



Progression Document: Explanation

Purpose: To explain how or why, e.g. to explain the processes involved in natural/social phenomena or to explain why something is the way it is.

Features of an Explanation text

*Non-Fiction Texts produced by the National Strategies

Generic text structure	Grammatical features	Planning and preparation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general statement to introduce the topic being explained. E.g. In the winter some animals hibernate. • The steps or phases in a process are explained logically, in order. E.g. When the nights get longer ... because the temperature begins to drop ... so the hedgehog looks for a safe place to hide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written in present tense e.g. Hedgehogs wake up again in the spring.) • Questions can be used to form titles e.g. How do hedgehogs survive the winter? Why does it get dark at night? • Question marks are used to denote questions. • Use of adverbs e.g. first, then, after that, finally... • Use of conjunctions e.g. so, because... • Use prepositions e.g. before, after... • Cohesion can be created, and repetition avoided through the use of nouns and pronouns e.g. Many mammals...they feed their young... • Indicate degrees of possibility using adverbs e.g. perhaps, surely... Sometimes modal verbs can be used to express degrees of possibility e.g. might, should, will... • Fronted adverbials can be used e.g. During the night, nocturnal animals...Relative clauses can be used to add further information e.g. Hedgehogs, which are mammals... • Degrees of formality and informality can be adapted to suit the form of the discussion, so an informal tone can sometimes be appropriate e.g. You'll be surprised to know that ... Have you ever thought about the way that ...? And a formal, authoritative tone can also be adopted e.g. oxygen is constantly replaced in the bloodstream... • The passive voice can sometimes be used e.g. gases are carried... • Layout devices such as heading, subheadings, columns, bullets etc can be used to present information clearly. • Paragraphs are useful for organising the explanation into logical sections. • Brackets, dashes and commas can be used to add extra information inside parenthesis e.g. oxygen (a gas found in air) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a title that shows what you are explaining, perhaps using why or how. • Decide whether you need to include images or other features to help your reader, e.g. diagrams, photographs, a flow chart, a text box, captions, a list or a glossary. • Use the first paragraph to introduce what you will be explaining. • Plan the steps in your explanation and check that you have included any necessary information about how and why things happen as they do. • Add a few interesting details. • Interest the reader by talking directly to them • Re-read your explanation as if you know nothing at all about the subject. Check that there are no gaps in the information • Remember that you can adapt explanatory texts or combine them with other text types to make them work effectively for your audience and purpose.

Progression by year group

Year 1

Text Structure	Sentence	Useful Vocab	Word classes	Punctuation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ideas grouped in sentences in time sequence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Simple connectives are used to construct simple sentences e.g. and, but, then, so.	Next... After that First... After that... Lastly...	Noun What a noun is. Regular plural nouns with 'er' Verbs Third person, first person singular. Ending added to verbs where there is change to root. Simple past tense 'ed' Adjectives Add 'er' and 'est' to adjectives where no change is needed to root word. Connectives/conjunctions Join words and sentences using and/then. Tense Simple past tense 'ed'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use spaces to separate words.Begin to use full stops.Begin to use exclamation marks.Capital letters for start of sentence, names, personal pronouns.Read words with contractions.

Year 2

Text Structure	Sentence	Useful Vocab	Word classes	Punctuation (new to year group)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief introduction to introduce the topic • Written in present tense • Main ideas organised in groups. • Using sequencing techniques – time related words. • Subheadings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject/verb sentences e.g. He was... They were... It happened... • Some modal verbs introduced e.g. would, could, should. • Use simple adverbs e.g. quickly, carefully • Use simple noun phrases e.g. tight screws 	<p>To begin with... Next... After that First of all . . . Afterwards . . . Lastly... Finally...</p>	<p>Noun Form nouns using suffixes and compounding. Expanded noun phrases for description. Add 'es' to nouns.</p> <p>Verbs Progressive form of verbs in the past and present tense. Add 'es', 'ed' and 'ing' to verbs.</p> <p>Adjectives Add 'er' and 'est' to adjectives where no change is needed to root word.</p> <p>Connectives/conjunctions Subordination – when, if, that, because Coordination – or, and, but.</p> <p>Tense Correct and consistent use of past and present tense.</p> <p>Adverbs 'ly' added to adjective to form adverb.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use spaces that reflect the size of the letters. • Use full stops correctly. • Use question marks correctly. • Use exclamation marks correctly. • Use capital letters correctly. • Apostrophes for contractions. • Possessive apostrophes for singular nouns. • Commas to separate items in lists.

Year 3

Text Structure	Sentence	Useful Vocab	Word classes	Punctuation (new to year group)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement to introduce the topic • Points organised into paragraphs denoted by time. • Written in present tense • Topic sentences. • Subheadings, bullets to display information clearly • Use of questions as subheadings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple sentences with extra description. • Some complex sentences using when, if, as etc. • Use of prepositions • Tense consistent e.g. modal verbs can/will • Adverbials e.g. As you turn the handle, the door will open. 	<p>This explanation will . . .</p> <p>The purpose of this explanation is to . . .</p> <p>To begin with...</p> <p>Following that . . .</p> <p>After a while...</p> <p>Before long . . .</p> <p>At this point...</p> <p>This causes . . .</p> <p>This because . . .</p>	<p>Noun Form nouns using prefixes. Nouns and pronouns used to avoid repetition.</p> <p>Verbs Present perfect forms of verbs instead of 'the'</p> <p>Adjectives Choose appropriate adjectives.</p> <p>Connectives/conjunctions Express time and cause (when, so, before, after, while, because)</p> <p>Tense Correct and consistent use of past and present tense.</p> <p>Adverbs Introduce/revise adverbs. Express time and cause; then, next, soon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce possessive apostrophes for plural nouns. • Introduce inverted commas.

Year 4

Text Structure	Sentence	Useful Vocab	Word classes	Punctuation (new to year group)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General statement to introduce the topic • Paragraphs organised correctly into key ideas. • Consistent present tense • Topic sentences. • Layout devices such as heading, subheadings, columns, bullets used to present information clearly • diagrams, photographs, a flow chart, a text box, captions, a list or a glossary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variation in sentence structures e.g. While the device is plugged in... As the cogs turn... • Use embedded/relative clauses e.g. Mrs Holt, who was very angry... The tiger, that was pacing... • Include adverbs to show degrees of possibility e.g. perhaps, surely, certainly 	<p>perhaps surely certainly</p> <p>This explanation is intended to ... It can be difficult to...so...</p> <p>The purpose of this explanation is to help . . . To begin with... Following that . . . After a while... Before long . . . At this point...</p>	<p>Noun Nouns and pronouns used for clarity and cohesion. Noun phrases expanded by the addition of modifying adjectives, nouns and prepositional phrases.</p> <p>Verbs Standard English forms for verbs.</p> <p>Adjectives Choose appropriate adjectives Connectives/conjunctions Use a wide range of connectives.</p> <p>Tense Correct use of past and present tense.</p> <p>Adverbs Know what an adverbial phrase is. Fronted adverbials Comma after fronted adverbials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apostrophe to mark singular and plural possession. • Commas after fronted adverbials. • Use inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate direct speech

Year 5

Text Structure	Sentence	Useful Vocab	Word classes	Punctuation (new to year group)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degrees of formality and informality adapted as appropriate to the audience e.g. You'll be surprised to know that ... Have you ever thought about the way that ...? And a formal, authoritative tone can also be adopted e.g. oxygen is constantly replaced in the bloodstream... Layout devices such as heading, subheadings, columns, bullets etc can be used to present information clearly. diagrams, photographs, a flow chart, a text box, captions, a list or a glossary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sentence length varied e.g short/long. Wide range of subordinate connectives e.g. whilst, until, despite. Complex sentences that use well known economic expression. e.g Because of their courageous efforts, all the passengers were saved, which was nothing short of a miracle. 	<p>You'll be surprised to know that... Have you ever thought about...? The purpose of this explanation is to . . . This explanation is designed to . . . It can be difficult to...so... Following that I intend to . . . Everyone understands that . . . Nobody knows why . . . Many people believe . . . It is true to say that...</p>	<p>Noun Locate and identify expanded noun phrases. Verbs Use modal verbs. Prefixes for verbs; dis, de, mis, over, ise, ify. Convert adjectives in verbs using suffixes; ate, ise, ify. Adjectives Choose appropriate adjectives Connectives/conjunctions Use a wide range of connectives. Tense Change tense according to features of the genre. Adverbs Know what an adverbial phrase is. Fronted adverbials Comma after fronted adverbials. Adverbials of time, place and number.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidate all previous learning. Brackets Dashes Colons Semi colons

Year 6

Text Structure	Sentence	Useful Vocab	Word classes	Punctuation (new to year group)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degrees of formality and informality adapted as appropriate to the audience e.g. You'll be surprised to know that ... Have you ever thought about the way that ...? And a formal, authoritative tone can also be adopted e.g. oxygen is constantly replaced in the bloodstream... The passive voice can sometimes be used e.g. gases are carried... Layout devices such as heading, subheadings, columns, bullets etc can be used to present information clearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verb forms are controlled and precise e.g. It would be helpful if you could let me know as this will enable us to take further action. Modifiers are used to intensify or qualify e.g. insignificant amount, exceptionally Sentence length and type varied according to purpose. Fronted adverbials used to clarify writer's position e.g. As a consequence of the accident... Complex noun phrases used to add detail e.g. the dilapidated fencing around the enclosure was extremely dangerous. Prepositional phrases used cleverly. e.g. In the event of a fire... 	<p>You'll be surprised to know that... Have you ever thought about...? The purpose of this explanation is to . . . This explanation is designed to . . . It can be difficult to...so... Following that I intend to . . Everyone understands that . . . Nobody knows why . . . Many people believe . . . It is true to say that...</p>	<p>Noun Expanded noun phrases to convey complicated information concisely.</p> <p>Verbs Use modal verbs. Prefixes for verbs; dis, de, mis, over, ise, ify. Convert adjectives in verbs using suffixes; ate, ise, ify.</p> <p>Adjectives Choose appropriate adjectives Connectives/conjunctions Use a wide range of connectives.</p> <p>Tense Change tense according to features of the genre.</p> <p>Adverbs Link ideas across a text using cohesive devices such as adverbials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a wide range of punctuation throughout the writing.