

# What, How and Why: a manual of better English

*You have led me back to the classroom, prepared to learn this time.* James 18

## PETER INSON – AUTHOR

- Qualified as an agriculturalist then trained to teach English. [ MA (Ed) BA, B.Ed, NDA ]
- 32 years teaching and headship in maintained, public and international schools.
- 30 years examining English: O and A-levels, IB and Common Entrance.
- Sixteen years after failing O-level English Literature appointed examiner for the subject.
- 2010 Heinemann commissioned *IGCSE First Language* (ISBN 9780435991180)
- Advice on reading and literacy published on The Times web site.
- Articles about young people and education for national and academic press.
- Arts Council award for first novel, *dunno*, about a teenager's struggles to grow up.
- Fostered a school "reject" and helped home-schoolers.

## The Book

The book was born out of concerns about poor standards of literacy among young adults in the UK. Trials followed with "school failures," school refusers, parents, tutors, soldiers in an army prison and in mainstream schools.

## How the book works

- Written with the help of a school "reject" and a fourteen year-old school refuser.
- Follows a long-held conviction that understanding English leads to better use of English.
- Adapts ideas from car manuals and progressive methods of teaching EFL.
- Addresses directly the point of view of those who have been let down by school or have let themselves down at school.
- Acknowledges students' failures and wariness of adult advice and interference.
- Engages with both students and helpers using humour and anecdote.
- Explains the importance of communicating clearly and accurately.
- Maximizes students' chances of getting things right and then finding the confidence to take the next step.
- Includes "Essentials" – guidance for teachers and tutors, and for students in a hurry.
- Aims at independent, educated use of English, for life, not just for schools and exams.

## Endorsements

*The kind of text which we need in the education system in this country – a rich and wide-ranging resource for teachers and learners.* **Tim Oates – Group Director – Cambridge Assessment**

*The idea at the heart of this work is extremely valuable; there is excellent material here.* **Bruce Gillham – Former President - UK Reading Association**

*Awesome – clear, easily accessible, interesting and a friendly tone. Fabulous stuff!* **Liz – tutor**

*Using “What, How and Why,” Peter helped Lawrence turn his results around in just a few lessons, from ungraded to a respectable final ‘C’ grade GCSE. **Lawrence’s mother***

*You have created a virtual classroom where there is no sarcastic teacher and no bullies or disruptives, but only a teacher who encourages students. You have led me back to the classroom, prepared to learn this time. **James 18 – a school failure***

*The sentences in the activity were funny which helps to engage the reader in them and makes me want to get the answers right. You keep saying “we” and it’s like talking with you. The sentences are so different from normal English books it doesn’t feel like actual school at all. **Ben – 14 year-old school refuser***

*I have not only used examples from this book successfully with KS3, GCSE and A Level English Language students, but also to refresh my own subject knowledge before teaching grammar in my classroom. The activities and tests enable readers to consolidate their learning, recognise their progress and identify any aspects that they need to look over again. I showed the manual to some bright boys in year 7. They liked the use of the idea of a car manual and found the explanations clear and liked the boxes at the side. They were able to do the activities correctly directly after reading each section. A super book! **Julia Hayden – secondary teacher***

### **Further distinguishing features**

- A complete sequenced format.
- Exemplar material from all over the English speaking world.
- Clear guidance for different requirements: detailed list of contents, links to national curriculum, glossary and essentials for additional support.
- Generous explanation to accompany answers to exercises.
- Elements of the history of English and links with other languages assist understanding.
- An awareness of language acquisition encourages engagement – listening before speaking, reading before writing.

**A compendium of good English, for schools, teachers, tutors, parents, private study and libraries, anywhere in the English speaking world.**

Further details [www.peterinson.net](http://www.peterinson.net)

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