The Scottish Unit for Literacy Assessment Support (SULAS)

What is SULAS?

SULAS is a Unit within the Praxis, Pedagogy and Faith Research Group of the School of Education at the University of Glasgow.

When and Why was it Established?

It was established in 2014 in response to increasing demands from the teaching profession from both Primary and Secondary sectors for support to address a range of assessment literacy challenges in Scotland.

What Were the Challenges?

These challenges had always been there, from 5-14 and Standard Grade, to Higher Still and National Qualifications. Formerly, these had been offered as Continuing Professional Development courses via the Language and Literature Section of the then Faculty of Education of this University. As demand increased, however, and remained over a number of years, it was decided to create specific time, supported by a workload allocation to the establishment of a Unit dedicated to supporting the teaching profession, nationally with the demands of meeting new assessment priorities.

Who Co-ordinates SULAS?

Willie McGuire, a Senior Lecturer in Secondary Language in the School of Education, co-ordinates the work of the Unit and is its Director.

What Does SULAS do?

SULAS has achieved a lot since its inception. Through it, a huge number of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses have been delivered either in-house to representatives from all of the Local Authorities in Scotland. Alternatively, bespoke courses have been delivered on-site to either schools, collections of schools or Education Authorities. Recently, in response to Covid-19, SULAS has offered online courses and support materials to address the 'Covid gap' engendered by repeated lockdowns.

What Courses Have Been Offered?

I believe strongly in the collaboration of HE/Initial Teacher Education providers and schools. As such, I have allowed access to many education authorities to educational support materials I have produced online.
Development plans: primary; Development plans: secondary; Development plans: SEN; Planning for Reading; Helpful Hints; Writer's Craft Standards; Managing the Implementation; Reading into Writing frame: Levels A/B William; Reading into Writing frame: Levels B/C. Spider; Reading into Writing frame: Levels D/E. Angela; Marking grid; Writer's Craft. Support materials for teachers; Writer's Craft. Quick guide.

I have been responsible for sustained high quality CPD courses over the last two decades including: Managing an English Department; 'S' Grade English Folio; 'S' Grade English Close Reading; 'S' Grade English Writing; Writer's Craft; Moderation of

Writing 5-14; Literacy across Learning Toolkit (online); Let's Go on Safari: managing information literacy in the digital age; Information Literacy: another perspective; CfE – Literacy across Learning (1); CfE – Developing Literacy across Learning: critical thinking; The English Folios: writing moderation for Higher and Intermediates 1 and 2; CfE – Literacy across Learning (2); Developing writing for CfE across stages 2 and 3. SCIS; The National 5 English Portfolio; The National 5 English Critical Essays.

To meet the demands of the first phase of the SULAS project, the following courses were developed and delivered in 2014-16: The National 5 English Critical Essays; The National 5 English Portfolio; Success in National 5 English; Preparing for CfE Higher English; M-Learning: mobile literacy apps and on developing strategies to improve the assessment literacy of academic colleagues, such as the project on creating functional feedback which blends formative and summative assessment. From 2016-20, I have run a wide range of income-generating courses every year on areas such as National 5/Higher/Advanced Higher English-Raising Attainment.

For the last year, online provision has been available for the following:

SULAS Online Literacy CPD Courses

I draw your attention to the following **online CPD** courses, which target challenging issues in the teaching of Literacy and English and are available for immediate online use, thus supporting your staff and pupils to address areas we know pose problems continually for pupils. These issues have also been identified as being necessary for successful outcomes in both **SNSA assessments and in National Examinations** and would also serve as essential revision post-Covid-19. Courses are online and **asynchronous**, so they can be accessed at any time and, therefore, require **no release from school**.

The courses are offered on a consultative basis by Willie McGuire, Senior Lecturer in English Language at the University of Glasgow, SQA Senior Examiner, Research Excellence Award Winner, Teaching Excellence Award Winner, Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, Senior Fellow of the Staff and Education Development Association and Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

COURSES

Summarising
Developing summarising skills at level 3. Course includes a 35 page resource.

Using Your Own Words
An Introduction to using your own words at level 3. Course includes a 59 page resource.

Tenses
Don't confuse Tenses for level 3. Course includes a 64 page resource.

Grammar
Oh No! The G word. An introduction to Grammar at level 3. Course includes a comprehensive 109 page resource.

Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation of non-fiction
texts for S1, S2 and S3. Each course includes a 68 page resource.
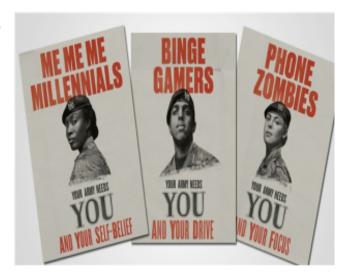
Developing summarising skills at level 3

For use with upper primary or lower secondary to introduce the summarising skills required of pupils in the senior phase of CfE. Contents include: Definitions; Main ideas; Identifying Non-essential information; Identifying Subsidiary ideas. Includes engaging development via songs, books and emojis as well as 'Guess the book from the summary' activities, The Big Five Hand approach and Sample summaries!

Sample

Generation Z and Snowflakes- Summarising Arguments

- Who is the audience for these posters?
- What do the posters want their audience to do?
- What do the phrases "me me me millennials" and "phone zombies" mean to you?
- Do you think this type of language will convince the target audience to do what the posters are designed to promote? Why/why not?

An Introduction to using your own words at level 3.

For use with upper primary or lower secondary to introduce the use of own words required of pupils in the senior phase of CfE. Contents include: Rewriting Stories; *Coraline*: Chapter 1; Polar Bear Substitution Exercise; The Prime Minister; What did you do at the weekend?; Phrase cards and taboo words; Group Flashcard Challenge; *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*- Chapter 1; *The Reptile Room*- Chapter 7; *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*- Chapter 2.

Sample

Text: Coraline, by Neil Gaiman - Chapter 1.

Coraline discovered the door a little while after they moved into the house. It was a very old house – it had an attic under the roof and a cellar under the ground and an overgrown garden with huge old trees in it.Coraline's family didn't own all of the house, it was too big for that. Instead they owned part of it. There were other people who lived in the old house. Miss Spink and Miss Forcible lived in the flat below Coraline's, on the ground floor. They were both old and round, and they lived in their flat with a number of ageing highland terriers who had names like Hamish and Andrew and Jock. Once upon a time Miss Spink and Miss Forcible had been actresses, as Miss Spink told Coraline the first time she met her.
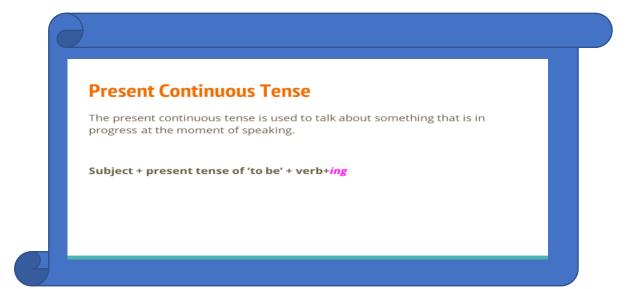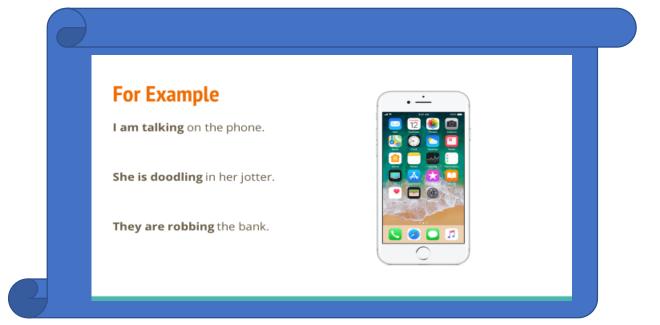
Worked example notes
Coraline has moved house. New house is old and big - attic and cellar. Other people live in house: old, round ladies downstairs with highland terriers.

For use with upper primary or lower secondary to introduce the tenses required of pupils in the senior phase of CfE. Contents include: Timelines; Getting to grips with the basics: Past, Present and Future; Tense changes; Tense consistency; Testing your tenses; Around the World; Tense ball games; Good Morning Britain video clip; Common tense errors; Tenses tell us the time; Tense charts: present simple continuous, progressive and perfect; past simple, continuous, progressive, perfect, future simple, continuous, perfect.

Sample

Present Continuous Tense

The present continuous tense is used to talk about something that is in progress at the moment of speaking.

Subject + present tense of 'to be' + verb+*ing*

For Example

I am talking on the phone.

She is doodling in her jotter.

They are robbing the bank.

An introduction to Grammar at level 3

For use with upper primary or lower secondary to introduce the grammar required of pupils in the senior phase of CfE. Contents include: Nouns, articles, verbs, auxiliary verbs, tenses, pronouns-personal, subject and object, adjectives, adverbs- time, place, manner and degree, frequency, sentence stretching, conjunctions, story creation, prepositions, prefixes and suffixes, word equations.

Sample

OBJECT PRONOUNS

Me, You, Him, Her, It, Us, Them.

Group task!

Each group has to create five sentences with both a personal and object pronoun

I understand pronouns because of him (that's me)

I, you, he, she, it, we, and they are subject pronouns.

Subject pronouns perform the action of a sentence:

"*I* wrote the book."
"*She* read it."

Me, you, him, her, it, us, and them are object pronouns.

Object pronouns receive the action of a sentence:

"John kissed *her*."
"She called *me*."

For use with upper primary or lower secondary to introduce the RUAE skills required of pupils in the senior phase of CfE. Contents include: Introduction; In your own words; summary writing; the idea of context; word choice; imagery; simile; metaphor; personification, onomatopoeia; sentence structure; punctuation-commas, colons, semi-colons, dashes, brackets, question marks, exclamation marks, ellipsis; sentence types- statement, question, exclamation, command, long, short, tone, linkage; introductions and conclusions.

Sample

Further Challenge: Longer 'Own Words' questions

Passage – I have never forgotten those childhood trips in the open-air swimming pool at North Berwick. It was right beside the harbour, and I swear the water in the pool was colder than the actual sea. But, it was where everyone went, and once you were there, you had to get into the water.

Everybody had their own way of making this bearable. Some jumped in recklessly in off the deep end, without even toe-testing the temperature. Other, rather more cowardly, swimmers would step cautiously down the flight of metal stairs, pausing on each one to get used to the chilly water creeping higher and higher. A few swimmers would stand on the stop step for a moment, then throw themselves forward, splashing those already in the freezing water.

Try answering by yourself. There is an answer key and example answer below:

Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation of <u>non-fiction</u> texts for S1, S2, S3. Cont'd.

Question: Explain **in your own words** the different ways that swimmers got into the pool. You should make **three** key points in your answer.

Passage	Own words
Some jumped in recklessly off the deep end, without even toe-testing the temperature.	
Other, more cowardly, swimmers would step in cautiously down the flight of metal stairs, pausing on each one to get used to the chilly water creeping higher and higher.	
A few swimmers would stand on the top step for a moment, then throw themselves forward, splashing those already in the freezing water.	

Top Tips: When you answer questions like this, you should remember two things:

- This is an **understanding** question, so you should answer in **your own words** to prove you understand. The questions above remind you to do this.
- You should organise your answer into a **bullet-pointed list.** This will help you keep track so that you know you have put enough detail into your answer. It also keeps the marker keep track.