

LPF Writing Exemplar

Spare a Thought

Task Description

Students played the role of the President of the Student Association and wrote a speech to appeal for funds from teachers and fellow schoolmates for the earthquake victims in Sichuan.

Preparation

Before the writing activity, students watched an English documentary about the earthquake in Sichuan which reported the death toll, how the victims suffered and what kind of help was needed. Students took notes, using a mind map while they were watching the programme. Then, they drafted the speech based on the notes and exchanged their work for peer comments using a feedback sheet.

Learning Outcomes: ATM7

Content	Organisation	Language & Style
<p>ATM7 Writing texts to convey information, ideas, personal experiences and opinions on familiar and less familiar topics with elaboration</p>	<p>ATM7 Linking ideas coherently throughout the text, and showing appropriate overall organisation of ideas</p>	<p>ATM7 Using a wide range of generally appropriate and accurate language forms and functions, and generally appropriate tone, style, register and features of a range of text types</p>
<p>The student can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recount the earthquake that happened in Sichuan with substantial elaboration, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - when the earthquake occurred; - how devastating the earthquake was; - how many people died • propose to his fellow schoolmates different ways to support the earthquake victims, e.g. ‘Apart from 	<p>The student can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish strong links within and across paragraphs through different means : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - conjunctions and adverbs indicating contrast, e.g. ‘but’, ‘Yet’, ‘However’ - lexical cohesion, i.e. using different words to refer the same event or thing, e.g. ‘earthquake’ ‘tragedy’, ‘disaster’; ‘funds’, ‘money’ - ellipsis, e.g. ‘...over 	<p>The student can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use emotionally-charged vocabulary to create a depressing atmosphere, e.g. ‘terrible’, ‘devastating’, ‘heartbreaking’, ‘cries of grief’ • establish a close relationship with his fellow schoolmates to encourage them to help the earthquake victims through using personal pronouns ‘you’ and ‘we’.

<p>donating, of course you can also pray for the victims, join groups on Facebook or other prayer groups.’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appeal to his fellow schoolmates to help the earthquake victims, e.g. ‘The victims are waiting for you...Please show your support by giving, for the ability to give is not granted to everyone.’ • compare different ways of spending money to get readers to think how to spend money meaningfully, e.g. ‘You can spend it on buying Armanis and Guccis, but you can also use it to help others.’ 	<p>60,000 confirmed deaths, and many (people) are still missing.’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - repetition, e.g. ‘...you can choose an appropriate organisation, an organisation that is trusted...’ • structure the speech coherently using an organisational framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - orientate the audience towards the focus of the speech, i.e. the need to help the victims of the earthquake - urge the audience to take action in the body of the speech - restate the focus at the end of the speech, e.g. ‘The victims are waiting for you...The world will be a better place when you start to give.’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use imperatives to persuade his fellow schoolmates to support the earthquake victims, e.g. ‘...stay and show your support...’, ‘Let’s not disappoint them.’ • use parallel structures to highlight the urgent need for help, e.g. ‘Now is the time for you to take part in...’, ‘Now is the time to show your kindness...’, ‘Now is the time to show everyone in Sichuan...’ • use facts and statistics to enhance the objectivity of the speech, e.g. ‘On 12th May, 2008’, ‘At 2:28 pm’, ‘magnitude 8.0 on the Richter’s scale’, ‘over 60,000 confirmed deaths’
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Spare a thought (A speech)

Good morning Principal, teachers and fellow schoolmates, I am Chris Wong, your president of the Student Association. Today, with pain and sorrow, I have come up to this stage to speak to you. Yet I am not speaking for myself nor my cabinet. I am here speaking on behalf of some of our fellow countrymen.

On 12th May, 2008, an untimely tragedy shook the foundations of our beloved country and shocked the hearts of many. At 2:28pm that day, a terrible and devastating earthquake, magnitude 8.0 on the Richter's Scale, swept tens of thousand of lives away, leaving only heartbreaking scenes of collapsed buildings and cries of grief. So far there have been over 60,000 confirmed deaths, and many are still missing.

The entire world is appalled, and so are you, I believe. We all want to do something for the victims of this horrible disaster. But as students, we can't really do much, as you may say. We cannot go to Sichuan and help rescuers dig out survivors, we cannot go and help doctors cure the injured, we cannot go and help distribute tents and food. So what can we do?

The answer is simple: stay and show your support by donations. All the rescuers, doctors, volunteers and most importantly, the victims, need financial support because everything comes with a price. They need us to support the costs of the whole operation and re-construction, and they need us now!

You are all good people with kind hearts. When you see someone suffer, you would want to help him, whether in terms of money or labour.

Now is the time for you to take part in this life-saving campaign that will go into the history books of the Chinese people. Now is the time to show your kindness and love for our country. Now is the time to show everyone in Sichuan that the whole world is in this together.

So please help Sichuan. It is said that they will need at least seven years to recover from this tragedy, since most of the buildings including schools and hospitals have collapsed and need to be re-built. The costs involved will be huge, and funds from the Chinese Government alone will not be enough. We need people like you to help ease the almost unbearable burden.

The Student Association is undergoing talks with the school over the possibility of organising a trip to Sichuan this summer. However at present what the victims need most will be money.

To donate, you should choose an appropriate organisation, an organisation that is trusted, like UNICEF or Oxfam, so that the victims will be able to obtain what they need and what you have donated.

Apart from donating, of course you can also pray for the victims, join groups on Facebook or other prayer groups. However, the most important thing should be encouraging more people to join you and donate money.

Money is not almighty, but it is very useful in many ways. You can spend it on buying Armanis and Guccis, but you can also use it to help others. This earthquake has certainly provided a very good cause for you to spend your money. Believe me, every penny that you donate will be well spent. So don't hesitate, when you go home tonight, tell your relatives and friends about our cause, so that they too can show their support.

The victims are waiting for you. Let's not disappoint them. Please show your support by giving, for the ability to give is not granted to everyone. The world will be a better place when you start to give. Thank you.

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