Finders may be keepers, but Cerita just wasn’t happy until she got rid of the watch she had found.

It was a beautiful watch.

Cerita spotted it on her way out of work. It was lying on the floor, between a table and a chair. Slowly, she picked it up and looked at it. The watch was gold, and obviously an heirloom. On the back were the letters HGB, which stood for someone’s name. Cerita felt certain it would be easy to find the owner.

She turned the watch over in her hand. A slight noise drew her attention. Holding the watch up, she listened. It ticked quietly. What an exquisite thing it was!

Who could have lost it? Suddenly, Cerita longed to keep the watch. After all, she had been the only one to see it. Turning to see if anyone was looking, she slipped the watch into her coat pocket. Then she hurried out of the building.

At home, Cerita looked at the watch for a long time. Then, slowly, she tried it on. It looked superb! She turned it this way and that. Yes, the watch suited her. It was funny, though, how the ticking noise was louder here in her room. Was it because she was feeling guilty? Hastily, Cerita took off the watch and put it away neatly in her dresser.

That night she was sure she could hear the watch ticking in her dresser. She couldn’t get over how loudly it ticked. Louder and louder. It was almost as if the watch was trying to awaken Cerita’s conscience and tell her that she had
done something wrong.

In the morning Cerita got up early. She did not have to work that day and she could have slept late. But something was on her mind. She thought she had heard the watch ticking in her sleep. She got dressed and slipped the watch on. She decided to wear it when she went out on her bicycle.

Outside, Cerita smiled. It was a sunny spring day. She climbed on her bicycle and headed downtown to do some shopping. She rode fast. The wind ruffled her hair and the fresh air caressed her face. It was a good feeling. It was a good day—almost.

In the first store the salesman showed her some rings.

““This one would go well with your watch,” he said. “See how attractive it would be…”

Surprised by what the salesman had said, Cerita dropped the ring suddenly and looked at the watch. There it was, ticking away louder than ever. “Remember, it's yours now,” she reminded herself. Still, she was in a hurry to leave the store. Maybe the salesman had seen this watch before.

In another shop a man asked her time. Cerita jumped. “I don't know,” she said. Then she heard the ticking again. “Oh! Oh, yes, it's...let's see....” Her voice shook as she told him the time. Why had she been asked in the first place? Were people searching for the watch?

Cerita took the quick way home. The watch felt heavy, and her head ached. The ticking seemed to get louder and louder. Tick...tick...tick.... “I'll take it off for a while,” she told herself. “I'll wear it later when I go out again.” That night Cerita went to the movies with a friend. But it was hard to hear the movie, because her watch ticked so loudly. Cerita muttered an excuse to her friend and went home early. That night, she put the watch in her closet. But its
noise followed her to bed. Now convinced that she was wrong to have kept the watch, Cerita didn’t sleep well at all. In the morning, she didn’t take the watch out. She didn’t wear it all day Sunday. She couldn’t wait for Monday.

On Monday, Cerita put the beautiful watch in a box and took it to work.

“Someone lost a watch,” she said. “It was on the floor near this table.”

A woman promptly came up. Cerita didn’t know her well. The woman said, “Was it an old watch, with the letters HGB on one side?”

Cerita said, “Yes.”

“It was my mother’s,” the woman said. She took the watch from Cerita and put it on. “Thank you so much!” Her voice was happy and her eyes were smiling. “I lost it,” she went on, “but I knew it was in good hands. It was as if I could here it ticking for the past two days.”

Cerita didn’t say much. It hurt to give back the watch. But at least she didn’t have to listen to it ticking anymore. The noise had vanished.

“It was a beautiful watch,” Cerita said to herself. “But it was someone else’s.”

Introduction

This lesson is a narration which combines descriptions of chronological and spatial orders. The development of the main story is structured around the process of time, a typical chronological narration. On the first day, a Friday, Cerita found a watch at the office after work. Then on Saturday, she wore the watch out, feeling bothered by the loud ticking the whole day. On Sunday, she didn’t wear the watch and couldn’t wait for Monday. When it was Monday, she found the lawful owner of the watch and gave it back to her, which finally relieved her worry and unease. The whole story is a good example which shows what a chronological narration looks like. It also serves as
a perfect sample for students to practice summarizing stories.

Besides descriptions of time sequential order, the topic itself may stir much discussion about the legitimacy of the statement “Finders keepers.” Opinions for or against the statement, when fully developed and well-organized, will make examples of expository writing.

Teachers are suggested to employ the two types of writing practice mentioned above at different points of time, depending on time available and students’ level of proficiency. A summary of the story and a description of a past event are recommended as a basic practice on the proper use of sequential transitions and presentation of events. As for expository writing practice, it involves more organization of thoughts. Therefore, it would be more suitable for students who have a higher level of proficiency, or it may be employed at a latter stage.

**Difficulty level:**

- **Easy**
- **Medium**
- **Hard**

Elementary  Intermediate   Upper-Intermediate  Advanced

**Model of writing:** Chronological narration, spatial narration, expository

**Teaching focus:** Transitions (adverbs, adverb phrases, subordinators, prepositional phrases) related to time sequence, spatial order, and numeration of argumentation.

**Lesson Plan**

I. Raising Students’ Awareness

Transitions play a very important role in creating a smooth piece of writing, and different types of writing require different types of transitions to preserve a smooth flow of thoughts of the writing. Without the use of proper transitions, what is presented would be sentences lumped together, each of which is unrelated to the others. Therefore, one way to raise students’ awareness of the importance of transitions is to show them how the lack of proper transitions results in a stumble of
thought flow in a piece of writing.

**Directions**

1. The teacher prepares the text with transitions omitted.

2. The teacher divides the class into groups and distributes the above text (without transitions) to each group and ask students (1) to pinpoint what is wrong with the text, (2) to add whatever they think will work to the text to make it sound better, (3) to compare their revised text with the original text in the textbook, and (4) to circle the transitions used in the original text.

**Narration without transitions**

| Cerita was about to go home after work.     |
| Cerita found a beautiful watch.            |
| She turned the watch over in her hand.     |
| She turned to see if anyone was looking.   |
| She slipped the watch into her coat pocket.|
| She hurried out of the building.           |

| She was at home and she looked at the watch for a long time. |
| She tried it on.                                           |
| She heard a loud ticking sound.                           |
| She took off the watch and put it in her dresser.         |
| She went to sleep.                                        |
| She heard a louder ticking sound.                         |

| It was Saturday.                                          |
| She got up early in the morning.                          |
| She got dressed. She slipped the watch on.                |
| She went out on her bicycle.                               |
| She headed downtown to do some shopping.                  |

| She went to the first shop.                               |
| The salesman showed her some rings.                       |
The salesman said, “This one would go well with your watch. See how attractive it would be…….”
She was surprised by what the salesman had said.
She dropped the ring and looked at the watch.
She was in a hurry to leave the house.

In another shop a man asked her the time.
She jumped.
She said, “I don't know.”
She heard the ticking again.
She told him the time and her voice shook.

She took the quick way home.
The watch felt heavy.
Her head ached.
“I'll take it off for a while,” she told herself. “I'll wear it later when I go out again.”

At night, she went to the movies with a friend.
It was hard to hear the movie.
Her watch ticked so loudly.
She muttered an excuse to her friend and went home early.
She put the watch in her closet.
Its noise followed her to bed.
She was convinced that she was wrong to have kept the watch.
She didn't sleep well at all.

It was Sunday.
In the morning, she didn't take the watch out.
She didn't wear it all day.
She couldn't wait for Monday.

It was Monday.
She put the watch in a box and took it to work.
She said, “Someone lost a watch. It was on the floor near this table.”
A woman came up.
The woman said, “Was it an old watch, with the letters HGB on one side?”
Cerita said, “Yes.”
The woman said it was her mother’s.
The woman took the watch from Cerita and put it on.
“Thank you so much!” the woman said.
The woman’s voice was happy and her eyes were smiling.
Cerita didn’t say much.
It hurt to give back the watch.
Now she didn’t have to listen to it ticking anymore.
The noise had vanished.

II. Presenting the Text

When presenting the text, the teacher may direct students’ attention not just to sentence patterns and vocabulary of a lesson, but also the organization of the whole text, so that students will get a better understanding of the specific type of writing the text presents. For chronological narrations like the lesson “Someone Else’s Watch,” summarizing the whole story through flow charts helps direct students’ attention to the story line. Once the flow chart is finished, students may retell the whole story based on the chart. In doing so, they are practicing two different activities, top-down processing and bottom-up processing. As a result, their awareness of the structural characteristics will be raised and strengthened.

Directions
1. The teacher prepares a flow chart and distributes it to each student.
2. Students are to fill in the flow chart with the development of the story.
3. When the chart is finished, students are to rewrite the story based on the chart they finish without referring to the original text.

Flow Charts for Story Summary
When? Friday afternoon, after work
Where? In the office
What happened?
What did Cerita have in mind?

When? Friday night
Where? At home
What happened?
What did Cerita have in mind?

When? Saturday night
Where? At the movie theater
What happened?
What did Cerita have in mind?

When? Saturday morning
Where? Out shopping
What happened?
What did Cerita have in mind?

When? Saturday night
Where? At home
What happened?
What did Cerita have in mind?

When? Sunday
Where?
What happened?
What did Cerita have in mind?
III. Bridging Practice to Writing

In this part, students will be given more chances to practice writing. There are two different types of writing for students to practice. One is narration based on chronological order, which is the genre of this lesson and the focus of previous activities. The other is expository writing, in which students would have to explain their point of views regarding a certain issue. The issue here for practice is to argue for or against the saying “Finders keepers.”

A. Narration based on chronological order

The students are to finish the following charts and write a complete story based on the charts they produce.

1. Flow charts for a story
2. Cerita’s Diary

The students are to record what happened in the diary from Cerita’s perspective.

Friday
Dear Diary,
Guess what I found today at the office? ______________
________________________
________________________
________________________

Your best friend,
Cerita

Saturday
Dear Diary,
It’s funny that I couldn’t fall asleep last night. It seemed I heard a loud noise from my dresser. ______________
________________________
________________________

Your best friend,
Cerita
B. Expository

In this writing practice, students are to express opinions whether they are for or against the statement “Finders keepers.” Before students start to write, the teacher may explain how to develop the writing in an organized way. If necessary, a sample writing can serve as a model for students to imitate. With prewriting instructions, students are able to organize their thoughts in a better way. The benefits are twofold. First, students learn to present argumentation in a logical way. Second, it saves much time on the teacher’s part to correct students’ works.

1. Directions

(1) Structure of the writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On Finders Keepers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paragraph I:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For or against “Finders keepers”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason 1;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason 2;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Paragraph II:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who lost what? When did it happen? What happened then?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(2) Transitions

**To enumerate points:**

To begin with, first of all, firstly, first and foremost, for one thing……

Besides, in addition, second, secondly, for another……

What’s more, moreover, furthermore, third, thirdly……

Last, last but not least, finally……

**Time sequential phrases:**

One day, on that day……

then, after that, later that day, afterwards……

on the next day, on the following day……

two weeks later, during that period of time, at the same time……

(3) Tips to describe a past event

Use past tense

What happened?

Where did it take place?

Who was involved?

What was the consequence?

Did anything happen later?

2. **On “Finders Keepers”—guided sample writing**

I don’t agree when people say “Finders keepers.” The following are my reasons./ First and foremost, it totally contradicts the education I have. (supporting sentences)/ Besides, it’s immoral to possess things that do not belong to us. (supporting sentences)/ Furthermore, we may get conscience-smitten for this. (supporting sentences)/ What’s more, don’t do to others what we don’t want others to do to us. (supporting sentences)

I once lost a very special watch on my way home from school. I guessed I had
lost it on the bus. (a. Describe how special the watch was.) That’s why I felt so sad and depressed when I found that it was gone. (b. Describe what you did to try to relocate it.) (c. Talk about what happened in the end.) This experience of mine made me more firmly believe that finders should not be keepers.

a. Describe how special the watch was

It was a birthday present for my 10th birthday from my grandmother. It may not be valuable or beautiful to anyone, but it meant a lot to me. After all, it was my first watch, and it was the last present I got from my grandmother, who died two years later. So I treasured the watch very much, taking it as a reminder of my grandmother’s love and care for me.

b. Describe what you did to try to relocate it

I did what I could, trying to find my lost watch. I called the bus company to see if anyone had found it and went to the lost-and-found counter. I also posted a notice at the bus stop in the hope that the finder would see the note and return my watch to me.

c. Talk about what happened in the end

Version A:
But all my efforts were just in vain. I never saw my watch again.

Version B:
Then one day, the bus company called, saying that they had my watch and that a young man had given it to them. Hearing this, I felt like in heaven. I was speechless with a heart filled with thankfulness and warmth.

IV. Students’ Works

A. Improvement of students’ works

Before Instruction (by Eve)

In ancient times, people didn’t have to close the door when they went to bed. That is, there were no thieves. Whoever found something lost on the
road, they wouldn’t just keep it. Instead, they would return it to the owner. I can’t agree more to this concept. In my opinion, I am totally opposed to the idea of “finders keepers.” People should not take others’ belongs as their own. Regardless of what people lost, it may be of great important to them. Whenever one finds something on the road, one needs to return it back and don’t keep it.

After Instruction (by Eve)

I’m opposed to the saying “finders keepers.” My reasons are as follows. **First of all**, it contradicts with the education I have. Teachers always teach us not to keep others’ belongs as ours. Instead, we should return them to their owners. **Moreover**, one may get conscience-smitten. If one keeps others’ belongs, he will be afraid of being found and get anxious all the time. **Finally**, don’t do to others what you don’t want others to do to you. If you lose something important, you will absolutely hope to find it back. We should stand in others’ shoes and never practice “finders keepers.”

Before Instruction (by Tirina)

Very often we may find ourselves in the situation of discovering items left within our reach, either unwanted or forgotten by a careless passerby. Then comes the struggle: do we allow our roaming fingers to take possession of it? I believe that one should not keep whatever he finds, for everyone should be given a second chance to recover what he or she has lost.

B. More writing by students

Against “Finders Keepers”

I don’t agree when people say “Finders keepers.” The following are my reasons. For one thing, it is against the education I have. My parents taught me not to possess things that don’t belong to me. For another, it is immoral. Once we posses things that don’t belong to us, we are no better than a thief.

I once lost my lucky ring on my way to music class on campus. It was a birthday gift that my parents bought me in celebration for my 14th birthday. It was not pretty or valuable to anyone, but it meant a lot to me. I did all I could to look for it. I pasted a note on the bulletin board in hope that someone might turn it back to me. After a depressing week, I almost gave up. All of a sudden, school informed me that a young girl had turned my ring back. I was just like in heaven. I couldn’t be more delightful. With this experience, I firmly believe that finders shall not be keepers.
For “Finders Keepers”

I agree with “Finders keepers.” The following are my reasons. First of all, what I happen to pick up is useful to me. I can’t tell why I have no rights to possess it. What lies on the ground is free for everyone to take. Whether to send it to the police is one of the choices. I just make the opposite one. Second, it is hard to find the owner. The police station will be stuff with lots of useless things; I bet lots of them must be old and dirty. Plus, not every owner takes the missing things as treasure. Furthermore, its’ not an illegal behavior. I don’t steal it. I just see it lying on the ground and take it with me.

A week ago, I saw a bear doll lying on the roadside when I was on my way home. I took a glance at it, yet I heard him cry. It’s no laughing matter! I firmly believe that he said he was homeless. His girl abandoned him. He needed a new warm home. I just couldn’t help but give him a hug. He was kind of dirty, but I could accept him. Finally I did what he demanded. We live happily ever after. That made me believe that finders could be keepers.

V. Conclusion

A reading text is more than a reading text. When properly applied, a reading text can serve as good material for writing practice as well as for teaching vocabulary, sentence patterns and the content of the text. A chronological narrative, like the lesson “Someone Else’s Watch” works well in teaching writing composition of the same genre, and diary keeping. Besides, the activity of writing can be expanded to expository writing in which students’ opinions on whether finders should be keepers are presented. When writing expository paragraphs, students will benefit a lot if the teacher gives pre-writing instruction to help them build up a schema concerning the presentation of the argumentation. The final production proves to be one that is better-organized with proper transitions, which tends to be overlooked by students if no instruction is given before the writing task proceeds. In a word, one may not be born to be a great writer, but he definitely can be taught to write better.