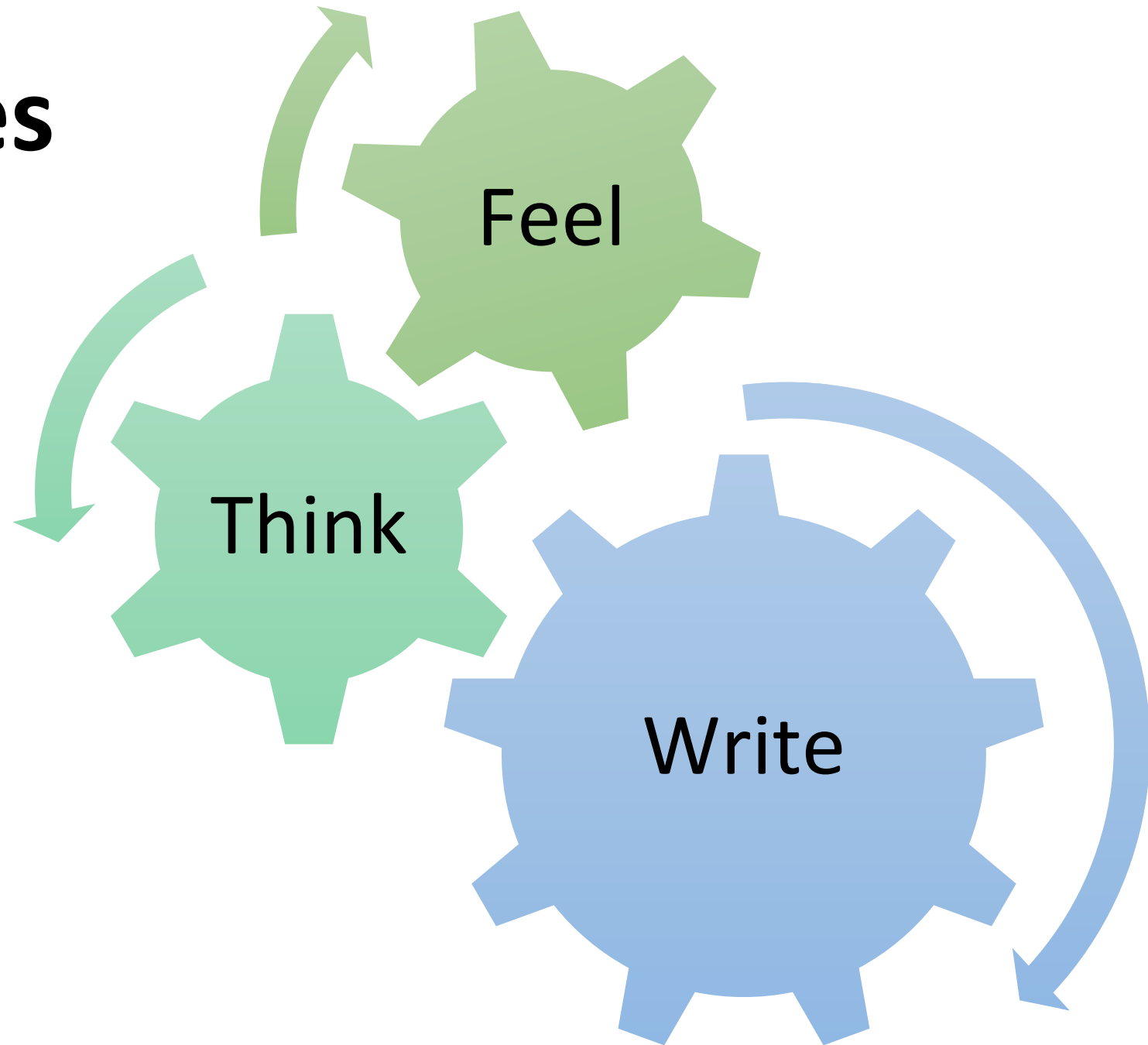
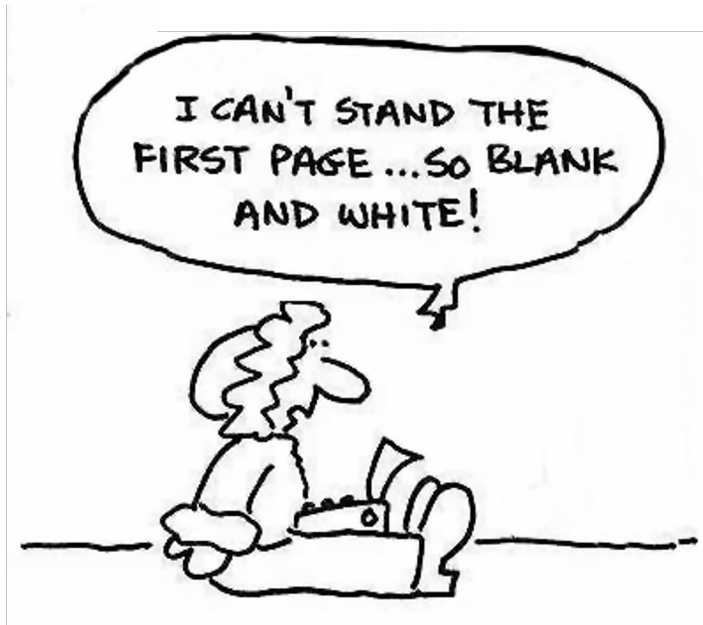


# Writing Activities That Inspire



# Are you a confident writer?



# Why do I / my students not write?

**Common excuses...**

# Why do I / my students not write?

## Common excuses...

"It's too hard."

"AI can do it for me, so why bother?"

"It takes too long..."

"I'm blocked, don't know what to write."

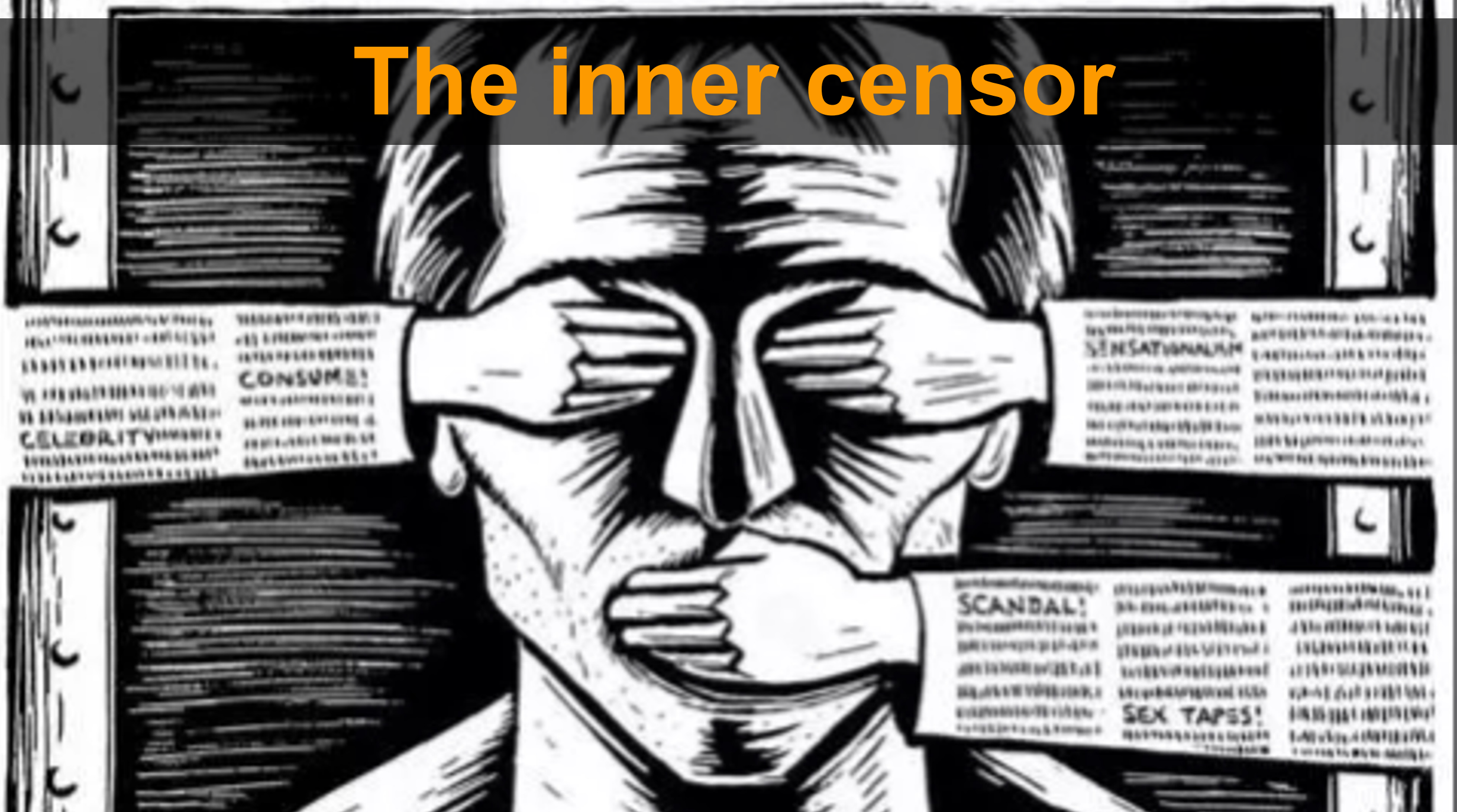
"How am I supposed to give everyone immediate feedback?"

"I don't have time to do it in class."

"If they write too much, I can't fix all their errors..."



# The inner censor



# Feedback criteria/grid/tips/Qs

## Which one is which?

- 1) Are there any grammar mistakes?
- 2) Is the vocabulary rich and accurate?
- 3) Is it cohesive/coherent?
- 4) Is the text stylistically accurate and genre-appropriate?
- 5) Is the length appropriate?

- 1) Was the writing experience enjoyable/memorable/ fun/emotive?
- 2) Were students given a chance to re-write?
- 3) Did the author "shine" through the text, i.e. was it authentic? Does the text show intriguing identity markers (dialect, idiolect, MT expressions)?
- 4) Did the author use an interesting language chunk / an original expression / an unusual metaphor?

# Feedback criteria/grid/tips/Qs

## Which one is which?

- 1) Are there any grammar mistakes?
- 2) Is the vocabulary rich and varied?
- 3) Is it cohesive/coherent?
- 4) Is the text factually accurate and appropriate?
- 5) Is the length appropriate?
- 6) Does it sound "too Czech"?

What went wrong-type-of-approach?

- 1) Was the writing experience enjoyable/memorable/ fun/empowering?
- 2) Did the text flow?
- 3) Did the author "show" rather than "tell" in the text, i.e. was it descriptive?
- 4) Did the text contain any interesting language features (e.g. an original expression, a simile, a metaphor)?
- 5) Does the text show intriguing identity markers (dialect, idiolect, MT expressions)?

What did you take from the experience?



# Feedback criteria/grid/tips/Qs

## Which one is which?



# Traditional approach

- **Product**-oriented => students write only one draft and get a grade
- **Genre**-oriented approach
- Feedback on the use of grammar, punctuation and spelling
- Assigning writing as **homework**
- Using writing to **test** (dictations, time-restricted compositions) rather than teaching students how to write, i.e. make their writing better through talking about it and multiple rounds of revising and rewriting



# WELL-BEING is at stake :)

## PREREQUISITES FOR THIS APPROACH

Why it matters to remove the inner censor?

(KRAUU 2023) 3.1. I create a safe space for learning.

***How? Write WITH your students. Always enable anonymity and non-sharing or sensitive forms of sharing***

(KRAUU 2023) 6.1. I systematically look after my mental well-being and psychological /mental hygiene.

***Why? It improves well-being / mindfulness / brings you into the present / grounds you***

# Creative writing tips

Write! Just do it! Try it out in class!

*You might have something in your mind but once you write it down, you'll be surprised that the idea will be a bit different.*



# Creative writing activities

## **1. Freewriting without any prompts**

ACTIVITY 1 Stream of consciousness

ACTIVITY 2 Cooperative freewriting of dialogues

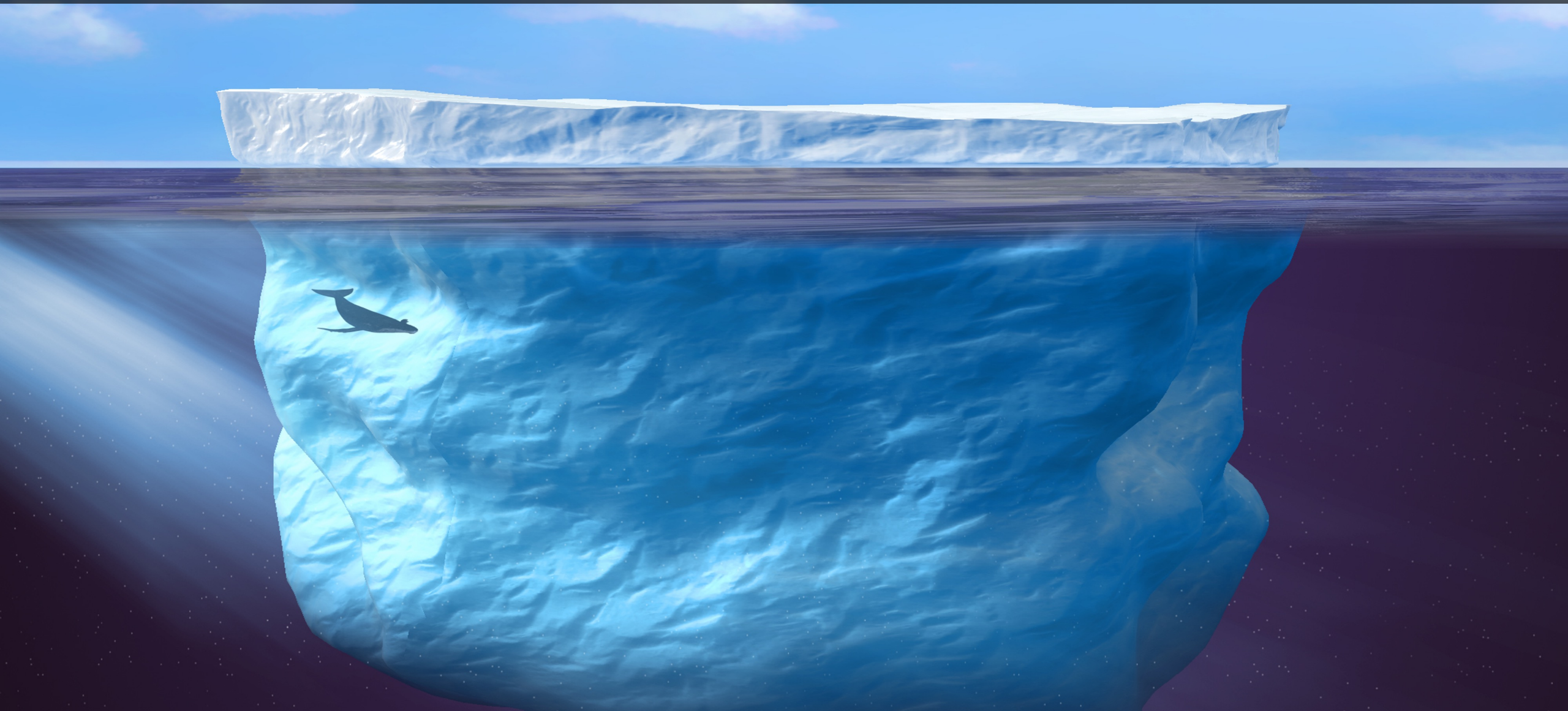
## **1. Freewriting with prompts (textual, visual, and audio)**

ACTIVITY 3 Creative writing with an audiovisual prompt

ACTIVITY 4 Write to feel

OTHER (haiku, framework poetry, stories, ....) *Next workshop?*

# Freewriting



# Directions for Freewriting

Don't stop for anything. Go quickly without rushing. Never stop to look back, to cross something out, to wonder how to spell something, to wonder what word or thought to use, or to think about what you are doing. If you can't think of a word or a spelling, just use a squiggle or else write, 'I can't think of it.' . . . The easiest thing is just to put down whatever is in your mind. If you get stuck it's fine to write 'I can't think what to say, I can't think what to say' as many times as you want; . . . The only requirement is that you *never* stop.

Peter Elbow, *Writing Without Teachers*



# Messy is the new sexy

dear, sneary, clear,

massag parlor

parlor is busy

ed lady good for sale shop.

A The light blue of his watery <sup>old</sup> eyes

when he entered her room almost every night

A none heard a <sup>a</sup> door <sup>all those</sup> <sup>silent cries</sup>

B ~~with~~ his bags full of <sup>under the</sup> <sup>narrow</sup> <sup>but</sup> <sup>for</sup> <sup>golden</sup>

a mouth full of flattery & lies

B he did what he did regardless of the weather

C I <sup>see</sup> ~~see~~ <sup>now</sup> ~~now~~ a baby bird were her <sup>far</sup>

C won't it ever be clearer all the <sup>the</sup> <sup>sneary?</sup>  
fitty



# Activity 1: Write your mind -> write to think/set yourself free!

- Write for 5-10 minutes (we will try 2 minutes today)
- Everything counts and there's nothing that can go wrong
- No form, no content, you are free, liberate yourself
- Don't think about what you write if it is possible
- Of course if you have something on your mind, write about it, but if not, just start from *I don't know, there's a cup on the desk, blabla, what now, I'm stuck, but won't stop and just let the words flow, come to me, I like how some words sound, lovey-dovey, cushy, wishy-washy, English can be playful, pleasing to ear, the stress-time rhythm makes me cheer....*

# Teacher's role

Do it with your students!

# Focus on fluency

Use what you know, let the words you know come to you.

Don't worry about the quality, focus on quantity.

Don't stop, try to keep writing, whatever comes to your mind.

Don't look back, don't worry about errors.

# Peer feedback

- 1) Who wants to share it? If you do, read it to your partner.
- 2) If you don't wish to share, talk about the writing experience, feelings and/or what you ended up writing about.



# Peer feedback - BENEFITS

- It allows for the practice of writing **fluency**.
- T can diagnose how much text gets generated.
- Lower levels/Young learners – can **mix L1** with English, draw pictures if they don't know a word.

TIP: Keep it private, only **volunteers** share (in groups of 4 + 1 class representative)



# Writing needn't be lonely





# Activity 2: Write to connect

- **Cooperative free-writing: silent messaging**

# Activity 2: Cooperative free-writing: silent messaging

## ROUND 1

- Work in pairs (you will get a blank sheet of paper).
- Open a conversation and ask your peer a question + write the question down, stay silent.
- Exchange your papers, then answer the question and ask a new question.
- Keep exchanging your sheets until you create a short dialogue (about 4 turns).
- Close the conversation in the final exchange.

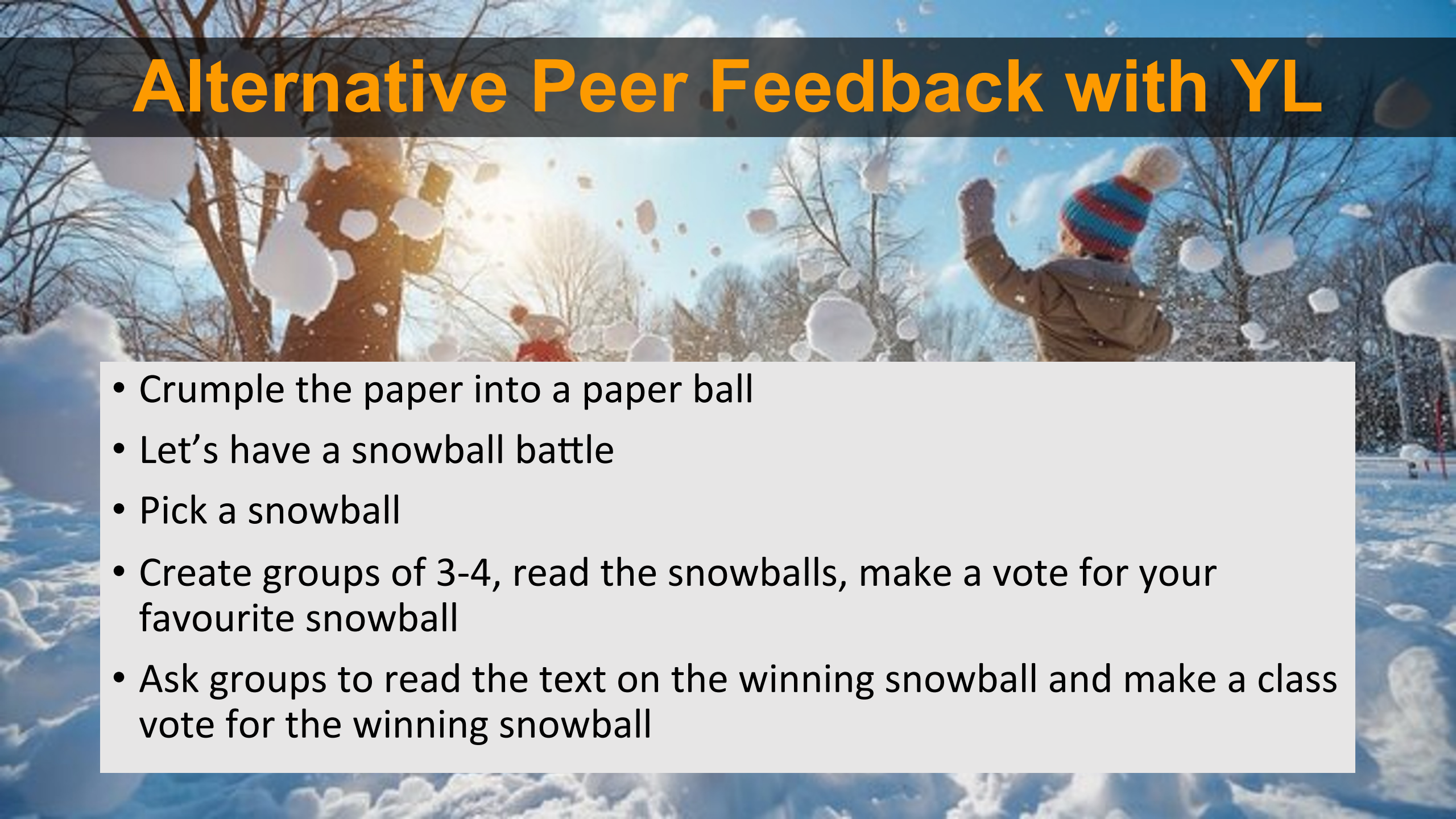
## ROUND 2

- Students pass on/exchange their dialogues with another group, read them and then continue the conversation, reopening the conversation.

## PEER-FEEDBACK

- Students read out/act out the dialogues in pairs. (Did anyone get an interesting/fun dialogue that they want to share?)

# Alternative Peer Feedback with YL

- 
- A photograph of a child in a winter hat and coat throwing a snowball in a snowy field. The child is in the foreground, and the background shows snow-covered trees and a bright sky. The snow is falling, creating a soft, white atmosphere.
- Crumple the paper into a paper ball
  - Let's have a snowball battle
  - Pick a snowball
  - Create groups of 3-4, read the snowballs, make a vote for your favourite snowball
  - Ask groups to read the text on the winning snowball and make a class vote for the winning snowball

# Activity 2: BENEFITS & TIPS

- TIP: ideal for lower level A1-B1 (as a pre-speaking stage before role-playing)
- TIP: for B2 and above use more challenging prompts (e.g. hypothesize, argue for/against, use indirect questions, use question tags) + controlled grammar practice or the transition from controlled to free practice
  - >>BENEFITS: it lowers the challenge, gives shy students more time to think
- T can suggest a few “upgrades”, promotes reflection on the experience, on the connection with the co-writers, curiosity what the other person wrote
- GOAL: to use writing to think and think through writing in a cooperative way

# II. Writing with prompts

- Textual prompts
- Visuals
- Music
- A short video
- A picture with a song and they will write about while listening to music
- Object (T can bring an object/Sts bring their own)

# Activity 3: Using an audiovisual prompt

1. Watch a video clip of a song.
2. Write about what your *see, hear, and feel*.
3. You can write words or sentences, describing what you see and feel, or noting some words you hear in the song. Or anything else.

Try not to think hard about it, **don't stop**, write as much as you can.  
Don't worry about mistakes, **be free**.



**Write about what you see, hear, and feel**



Weezer: Island in the Sun

# What are the BENEFITS?

- ...
- ...
- ...

# Samples from class

what the hell the guitar is? So sharp strings. tears my ears . Bear in Africa?  
Interesting choice of animals. Makes me feel going to Zoo. Blue blanket?  
With a lion pup? Those butterflies are from South America, arent they?  
Stripy shirt. The bear is gonna bite him. What the heck were they smoking?  
Hope I wont remember the melody. Flying chimpanzees!!! Nope, we will not  
feel bad anymore after smoking this material.

Looks like the place where you will get when you died. People and animals  
together.

PURGATORY FOR ANIMALS.

# Activity 4: Write to feel

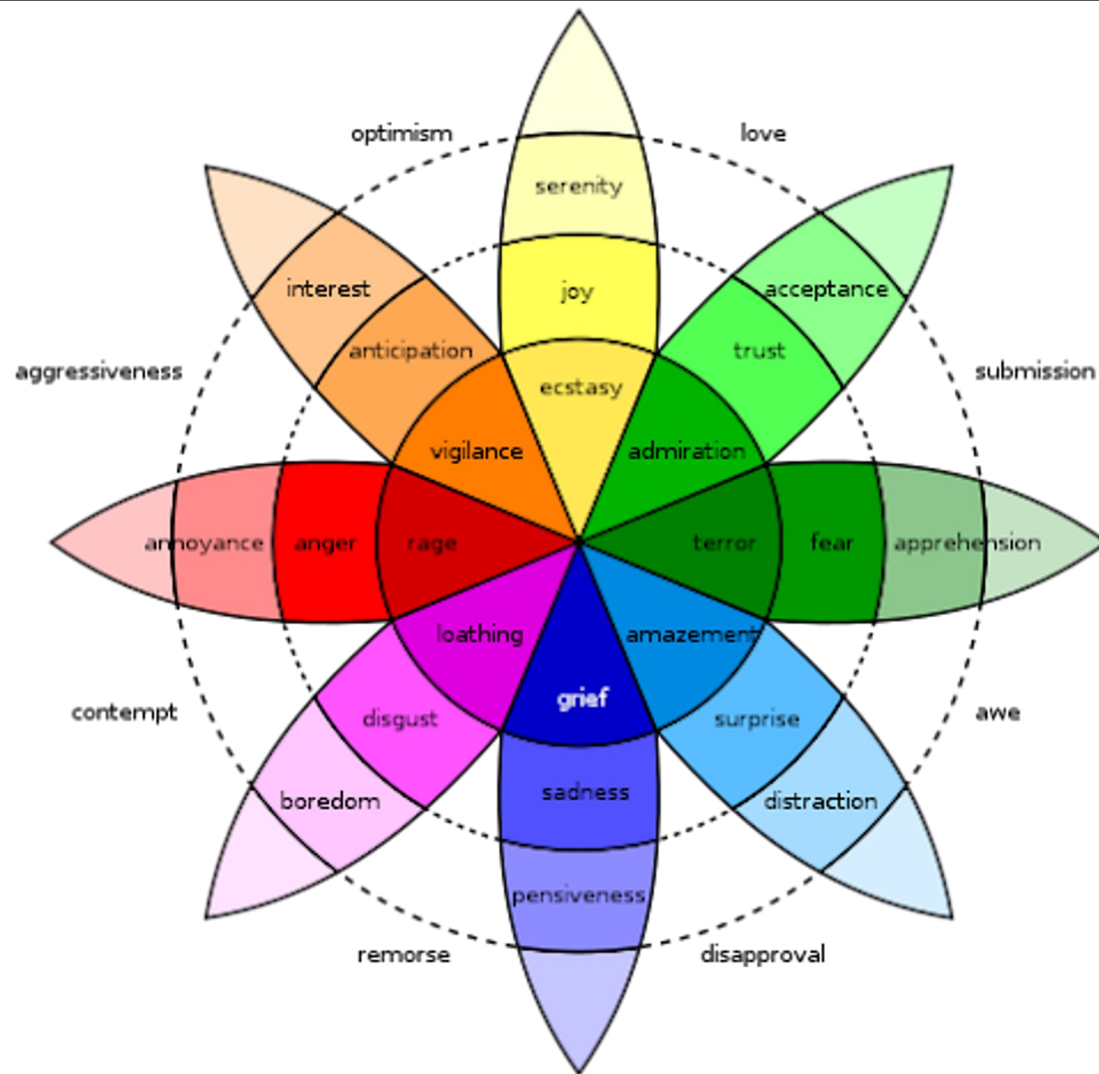
## 1) OPTION: WITHOUT PROMPTS

- Write for 5-10 minutes (*we will try 1 minutes today*)
- **Write about something that made you feel something this week —**  
*annoyance, joy, curiosity, embarrassment...*
- Focus: *emotions, authenticity, personal voice*

## 2) OPTION: WITH (EMOTION) PROMPTS

- Write for 2 minutes. (*we will try + minutes today*)
- Which of these do you know actively/receptively? Make sure you use **at least 1** you like/wish to use actively: *discombobulated, livid, viscerally shaken, caught between indignation and despair, incandescent with joy*

# Which emotion did you choose?



# Much later it became this...

Framework poem by VQN 2025

FEAR

*The light blue of his watery, ageing eyes,  
when he entered her room almost every night.*

*A room behind a door with a mirror, where he churned his lies.*

*His bags full of expensive sports gear and jackets made of leather.  
Choking on flattery, his wet narrow lips loved listening to themselves.  
He did what he did regardless of the weather.*

*If a baby bird were her fear,  
will it ever fly free, cleaned from all the shame and smear?*

# How confident do you feel now?



# The Value of Having A Writing Date With Yourself

- **Kill or at least silence the inner censor! Or talk back! :) Write for the sake of writing:** experience, flow, pleasure; unplug creativity. View writing as a **process / fun / a joyful creative activity / gateway to speaking / thinking / feeling / collaboration.**
- **Liberate yourself! :) Free yourself:** not for a grade, not for correctness, not high-stakes; *work-in-progress is OK!*
- **Foster emotional well-being / mindfulness / emotional intelligence.**
- **Create SAFE SPACE**
- **Get into the habit:** small, regular doses build fluency
- **Values: JOY – FREEDOM – CREATIVITY – AUTHENTICITY – EMOTIONS**
- **ELF/GEs-informed pedagogy**



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