Information report text type examples

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Informational Text Features

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Data Table		
Graph		
Chart		
Caption		
Other:		

ANTARCTICA

Antarctica is the world's fifth largest-continent. it is at the bottom of the earth, in the Frigid Zone.

Climate
The weather on this icy land mass means that it is the windiest, coldest and driest place on earth. The highest temperature Antarctica has reached is -10 degrees Celsius, while the lowest is -89 degrees Celsius. In thinner regions of Antarctica, there are extremely cold temperatures which cause several months of darkness.

Landforms
The Antarctic landform is unique because of its different shapes and sizes which are formed by the wind and waves. Antarctica started to break up during the Triassic period (between 205-240 million years ago).Antarctica used to be apart of a larger land mass called Gondwanaland.

Fauna
There are many varieties of animals, insects, birds and sea creatures in the Antarctic. But very few of them live in Antarctica all year round because of the cold weather conditions.

Flora
Plants do grow in Antarctica but there are very few because of the extremely harsh weather conditions. There are no trees or shrubs growing in Antarctica. There are only 2 types of flowering plants in the Antarctic.

Antarctica is not owned by anyone because no one lives there since it is made up of 70% of the world's fresh water and is uninhabitable.
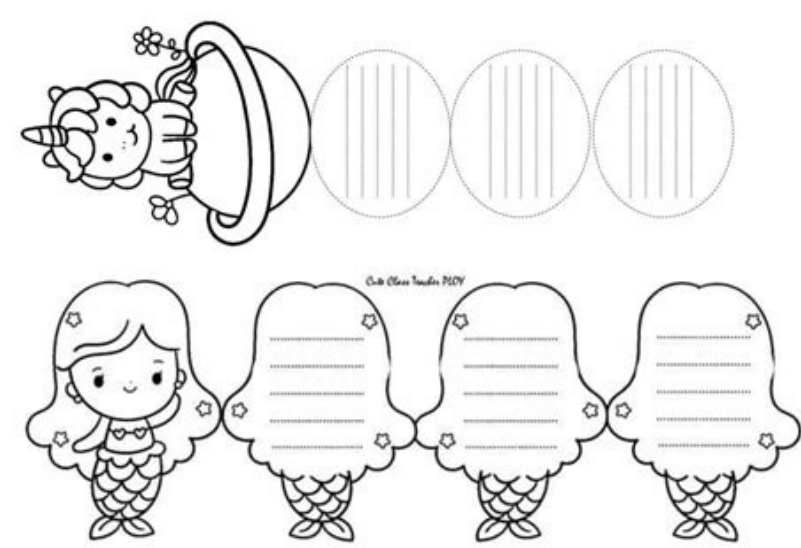
Information report text example. Example of report text type. Information report text type.

It is no surprise that information texts are given a position of primary importance in most English curricula – we are in the information age after all. From the ELA Standards of U.S. Common Core to the Literacy Requirements of the National Curriculum for England, non-fiction genres, in general, are given central positions in our teaching schedules. Acquiring the broad range of skills necessary to produce these texts competently takes time. Let's take a look at the main features and organizational aspects of information reports to help set our students on the path to writing success. Regardless of what genre we aim to teach our students, it is crucial that they develop an awareness of the different approaches required when writing for a variety of purposes. Students need to be able to select the correct tools and structures for the job and this starts with the students defining the text's purpose. Information reports present factual information to inform the reader about a specific topic. Examples of information reports may be found in, encyclopedias, reference books, technical texts, social studies books, science books, magazines, and even internet websites. These may all be classed as forms of information texts. Despite this very broad range, it is useful to describe information reports in relation to a number of common features. These we will explore in this article. WHAT IS AN INFORMATION REPORT? An information report provides readers with information on a chosen topic by providing them with facts. Generally, an information report is written to provide facts about a living or non-living object. It can be an individual object or a group of objects. Some suggestions are. Sea CreaturesThe Bald EagleAircraftThe TitanicRomePollution The challenge in writing a good information report is to provide the audience with plenty of facts and evidence about a topic without providing a personal opinion. If you do include personal opinion, essentially you are writing a persuasive (also known as an expository) text. If you are writing about a class of objects, such as sharks, it is important to highlight the differences and similarities between the objects. Scientific Reports: Usually focuses on describing appearance and behaviour of the subject of your report. Technological Reports: Usually focus on two main categories of information being the components and uses of the technology. Social Studies Reports: Usually focuses on the description of people, places, history, geography, society, culture and economy. RESEARCHING YOUR INFORMATION REPORT Teaching students how to write information reports offers a great opportunity to introduce research skills to your students. For more advanced students, it creates opportunities for them to hone these important skills further. There are also a number of different processes students need to develop to ensure that can filter their research for relevancy and accuracy. Let's take a look at these: If the scope of the topic is not defined precisely, considerable energy can be wasted at the research stage – especially if internet research is undertaken! Undoubtedly, you will know this from your own experience. How many man and woman hours have been wasted as our own research takes us down a pesky internet cul-de-sac! The importance of keywords and subject-specific vocabulary to writing an information report has already been mentioned. However, generating these keywords and phrases is also crucial for the research stage using the internet. Search engines are only as valuable as the terms that are searched. The research process will help students refine and filter the concepts and vocabulary that they will use in the writing of their text. After students have selected their search terms, they will need to look at and evaluate the returned sources. This is best achieved by the teacher going through a variety of example sources and modelling the criteria used to select the most valuable among them. Students are often not required to cite research papers at the school level, etc. But they should begin the process of ranking information in terms of its legitimacy. This is a long-term objective, but the teaching of this genre of writing offers ample opportunities for introducing this complex idea. Teaching this objective may involve lessons on things like distinguishing fact from opinion, how to spot bias, detecting fake news/satire, cross-referencing sources etc. The research stage of writing an information report affords students a valuable opportunity to develop their note-taking skills. The ability to mine information for the key points is an essential skill for a student to develop. Obviously, note-taking is a complex skill and will necessarily be differentiated according to the student's age and abilities. As an information report is a factual piece of writing with a focus on attention to detail, you will need to ensure your students are provided with an opportunity to research their topic. Ensure they are using technical language when required and have a collection of useful facts to include. Research is going to be a significant part of your lesson time, so please ensure you allow this before expecting them to contribute anything worthwhile. Although we strongly encourage the use of visuals, leave this till all writing has been drafted, written and edited. It should support a strong written report first and foremost. Using graphic organizers, planning tools, and writing checklists will greatly assist the planning and editing time. We have an in-depth article on student research strategies for you to explore here. GENERAL FEATURES OF INFORMATION REPORTS Present Tense: Information reports are predominantly written in the present tense. This is because the information presented on the topic will generally be considered static knowledge. However, this is not always the case for all information texts, for example, autobiographies and biographies can be considered as information texts but will more than likely be written in the past tense. For the purposes of this article, however, we will focus on the more formal genres of information texts. Subject Specific Vocabulary: Depending on the topic of the text, vocabulary specific to the subject will normally be used. For example, if the text provides information on an animal, it will likely utilize related words and phrases such as 'habitat', 'species', 'offspring', 'lifespan' etc. A helpful exercise for preparation to write an information report is to have students brainstorm words and phrases related to that topic. This also helps ensure the student covers all relevant related material and helps them organize their material before writing. It will also provide useful search terms for internet researching of the topic and provide some of the vocabulary to be contained in the glossary – more on this later! General Nouns: It is vital for students to realize that they should use general nouns when writing on their topic. The information included in their text should be information that is true generally, and this should be reflected in the use of the generic noun classifying it, for example, Bees collect nectar from flowers. Passive Voice: Information reports are an example of formal non-fiction writing. In common with lots of formal writing, they often apply the passive voice. It is helpful to draw the student's attention to how this differs from other more personal writing genres, such as fiction. When teaching narrative writing, we often encourage, even insist, our students name the doer of the action. In fiction writing, using the passive voice often takes the narrative drive out of a story, leaving it limp and weak in the hands of the reader. This is because the character and narrative voice are of central importance in story writing. This is not the case in information report writing. Here, the passive voice draws attention away from the doer or speaker and brings the attention firmly back to the object itself. For example: "Every year, cars kill thousands of hedgehogs on our roads." Here the active voice is used. Read carefully, we can note a considerable amount of our attention goes to the 'killer' in this sentence, i.e. 'cars'. This brings our attention away from what should be our primary focus, and the topic of the report, 'hedgehogs'. If we instead use the passive voice to convey this information, it would look something like this: "Every year, thousands of hedgehogs are killed on our roads." Now the same information is relayed to the reader while maintaining the focus of the sentence on the subject 'hedgehogs'. A valuable exercise to help students understand the difference between passive and active voices is to give them a list of sentences for them to identify whether the active or passive voice is being used. They can then rewrite active voice sentences as passive voice sentences and vice versa. Information reports are also generally written in the third person for the same reason the passive voice is used. The third-person perspective creates an impersonal tone that maintains a formal tone appropriate to the genre. DIAGRAMS ARE A ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF AN INFORMATION REPORT Visual presentations of the information to support the text, whether in the form of diagrams, photographs, graphs, maps, pictures, or tables, are extremely helpful to the reader. They help the reader to digest large amounts of information quickly. Remember too, that pictures, photographs etc should be labelled with captions explaining what they show. Visual presentations should reinforce points made in the text, often in a condensed way. You may remember flicking through the pages of the World Book Encyclopedia or Encyclopedia Britannica as a child, and even if lacking the necessary literacy skills to actually read the articles, you likely picked up information just by looking at the colourful and well-presented illustrations and tables. Browse any well-developed website, and it will quickly become apparent the central role visual media plays in the sharing of information. Your student's work should be no different in this regard. Depending on the age and ability of your students, they may wish to draw pictures or create graphs using computer software to accompany their text. Fact vs Opinion: As stated, the purpose of information reports is to present factual information on a topic. It is important that students are able to consistently and accurately differentiate between what constitutes fact and what can be considered as opinion. This is not always as straightforward as it may seem and will require some practice on the part of the student. It can be helpful for students to have a number of sessions working on distinguishing fact from opinion prior to writing their information reports. Prepare a set of statements for the students in your class. It may be on the topic they are to write their reports on or on an entirely unrelated topic. There should be a mixture of factual and opinion-based statements. After instructing the students on the differences between facts and opinions, have them go through each statement in their groups and discuss which they believe to be facts and which they believe to be opinions. They then categorize them accordingly. Beyond the writing of information reports, identifying opinions and facts is an invaluable skill to inculcate in our students. You may wish to encourage them to apply it when watching TV news, reading newspapers etc. STRUCTURE OF INFORMATION TEXTS When considering how to organize the structure of an information report, the purpose of the text must be at the forefront of the student's decision-making. The complexity of the textual organization will again depend on the student's grade level and ability, however, the general structure will be as follows: A table of contents should be included for longer information texts. It should outline where specific information can be found in the document or the text. For longer texts, each section should correspond to a page number on the table of contents. For shorter texts, this may be numbered sections instead of page numbers. This will allow the reader to locate specific information that is being searched for without having to read through the whole text. Page numbers can be entered on the table of contents after the text is completed. 2. Introduction As with other writing genres, information texts must first use a hook to grab the reader's attention. This hook may take the form of an interesting fact or statistic, an anecdote or a question etc. Fundamentally, the introduction to the text must orientate the reader to the topic in question. It should outline what the reader can expect to learn within the body of the text. 3. Subheadings The main job of the student when writing an informational text is to organize the information so that the reader can easily understand it. To help the reader achieve this, they need to organize their ideas into paragraphs and to help the reader locate the information on each of these ideas, each paragraph should contain a subheading. These subheadings can also provide titles for the table of contents. Be sure to check out our own complete guide to writing perfect paragraphs and sentence structure. Subheadings are necessary to help your students organize their information by focusing on various aspects of the topic as a whole. For example, if the focus of the information report is an animal, then subsequent subheadings maybe something along the lines of appearance, habitat, diet etc. Each subheading will consist of at least one paragraph that constitutes a separate section in the body of the text. These subheadings often emerge organically as the student undertakes their research before writing. Subheadings may also be accompanied by relevant drawings, maps, tables etc, that summarize the information contained within. The first sentence of each

section should begin with a topic sentence expressing that paragraph's main idea or topic. The following sentence will provide more detail on the topic sentence or main idea. The next sentence can provide an example or evidence regarding the main idea. Have your students practice this paragraph structure: Topic – Detail – Example. 4. Conclusion The closing section of an information report can be used to summarize. The conclusion should focus on what the reader has learned in the text. It may also contain information on links or further reading the reader can undertake to find out more about the topic. For more advanced students, the opportunity to make cross-curricular links to IT skills (for example) can be taken by encouraging students to incorporate hyperlinks to further sources. 5. Glossary The glossary will contain much of the subject-specific vocabulary identified at the prewriting stage. It will contain the words in alphabetical order accompanied by a definition that gives the word context in light of the topic. Some of the contents of the glossary will also be identified by the student reading over the body of the text they have written and selecting words that may pose difficulties for readers or need further contextualization in terms of the topic. Sometimes, it is helpful to use bold fonts to emphasize the words in a text that will be defined in the glossary. This allows the reader to know they can turn to the glossary to find out further information on the definition of this word and its use in context. As with the other sections of an information report, illustrations, tables, and photographs can be used here to visually represent related ideas and concepts and reinforce the definitions provided. And there it is, some meat on the bones of information reports. Choosing topics for your students to write about can be generated either by the interests of students themselves, which can significantly enthuse them, or you can select topics for your students that tie into other areas of their learning thereby killing the proverbial two birds with one stone! It is quite a complex genre but a very important one and it is advised that students are offered ample opportunity to read lots of information reports to internalize these features and structures. The reading of information reports not only helps our students to understand how to write them but also, wonderfully, helps our students learn lots of stuff about lots of things! TIPS FOR WRITING A GREAT INFORMATION REPORT Assume your readers are not as knowledgeable on the topic as you are. This means you will have to briefly explain your topic before getting into the body.Use the correct scientific and technical terms in your report.Find or create some labelled diagrams if possible.Use paragraphs effectively. Each new element of your information report should start with a new paragraph.Information reports are always written in present tense and from a third-person perspective.You may offer some form of question or comment around your findings in the conclusion only. The rest of your report should be constructed purely of facts and evidence. WELL LABELLED IMAGES CAN SAVE YOU A GREAT DEAL OF EXPLAINING AND ENHANCE AN INFORMATION REPORTS VISUAL APPEAL. Be Technical and Descriptive When putting together an information report, you need to know your topic well, so be sure to do your research beforehand. If you were writing an information report on the Titanic, you might need to find out some of the following facts. When & Where was Titanic built?What materials was it made from?Who was the captain, and any other significant people involved?Explain the facts about Titanic's maiden voyage, such as locations and dates.What caused the Titanic to sink (Remember not to share opinions, just facts.)Any critical dates and statistics associated with Titanic. INFORMATION REPORT GRAPHIC ORGANIZER TEMPLATE (USE SLIDER) Information Report Example (Student Writing Samples) Below are a collection of information report examples for students. Click on the image to enlarge and explore them in greater detail. Please take a moment to read the information reports in detail and the teacher and student guides highlighting some of the key elements of information report writing to consider before writing. Please understand these student writing samples are not intended to be perfect examples for each age or grade level but a piece of writing for students and teachers to explore together to critically analyze to improve student writing skills and deepen their understanding of information report writing. We recommend reading the example either a year above or below, as well as the grade you are currently working with, to gain a broader appreciation of this text type. YEAR 3YEAR 4YEAR 6YEAR 7YEAR 8 INFORMATION REPORT WRITING CHECKLIST Does every paragraph include all the needed information? Did you indent every paragraph? Do you have a capital letter and end mark for every sentence? Did you check your paper for accurate spelling? Did you read your paper out loud to someone or have another student read it to make sure it made sense? Did you have the teacher help edit your paper (this is done last)? DOWNLOAD A COMPLETE INFORMATION REPORT WRITING UNIT We pride ourselves on being the web's best resource for teaching students and teachers how to write an information report. We value the fact you have taken the time to read our comprehensive guides to understand the fundamentals of writing skills. We also understand some of you just don't have the luxury of time or the resources to create engaging resources exactly when you need them. If you are time-poor and looking for an in-depth solution that encompasses all of the concepts outlined here I strongly recommend looking at the "Complete information report writing unit". Working in partnership alongside Innovative Teaching Ideas, we confidently recommend this resource as an all-in-one solution to teach how to write an information report. This unit will find over 60 pages of engaging and innovative teaching ideas. INFORMATION REPORT WRITING ANCHOR CHARTS & RUBRIC BUNDLE CLICK TO DOWNLOAD THESE WRITING CHECKLISTS INFORMATION REPORT WRITING VIDEO TUTORIALS The content for this page has been written by Shane Mac Donnchaidh. A former principal of an international school and university English lecturer with 15 years of teaching and administration experience. Shane's latest Book, The Complete Guide to Nonfiction Writing, can be found here. Editing and support for this article have been provided by the literacyideas team.