Guidelines for collaborative writing online

* Anyone may write at any time.
* If you think you see an error, highlight it and add a **comment**, so the writer can try to correct it.
* Try to help each other in a kind and constructive way.
* Create the content *together* not alone – you are **collaborating.**
* It is ok to add any ideas related to the task – you can always go back and edit them later.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Task: Make a list of the pros and cons of conducting collaborative writing using ‘Word Online’. Then summarise into a paragraph evaluating the usefulness of the activity.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Pros:

* If one student makes lots of spelling mistakes then the other students can correct their mistakes
* Students can benefit from each other’s strengths (e.g. grammatical knowledge) and can help each other with their areas to improve
* All students have to take part as the teacher can see who has typed which part of the text.
* You can see who is writing what by hovering over their icon, this can be encouraging.
* This might be good for shy students who wouldn’t tend to contribute much to discussion tasks
* By contributing collaboratively to a single document, ideas are explored more fully
* Less marking for teachers! The work can be ‘marked’ in real time and any misconceptions can be addressed immediately, although it can take time to adjust to looking at multiple tabs of student work at the same time.
* This can be used for taking lecture notes as well as formal collaborative writing tasks.
* Actually seems more suited to lecture notes!
* You can assign different students different roles depending on their strengths or areas that they need to work on e.g. a weak speller could be in charge of proofreading, but they shouldn’t feel limited.
* Students can contribute from any location!

Cons:

* What if someone has forgotten their computer? They wouldn’t be able to take part. It seems likely that there will be technical problems at times e.g. Internet connection...
* Some students may be quicker at typing than others and so will be able to contribute more.
* It can be confusing for students.
* Without a plan for the piece of writing, it can be difficult to contribute in a meaningful way, you end up just reading everything.
* Everyone needs to have the same goal, do they decide that before?
* It can end up with each member just writing individually