Progression in Narrative

Purpose: The purpose of narrative can be defined simply as to tell a story. However, that does not convey the many purposes of stories and the way that they work at different levels. The purpose of a narrator is to make the listener or reader respond in a particular way. Stories are written or told to entertain and enthral an audience. Stories can make us sad, horrify us, make us laugh, make us excited. They create imaginative worlds that can help us understand ourselves and the things around us and take us beyond our own experience. From the earliest times, stories have been a part of the way that people have explained their world, passed on their beliefs and memories and entertained one another.

Narrative is central to learning, especially for young children who develop their understanding through making up stories about what has happened and what might happen. Children use narrative to organise their ideas, structure their thinking and, ultimately, their writing. Telling and writing stories is not simply a set of skills for children to learn, but an essential means for them to express themselves in creative and imaginative ways.

Generic text structure
This can be expressed simply as:
- **opening** that usually includes a setting and introduces characters
- a series of events that **build up**
- **climax** (problem and resolution)
- **conclusion**

Although this structure is evident in many stories, it can be adapted, modified or expanded. Children will hear and read many different stories and will gain an understanding of the

ways that authors vary narrative structure, for example; using time shifts or starting the story with an exciting incident and then 'back-tracking'. They will learn that stories in a particular genre tend to have distinctive structures, e.g. adventure stories often have a series of 'cliff-hangers' before the final resolution. Children's growing awareness of more complex narrative structures in the stories they read or listen to is likely to be ahead of their development as writers. The aim is for them to internalise the basic structure and use it to organise their creative ideas when writing their own, original stories, rather than being constrained by having to imitate a particular style of story.

Language features
These will vary in different narrative genres, but can be summarised as:
- can be presented in oral or written form or with images and words on screen
- told/ written in first or third person
- told/ written in past tense (and occasionally in the present)
- chronological
- main participants are human or animal with contrasting qualities ['good' and 'bad']
- use of typical characters, settings and events (depending on genre)
- connectives that signal time, e.g. *early that morning, later on, once*
- connectives used to shift attention, e.g. *meanwhile, at that very moment*
- connectives used to inject suspense, e.g. *suddenly, without warning*
- connectives to move the setting for episodes, e.g. *on the other side of the forest, back at home*
- dialogue, in differing tenses

- verbs used to describe actions, thoughts and feelings
- language effects used to create impact on reader, e.g. adverbs, adjectives, precise nouns, expressive verbs, metaphors, similes etc.

Knowledge for the writer:
- decide the intended impact of the story on the reader
- plan before writing, be sure of key events and ensure that all the events lead towards the ending
- tell and re-tell the story orally before writing and rehearse sentences orally whilst writing
- try to visualise the story whilst writing
- plan a limited number of characters and describe a few key details that show something about their personalities
- try to show rather than tell, for example, show how a character feels by what they say or do
- use all the senses when imagining and then describing the setting, for example, include the weather, season, time of day
- make use of ideas from reading, for example, using a question to draw the reader in or using repetition to create an effect
- at the end, show how the main character has changed as a result of the narrative
- reread the completed story aloud, for example, to a small group

Progression in poetry

Purpose and audience:

Like many art forms, poetry could be said to have little purpose and yet every culture has song, rhyme or poetry as an essential aspect of its cultural inheritance because it goes to the heart of language, thought and who we are as human beings. Usually poetry matters most to the writer and then the reader. It may be written specifically to entertain but often will be written in order to preserve and celebrate experience. Poetry helps us to create, or recreate, imagined or real experiences that are deeply felt. Reading poems and making our own poems challenges, surprises, enriches and comforts.

Children also soon discover that language has the power to recreate experience. For instance, a young child looking in awe at the moon on a cold December night may find that ordinary language will not sufficiently convey enough of the experience or what was felt - because it merely labels or reports the experience (*I saw the moon. It was fantastic*). In order to capture something of both the experience and what was felt, language has to be used in a different manner (*the moon hung in the dark,/like a bear's silver claw,/ and the stars speckled the night...*). So, poetry helps us to explain ourselves to the world and the world to ourselves – capturing something of the essence of the experience as well as our response. Children should listen to, speak, read and write poetry for a wide range of audiences, varying language features and text structures to suit the audience and purpose.

Structure:

Children should read a rich vein of poetry that includes many different forms and styles. However, mastery of many forms is

highly skilled and young children may find themselves constrained by attempting demanding structures. For instance, reading Charles Causley ballads provides much pleasure but children will find writing in the ballad form too demanding a task except for the most gifted. For writing, the form should not constrain or stultify imagination. Simple structures for writing can act as a coat hanger for the children's own ideas so that their writing is not just a pale imitation but brings into being something new. So, a well-chosen form will release the child from worrying about structure. Form should not interfere but should liberate creativity. By the end of key stage 2, children should have a range of simple forms to draw upon for their own writing.

The key forms for children's writing are:
- collage or list poem
- free verse
- shape poems (free verse in a shape)
- short patterned poems, for example, haiku, cinquain, kennings
- borrow or invent own pattern, for example, pairs of lines
- simple rhyming form, for example, rap

Language Features:
Different poetic forms use different language features. It is important that children do not just recognise language features, such as simile, but also discuss the impact, their response and interpretation. As writers, they should develop a repertoire of stylistic techniques that they can use to create different effects. The progression in poetry identifies different devices such as the use of powerful verbs, alliteration, simile and metaphor. It is important to see this as cumulative so that early techniques are revisited and become part of an increasing, automatic and confident use of language in a child's individual voice.

Key features of poetry include:
- sound effects – repetition, alliteration, onomatopoeia, rhythm, rhyme;
- visual effects – simile (like/as), personification, metaphor;
- selection of powerful nouns, adjectives and verbs;
- surprising word combinations;
- use of repetition and repeated patterns for effect

Knowledge for the writer
Depending on what is being written:
- observe experiences carefully, drawing on your senses
- brainstorm words and ideas
- notice details that illuminate
- use a few words that evoke more than is described
- select powerful words that are linked to the senses, for example *click, crack, greasy, jagged*
- create sound effects and images by using alliteration, similes and metaphors sparingly
- invent new word combinations to surprise the reader, showing something in a new light
- use free verse or a form to capture your ideas
- use the shape upon the page to emphasise words and meaning
- hold the subject in your mind as you write
- draw upon observation, memory and imagination
- try writing very quickly in a focused manner
- use word play for extra impact
- keep re-reading as you write to capture flow and rhythm
- read aloud to hear how it sounds and see how it looks
- be careful when revising so that each word is fresh and each word counts
- revise by adding in and on, trimming, changing words, re-ordering, using stylistic effects, avoiding cliché and over-writing, checking for rhythm and flow

Children write most effectively about subjects that they have experienced and that matter. It is the desire to capture and communicate to a reader or listener **real experience** and **genuine feeling** or to **play with language** that leads to the most powerful writing. An imaginative and interesting starting point is essential, for example:

- a first hand experience – observing butterflies, looking at a candle flame, studying feathers with magnifying glasses;
- objects – skeleton leaves, marbles, hands, trees, watches, a clock, a ship-in-a-bottle;
- art – drawing before writing, postcards/posters of paintings, music, sculptures, film clips, photos, dance;
- locations – churchyard, building site, sea front, deserted house;
- collections – buttons, shoes, stamps, coins, fruit, leaves, pieces of bark;
- a recalled, common experiences – darkness at night, snow falling, bonfire night;
- seasons and weather – wintry days, storms, frost on the window pane, celebrations;
- playful ideas – magical windows, putting on masks, looking through coloured glasses, riddles;
- relationships – things gran says, old people, my mum says, our teacher is, my cat;
- memories – secret places, details, strange events, old dreams, things I used to do;
- feelings –anger, sadness, elation, memorable incidents;
- models – suitable model poems, for example, 'The Magic Box' by Kit Wright, or phrases to stimulate writing, for example, a line from Shakespeare

Progression in discussion texts

Purpose

- To present a reasoned and balanced over-view of an issue or controversy.

Discussion texts (both oral and written) usually involve carefully and strategically selecting and organising information - often as a two or more different 'views' or 'arguments' on an issue, each of which may require elaboration (explanation, evidence and/or examples) – with the specific intention of providing the reader with a reasoned overview. The writer may conclude by presenting his/her own view, or a more objective conclusion, but this will be reasoned on the basis of the balance of available evidence. In this, discussion contrasts with persuasion, which develops only one viewpoint (usually the writer's own) and may or may not be based on genuinely reasoned judgements. Discussion texts generally make use of formal and impersonal language to demonstrate objectivity. They can sometimes combine other modes of communication (e.g. visual images, diagrams) with written text in order to present the range of viewpoints and the evidence for them.

Discussion is not limited to controversial issues – although polarised views may make it easier to teach (e.g. completing a for-and-against 'skeleton' to bring issues from another area of the curriculum into literacy learning). In contrast, critically evaluative responses to a text may lead to a discussion of subtleties within it.

Like all text types, variants of discussion can occur and they can be combined with other text types. Discussion is not always necessarily a distinct text-type in its own right; elements of

discussion writing can be found in many different texts, both on paper or on screen.

Audience

Children should listen to, speak, read and write explanation texts for a wide range of audiences, varying language features and text structures to suit the audience and purpose.

Generic text structure

The structure of a discussion text is often (but not always):
- statement of the issues plus a preview of the main arguments
- arguments for, plus supporting evidence
- arguments against [or alternative view(s)], plus supporting evidence [a variant would be arguments and counter-arguments presented alternatively, one point at a time]
- recommendation – summary and conclusion

Language features

The language features of a discussion text are often (but not always):
- written in simple present tense
- focused mainly on generic human (or non-human) participants using uncountable nouns, for example, *some*, *most*, category nouns, e.g. *vehicles*, *pollution* (nominalisation), *power* (abstract)
- constructed using logical, connectives, for example, *therefore*, *however*
- a movement usually from the generic to the specific: *hunters' agree….. Mr. Smith, who has hunted for many years…..*

Knowledge for the writer

- you can turn the title into a question: *Should we hunt whales?*
- open by introducing the reader to the discussion – you may need to add why you are debating the issue
- try to see the argument from both sides
- make views sound more reasonable through use of modal verbs and words such as *often*, *usually*
- support views with reasons and evidence
- in your conclusion you must give reasons for what you decide
- if you are trying to present a balanced viewpoint, check you have been fair to both sides
- recognise that discussion texts can be adapted or combined with other text types depending on the audience and purpose

Progression in explanatory texts

Purpose

- To explain the processes involved in natural and social phenomena, or to explain how something works.

Explanation text is generally one in which a process is being explained, not just described. An explanation generally answers 'how' or 'why' questions and includes causes, motives or reasons. The verb 'explained', however, is often loosely used to mean 'report', for example, 'Explain what you did' generally means 'tell me or describe what you did' and may not have any reasons attached to it. The verb 'explain' is also used in place of 'define' so dictionary definitions are sometimes inaccurately categorised as explanation texts. (However, children's dictionaries are often a hybrid between a dictionary and an encyclopaedia so could reasonably be consulted for an explanation.)

Like all text types, variants of explanatory texts can occur and they can be combined with other text types.

Audience

Children should listen to, speak, read and write explanation texts for a wide range of audiences, varying language features and text structures to suit the audience and purpose.

Generic text structure

The structure of an explanation text is often (but not always):
- a general statement to introduce the topic, for example, *in the autumn some birds migrate*

- a series of logical steps explaining how or why something occurs, for example *because hours of daylight shorten…*
- steps continue until the final state is produced or the explanation is complete

Language features

The language features of an explanation text are often (but not always):
- written in simple present tense, for example, *many birds fly south*
- use connectives that signal time, for example, *then*, *next*, *several months later*
- use causal connectives, for example *because*, *so*, *this causes*

Knowledge for the writer

- decide whether diagrams, charts, illustrations or a flow chart would help to explain
- use a title that shows what you are writing about
- using how or why in the title helps. Try to make the title intrigue the reader, for example, *Why do sloths hang about?*
- use the first paragraph to introduce your subject to the reader
- organise the writing and illustrations to explain: what you need, how it works, why it works (cause and effect), when and where it works, and what it is used for
- add in extra, interesting information
- try to end by relating the subject to the reader
- if you use specialised terminology, a glossary may be needed

- interest the reader with exclamation, for example *Beware – whirlwinds can kill!* Or use questions: *Did you know that...?*
- draw the reader in, for example *strange as it may seem...*; *not many people know that...*,etc
- re-read your explanation, pretending to know nothing about the subject – is it clear?
- recognise that explanation texts can be adapted or combined with other text types depending on the audience and purpose

Progression is achieved through

- speaking and listening preceding reading and writing
- teacher modelling and scribing preceding children's independent attempt
- increased understanding by the children of the form and features of the text type
- increasing complexity, such as length, obscurity of task, additional features such as diagrams

Progression in instructional/procedural texts

Purpose:
Instructions, rules and procedures aim to ensure something is done correctly and a successful outcome achieved. If there is a process to be undertaken this is given in the order in which in needs to be undertaken to achieve a successful outcome - usually a series of sequenced steps.
Like all text types, variants of instructions can occur (they may for example be pictorial rather than text based) and they can be combined with other text types. Instructions are found in all areas of the curriculum but are found particularly in subjects such as ICT and Design and Technology.

Audience:

Children should listen to, speak, read and write instructional/procedural texts for a wide range of audiences, varying language features and text structures to suit the audience and purpose.

Generic text structure:

The structure of an instruction text is often (but not always):

- goal – a statement of what is to be achieved, e.g. how to make a sponge cake

- materials/equipment needed, listed in order, e.g. 2 eggs, flour

- sequenced steps to achieve the goal, e.g. cream the sugar and butter.

- often diagrams or illustrations

Language features:

The language features of an instruction text are often (but not always):

- written in the imperative, e.g. sift the flour or 2nd person e.g first you put …

- in chronological order, e.g. first, next

- use of numbers, alphabet or bullet points and colour to signal order

- use of adverbs and adjectives for precision – e.g measure carefully

- focus on the generalised human agents rather than named individuals.

Knowledge for the writer:

- Before writing instructions be clear about what is needed and what has to be done, in what order.

- Think about your readers. You will need to be very clear about what to do or they will be muddled – if they are young, you may have to avoid technical language or use simple diagrams.

- The title should explain what the instructions are about – using how to…helps, e.g. How to play cricket.

- In your querying you may need to say when the instructions are needed, e.g. If your computer breaks down…, or for whom it is best suited, e.g. Young children may enjoy this game….

- Use bullet points, numbers or letters to help the reader.

- Use short clear sentences so the reader does not become muddled.

- Pictures and diagrams may be helpful - both to show the process and to demonstrate the final outcome.

- Use the end statements to wrap up the writing – evaluate how useful or how much fun this will be.

- Make your writing friendlier by using you, or more formal by just giving orders.
- Use adjectives and adverbs only when needed.
- Tantalise the reader, e.g. Have you ever been bored – well this game will….
- Draw the reader in with some 'selling points', e.g. This is a game everyone loves….
- Make instructions sound easy, e.g. You are only four simple steps away….
- Finally, ask yourself whether someone who knows nothing about this could successfully use your instructions.
- Recognise that instruction texts can be adapted or combined with other text types depending on the audience and purpose.

Progression:

Instructional texts are suitable for young children because:

- they need to be able to follow verbal instructions
- a single instruction is an ideal length for early reading and writing
- even a series of instructions comprises a short text
- they relate to young children's experiences
- creating instructions encourages logical thinking

However, 'reading and following instructions' is an important workplace skill. Writing clear instructions can also be very complex (and is often done badly, as shown by some DIY manuals). Therefore the progression of this text type continues into the secondary phase.

-

Progression in non-chronological report

Purpose: report texts describe the way things are. They help readers understand and envisage the item/s being described by categorising information, for example under appearance, climate. They usually therefore have a logical structure rather than a temporal structure i.e. they are non-chronological. Reports are used to create precise and detailed information 'pictures'. Most reports aim to be objective but the selection of information included in a report can create bias.

Like all text types, variants of reports can occur and they can be combined with other text types. Reports are found in all areas of the curriculum but are found particularly in subjects such as science and geography.

Audience
Children should listen to, speak, read and write explanation texts for a wide range of audiences, varying language features and text structures to suit the audience and purpose.

Generic text structure
The structure of a report text is often (but not always):
- an opening, general classification, for example *sparrows are birds*
- more technical classification (optional), for example *their Latin name is...*
- a description of the phenomenon, including some or all of its:
  –qualities, e.g. *birds have feathers*
  –parts and their function, for example, *The beak is...*
  –habits/behaviour or uses, for example, *They nest in...*

Language features
The language features of a report text are often (but not always):

- written in the third person, present tense, for example. *they nest*
- non-chronological
- written to include passive voice
- focused on generic subjects: *sparrows in general, not Sam the sparrow*
- descriptive language, including the language of comparison and contrast , for precision, not to create an effect or emotion

Knowledge for the writer
- plan under paragraph headings in note form (spidergram or a grid)
- use a range of resources to gather information
- select facts from a range of sources to interest the reader, e.g. books, CD-ROM
- possible use of a question in the title to intrigue the reader, e.g. Yetis – do they exist?
- be clear, so that you do not muddle the reader
- open by explaining very clearly what you are writing about – take an angle to draw the reader in
- use tables, pictures, diagrams to add more information
- possibly end by relating the subject to the reader, for example, Many people like whales…
- reports are factual but you could add comments or use questions to draw in the reader
- reread as if you knew nothing about the subject to check that you have put the information across successfully
- Recognise that discussion texts can be adapted or combined with other text types depending on the audience and purpose

Progression in persuasion texts

Purpose
- to argue a case from a particular point of view
- to attempt to convince the reader/listener

Persuasive texts (both oral and written) usually involve carefully and strategically, selecting and organising information – often as a series of major points, each of which may require elaboration (explanation, evidence and/or examples) – and have the specific intention of encouraging the reader into a particular way of seeing or understanding things. This intention may, however, sometimes be covert. Such texts generally make use of devices like vocabulary choice, rhetorical questions and even simple psychology in order to influence the reader (e.g. *Any sensible person can see that…*).They often also combine other modes of communication (e.g. visual images) with written text in order to achieve the desired effect on their audience.

Like all text types, variants of persuasion can occur and they can be combined with other text types. Persuasion is not always necessarily a distinct text-type in its own right, and elements of persuasive writing can be found in many different texts, both on paper or on screen.

Audience
Children should listen to, speak, read and write explanation texts for a wide range of audiences, varying language features and text structures to suit the audience and purpose.

Generic text structure
The structure of a persuasive text is often (but not always):
- thesis – an opening statement, for example, *vegetables are good for you*

- arguments: often in the form of point plus elaboration, for example, *they contain vitamins. vitamin c is vital for…*
- reiteration: summary and re-statement of the opening position, for example *We have seen that… so …*

Language features
The language features of a persuasive text are often (but not always):
- written in simple present tense
- focus mainly on generic participants, for example, vegetable, not a particular vegetable
- mainly logical connectives, rather than connectives which signal time, for example *this shows, however, because*
- a movement usually from the generic to the specific

Knowledge for the writer
- use good reasons and evidence to convince your reader
- use facts rather than just persuasive comments
- you may wish to counter arguments
- try to get the reader interested and on your side – appear reasonable!
- tantalise your reader so that they agree with you
- use strong, positive language
- short sentences can help to give emphasis
- make the reader think that everyone else does this, agrees or that it will make them a happier, better person, for example *Everyone agrees that… We all know that…*
- draw the reader in, e.g. *At long last… The x have been waiting for you*
- be informative, persuasive and sound friendly
- alliteration can help to make slogans more memorable, e.g. *Buy British Beef*
- use humour as it can get people on your side

- a picture that tugs at the heart-strings can be more effective than 1,000 words..
- reread and decide whether you would be persuaded
- recognise that persuasive texts can be adapted or combined with other text types depending on the audience and purpose

Progression is achieved through
- speaking and listening preceding reading and writing
- teacher modelling and scribing preceding children's independent attempt
- increased understanding by the children of the form and features of persuasive writing and then increasing ability to manipulate elements of writing to persuade others
- increasing complexity, subtlety, challenge of task (persuading a reader to change their mind), and/or adding additional features such as multi-modal elements (visual images, video, vox clips, etc.)
- increasing ability to recognise persuasion and understand the persuasive devices used   in the writing of others; in their own writing to persuade effectively as appropriate to their purpose and audience.

Progression in recount

Purpose
Recounts (or accounts as they are sometimes called) are the most common kind of texts we encounter and create. Their primary purpose is to retell events. They are the basic form of many story telling texts and in non-fiction texts they are used to create factual accounts of events (either current or historical). Recounts can entertain and/or inform.

Like all text types, variants of recounts can occur and they can be combined with other text types. For example, newspaper 'reports' on an event often consist of a recount of the event plus elements of explanation or other text types.

Audience
Children should listen to, speak, read and write recount texts for a wide range of audiences, varying language features and text structures to suit the audience and purpose.

Generic text structure
The structure of a recount text is often (but not always):
- orientation – scene setting opening, for example, *I went to the shop...*
- events – recount of the events as they occurred, for example, *I saw a vase...* these events may be elaborated on by adding, for example, descriptive details
- reorientation – a closing statement: *When I got back, I told my mum* (with elaboration in more sophisticated texts)

Language features
The language features of a recount text are often (but not always):
- written in the past tense, e.g. I went
- in chronological order, using connectives that signal time, for example, then, next, after, meanwhile
- focused on individual or group participants, for example, in first person: I, we, or third person: he, she, they

Knowledge for the writer
- details are vital to bring incidents alive
- use specific names of people, places, objects, etc
- pick out incidents that will amuse, interest or that in some way are significant
- you can write as if you were 'telling the story' of what happened
- plan by thinking, noting or drawing — when? who? where? what? and why? Use a time-line to plan the sequence
- end by summarising and/or commenting on events
- recognise that recount texts can be adapted or combined with other text types depending on the audience and purpose

Progression in recount texts
Recounting or retelling personal events is fundamental to young children's lives. The readiness and ease with which they do it orally makes it an obvious starting point for developing writing. In fact, for most children, sharing each other's personal recounts and writing them down probably precedes their reading many of them. Personal recount is an early text for children to write but it branches into many forms in upper KS2. Opportunities to listen to, speak, read and write recount texts occur in all areas of the curriculum.