

# A MaWSIG welcome

Hello and welcome  
to the second MaWSIG PCE.

We'd like to start by thanking you for your continued support;  
we've grown in numbers over the past year and the committee are looking forward  
to making the SIG even better this year.

For today's PCE, 'The Material Writer's Essential Toolkit', we are very privileged to be welcoming  
ten fantastic guest speakers and we are very grateful to them for giving their time so  
freely and for sharing their knowledge and experiences.

## The Material Writer's Essential Toolkit

No matter how much experience you have as a  
materials writer, no matter whether you're writing for print or for digital,  
there are certain core skills that every writer needs to master.

Can you write an effective multiple-choice question? Can you write audio and video  
scripts that sound authentic? Can you write a great artwork brief and make your pictures  
'pay their way'? Can you use technology to make your writing better and more efficient?  
Can you write activities for video? Can you use corpus tools? Can you handle the challenge  
of writing ESP material? Can you take content that you know works in your classroom  
and make it work in a coursebook?

In this highly interactive PCE, MaWSIG is offering a series of eight workshops covering  
these essential topics. You will have the chance to work with leading materials  
writers - to learn, to ask questions, and to share your own experiences and expertise.  
Whether you're an experienced writer, or a teacher taking your first steps into  
the field, we're sure there will be something here for you.

## TIMETABLE FOR THE DAY

We have a jam-packed day for you, so please ensure you are back in your seats ready  
to start each session on time. Thank you.

Welcome	10.00 am
Sessions 1-2 start	10.10 am
Morning break	11.30 am
Sessions 3-4 start	12 noon
Lunch	1.30 pm
Sessions 5-6 start	2.30 pm
Afternoon break	3.30 pm
Sessions 7-8 start	4.00 pm
Closing remarks	5.00 pm



10.00	<b>Opening words</b>
10.10 Session 1	<p><b>Sue Kay 'Writing multiple-choice questions'</b></p> <p>Although I'm an experienced author, this is something I've always had a blind spot for. Up to now, I've avoided writing MCQs, but I've recently had to face my fears and do it anyway for the exam strand of a secondary course I'm currently writing. In this session I'll describe how, with the help of ELT Teacher 2 Writer's training modules, I ...</p> <p>a) cracked it. b) found it more of a struggle. c) went back to T/F activities.</p> <p>Participants will have a chance to do some practical tasks and leave with a set of guidelines.</p>
10.50–11.30 Session 2	<p><b>Ben Goldstein and Ceri Jones 'Maximising the image in materials design'</b></p> <p>In this session we aim to equip writers, both new and experienced, with tools and techniques for using and choosing images in their work. We will focus on the use of online image banks, the range of resources available and the different ways images influence the way we write. Participants will take away:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an insight to how images are sourced in-house and how to influence the process</li> <li>• practical tips for researching and producing effective artwork briefs</li> <li>• a list of links to current state-of-the-art image banks</li> <li>• suggestions for keeping up to date with images and their uses</li> <li>• ideas for using images to inspire and inform the writing process.</li> </ul>
11.30–12.00	<b>Morning break</b>
12.00–12.45 Session 3	<p><b>Nick Tims 'A technological toolkit for material writers'</b></p> <p>In this session I will present and demonstrate a range of tech-related tools that make me a better and more efficient material writer. This will include discussion of: hardware (set-ups, a few super-useful peripherals), software (applications, web-based customisations, some *super-light* coding), plus a few tips on time-management.</p>
12.45–1.30 Session 4	<p><b>John Hughes 'Writing ELT audio and video scripts: From basic principles to creating drama'</b></p> <p>Audio and video ELT scripts recorded for course materials are often criticised by teachers for their lack of authenticity, overload of target language, dull characters and non-existent plotlines. In part, many ELT writers sometimes share this view but at the same time there are basic principles we need to follow which seem to limit what we can realistically do. In this session, I'd like to explore what those limitations are and then consider ways to write more creatively within them. Participants will work together on some short ELT dialogues and then redraft these scripts by applying techniques used by writers for theatre and film. The session will give novice writers an insight into ELT scriptwriting for audio and video, and give experienced writers the chance to share and reflect on their own approach.</p>
1.30–2.30	<b>Lunch</b>

<p>2.30–3.00 Session 5</p>	<p><b>Kieran Donaghy and Anna Whitcher 'How to write ELT activities for authentic video and film'</b></p> <p>In this session we will look at how new and more experienced writers can write effective and engaging video and film activities for ELT. We will look at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• why video and film are becoming increasingly important in language learning</li> <li>• examples of best practice in ELT video and film activities</li> <li>• methods to help writers create materials that engage students in active learning, with a focus on exploitation of not just linguistic features of moving image texts, but also visual and cultural elements</li> <li>• what to look for when previewing suitable videos for class, websites and books.</li> </ul> <p>Participants will watch short films and videos, and work in small groups to create their own activities designed around them.</p>
<p>3.00–3.30 Session 6</p>	<p><b>Julie Moore 'Does a corpus have the answer? Corpus tools for ELT writers'</b></p> <p>With a background in lexicography, I'm very familiar with corpus tools and find them invaluable when I'm writing all kinds of ELT materials. This session will focus on practical ways in which corpus tools can be useful to an ELT materials writer. It will look at things like finding authentic examples, finding answers to tricky language problems, checking collocations, complementation patterns etc. and just looking for inspiration. It will also take a brief look at different types of corpora (those owned by publishers, publicly available, specialist and build-your-own) and how writers can access them.</p>
<p>3.30–4.00</p>	<p><b>Afternoon break</b></p>
<p>4.00–4.30 Session 7</p>	<p><b>Evan Frendo 'Tailor-making materials from an ESP author perspective'</b></p> <p>Lots of teachers talk about tailor-making materials to suit particular groups of learners or a particular client: in ESP it is considered normal practice. Tailor-making materials involves understanding the learner's context and priorities, and it also involves analysing the target discourse and working out what the key language is. In this session I will introduce some materials I have helped design for corporate clients, and discuss some of the thinking that went in to the development.</p>
<p>4.30–5.00 Session 8</p>	<p><b>Christien Lee 'Adventures in self-publishing'</b></p> <p>The explosive growth of the Internet as a creative medium and sharing platform, plus the effects it has had (and is still having) on traditional publishing models, combine to make self-publishing an increasingly attractive option to many ELT writers. This session will summarise my recent experience self-publishing a 'blended' book (i.e. a traditional print book supported by an online component) of testing material for a high-stakes test equivalent to IELTS. The session will focus on several aspects of the self-publishing process.</p>
<p>5.00</p>	<p><b>Closing remarks</b></p>



## Join us

**MaWSIG is the IATEFL Materials Writing Special Interest Group.**

MaWSIG is for IATEFL members who are interested in exploring ways to write better materials, either for their own classes or for wider publication. MaWSIG has three guiding aims:

- To encourage greater expertise and professionalism in the creation of teaching material
- To offer new opportunities for professional development to IATEFL members
- To offer further bridge-building opportunities between publishers and IATEFL members

If you would like to join MaWSIG, please speak to one of the committee members or sign up online at [www.iatefl.org](http://www.iatefl.org).



**Join us online throughout May for our series of webinars with a host of great guest presenters.**

**More details coming soon!**

## Check out our new website

[www.mawsig.iatefl.org](http://www.mawsig.iatefl.org)

Our new website is now up and running and features news on MaWSIG, as well as a blog with a guest post each month. Please come and visit and add your comments. If you would like to write an article for the blog, please contact us at [mawsigpublications@gmail.com](mailto:mawsigpublications@gmail.com). At the end of the year the collection of twelve articles will be published for MaWSIG members as a complimentary ebook.

## Recent guest posts

A fresh  
**START?**

Johanna Stirling

Getting rubrics  
**RIGHT**

Claire Hart

Developing  
**CRITICAL**  
materials

Derek Philip