MODULE 2
2.6 - DIGITAL TOOLS FOR SUPPORTING WRITING ACTIVITIES

In the previous video, you have learned and practiced how you can create your own content by using programmes like Microsoft word and PowerPoint, or online with Google docs and Google slides. Besides using these programmes to prepare your lessons and materials, you can also use them in class to support your teaching. As you know, learning a language focuses on the different elements of the language: speaking, listening, writing and reading. This video will focus on ICT skills and tools that can support writing and presentation activities.

Most evidently, you could ask students to use a word processor application to create a written text, leaflet, table or poster. Think of, for example, to create recipes with a picture of the final result, an email, an article, or a CV. You can ask your students to write and create this content digitally, at home or in class.

When you would like to present, or you want your students to present something, presentation tools like Microsoft PowerPoint and Google Slides, are useful.

You could also use blogs as a writing exercise. So instead of writing it in word, you could actually create a blog with your class, or let students create one on their own, and use it to collect and show the writing exercises. Free online blogs are Penzu: https://penzu.com and blogger.com

Other useful digital tools that you can use to support writing, but actually also speaking, are online dictionaries. These can also be useful for your students and you to find the translation of some words. The most comprehensive online dictionary is Google Translate as it provides translation between many different languages. Another very useful tool is Reverso Context: although it contains fewer languages, it provides examples from real translated texts that allow you to pick the best translation on the basis of the context. Remember to be critical when using automatic translation tools, especially when translating entire texts rather than simple words: in these cases the translation is rarely completely exact. Language structures are often wrong and sometimes the best synonym for a translated word is not the one offered by the translation tool. We advise you to translate texts on your own and then use the online dictionaries for the words you don't know. This counts of course also as a tip for your students.

Finally, you can also use social media and emails to practice writing skills. For example, by creating a Facebook or a WhatsApp group for the class to share information and communicate in the language that you are teaching, or make students write emails as a post-task.

I hope this can give you some inspiration. Make sure though that you try out the tools first, so you know how to guide your students. Now, let's try some activities!