

How to plan a book.

Title: How to plan a book.

Author(s): Lindsay Clandfield

Publisher: ELT Teacher 2 Writer

ISBN: NA ??

Media reviewed: E-book

Name of Reviewer: Thomas Ewens

Price: € 6.18

This resource is part of a series of e-books (referred to as training modules) produced by the independent outfit ELT Teacher 2 Writer and aimed at English language teachers and teacher trainers who are interested in learning more about the ELT publishing industry. It functions as a how-to guide for potential ELT authors in structuring and designing an ELT course book syllabus and individual units within that.

This book begins with an introductory chapter on the aims of the book. In Chapter 2 we are invited to think about what goes into a typical ELT course book. Chapters 3 and 4 discuss terms to describe typical ELT syllabuses and how they are organised. Dilemmas in designing and writing a syllabus are discussed in Chapter 5 (a set of possible pitfalls in syllabus and unit writing are discussed in Chapter 11). In Chapter 6, Lindsay discusses contemporary ideas and fashions in course book writing and in Chapter 7 he discusses market specific books. In Chapter 8 we are invited to have a go at designing our own syllabus for an Elementary level class (in Chapter 13 we are also invited to plan an individual course book unit). In Chapters 9 and 10 we are guided through ways to design a unit of work and to sequence the tasks. Chapter 12 discusses the help a writer can expect to get from publishers and co-authors. The last chapter contains a discussion of how digital technologies might impact course books in the future. This is all rounded off with a useful glossary of the key terms which are introduced. Although many teachers will already be vaguely familiar with them, it is good to have accurate definitions pinned down.

Each unit contains a theoretical discussion and is followed by a practical task for the reader to complete. There is a hyperlinked list of possible answers to the tasks and additional discussion at the back of the book meaning readers can easily flit from one section to another.

Lindsay Clandfield obviously has considerable credibility in the field. This training module is clearly written, and has a good balance between theory and practice. Its main strength is its invaluable and pragmatic advice on syllabus design, on unit design and on issues surrounding content in ELT materials.

A weakness is perhaps that it does jump around a bit too much from topic to topic. One solution might have been to divide the book into two clear sections, one on syllabus writing, the other on individual unit writing.

Overall, this is an excellent resource for English teachers and others looking to learn more about the ELT publishing industry and contains some really

essential, pragmatic advice for would be ELT authors. It is a valuable addition to the ELT Teacher 2 Writer training module series. Highly recommended.

Four Stars (the top ranking)

492 words

Thomas Ewens is an English language teacher and materials writer. His first book, English Clubs, was published with the round in 2013. See <http://the-round.com/resource/english-clubs/>

t.r.ewens@gmail.com