

NON-FICTION TEXT – INSTRUCTIONAL TEXTS

The basic organisation of an instruction text contains an introduction, some sequenced steps and a conclusion. Instructional forms of learning and writing should play a vital part in developing logical understanding especially in maths, science and technology where processes and procedures are at the heart of understanding these subjects.

Purpose	Common examples of text type	Generic Text Structure / Language Features
<p>To inform the reader about how to accomplish something in as clear a way as possible.</p>	<p>Many teachers use ‘real’ topics for instruction writing. While these more functional sets of instructions are important as they may be needed in real life (recipes, instruction to use an appliance/build something), more imaginary topics are also useful as they allow the children to become engaged creatively while developing their use of key language structures.</p> <p>Key uses of instruction writing skills across the curriculum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to grow a tomato plant • How the Vikings crossed the seas • How to stay healthy • How to work the computer • How to make a simple finger puppet • How to divide a large number by a fraction • How to tame a troll 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An introduction that explains what the instructions are for and why they might be necessary. May include rhetorical questions to capture the reader’s interest (KS2) • List of what is needed in order of use • Subheadings e.g. What you need/ What to do • List of clear, concise steps to be taken in chronological order • Temporal connectives to organise the steps taken, e.g. first, next, after that, then, so, finally • Steps organised by numbers, letters or bullet points • Use of imperative verbs • Commas used when writing a list, e.g. What you need: a spade, bucket, and trowel • Often includes diagrams • Subject specific and technical vocabulary • Formal language • Conclusion that adds in any extra points, reminders, warnings, or encouragement to the reader

Skills Progression

EYFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and list what is needed to tell someone how to do something and what steps need to be taken e.g. <i>a class cooking activity, cleaning my teeth, etc.</i> • Make a map to show a process getting the steps in the right order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the map to learn and retell instructions with a few simple steps, with appropriate actions emphasising use of language features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A title which should explain what is to be done - Numbers, numerical or time - Connectives e.g. 1,2,3; first second; <i>then, next, after that</i> etc. - Short, clear direct sentences - Imperative (bossy) language e.g. <i>Put the flour in the bowl, then add some water, mix them together</i> etc.
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Skills Progression

KS1	<p>As EYFS, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the range and scale of instructions, building in language features from EYFS (title, sequential connectives, short clear sentences, and imperative language) e.g. <i>recipes, directions to get somewhere, simple instructions for games, how to make a scary mask, how to grow butter beans</i> Use shared writing to invent new instructions which can be inventive and creative e.g. <i>How to get to the moon; How to make baby bear happy</i> Extend the range of connectives used to include: number <i>first, second, firstly, secondly</i> etc. co-ordinating conjunctions <i>and, but, so</i>, time connectives <i>before, after, when, finally</i> and linking words <i>who, which, that</i>, etc. Use a range of prepositions appropriately to indicate place, position and time accurately <i>in front of, behind, beside, while</i> etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use appropriate punctuation: commas for lists, bullet points Keep sentences short by choosing precise nouns and verbs (words and phrases) <i>whisk; select, twist, arrange, the red door by the entrance, the top shelf, a cold dark cupboard</i> etc. Use adverbs and adjectives sparingly and only to add precision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>stir carefully, press hard</i> comparatives and superlatives: <i>green-er, green-est;</i> adjectives of degree: <i>boiling-warm-tepid; quarter-half-three quarters; dark-pale-light</i> etc. Use diagrams, arrows, pictures etc. alongside text, where it helps to make instructions clear.
LKS2	<p>As KS1, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the range and scale of instructions using exemplar texts, building in and extending language features from Y1/2 (an interesting title – to grab reader’s attention, extended range of connectives, short clear sentences, imperative language, precise nouns and verbs, sparing use of adverbs and adjectives for brevity and precision, varied sentence order and openings for emphasis and effect, diagrams alongside text to clarify meaning) Include introductions to interest or hook the reader e.g. <i>Have you ever wondered how to...? Have you ever been bored by...Well this game will give you hours of fun...</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclusions to wrap up and summarise e.g. <i>Follow these directions carefully and you will never need to...; These simple instructions should enable anyone to...</i> Use appropriate punctuation: commas for lists, colons and bullets, for points and subpoints Use a range of add-on and drop-in phrases/clauses to advise and warn e.g. <i>Without spilling it, transfer the powder to...; First climb up the beanstalk, taking care not to</i> Apply instructional writing to work in other curricular areas e.g. <i>how to play mathematical games or do calculations, how to find something on the internet, how to assemble a model, what to do in an emergency</i> etc.
UKS2	<p>As LKS2, plus: Other subjects in the curriculum should provide rich content for instruction writing which can be taken to challenging levels with older children, common in e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maths: e.g. directions for playing games, solving problems, doing calculations, constructing shapes and designs etc Science: e.g. writing up processes and procedures: <i>How to build an electrical circuit with a switch..., measuring time using the sun...</i> Geography: <i>calculating the height of trees...</i> PHSE e.g. steps to take in dealing with hostile behaviour DT e.g. rules for safe handling of tools and materials, directions for constructing Increase the complexity of topics and steps to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>explanations</u> e.g.: who the instructions are intended for; to introduce technical language; to guide readers how to use the instructions <u>multiple prior or parallel steps</u> e.g. <i>Before this can be done, the ends should be tied off so that ...While the glue is setting, cut the wires to fit round ...</i> <u>Options</u> e.g. <i>at this point you can either (a)...or (b)...; ...any player may roll the dice but only the player with...etc.</i> <u>Advice</u> e.g. <i>Before you take the wrapping away..., You may need another pair of hands to help you do this...</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decide whether it will help to use symbols, diagrams, pictures, flow charts etc. to support the text. Vary the tone and formality e.g. to make instructions sound: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> authoritarian with uncompromising imperatives e.g. <i>Leave the building quietly, Do not leave the area until...</i>, or more friendly and reasonable by using modal verbs <i>may, might, should, could, would</i> etc. and phrases like <i>provided that..., so long as...</i> etc. speak to a general audience e.g. <i>These regulations are intended for the use of...</i>, or to an individual e.g. <i>To get the best results, take a few minutes to ...</i> When you have finished, check carefully to ensure your instructions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> make sense and are free of ambiguity and contradiction, effectively sequenced to achieve their objective, can be understood by others.