

## PTE Academic Lesson Plan Ideas: Test Taking Strategies

### Lesson 20 – Write from dictation


**Time allocated:** 40 minutes

#### Step 1: Introduce the Item Type

This is a short-answer item type that integrates listening and writing skills, and requires test takers to understand and remember a sentence, and write it using correct spelling.

*You will hear a sentence. Type the sentence in the box below exactly as you hear it. Write as much of the sentence as you can. You will hear the sentence only once.*

Status: Beginning in 7 seconds.

Volume 

Total Word Count: 0

#### Step 2: Present the Item Type Strategies

##### Strategy 1

Type the content words or keywords into the response box or write them on the Erasable Noteboard Booklet provided. Then add in the function words and the inflectional endings, using your knowledge of English grammar and sentence structure, as well as your memory.

##### Strategy 2

To improve your writing or typing speed, you can also use abbreviations and symbols to write down as many words as possible while listening.

##### Strategy 3

Use your phonemic awareness and grammar knowledge when checking spelling.

## Step 3: Explain and Practice Each Strategy

### Strategy 1

Explain to your students that if they can type or write fast, they can do so either directly into the response box or on the Erasable Noteboard Booklet. They should focus on the content words such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. Remind students of the basic word order of English: Subject, Verb, Object. Explain that knowledge of the sentence structure will help them reconstruct the sentence correctly and predict the position of any function words, such as prepositions or articles. Remind students of the passive and active sentence structures, and the sentence types: declarative, interrogative, imperative, and conditional; simple, compound and complex.

To practice this strategy, ask your class to do the following activities in pairs:

- Ask students to provide example sentences to illustrate different sentence structures and sentence types. Encourage them to use academic vocabulary and topics.
- Ask students to read the sentences to each other. Their partners should try to write as they listen, focusing on the content words or keywords, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs, e.g., *Most adults learn best when novel information is presented through a variety of experiences.* (*adults learn best novel information present variety experiences*). Then have students reconstruct the complete sentence based on what they can recall and their knowledge of grammar.

### Strategy 2

Explain to students that they can also make use of their note-taking skills while listening. They need to develop a uniform system of abbreviations and symbols that make sense to them. Remind students that they should be consistent by using the same system when note-taking. Using different symbols or abbreviations for the same word, e.g., using *b4* and *bef* for the word *before*, can cause confusion.

If students intend to type directly into the response box, they can also choose from the symbols at the top of the keyboard. They need to decide which keyboard symbols to use and establish the relationships before the actual test and practice using the symbols for a few weeks so they can memorize them.

Explain to students that it is important that they have enough time to change all the symbols to English words before they move on to the next item.

To practice this strategy, ask your class to do the following activities in pairs:

- Ask students to generate a list of common words and phrases that can be abbreviated, e.g., *with (w/)*, *without (w/o)*, *should be (s/b)*, *because (bec)*, *experience (exp)*, *the (th)*, *by (b)*, etc.
- Have students read some sentences to each other, e.g., *You must submit your assignments by next Friday at the latest.* Their partners should try to write down each sentence as they listen, using abbreviations and symbols only (*U mst subm yr assgn b nx fri at th lts*). Then they should try to write the full words.
- Now ask the student who reads the sentence to assess his/her partner's sentences by putting a checkmark next to the ones written correctly.

### Strategy 3

Explain to your students that they should also use the correct spelling they type in each word. For any unknown words, they should try to apply their knowledge of the regular sound-letter correspondence to predict the spelling. Students should also use their grammar and word formation skills to identify and correct any mistakes, such as wrong past tense inflections or wrong adverb suffix.

To practice this strategy, ask your class to do the following activities:

- Dictate some difficult words and have students write them down, e.g., *ecstasy*, *millennium*, *accidentally*, *minuscule*, *accommodate*, *irresistible*, *liaison*, *embarrass*, *sacrilegious*, *privilege*. Have them discuss and work out the sound-letter correspondences.

- Write down some incorrect sentences (e.g., *\*Five of the student fail to submit they assignment last Friday. \*I think the important of creative today real reflect a fundament shift in the nature of the economy.*) Have students work in pairs to correct the sentences (*Five of the students failed to submit **their** assignments last Friday. \*I think the importance of creativity today **really** reflects a **fundamental** shift in the nature of the economy.*) Have them analyze each mistake and explain the contextual, grammar and word formation clues that helped them make the corrections.

## Step 4: Respond to a Write from Dictation Item

Explain to your students that they will now respond to a test item simulating the test conditions. They will hear a sentence only once and write it down immediately. Remind them of the three strategies covered in this lesson and ask them to apply these strategies.

Play the audio [L20\_Write\_from\_dictation\_1], and have students write the sentence.

### Transcript

*The time of the (maths, math) lecture has been changed to (ten thirty, 10.30, 10:30).*

## Step 5: Provide Feedback

Ask your students if they were able to use the strategies. Which one was the most difficult to apply? Which one do they think was the most useful?

Ask students to compare and evaluate each other's written sentences in pairs or groups. Then show the correct answers and play the audio again.