

# Unit 8 Explanatory Text: Time and Space

## Summary and context

The focus of this unit is to produce a piece of explanatory text, applying the features of the genre. A topic of interest was chosen, stimulated by a letter from the past. It is expected that children will have been reading explanations and will have experience of writing in this form.

## Overview of objectives

Target statements for writing	NLS Framework objectives
<p><b>Style: sentence construction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select appropriate word order in sentences to create interest and to increase precision, clarity and economy.</li> </ul>	Y5 T2 S8
<p><b>Style: language effects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use appropriate grammatical features for different text types.</li> </ul>	Y5 T2 T22
<p><b>Purpose and organisation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In non-fiction, elaborate the basic structures of text types in order to make writing more effective in relation to audience and purpose.</li> <li>In non-fiction use basic features of text types, such as introductory statements, followed by clear points leading to a conclusion.</li> <li>Adapt writing to be concise and clear, and use an impersonal style.</li> </ul>	Y4 T2 T24 Y5 T2 T22
<p><b>Process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map text structures and lines of development.</li> </ul>	Y5 T2 T15

### Outcomes

- By the end of the unit the children will have read and investigated an example of explanatory text.
- They will write a text to explain how the solar system works.

### Homework

- Research facts on space and find examples of other explanatory texts.
- Write a follow-up letter to Galileo.
- Research into his life and works.

### Resources

- Highlighters or coloured pencils for text marking
- *Grammar for Writing* p.187 – list of connectives taken from the glossary and prepared as a poster for reference
- *Grammar for Writing* p.154–5 – OHT or poster listing features of explanation genre
- OHT of a writing frame
- An envelope or 'time capsule' for sending children's work to Galileo
- Text 1: Galileo's letter (attached)
- Text 2a: The universe, a modern view 1639 (model text: whole class reading and general group text marking, attached)
- Text 2b: The universe, a modern view 1639 (modified text: focus group text marking, attached)
- Text 3: (Text showing errors in style and structure)
- Text 4: *Fascinating facts about our solar system* (attached)

# Unit 8 Explanatory Text: Time and Space

## Lesson 1

### Lesson objectives

- to identify the key features of explanatory texts;
- to scan and locate key words and phrases;
- to summarise main points of text.

### Shared whole class work

#### Shared reading

- Explain lesson objectives.
- Introduce task card (Text 1).
- Read explanatory text (Text 2a) with whole class.
- Summarise text by listing main points and asking, 'What did these people believe?'

#### Sentence level

- Revise key features of explanatory texts, e.g. *written in present tense; have a clear sequence (opening, closing statement, logical steps); use diagrams, subheadings, captions to support the message; use an impersonal style (formal language).*
- Use connectives to improve writing.

### Key points to highlight

- Recap key elements of explanatory text.

### Independent/guided work

#### Independent task

- Text marking in pairs:
  - identify and mark connectives;
  - identify and mark evidence of tense (verbs);
  - identify and mark evidence of presentation (heading, subheading, caption).
 (General group use Text 2a and focus group use Text 2b.)
- Identify and mark five or more errors in style and structure using Text 3.

### Plenary

- Use findings to recap and review all key features of explanatory text.

# Unit 8 Explanatory Text: Time and Space

## Lesson 2

### Lesson objectives

- to expand short statements into connected prose;
- to use language selectively according to text type;
- to write an explanatory text including key features.

### Shared whole class work

#### Shared reading

- Outline lesson objectives.
- Review purpose for writing explanatory text.
- Read Text 4: *Fascinating facts* (unsequenced, random text).
- In pairs, sequence the facts.

#### Sentence level

- Recap key features of explanatory text, e.g. *connectives, tense, sequence, presentation, impersonal style*.
- Model writing of opening statement with class.

#### Key points to highlight

- Recap key features of explanatory text.
- Highlight need for structure/organisation of facts.
- Highlight use of impersonal language.

#### Independent/guided work

- Use previously organised facts to construct text to clearly explain today's understanding of the workings of the solar system to people of the past.

#### Plenary

- Share selected examples of children's work.
- Discuss effectiveness for purpose.
- Collect texts to put in envelope or time capsule to 'send to Galileo'.

# The National Literacy Strategy

## Year 5 Booster Units

# Unit 8 Explanatory Text: Time and Space

## Lesson 1 example

Teaching	Teaching and learning strategies
<p><b>Objectives</b></p> <p>Teacher to read Galileo's letter (Text 1) to set the scene. Through discussion and questioning the teacher leads the class to identify the task set by Galileo: to write an explanation of the solar system, as we know it today.</p>	<p>Drama and role-play for initial stimulus</p> <p>Sharing objectives to inform children of expectations</p>
<p><b>Shared whole class work</b></p> <p>Display and/or distribute copies of <i>The universe – a modern view 1639</i> (Text 2a). Read explanatory text from the people of Galileo's time.</p> <p><b>Teacher:</b> <i>In pairs discuss the messages in the text. What do the people believe? Find three key facts. Prepare to feed them back into class discussion.</i></p> <p>Remind class of Galileo's letter.</p> <p>Teacher collects and lists key facts in note form.</p> <p>Move the focus of the discussion to the style of the text.</p> <p><b>T:</b> <i>What do we notice about an explanatory text?</i></p> <p>Take children through the text giving them time out to discuss and find examples of tense, connectives (refer to connectives poster), lists and bullet points, and paragraph headings.</p>	<p>Whole class reading</p> <p>Time out in pairs</p> <p>Teacher modelling listing</p> <p>Explain and demonstrate</p> <p>Time out</p>
<p><b>Independent task</b></p> <p>Make sure general group have copies of Text 2a and supply focus group with simplified Text 2b.</p> <p>Ask children to work in pairs to find and highlight examples of key features. Ask children to annotate, naming the feature they have drawn attention to. Remember to tell class which pairs are going to present their findings.</p>	<p>Text marking</p> <p>Give support to pairs where necessary. An additional adult could support here</p>

**Teaching****Teaching and learning strategies**

Give out Text 3.  
Explain clearly that pupils are looking for mistakes in the structure and language style of the text, **not** factual errors, e.g. not how beliefs have changed.

**Plenary**

Targeted pairs present their findings.

Evaluation

'Audience' checks out their own work.

# The National Literacy Strategy

## Year 5 Booster Units

### Unit 8 Explanatory Text: Time and Space

#### Lesson 2 example

Teaching	Teaching and learning strategies
<p><b>Objectives</b></p> <p>Recap on the idea of Galileo needing a clear explanation of a modern (2001) view of the solar system. Revisit Galileo's letter (Text 1).</p>	<p>Sharing objective to inform children of expectations</p>
<p><b>Shared whole class work</b></p> <p>Give children <i>Fascinating Facts</i> (Text 4). Call on individual children to read one of the facts.</p> <p><b>T:</b> <i>How did you choose which fact to read? Were there any features to guide your reading? What do you notice about these facts?</i></p> <p>They are not organised in a logical sequence. There is no introductory statement.</p> <p><b>T:</b> <i>How can we help the reader? What will we need to do first?</i></p> <p>Organise the material logically. Give the reader a statement to introduce the topic. Decide where our reader might need more information.</p> <p>In pairs, children explore ways of organising the information, linking common themes.</p> <p>Teacher models two or three alternative ways of beginning the explanation, possibly taking and developing ideas from the children to compose an opening statement. (This may require preparation beforehand.)</p>	<p>Whole class shared reading</p> <p>Questioning Invitation to contribute Paired talk</p> <p>Paired investigation Recording on whiteboards or large sheets of paper</p>

**Teaching****Teaching and learning strategies****Independent task**

Recap all key features of explanatory text.  
Outline a writing format on OHP.  
Draw attention to spaces for headline and caption.  
Give children time to write their own clear explanatory text on the 2001 view of the solar system in response to Galileo's request.  
Remind children that the task is not to produce a letter.  
Identify individuals to present to the class.

Whole class recap

**Plenary**

Give children the opportunity to share their work, either with a response partner or with the class.  
Evaluate their explanations in the light of the original purpose.  
Use children's writing to assess their understanding of explanatory text.

Guide self-evaluation



## Text 1

### Galileo's letter

I can arrange key events in a recount in chronological order.

Dear people of the New Millennium,

I, Galileo, in the year of Our Lord 1640, find myself in disagreement with the law of this land and with the people of my time.

My work as an astronomer has led me to understand that our universe does not revolve around the Earth but around Sol, the Sun.

I am now under house arrest for my views and urgently need your help! I am sending you an explanation of the beliefs of my people. With your own knowledge of the universe in your time, I urge you to send me a clear explanation of what the universe is really like.

Galileo

Master Astronomer

## Text 2a

### ***The universe - a modern view 1639***

Our world is positioned in the centre of the universe and is surrounded by a number of heavenly bodies, which are constantly revolving around it.

Although it would appear that the world is flat (and indeed until recently that was the widely held belief) it is, in fact, a spherical object. It remains still, in the middle of the universe, while all the planets move around it.

#### **Sol and its position in the universe**

The Sun is the most important of the planets in that it provides our world with light and warmth. It rises each morning and sets each evening as a result of its never-ending motion around the Earth.

When the Sun moves to the far side of the world, we are then left in darkness. Fortunately however, this is not total, due to the presence of the second most important of the planets - Luna, the Moon.

#### **Luna and its position in the universe**

During the night the Moon sheds its silvery light upon our world before moving around to make way for the Sun and the day once more.

In addition to the Sun and the Moon there are the lesser heavenly bodies - the remaining planets - and, of course, the stars.

#### **The planets of our universe**

The planets are organised as follows:

- Saturn
- Jupiter
- Mars
- Sol (the Sun)
- Venus
- Mercury
- Luna (the Moon)

The stars are set in the heavens to assist the Moon in its task of illuminating the night-time and are therefore very important.

## Text 2b

### ***The universe - a modern view 1639***

Our world is in the centre of the universe and has planets, which are always moving around it.

Although it seems that the world is flat (and indeed this is what used to be believed) it is, in fact, a spherical object. It remains still, in the middle of the universe, while all the planets move around it.

#### **Sol and its position in the universe**

The Sun is the most important of the planets. It gives our world light and warmth. It comes up each morning and goes down each evening because it is always going around the Earth.

When the Sun moves to the other side of the world, we are then left in darkness. It is not totally dark because of Luna, the Moon.

#### **Luna and its position in the universe**

During the night the Moon gives light to our world before the Sun comes up again.

As well as the Sun and the Moon, there are other planets and, of course, the stars.

#### **The planets of our universe**

The planets go in this order:

- Saturn
- Jupiter
- Mars
- Sol (the Sun)
- Venus
- Mercury
- Luna (the Moon)

The stars are in the sky to help the Moon to light up the night-time and so they are very important.

## Text 4

### Fascinating facts about our solar system

