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Unit 1 Looking closer at non-fiction

I know and understand the features of different non-fiction texts.

Helpful hints

Non-fiction texts have their own set of language features, organisation and layout. There is a big difference between an advertisement persuading adults to buy soap powder, and an explanation text for school children!

1 Copy the table below and identify the correct non-fiction type. Use this list to help for: Instructions, letter, newspaper report, diary, biography, advertisement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extract</th>
<th>Non-fiction type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a Take one shoelace in each hand and make the shape of a cross.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Come to ‘High Hopes’ adventure theme park for the experience of a lifetime!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Schoolboy in Dramatic Rescue of Teacher!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d Micah called up about three in the morning, to tell us of a great fire they saw in the city. So I rose, and went to the window.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire, and baptised a few days later on 26 April 1564.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f Dear Sir, I am writing to complain about an item of clothing I purchased at your store.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Identify which non-fiction type uses the language features listed below.
Choose from Persuasion (P), Instructions (I), Argument (A)

a Imperative verbs at the start of sentences, for example, Take, Cut
b Connectives which explain points, for example, although, in contrast
c Adjectives and adverbs used for emotive effect, for example, stupendous, brilliantly
d Personal pronouns which include the reader, for example, you, we, our
e Title sometimes put forward as a question, for example, Should school be made compulsory?
f Connectives used to indicate chronology (time), for example, Next … Then … When …
g Sound features, for example, alliteration, rhythm, onomatopoeia, rhyme
h Conclusion shown by words and phrases, for example, In conclusion… Finally
i Encouraging remarks, for example, Just four easy steps to …
Comparison of the language, style and impact of non-fiction texts

1. Recount texts re-tell the story of something that has happened. Read the three recount extracts shown.
   a. What text types are A, B and C?
   b. Give three similarities and three differences between the three texts.

Monday
Boring morning in school! Maths was SO hard! At break, played with Henry. Had chips and salad for lunch. PE (cricket) in the afternoon, and our side won. Hooray! Lucky stew for dinner, then attempted maths homework. Couldn’t finish it. Watched some TV. In bed by 9pm.

Pamela Mordecai was born in 1942 in Kingston, Jamaica. She is a Jamaican teacher, scholar, poet and writer of short fiction. She attended high school in Jamaica and college in the USA, where she did a degree in English. Mordecai has written over thirty books including children’s books and five books of poetry for adults.

Lorry Error Engulfs City in Bubbles!
Yesterday, an error by a lorry driver caused the main street in Cairo to be covered in bubbles. When attempting to reverse his lorry, Abdul Serai accidentally discharged 5000 litres of ‘Happy Dishes’ washing-up liquid on to the street. Abdul said, “Everyone was shouting directions, and I suddenly became confused. I’m afraid I pressed the release button instead of the reverse.”

Talk Partners
Choose one of the three texts. What tips would you give to a younger class on how to write this type of text? Share your tips with a talk partner.

Try this
List all the non-fiction text types that have been focused upon so far. Can you think of any others not yet mentioned? Agree on a list with a partner. (Hint: letter, article)
Meanings of connectives

Connectives – which can be words or phrases – are very useful in non-fiction texts for putting ideas in order and linking them. They can be used to connect ideas between sentences, or make links between paragraphs. Here are some examples of different types of connectives. Notice how they can be a word or a phrase.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adding points</th>
<th>Ordering points</th>
<th>Reinforcing points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>also</td>
<td>first of all</td>
<td>besides this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>furthermore</td>
<td>next</td>
<td>this proves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moreover</td>
<td>finally</td>
<td>increasingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining points</td>
<td>Contrasting points</td>
<td>Summming up points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for example</td>
<td>however</td>
<td>as a result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in other words</td>
<td>on the other hand</td>
<td>thanks to this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that meant</td>
<td>but</td>
<td>therefore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Write about what you did yesterday. Your aim is to use at least eight of the connectives from the list above. For example, ‘First of all I got up, dressed and had a shower …’

2. Connectives can be placed at the start of a sentence – and inside it. Pick out the connectives used in this short article about drones. Find at least six!

Tiny, unmanned aircraft are being used more and more for a huge variety of tasks, but landing drones safely has proved to be a problem. Now one researcher has designed a pair of legs that can be attached to drones. These will allow them to grab on to the surfaces – for example, branches or phone lines. Moreover, the ‘claws’ on the legs are sharp, therefore enabling a really tight grip. This also means the drone has time to do things – such as shut down its engines, or even fully recharge.

Although drones were first used by researchers working in remote areas, they are being used increasingly to find survivors in places hit by natural disasters.
More connectives

1. Write two paragraphs on what you would do if you were in charge of the country for a day. What would you change, and why?
   a. The first paragraph could be about the school or the town where you live.
   b. The second paragraph could be about the whole country – or even the whole world! Remember to use connectives to link your ideas.
   c. Your ideas will sound more convincing if you back them up in some way. For example:

      **Firstly, I would like to change the school day, so that we have more free time. At present, we do not have enough. The result of this is that we are made to work too hard, and get tired. Eventually, learning suffers – particularly in the afternoon. Secondly …**

      Notice how:
      - the first sentence makes clear what should be changed
      - the second sentence introduces the argument
      - the third and fourth sentences back up the argument.

b. When you have finished, underline the words you think are important. These might include some connectives.

Talk Partners

Read your ideas aloud to a partner. Emphasise the words underlined; hold your body up straight – and enunciate the consonants and vowels in each word. A clear, well presented talk will make your argument seem more convincing!
How to spell connectives

**Helpful hints**

Here are some tips on remembering how to spell words – including connectives.

- Look at the word. Cover it. Write it. Check it.
- Split the word into syllables. For example, *lat-er*; *in-ter-est-ed*; *fright-en-ing*.
- Find a word within a word. For example, *never-the-less*; *bus-i-ness*; *fav-our-it-e*.
- Apply the spelling rule. For example, addition of the suffix *ly* to a word ending in ‘l’ as in ‘finally’.
- Highlight a particular letter or letters. For example, *con-se-quently*; *is-land*; *doubt*.
- Break the word into affixes. For example, *un-fortu-nate+ly*.
- Link with word families. For example, *cer-tain*, *cer-tain-ly*, *uncer-tain*.
- Use a mnemonic such as in *necessary*  
  \[=\text{one collar, two sleeves}\]

- Keep a spelling log or journal. Make a record of:
  - words you need, or wish, to learn
  - rules and words which show an example of a rule
  - reminders and mnemonics
  - key words that are difficult
  - common prefixes and suffixes such as im, re, un, il and ful, hood
  - ways to remember words.

1. These words are commonly misspelled. What strategies would you use to remember them?
   - argument
   - definite
   - successful
   - surprise
   - sincerely
   - embarrassed
   - persuade
   - interesting
   - beginning
   - disappointing

2. Keep your own spelling journal, and organise it so that it helps you learn and remember spellings. Use some of the tips given above.
Complex sentences

1. Using the table below, form four complex sentences. Start with the main clause, then choose an appropriate connective and clause.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main clause</th>
<th>Connective</th>
<th>Subordinate clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are no sandwiches left</td>
<td>if</td>
<td>you take me to the party.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will come</td>
<td>so</td>
<td>I think I’ll stay in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could not eat the food</td>
<td>although</td>
<td>it was inedible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My favourite TV programme is on</td>
<td>because</td>
<td>there is some cake.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tonight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Helpful hints

A complex sentence contains a main and a subordinate clause.

‘I will help you to your seat, if you come with me.’

Main clause    Subordinate clause

The main clause can make sense on its own. The subordinate clause is introduced by a subordinating connective (if) and needs the main clause in order to make complete sense. A subordinate clause must have a verb (come).

2. Complex sentences can also begin with a subordinate clause. When this happens, notice how a comma has been used to separate the main clause from the subordinate clause.

I ran to get ready when I saw you coming.

When I saw you coming, I ran to get ready.

- Write two complex sentences which start with a main clause followed by a subordinate clause, using the connectives: as, although.
- Write four complex sentences which begin with the connectives: if, since, when, to.
Finite and non-finite verbs

Helpful hints

A clause has to have a verb. Verbs which can stand on their own, and are able to be changed into the past and present tense are known as finite. Verbs which cannot stand on their own or shift tense are known as non-finite.

Examples of finite verbs
Isaq plays football.
I spoke German on holiday.
I ran all the way to school.

Examples of non-finite verbs
It took courage to continue up the mountain.
Going home was such a relief.
Please leave when asked.

Non-finite verbs will be:
- a present participle ending in -ing
- a past participle ending in -en, -t, -ed.

1. Beginning sentences with a non-finite clause can make them more interesting to read. For example:

   Walking quickly, Senara hoped she would not miss the train.

   non-finite clause   finite clause

   In a, b, c write the two sentences as one sentence starting with a non-finite verb. Remember to mark off the non-finite clause with a comma.
   a  The boys ran across the playground. They were shouting loudly. (Shouting ...)
   b  The wind was blowing fiercely. It made it difficult to sail the boat. (Blowing ...)
   c  The girl slipped. She was running too fast. (Running ...)

2. Write a sentence using each of these non-finite clauses at the beginning.
   a  Encouraged by the boy’s answer, ...
   b  Hidden in a secret cupboard, ...
   c  To manage this, ...
Commas in complex sentences

1. Re-write these complex sentences putting the commas in the correct place.
   a. If you come to my party I will be really pleased.
   b. By running very quickly I just made the train.
   c. Loaded with shopping I could barely climb up the stairs.

2. Re-write these two extracts from texts inserting the missing commas.
   a. For a moment Paul was unsure what to do.
      He cut the bike’s engine climbed off the machine and rested it against the railings.
      Slowly he walked to the gates and tried the handle. They were locked. Glancing around he realised the street was deserted too as though everyone had shut themselves away behind closed doors. (Five commas missing)
      From The Eagle Trail by Robert Rigby

   b. Away in the far and frozen north amid the ice and snow of Greenland there lived a boy named Katerpursuk. Unfortunately he had lost both his father and mother and the members of his tribe paid little attention to him. Knowing that he was dependent on his relatives the boy tried to make himself as useful as possible and so pay back what kindness was shown to him.
      From A Boaster Beaten, Crossing the Line and other stories Reader E

Try this

Re-write the sentence below and put in the commas.
As I am sure we would all agree Adina Liberman who is the youngest girl in the school deserves first prize.