctuation review

Punctuation marks, which play a significant role in writing, are sometimes neglected in English courses. In this part, emphasis is placed on punctuation marks which allow writers to tell their readers when to pause, which words should go where, and so on. Extracts are also referred to when illustrating the functions of the punctuation marks below:

- capital letters;
- colons;
- commas;
- avoiding unnecessary use of commas;
- semi-colons;
- apostrophes;
- hyphens.

Part Four: Expanding your creativity

To provide students with opportunities to put what they learned about writing from each chapter into

practice, and more importantly, to help them develop creativity, which is an important component of successful writing, short writing tasks are available in this part. Most of the writing tasks provided have common features such as:

- ✿ meaningful;
- ✿ purposeful;
- ✿ relevant to students' interests and experience;
- ✿ covering a wide range of topics;
- ✿ related to the theme of the corresponding chapter;
- ✿ of suitable length (around 120 words each).

Common Writing Problems

The *College English Creative Writing* series of College English textbooks is aimed at helping students develop the writing skills and language competence necessary for their tertiary studies and other writing needs. To achieve this, it is necessary to identify and analyze the common writing problems faced by students.

Vocabulary

As we all know, English has an extremely large number of vocabulary items. There are at least 1,000,000 English words. It is, therefore, easy to understand why learners may find the vocabulary of other languages such as French or German easier to learn; there are approximately only 100,000 French words and 125,000 German words.

Another factor that makes learning English words difficult is the time required. An average learner can reasonably be expected to learn around six new words a day. Clearly, it is unrealistic to expect to learn even all non-technical words in English.

One of the major differences between experienced learners and inexperienced learners is that experienced learners are more aware of their limitations, and therefore they adopt more effective learning strategies to overcome these limitations. A common strategy is selecting and learning only words most relevant to their needs and interests. This series aims to help students identify these areas of vocabulary which are likely to be of most use to them in their future use of English.

A particular focus is put on word formation. A good knowledge of word formation helps learners work out the meaning of a new word without looking it up in the dictionary. For example, if learners are familiar with meanings of prefixes such as *dis-* and *pre-*, they will be more able to define words such as *disregard*, *dissimilar*, *predetermine*, *pre-decide*, etc. when they come across these words for the first time.

Grammar

Given the length and scope of the series, it is impossible to explain all grammar items learners may find difficult or confusing. The focus is placed on items that are likely to cause serious confusion when mistakes relating to the items are made. Examples of such grammar items include tenses (see Chapters 3, 4, 6, 7 and 13).

Grammar items that affect the precision of writing and the organization of sentences are also introduced, for example, defining and non-defining relative clauses (see Chapter 1), signpost words and phrases (see Chapters 3 and 11), etc.

It is important to use an appropriate tone when writing. For example, particular words and phrases are used in formal writing. To raise learners' awareness of these words and phrases, detailed notes and exercises are available (see Chapter 13).

Punctuation

When speaking, tools such as pauses, gestures, body language and volume can be used to help convey messages. For example, we can pause to signal the end of a point, or we may stress an important point by increasing the volume of our voice, etc. Such tools are not available when writing. Instead, punctuation marks allow us to set the rhythm and pace of our writing. Punctuation can also markedly affect the meaning of a sentence.

It is necessary to learn the functions of various punctuation marks to improve our writing. This is especially important when writing a formal text; punctuation marks such as exclamation marks and question marks are rarely used in formal writing.

Sentence Structures

There are many ways in which the weak organization of a sentence can confuse readers. Examples of these include:

- dangling clauses;
- incomplete sentences;
- run-on sentences.

These and other areas of weakness or confusion are covered in the series.

Lack of Ideas

Learners often find writing difficult because they are lacking in ideas. Even experienced writers may encounter this problem, especially when they are writing on topics less familiar to them. To tackle this problem, an effective strategy called *brainstorming* is encouraged and developed throughout the

book. Learners are encouraged to try the following three steps for brainstorming:

- 1) Lots of different — and often very surprising — ideas run around in our heads. We need to relax and allow our minds to wander freely over the topic.
- 2) As we do this, we note down all the ideas that come to mind. At the end of our brainstorming exercise, we are left with a collection of random ideas written down on a piece of paper.
- 3) At that point we begin to try and put the ideas together in a sensible form. Some of our notes will be useless and we'll just throw them out. But if we are lucky, or if we have trained ourselves to relax (which takes practice) — we should have a few new ideas to write about (see Chapter 1).

After ideas have been generated through brainstorming, it is necessary to structure ideas or to work out the logical relationships among the ideas generated. In Chapter 1 of Book One, mind maps, a common strategy for structuring ideas, are illustrated.

Coherence

Writing is not just a matter of language. Organization is also important. Readers may find it difficult to understand and process a text if it is not properly structured, even if the choice of words is suitable, the grammar is correct and the sentences are well-structured. Common ways of organizing a text at the paragraph level are introduced in Book One. For example:

- comparison;
- contrast;
- classification;
- process description;
- cause and effect;
- the inductive approach;
- the deductive approach, etc.

Cohesion

Cohesion refers to the relationship between different sentences or between different parts of a sentence. If the relationships are not clear, there will be illogical gaps. Version One below is a typical example of bad cohesion.

Version One

(1) After the burglary in the office, an investigation was conducted by the Security Office. (2) The new alarm system proposed by the Security Office costs \$1.5 million. (3) There are various systems available on the market. (4) Mr Cheng, the head of the Security Office, has made an appointment with Ms Wang, a marketing executive from Heng Mun Alarm Systems, which provides alarm systems. (5) The final decisions will be made in a month's time.

There is a gap between Sentence (1) and Sentence (2). The reason for proposing the new alarm system is not clearly stated. It is also confusing why Mr Cheng has made an appointment with Ms Wang. At the end of the extract, the focus of the final decisions is not explained either.

To bridge the gaps, the missing details are given in Version Two.

NOTE: The supplementary details are in bold.

Version Two

*(1) After the burglary in the office, an investigation was conducted by the Security Office. **The investigation results showed that the existing alarm system did not work properly during the burglary. Therefore, it was proposed to install a new alarm system.** (2) *The new alarm system proposed by the Security Office costs \$1.5 million. **It is necessary to compare this proposed with other alternatives before making any decision.*** (3) *There are various systems available on the market. **To find out more about these systems,*** (4) *Mr Cheng, the head of the Security Office, has made an appointment with Ms Wang, a marketing executive from Heng Mun Alarm Systems, which provides alarm systems. **Based on Ms Wang's professional advice,*** (5) *the final decisions **regarding the most appropriate system** will be made in a month's time.**

To ensure that the flow of logic is smooth and there is cohesion among sentences, it is necessary to use:

- signposts words (see Chapters 3 and 11);
- connectives (see Chapter 6);
- words and phrases which problematize points (see Chapter 7);
- words associated with causation and effect (see Chapter 9).

All of these skills, plus a wide range of others, are covered in a way which is clear and manageable to students and which, we hope, easy and stimulating for you, the teachers, to present.

Contents

College English Creative Writing (2)

CHAPTER ONE

Part One

Looking at texts *Descriptive Writing I: Places* 1

Vocabulary practice Compound adjectives 3

Part Two

Advanced grammar and usage Defining and non-defining relative clauses 4

Part Three

Punctuation review Commas 4

Part Four

Expanding your creativity A brief description of Chateau 5

CHAPTER TWO

Part One

Looking at texts *Descriptive Writing II: People* 6

Vocabulary practice The suffix “-ish” 8

Part Two

Advanced grammar and usage Reference 8

Part Three

Punctuation review Commas (cont. 1) 9

Part Four

Expanding your creativity A job reference form 10

CHAPTER THREE

Part One

Looking at texts *Descriptive Writing III: Chronological Processes* 12

Vocabulary practice Signpost words and phrases 14

Part Two

Advanced grammar and usage The simple past tense 15

Part Three

Punctuation review Capitalization 17

Part Four

Expanding your creativity A short article describing a trip 18

CHAPTER FOUR

Part One

- Looking at texts *Descriptive Writing IV: Reverse Chronological Processes* 20
Vocabulary practice Words and phrases which convey reverse chronology 22

Part Two

- Advanced grammar and usage The simple present tense 22

Part Three

- Punctuation review Colons 24

Part Four

- Expanding your creativity What makes for a successful life? 25

CHAPTER FIVE

Part One

- Looking at texts *Descriptive Writing V: Feelings* 27
Vocabulary practice Words which describe feelings 29

Part Two

- Advanced grammar and usage “Absolute” adjectives and adjectives expressing degrees ... 30

Part Three

- Punctuation review Avoiding unnecessary use of commas 32

Part Four

- Expanding your creativity Brief articles based on interviews with people 32

CHAPTER SIX

Part One

- Looking at texts *Argumentative Writing I: Pros and Cons (a)* 35
Vocabulary practice (a) Contrasting words and phrases (b) Connectives
(c) Concluding connectives 37

Part Two

- Advanced grammar and usage The present continuous tense 38

Part Three

- Punctuation review Semicolons 39

Part Four

- Expanding your creativity A short speech about your favorite hobby or interest 40

CHAPTER SEVEN

Part One

- Looking at texts *Argumentative Writing II: Pros and Cons (b)* 42
Vocabulary practice Words and phrases which problematize points 44

Part Two

Advanced grammar and usage	The past continuous tense	46
----------------------------	---------------------------------	----

Part Three

Punctuation review	Dashes	46
--------------------	--------------	----

Part Four

Expanding your creativity	A bank robbery	47
---------------------------	----------------------	----

CHAPTER EIGHT

Part One

Looking at texts	Argumentative Writing III: Problem and Solution	49
------------------	--	----

Vocabulary practice	Words for argumentative writing	50
---------------------	---------------------------------------	----

Part Two

Advanced grammar and usage	Clauses of reason	51
----------------------------	-------------------------	----

Part Three

Punctuation review	Capitalization (cont.)	52
--------------------	------------------------------	----

Part Four

Expanding your creativity	A speech about students spending too much time on computer activities	53
---------------------------	--	----

CHAPTER NINE

Part One

Looking at texts	Argumentative Writing IV: Cause and Effect	55
------------------	---	----

Vocabulary practice	Words associated with cause and effect	58
---------------------	--	----

Part Two

Advanced grammar and usage	Clauses of result	58
----------------------------	-------------------------	----

Part Three

Punctuation review	Apostrophes	59
--------------------	-------------------	----

Part Four

Expanding your creativity	What makes for a happy family	59
---------------------------	-------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER TEN

Part One

Looking at texts	Expository Writing I: Writing from Statistics	61
------------------	--	----

Vocabulary practice	Comparative adjectives and words dealing with statistics	62
---------------------	--	----

Part Two

Advanced grammar and usage	Gerunds	63
----------------------------	---------------	----

Part Three

Punctuation review	General revision quiz 1	65
--------------------	-------------------------------	----

Part Four

Expanding your creativity	A letter of reply to a customer	66
---------------------------	---------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Part One

Looking at texts *Expository Writing II: Comparison of Similarities and Differences* 68

Part Two

Advanced grammar and usage Phrasal verbs 69

Part Three

Punctuation review General revision quiz 2 72

Part Four

Expanding your creativity Describing your time at a camp 73

CHAPTER TWELVE

Part One

Looking at texts *Expository Writing III: Writing Instructions* 75

Vocabulary practice Words to describe states of mind 76

Part Two

Advanced grammar and usage Noun clauses 78

Part Three

Punctuation review General revision quiz 3 79

Part Four

Expanding your creativity A thank-you letter to a friend 80

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Part One

Looking at texts *Expository Writing IV: Explaining Rules and Instructions* 82

Vocabulary practice Words and phrases for formal writing 85

Part Two

Advanced grammar and usage Revision of the simple present tense .. 85

Part Three

Punctuation review Hyphens 86

Part Four

Expanding your creativity Changing instructions into the simple present tense 86

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Part One

Looking at texts *Expository Writing V: Defining Concepts* 88

Vocabulary practice (a) Words to do with time (b) Words to do with activity and frequency 90

Part Two

Advanced grammar and usage	Clauses of time	91
----------------------------	-----------------------	----

Part Three

Punctuation review	General revision quiz 4	92
--------------------	-------------------------------	----

Part Four

Expanding your creativity	Hopes and plans for the future	92
---------------------------	--------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Part One

Looking at texts	Expository Writing VI: Classification	94
------------------	--	----

Vocabulary practice	(a) Vocabulary of comparison (b) Hedging (c) The language of selling (d) Noun phrases which are double positives	95
---------------------	--	----

Part Two

Advanced grammar and usage	Selective classification	96
----------------------------	--------------------------------	----

Part Three

Punctuation review	Semicolons (cont.)	97
--------------------	--------------------------	----

Part Four

Expanding your creativity	Describing choices	98
---------------------------	--------------------------	----

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Part One

Looking at texts	Narrative Writing	100
------------------	-------------------------	-----

Vocabulary practice	"In that case"	102
---------------------	----------------------	-----

Part Two

Advanced grammar and usage	Advanced narrative techniques	103
----------------------------	-------------------------------------	-----

Part Three

Punctuation review	Commas (cont. 2)	103
--------------------	------------------------	-----

Part Four

Expanding your creativity	A brief narrative based on notes given	104
---------------------------	--	-----

CHAPTER ONE

Descriptive Writing I: Places

This chapter is the first on descriptive writing. In it we look at writing about places. As with any other type of writing, once we are clear what general type of writing we are considering, the questions to be asked are:

- Who are we writing for? It is the audience of readers that will determine what style of writing we are to adopt.
- Is the piece of writing a formal report, an information document to be read by officials in a workplace?
- Is it the same type of report, but open to the general public?
- Is it for entertainment purposes — to a friend, for example? (And is that friend a serious kind of person or do they enjoy a good joke?)
- Is it for advertising purposes, with a view to selling something?

Questions such as these will help us decide what kind of style and approach we must adopt in our writing, and we must keep our audience in mind all the time as we write.



Part One

LOOKING AT TEXTS



Tasks 1 to 5

OBJECTIVE: For students to search texts in detail for information about source and purpose.

APPLICATION: Using the tasks as an introduction to the issues of authorship, purpose and intended audience.



SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

Task 1

Written For: <i>Tourists</i>	Working For: <i>Unknown</i>
<i>Its huge number of domes ... have delighted the eyes of visitors ...</i> <i>You can best appreciate St. Basil's appeal by ...</i>	<i>Possibility 1: St. Basil's cathedral?</i> <i>Possibility 2: Moscow Tourist Bureau?</i>

Task 2

Written For: <i>Tourists</i>	Written By: <i>Unknown</i>
<i>Charles Bridge is at the top of every Prague visitor's must-see list.</i>	<i>Prague / Czech Republic's Tourist Bureau?</i>

Task 3

What Sort of Publication	Examples
<i>Tourist / Traveller's guidebook</i>	<i>... see how Russia is changing.</i> <i>The contrasts ... are obvious here.</i> <i>... where you can buy anything you like ...</i> <i>... beautiful churches ... are being lovingly restored.</i> <i>... the hidden corners and back streets, which are all unique.</i> <i>... the first signs (of change) can always be seen in Moscow.</i>

Task 4

Writing For	Examples
<i>Theme park lovers</i> <i>Nature lovers</i> <i>Readers of history</i> <i>Tourists in California</i>	<i>Description of the physical features of the park</i> <i>History of the park (its rise and fall)</i> <i>Description of the main activities held in the park</i>

Task 5

Passage 1 is a factual report and Passage 2 is informational.