

Piece D: Letter and instructions

Key

This was part of a topic based on *The Story Machine* by Tom McLaughlin. The pupils were asked to write a letter to Elliott explaining the purpose of the machine he had found (a typewriter). Kim chose to use instructions in the letter, illustrated them (in the original), and edited and proof-read it.

[C] composition
[GP] grammar and punctuation
[T] transcription

This successful piece combines a letter with a numbered list of instructions.

The letter begins appropriately with a greeting and closes with a sign-off. The realistic postscript brings the letter alive and shows the pupil's engagement in this task.

The numbered instructions for using the typewriter are clearly sequenced and provide an accurate account of using a manual typewriter. Adverbials contribute effectively to coherence: *First; Next; Now*.

The sentences are a judicious mixture of commands, with verbs in the imperative form for the instructions (*put, turn, push*), and statements for guidance and advice, including a modal verb (*You cant...*). This variety contributes to the effective and convincing tone of the letter, friendly and yet instructive.

[C] [GP]

Dear E Elliott We know what you machine is it's a typ writer.

How to use it:

1. First put the paper in the typ writer.
2. Turn the dial to feed the paper into the typewriter
3. Next push the keys down firmly X to print a letter
4. Now push the suver lever down on the side of the typewriter
5. If you hear a ding that means you you are at the ei end at of the line. ding! ding!
6. You cant take any thing of away if you made a mistake! ~~bas~~space

I hope you lean how to use your typewriter love from Kim xxx Now you can typ letters to me.

The verb 'made' should be 'make' (or 'have made') for consistency with the rest of the instructions.

[GP]

The subordinate clause, beginning with 'if', follows the main clause (*You cant take any thing away*) and adds variety to the sentence structures overall.

[C] [GP]

The contracted form is correct here but is not correctly punctuated in *cant* in instruction 6.

[GP] [T]

The subordinating conjunction 'If' starts the subordinate clause that precedes the main clause (*that means you are at the end of the line*).

[GP]

In editing, the pupil has substituted *you are* for the contracted form (*your/you're*), possibly either because they recognise the full version is more in keeping with the instructional tone or because they are unsure of where to put the apostrophe.

[C] [GP]

Capital letters are mostly of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters. The difference in size between capitals and lower-case letters is clear.

The lower-case letters in the first instruction are an even size. As the pupil becomes interested in the content of the letter, the quality of the handwriting is less consistent. However, the letters overall are well-formed and the orientation is good.

The spacing between words reflects the size of the letters.

[T]

Many words are spelled correctly: *know, machine, feed, paper, lever, hear, ding, mistake, letters, use, hope, how*. The pupil's attempt to spell 'dial' is phonically-plausible, indicating that they can segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes. While there are some errors in hearing sounds and segmentation, such as *lean* for 'learn' and *you* for 'your', these are few.

Contracted forms are sometimes correct: *it's*, but not *cant*.

The common exception words from year 1 and year 2 are correct (*push, put, any, love*).

[T]

Most sentences are correctly demarcated with capital letters and full stops. The exclamation marks are correct.

[GP]

The digits in the numbered list are a suitable size in relation to the lower-case letters.

[T]

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Dear Elliott We know what your machine is it's
a typewriter

How to use it:

1. First put the paper in the typewriter.
 2. Turn the dial to feed the paper into the typewriter
 3. Next push the keys down ^{to print a letter} firmly
 4. Now push the server lever down on the side of the typewriter
 5. If you hear a ding that means ^{you are} ~~you are~~ at the end of the line ding! ding!
 6. You can't take any thing ^{away} off If you make a mistake! ~~back space~~
- I hope you learn how to use your typewriter
love from [redacted] xxx Now you can typ letters
to me.