

Instructional Text Type

Grade: Prep

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In Exploring How Texts Work, Beverly Derewianka describes the curriculum cycle of writing as “building the field”, “modelling the text type”, “joint construction”, and “independent construction”. This process should take approximately five to six weeks. However, the process is not linear, as it’s important to revisit different aspects of the curriculum cycle throughout the process. As we worked through this process with a class of Preps (5-6 year olds), we constantly moved between “building the field”, “modelling the text type”, and “joint construction”. One of our goals was to expose the children to the text type. We stopped at the “joint construction” phase because of the age group. Our final learning engagement was interactive writing.

Building the field:

1. Children will be asked to bring in examples of procedure texts (recipes, game instructions, how-to manuals, etc.) from home. Children will also be encouraged to bring examples in their mother tongues. (*see video*)
 - As children bring in examples, create a “procedure wall”, where a display will be presented.
 - Near the procedure wall, create a reading corner with various procedure texts: cookbooks, guided readers, how-to manuals, DVD’s (how to make a pool), CDs, etc.
2. As part of the class Unit of Inquiry, the children are involved in learning about the process of food production and the changes food goes through. They can practice giving oral recounts of different food processes (eg. how to make a milkshake, turning butter into cream, etc.).
3. In a guided reading session, read “How to Make Blueberry Muffins”.
 - Discuss cooking, experience with following recipes, and the language found in the text.

At this stage, move to modelling the text type and joint construction (#8&9).

4. Introduce Halloween and different symbols (Jack-o-lantern, pumpkins, dressing up, trick or treating, etc.) This is a great way to connect with the Library, and the Librarian can lead this introduction.
5. Play a game of “Simon Says” with the children to practice and reinforce the oral language of procedures/instructions. Pay close attention to prepositions of location (up, down, over, under, etc.), sequencing words (first, next, then, after, etc.) and imperative (command) verbs.
 - If the ESL children need extra reinforcement, the ESL teacher can work with them in a small group. Interactive writing and using realia is a good way to reinforce prepositions of location, sequencing words, and imperative words.
6. Make Jack-o-lanterns with the children (*see video*). To start, it’s important to review shapes (rectangle, triangle, oval, stars) with the children. Give each child one orange oval, one black rectangle, three black triangles, and five black stars. Explain to the

children that they need to listen to a procedure to make something. Give instructions to the children:

- Find the top of the oval
- Find the middle of the oval
- Place the rectangle in the middle on the top
- Glue the rectangle
- Find the middle of the oval
- Place one triangle in the middle of the oval
- Glue the triangle
- Point above the middle triangle
- Move half way across to the right
- Glue one triangle there
- Point above the middle triangle
- Move half way across to the left
- Glue one triangle there
- Find the middle triangle
- Move half way down
- Glue one star there
- Glue two stars in a line on the left
- Glue two stars in a line on the right
- Evaluation: "What do you have?" "What does it look like?"
- Reflection: "Faces" organizer (*see video*).

At this stage, move to modelling the text type and joint construction (#10).

7. "How to clean your teeth" (*see video*). Ask the children to brainstorm what they know about their teeth and cleaning their teeth and record their responses on the board.
 - Ask the children how to clean their teeth and listen to their responses.
 - Show children the poster from "Targeting Text", page 68. Read the poster and have the children point to the pictures.
 - Discuss the action words such as "open", "squeeze", etc. and ask the children in what other contexts they can use these words (eg. "You can open a door or open a can a food.").

At this stage, move to modelling the text type and joint construction (#11-13)

Modelling the text type and joint construction:

8. Share with the children the structure of a procedure. Constant reinforcement and modelling of this language needs to occur. (*see video*)

Structure:

- Goal
 - Equipment
 - Steps
 - Evaluation
9. Ensure that the children are very familiar with the text, "How to Make Blueberry Muffins" and that they understand the structure of a procedure. Using different coloured paper for each section of the structure for a procedure, type the text for "How to Make Blueberry Muffins" on the strips of coloured paper.

- Each child is given a strip with a piece of the text. As a class, reconstruct the text. (*see video*)
- Make blueberry muffins. (*see video*)
- Sequence the pictures of "How to Make Blueberry Muffins"/oral retelling. (*see video*)

At this stage, move back to building the field (#4-6).

10. Use the Jack-o-lantern experience to jointly construct the text, with the teacher acting as scribe. Have the children retell the steps involved in making a Jack-o-lantern (we found their instructions were much better than ours!) and record their responses. Encourage the children to use the language of writing (goal, equipment, steps, evaluation). You could also have the children redo creating a Jack-o-lantern based on their own instructions.

At this stage, move to building the field (#7).

11. As a whole class, reconstruct the text, "How to clean your teeth", using the text and pictures from "Targeting Text", page 68.
12. Give each child a copy of "Putting things in order" from "Targeting Text", page 72. The children have glue and the strips. They need to "read" the strips and put them in the correct order. The children will need a lot of assistance with this learning engagement.
13. Have the children draw a picture of themselves, cleaning their teeth, in their bathroom. (*see video*)

Instructions for interactive writing:

- Please watch the video for an example of how to run an interactive writing session with young writers.
- Our goal in this segment was to work with a small group of children on procedure writing, specifically giving directions.
- As you see in the video, Beth worked with a small group of children and set the activity by having them complete a "mind map" of how to get from their classroom to the pre-school. Beth talked the children through a number of images so that they could imagine how to move from one place to the other. We also used a map to provide a visual stimulus for the children.
- After creating a mental image, the children actually walked from their classroom to the pre-school and stopped to discuss the directions.
- After walking from their classroom to the pre-school, we worked in the group on an interactive writing segment of "How to find a teacher in the pre-school". Because of time constraints, Beth acted as a scribe. If there had been additional time, the interactive writing segment could have run over several lessons.
- The small group then presented their directions to their classmates. Tami-Jo took a few children to the pre-school, following the group's directions.
- We had a class discussion and debrief once the other group returned to the classroom.