

# Small Writers, Big Results: Creative Skills For Cambridge YLE

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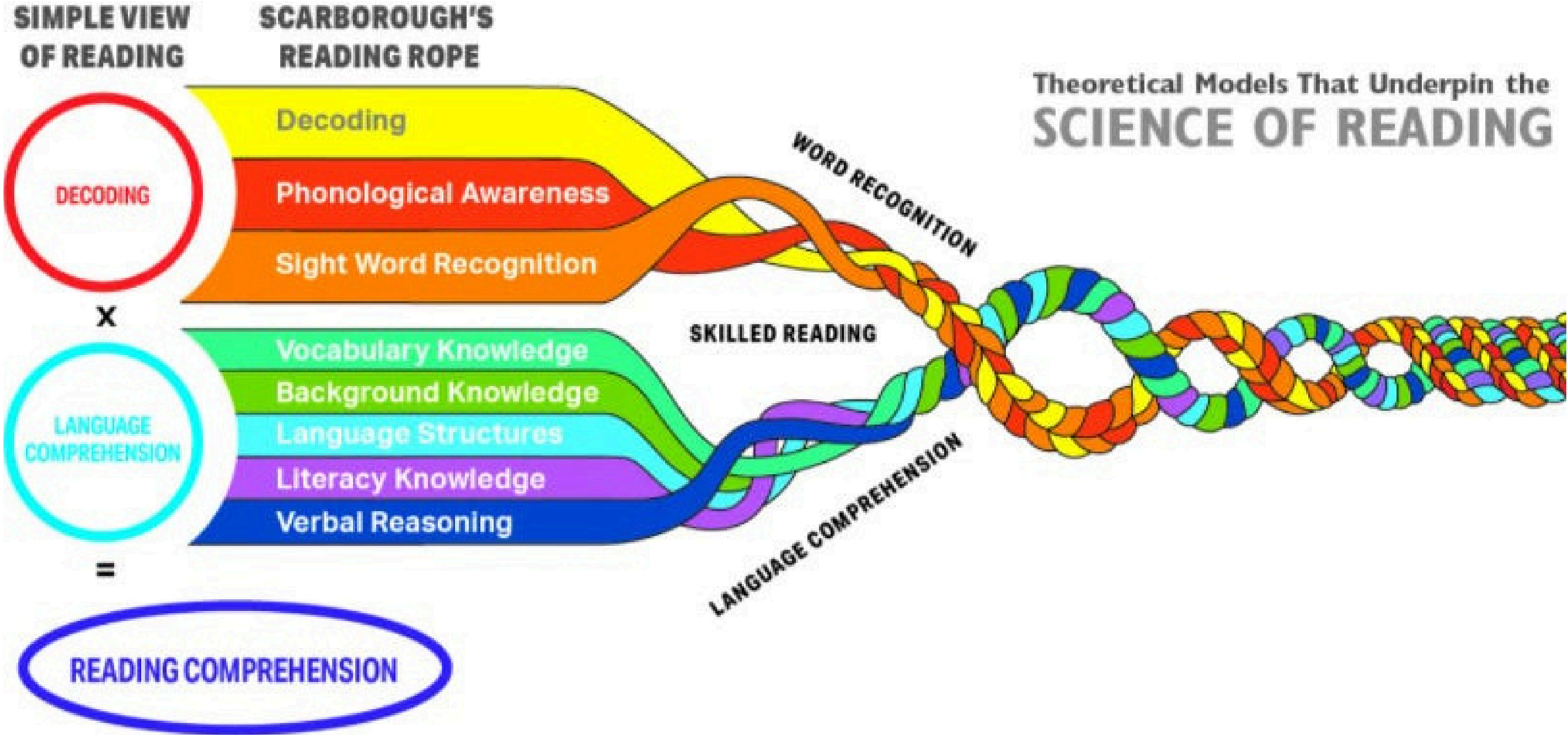
Jolly Learning Conference, Bucharest, 16 May 2026

# Outline

- explore the key skills involved in YLE writing
- understand how phonics and oral language support writing development
- examine practical ways to scaffold young learners' writing
- share classroom-ready activities for developing confident YLE writers

# How Good Is Your Maths?

$$RC = D * LC$$



# Questions to You

If spelling, grammar, and lexical retrieval do not consume cognitive space, there's more room for writing.

- What do you think?
- How can we achieve this?

# Can You Decode the Message?

in Jack is go to in is Jack is father go ball is and doll and shaker Haper  
stay words in is and china Jack is ball is backfast

**Beach images**



# What seems to be the problem?

The response includes some English words that the reader is able to understand.

(Cf. *YLE Handbook for Teachers*, p. 71)



# W Task Demands – Movers

Candidates complete sentences, answer questions and write full sentences about a picture.

A1 Movers Reading and Writing

## Part 6 – 6 questions –

Look and read and write.



### Examples

The dog is playing in some ..... water  
What's the mother wearing? ..... a purple shirt

### Complete the sentences.

- 1 The boy on the bike is wearing grey .....
- 2 One dog is brown and one dog is .....

### Answer the questions.

- 3 What's the girl in the black skirt doing?  
.....
- 4 Where are the flowers?  
.....

### Now write two sentences about the picture.

- 5 .....
- 6 .....

# Assessment

A total of 10 marks are available for this part.

QUESTION	SCORE
1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Candidates can score a maximum of 1 mark for each of Questions 1 and 2.</li><li>• 1 mark is awarded for a response that provides an accurate representation of the picture.</li></ul>
3–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Candidates can score a maximum of 2 marks for each of Questions 3–6.</li><li>• 1 mark is available for a response which is comprehensible.</li><li>• 1 mark is available for a response which is an accurate representation of the picture.</li><li>• Candidates are expected to write two different sentences for Questions 5 and 6.</li></ul>

What do you think, 0, 1, or 2 marks?

1. The boy on the bike is wearing grey table.
2. One dog is brown and one dog is black and white
3. Riding a bike
4. The flowers are under the tree
5. The brown dog are playing in the water
6. There is a table and chair in the garden



## Were you right?

1. Zero  not an accurate representation of the picture
2. 1 mark  an accurate reflection of what is shown in the picture
3. 1 mark  comprehensible but does not provide an accurate representation of the picture
4. 2 marks  both comprehensible and accurately reflects what's happening in the picture
5. & 6. 2 marks  both comprehensible and true to the picture

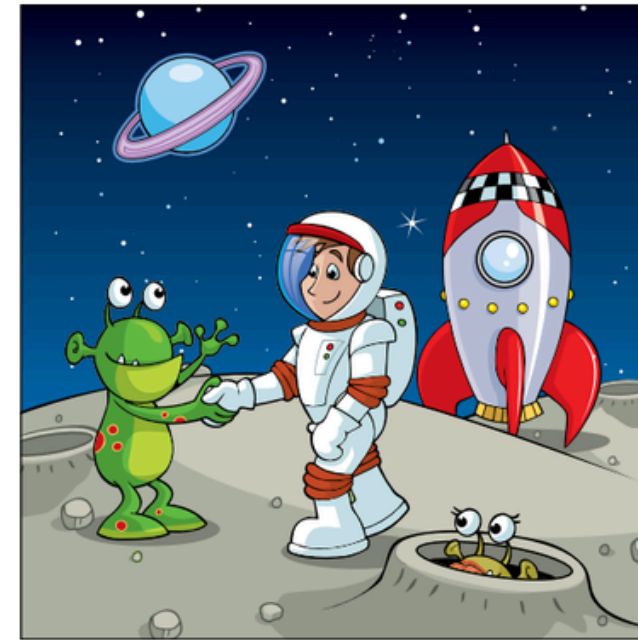
Cf. *YLE Handbook for Teachers*, p.45

# W Task Demands – Flyers

Candidates write a short story based on three pictures.

## Part 7

Look at the three pictures. Write about this story. Write 20 or more words.



# Assessment

SCORE	SCORE
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Response describes a progression of events which are explicitly connected to each other and</li><li>• Response is based on all three pictures and</li><li>• Minimal effort is required on the part of the reader to make sense of the response</li></ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Response describes a progression of events, some of which are explicitly connected to each other and</li><li>• Response is based on all three pictures and</li><li>• Some effort is required on the part of the reader to make sense of the response</li></ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Response describes a progression of events and response addresses at least one of the pictures</li></ul> OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Response describes a progression of events and addresses all three pictures but imposes a significant strain on the reader, who may be required to read it more than once in order to make sense of it</li></ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Response includes at least one phrase that is clearly comprehensible</li></ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Response includes some English words discernible by the reader</li></ul>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Question unattempted or totally incomprehensible response</li></ul>

# Common Difficulties in YLE Writing

- phonetic spelling errors (*elifent, nite, rite* etc.)
- limited sentence patterns
- repetitive vocabulary
- fear of making mistakes
- inability to expand ideas
- copying **instead of** generating language



**How can we prepare children BEFORE exam practice begins?**



# From Sounds to Sentences

Hear → Say → Segment → Spell → Write

Children who can hear sounds clearly are more willing to write independently.

## Too Much in Their Working Memory?

- When spelling becomes less stressful, working memory is freed
- How are the two children different?

# What Happy Children Need

Memorable learning experiences ♥:

- move
- sing
- act
- visualize
- manipulate language physically



# Do You Agree?

Children write more successfully when language is **emotionally** and **physically memorable**. Why (not)?



# Creativity as a Writing Engine

Creativity is not “extra”. It helps:

- vocabulary retrieval
- motivation
- sentence expansion
- risk-taking
- engagement



# Creative Tasks to Prepare Students for YLE

Children rarely struggle to write about what excites them.

Do you agree?

What should this tell us about the way in which we teach children?

# Pre-W

- picture prediction
- silly sentence races
- story cubes
- role-plays
- sound-to-story games
- “What happens next?” collaborative storytelling

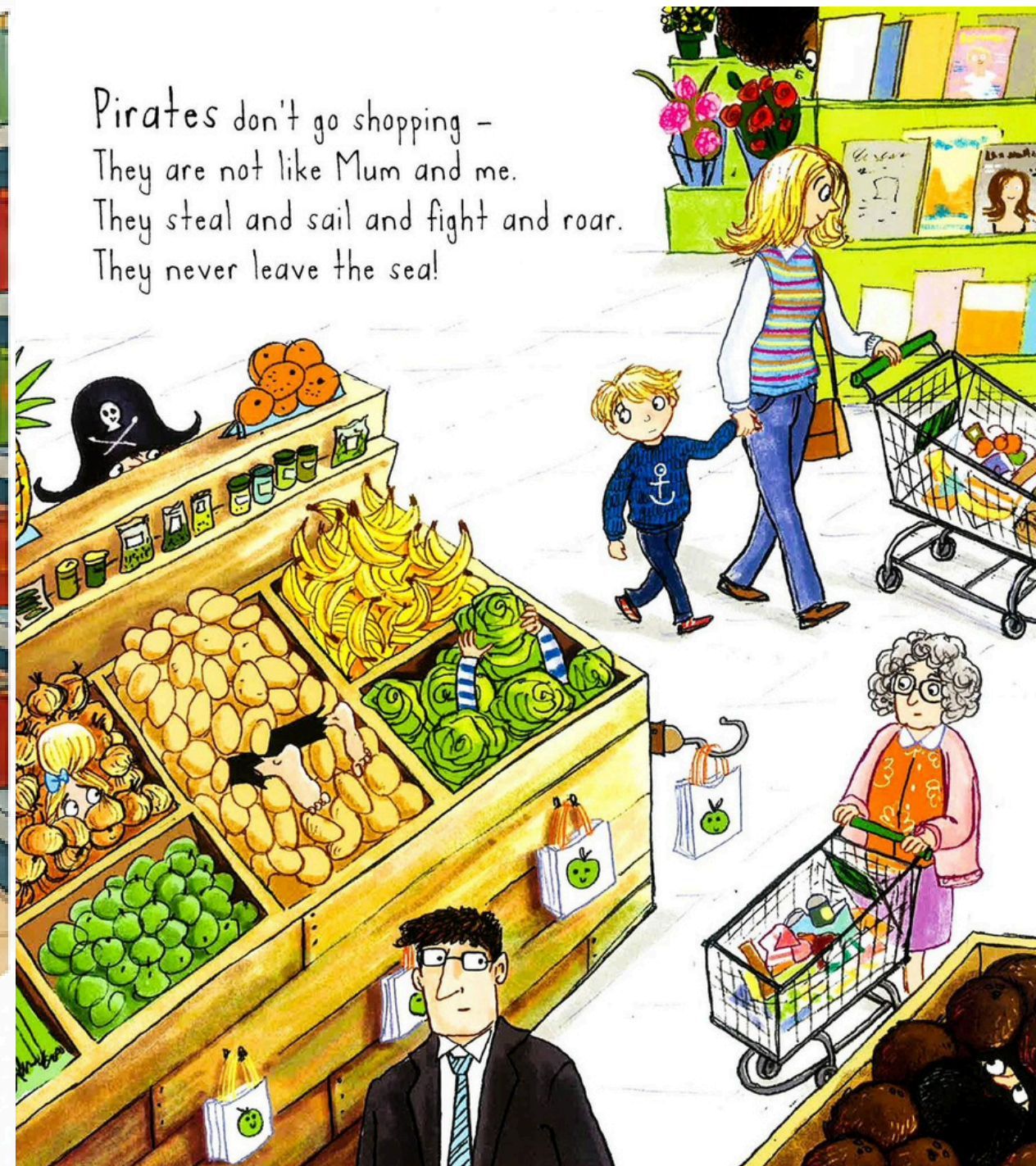
## Over to You

- What happened before?
- What is happening now?
- What will happen next?



# What does he really need? Tell the story!

- I think...
- Maybe...
- He is...
- They are going to...
- Suddenly...
- Unfortunately...
- To their surprise...



- What happened before?
- What is happening now?
- What will happen next?

# Treasure?

- What happened before?
- What is happening now?
- What will happen next?



# Let's Have a (Funny) Race!

Characters	Actions	Places
 a dinosaur	 danced	 in the bathroom
 my grandma	 ate spaghetti	 at school
 an alien	 climbed a tree	 on the moon

Walk around the room, talk to your peers, and build sentences with these words. Make sure you have very funny ones. Add any words that would make your sentences better.

**Alternative:** use flashcards and have the Ss choose the characters, places, actions etc., then group them into categories, then build their sentences.

# Sound to Story

Create a silly story including words with the following sounds:

*/sh/ /ch/ /ei/*

E.g.: A sheep ate cheese on a train. □

## **Benefits:**

- phonemic awareness
- spelling
- vocabulary retrieval
- creative language production

# While-W

- sentence frames
- word banks
- phonics
- visual grammar mats

# Visual Grammar Mats

dog run park vs. The big dog is running in the park today.









**SENTENCE BUILDING:** Put the words together to make your sentence.

WHO? + WHAT DOING? + WHAT LIKE? + WHERE? + WHEN? + HOW? = MY SENTENCE

\_\_\_\_\_


\_\_\_\_\_.


**8. FEELINGS** (how someone feels)


 happy	 sad	 scared	 excited
 angry	 surprised	 bored	 proud

**7. CONNECTORS** (join ideas)

- ★ and
- ★ but
- ★ because
- ★ so
- ★ then
- ★ when

I like **ice cream** and chocolate. 

It was **raining**, **but** we went out. 

I was **tired**, **so** I went to bed. 

# Bad Writer vs. Brave Writer

The boy ran.



The boy ran quickly.



The boy ran quickly  
into the forest.



The frightened boy ran  
quickly into the dark forest  
because he heard a strange  
noise.

What would you choose to advise your students to do:

- Play safe?
- Take risks?
- Why?

# Post-W

1. peer reading
2. illustration
3. dramatization
4. story extension

- Which do you prefer? Why?
- What's your students' favourite post-W activity?
- Why do they enjoy it?

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# Help Your YLE Writers GLOW! 😎

- **G**rammar
- **L**anguage (oral language)
- **O**racy / phonics foundations
- **W**riting creativity

Any questions  
or final  
thoughts?



**Thank you, congratulations for the  
session!**

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