

## 2.1: Recognizing academic style

### Teacher's notes

#### Background

One of the key features of academic style is the use of noun phrases to refer to complex ideas, events and processes. Students need to be able to identify the boundaries of noun phrases in academic texts in order to be able to understand the ideas they contain. This task assumes that students are able to identify the main verbs in a sentence.

#### Aims

- to understand which features of style make a text academic
- to identify complex noun phrases in academic texts
- to identify the components of complex noun phrases

#### Material

Tasksheet containing two short texts about using a hobby to start a business. One is written in an academic style and one is written in a style more suitable for a magazine article.

#### Procedure

- 1 Ask students if they have ever considered starting their own business. Where did the idea for the business come from? If no one volunteers hobbies, you can suggest this yourself.
- 2 Students read the two texts and decide which one is more academic in style. Text 1 is the academic text. Students should provide evidence for their choice by identifying features which make the texts academic or non-academic – for example, the use of noun phrases to carry the main information in Text 1, or the use of personal pronouns in Text 2. Point out the simple sentence structure in Text 1. All the complexity is in the noun phrases.
- 3 Students find and highlight the main verbs in Text 1. They then identify the noun phrases which follow these verbs (i.e., their objects or complements, but it is not necessary to use these terms) and write them in the table, treating the noun phrases joined by *and* in the final two sentences as separate phrases. You can support this process by asking questions such as *Hobbies are what? Disadvantages include what and what?* From the table, guide students to identify the basic structure of noun phrases, which contain some or all of the following elements:  
determiner + adjective (noun) + noun + prepositional phrase + relative clause

#### Follow-up

Students try producing their own long noun phrases, starting with a controlling noun, and adding adjectives or nouns to the beginning, and prepositional phrases or relative clauses to the end. This can be done as a competition to produce the longest accurate noun phrase.

Students carry out similar tasks with any authentic texts they are reading. They can decide how academic the text is by looking specifically for complex noun phrases within simple sentences.

## KEY

Text 1 has the more academic style. The sentences begin with ideas (*hobbies, advantages, disadvantages*). Most of the information in the text is in noun phrases, and the sentence structure is very simple: The advantages are x and w; the disadvantages include y and z, where w, x, y and z are complex noun phrases.

Text 2 has a style similar to a magazine article. The sentences begin with people (*you*), linking words (*if, when*) or empty subjects (*there*). The verbs carry some of the information and the sentence structure contains subordinate clauses, indicating time (when it was your hobby) and condition (if you are looking ... if you decide ...).

The main verbs in Text 1 are underlined below. They are all lexically empty and are used to link the ideas contained in the noun phrases. The function of the text is describing.

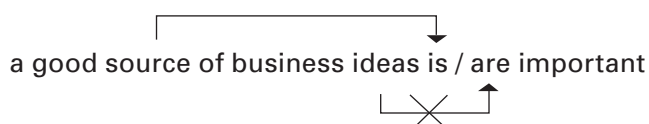
Hobbies are one source of business ideas. Crafts and unusual hobbies may well have commercial potential. The advantages of turning a hobby into a business are the degree to which one is already motivated and knowledgeable about the area and the possibility that it might make a very agreeable occupation. Disadvantages include ignorance about the market for the product or service and the loss of the relaxation enjoyed when the interest was only a hobby.

The noun phrase which follows each underlined verb is shown in the table together with the controlling noun.

Verb	Noun phrase	Controlling noun
are	one source of business ideas	source
may ... have	commercial potential	potential
are	the degree to which one is already motivated and knowledgeable about the area	degree
(and)	the possibility that it might make a very agreeable occupation	possibility
include	ignorance about the market for the product or service	ignorance
(and)	the loss of the relaxation enjoyed when the interest was only a hobby	loss

In each case, the controlling noun is a general noun which requires more specific details to understand what it refers to. These are provided in the other parts of the noun phrase.

Students may be tempted to identify nouns which carry these specific details, e.g., *business ideas* and *relaxation* as controlling nouns in the noun phrases. You can demonstrate how the noun phrase could function as a subject, and show which noun determines the form of a main verb using the following diagram:



These noun phrases contain

determiners:	<i>one, the</i>
adjectives:	<i>commercial, motivated, knowledgeable, agreeable</i>
prepositional phrases:	<i>of business ideas, about the area, about the market, for the product or service, of the relaxation enjoyed ...</i>
relative clauses:	<i>to which one is already motivated, [which was] enjoyed when the interest was only a hobby</i>

in the following framework:

determiner + adjective (noun) + noun + prepositional phrase + relative clause

Noun phrases may contain any or all of these elements, and there can be more than one prepositional phrase or relative clause, in any order. The following are all examples of noun phrases:

*computers*  
*these advantages*  
*vast sums of money*  
*an immense amount of detailed information*  
*fifth generation mobile phone technology*  
*the extent to which computers have changed the face of business*

## Tasksheet: Recognizing academic style

Look at the following two texts and decide which style seems more academic.

**Hint:** Which text seems to talk about ideas and which talks about people?

### Text 1

Hobbies are one source of business ideas. Crafts and unusual hobbies may well have commercial potential. The advantages of turning a hobby into a business are the degree to which one is already motivated and knowledgeable about the area and the possibility that it might make a very agreeable occupation. Disadvantages include ignorance about the market for the product or service and the loss of the relaxation enjoyed when the interest was only a hobby.

### Text 2

If you are looking for a business idea, think about your hobbies. You might be able to use an unusual hobby to start your business. There are several advantages if you decide to turn your hobby into a business. You probably already know about the area and find it motivating. You might also find the work very agreeable. However, there are some disadvantages. When it was your hobby, you didn't need to know anything about the market for your product or service. If it becomes your work, you might no longer enjoy the activity and find it relaxing.

### Identifying noun phrases

In Text 1, underline the main verbs in the paragraph. In the table below, write the noun phrase which follows each main verb. When two noun phrases follow the verb, write them in separate rows.

Verb	Noun phrase	Controlling noun
are		
may ... have		
are		
(and)		
include		
(and)		

For each noun phrase in the table, find one noun that seems to be the most important for the grammar of its sentence. Write this noun in the column on the right side of the table.

Can you make any generalizations about the composition of noun phrases in English? For example, which word classes do noun phrases contain?

## 2.2: Controlling nouns in noun phrases

### Teacher's notes

#### Background

Once students can recognize the boundaries of noun phrases in texts and identify their basic structure (Classroom materials 2.1), they need to be able to recognize the way these noun phrases fit into sentences in the text. Students can look more closely at the function of the controlling noun, i.e., the main noun in the noun phrase. In particular, they should consider noun phrases which have two nouns linked by the preposition *of*. This task assumes that students understand that subjects agree with verbs in a sentence.

#### Aims

- to understand how complex noun phrases are used in sentences
- to consider, in particular, the form *general noun + of + specific noun*

#### Material

Examples of long noun phrases in sentences, particularly those which contain the form *general noun + of + specific noun*. Additional practice tasks can be produced using noun phrases from texts students are reading.

Tasksheet: Controlling nouns in noun phrases

#### Procedure

- 1 Remind students of the basic structure of noun phrases. Students read the introduction on the tasksheet and study the examples which show subject–verb agreement.
- 2 Students choose which of two alternative verb forms agrees with the highlighted controlling noun. The exercises become progressively more difficult. Students have to determine which noun controls the noun phrase in the sentence and then choose the correct verb, or supply the correct form of the verb themselves.

#### Follow-up

Students think about the difference between their own language and English in this area of grammar. You can ask students to translate some of the noun phrases into their first language and ‘back translate’ (i.e., provide a word-by-word translation back into English) in order to compare the organization and order of elements.

Before students begin a piece of writing they can do some pre-writing activities in which they identify noun phrases they will need to use and attempt to write these accurately.

#### KEY

The correct verb to follow the noun phrase is circled.

- 1 Vast **sums** of money was / were spent on the new football stadium.
- 2 A **series** of relatively simple steps is / are needed to send an email.
- 3 A smaller **number** of students in the classroom seems / seem to translate into less noise and disruptive behaviour.

- 4 Smaller **classes** at junior school means /mean/ that the teacher can give more individual attention.
- 5 A **pattern** of light and movement appears/ appear on the monitor screen.
- 6 Every day a **sample** of trainersis/ are tested by the Quality Control Department.

The controlling nouns are highlighted. The correct verb is circled.

- 1 A **series** of advertisements was/ were run on TV to promote the new product.
- 2 Only the smallest possible **amounts** of stock is /are kept at the factories.
- 3 In a cellular production system, the **stages** in assembling a car is /are carried out by a **group** of workers **which** is/ are called a cell.
- 4 Any **problems** in the manufacturing process becomes /become obvious if there is a good Quality Control Department.
- 5 The **benefits** of reduced class size depends on /depend on whether teachers adapt their methods to take advantage of smaller classes.
- 6 The **findings** of an investigation into the effectiveness of pre-university language courses is /are reported in this paper.

The controlling nouns are highlighted and the correct verb is given in the gap.

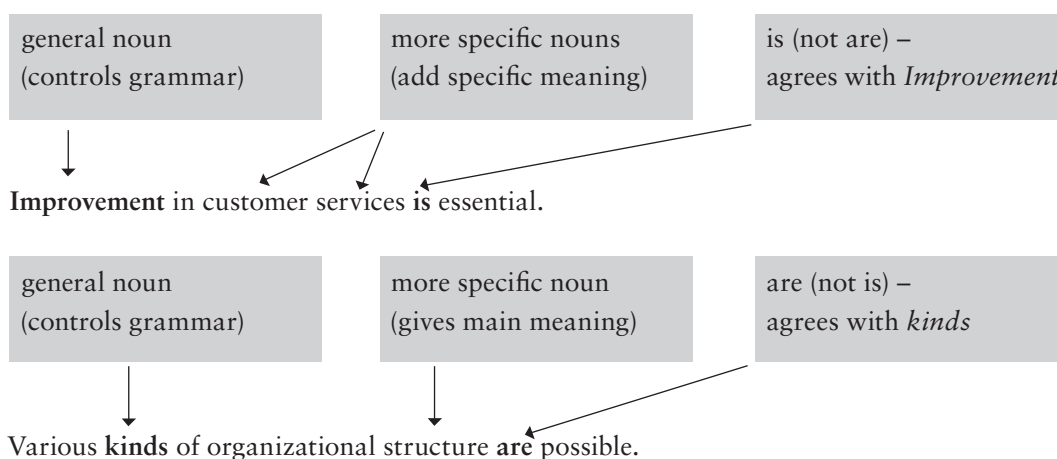
- 1 The **extent** to which **computers** have changed modern societies is phenomenal.
- 2 The **improvement** in customer services that technology can deliver makes it an essential investment.
- 3 The **importance** of comparing companies operating in similar business activities has already been mentioned.
- 4 In recent years, the **improvement** in telephone **services** which are available to the general public has been extraordinary.
- 5 The principal **medium** of teaching which modern universities and other institutions of learning still employ remains the lecture.

## Tasksheet: Controlling nouns in noun phrases

### The controlling noun

Noun phrases can be used just like nouns to name things, people, events, processes and ideas in subjects or complements of sentences or phrases. A noun phrase always contains one controlling noun.

These nouns control the verbs which follow them because the verbs which follow the noun have to agree with the noun. You need to be able to recognize the controlling noun so that you can choose the correct form of the verb which follows it.



### Choosing verbs which agree with the controlling noun

In the sentences below, the controlling noun has been highlighted in each noun phrase. Choose the correct verb to follow the noun phrase.

- 1 Vast **sums** of money was / were spent on the new football stadium.
- 2 A **series** of relatively simple steps is / are needed to send an email.
- 3 A smaller **number** of students in the classroom seems / seem to translate into less noise and disruptive behaviour.
- 4 Smaller **classes** at junior school means / mean that the teacher can give more individual attention.
- 5 A **pattern** of light and movement appears / appear on the monitor screen.
- 6 Every day a **sample** of trainers is / are tested by the Quality Control Department.

This time the controlling nouns have not been highlighted. You have to decide which the controlling noun is and choose the correct verb to follow the noun phrase.

- 1 A series of advertisements was / were run on TV to promote the new product.
- 2 Only the smallest possible amounts of stock is / are kept at the factories.
- 3 In a cellular production system, the stages in assembling a car is / are carried out by a group of workers which is / are called a *cell*.

- 4 Any problems in the manufacturing process becomes / become obvious if there is a good Quality Control Department.
- 5 The benefits of reduced class size depends on / depend on whether teachers adapt their methods to take advantage of smaller classes.
- 6 The findings of an investigation into the effectiveness of pre-university language courses is / are reported in this paper.

Pay attention to the relative clauses in some of the following sentences. Write the correct form of the verb (in brackets) to agree with the controlling noun.

- 1 The extent to which computers \_\_\_\_\_ changed modern societies \_\_\_\_\_ phenomenal. (have / be)
- 2 The improvement in customer services that technology can deliver \_\_\_\_\_ it an essential investment. (make)
- 3 The importance of comparing companies operating in similar business activities \_\_\_\_\_ already been mentioned. (have)
- 4 In recent years, the improvement in telephone services which \_\_\_\_\_ available to the general public \_\_\_\_\_ been extraordinary. (be / have)
- 5 The principal medium of teaching which modern universities and other institutions of learning still employ \_\_\_\_\_ the lecture. (remain)

Think about your own language:

- How are noun phrases constructed in your language?
- Is it the same as in English or different?



## 2.3: Identifying general nouns

### Teacher's notes

#### Background

General nouns such as *activity, approach, issue, problem, solution* are empty lexical items which rely on their context to specify what they refer to. The puzzle in this task raises students' awareness of the non-specific nature of noun phrases which contain only general nouns, and forms an introduction to the role of general nouns in texts. This task assumes that students understand how to write a description of a process and the structure of noun phrases, including those with the following structure: *general noun + such as + specific examples*.

#### Aims

- to raise awareness of the existence of lexically empty nouns
- to practise specifying more precisely what noun phrases refer to

#### Material

Tasksheet containing a constructed text which describes the process of doing a common household task. The text is deliberately vague to demonstrate the lexically empty nature of general nouns.

#### Procedure

- 1 Ask students which household tasks they like doing, and which ones they would rather not do.
- 2 Students read the text and try to guess which household task is being described. They can use the stages of the process to help them to do this. You can supply the answer at this stage if they cannot guess.
- 3 Students highlight the general nouns in the text which require more specific details if the reader is to understand the text.  
Students write a longer noun phrase, for each general noun, which will make the text easier to understand. You should point out that this results in some noun phrases which seem unnatural, and indicate alternative forms.

#### Follow-up

This task forms an introduction to Classroom materials 2.4, *The role of general nouns*. Following this, students should look at Classroom materials 2.5, *Topic development*, Classroom materials 2.6, *Information flow*, and Classroom materials 2.7, *Summarizing noun phrases*, in order to understand how general nouns contribute to the logical development of topics in texts.

## KEY

The text is about washing dishes. The general nouns are underlined in the text.

### Washing dishes

This task is usually carried out three times a day. The process is simple but time consuming and often interferes with other more enjoyable activities. The items to be processed are collected and roughly sorted. Small items are usually dealt with first and larger items are left until the end. The degree of difficulty of the task depends on the facilities available. If the facilities are very basic, then each item must be handled separately in two different stages. If sophisticated equipment is available then the process simply consists of transferring the items to a machine, initiating a cycle and unloading the machine at the end of the cycle.

The general nouns, *task*, *process*, *activities*, *items*, *facilities*, *stages*, *equipment*, *machine* and *cycle* could be expanded as follows. Note that there will be more than one correct answer.

- 1 the task of washing dishes [This expansion results in a somewhat inauthentic noun phrase – you can point this out to students. We would normally just say *washing dishes*, without using a general noun.]
- 2 the process of washing dishes [Note that noun phrases for process often contain verbal nouns, e.g., *washing*, which denote an ongoing action rather than a completed action.]
- 3 more enjoyable activities such as meeting friends, reading or watching TV
- 4 items of cutlery and crockery [Note that students might not know *cutlery* and *crockery*, but they form quite strong collocations with *item* in this noun phrase, and should not be substituted with less frequent collocations, e.g., *items of china*.]
- 5 small items such as glasses or plates
- 6 larger items such as pots and pans
- 7 facilities for washing dishes
- 8 stages in the dishwashing process
- 9 equipment which is necessary for washing dishes
- 10 machine for washing dishes / dishwashing machine [The second noun phrase is an example of a ‘reduced’ noun phrase – a more compact form.]
- 11 cycle which the dishwashing machine goes through (to wash the dishes)

## Tasksheet: Identifying general nouns

Here is a description of household task that no one likes. Can you guess what it is? Write your answer as a noun phrase which could be used as the heading for the paragraph.

This task is usually carried out three times a day. The process is simple but time consuming and often interferes with other more enjoyable activities. The items to be processed are collected and roughly sorted. Small pieces are usually dealt with first and larger items are left until the end. The degree of difficulty of the task depends on the facilities available. If the facilities are very basic, then each item must be handled separately in two different stages. If sophisticated equipment is available then the process simply consists of transferring the items to a machine, initiating a cycle and unloading the machine at the end of the cycle.

Highlight the general nouns in the text which would need to be explained more specifically to make this paragraph easier to understand.

For each general noun you highlighted, write a longer noun phrase, adding specific details to make the meaning of the phrase clear.

## 2.4: The role of general nouns

### Teacher's notes

#### Background

General nouns such as *activity, approach, issue, problem, solution* are empty lexical items which rely on their context to specify what they refer to. They are often found in noun phrases which summarize information that has appeared previously in a text, or which advertise what is coming next. They can give a very brief summary because they classify the person or thing or event or idea described in more detail in previous or following sentences. They also show the reader how the writer intends the information to be viewed. This task assumes that students understand the concept of classification, and the way in which classifying general nouns can be used to label previous or subsequent ideas.

#### Aims

- to raise awareness of the use of general nouns to label ideas in other parts of a text
- to notice how writers can use these general nouns to show their viewpoint in a text

#### Material

Tasksheet containing a constructed text about the activities of a company, Bettaworld

#### Procedure

- 1 Remind students of the way in which a general noun can classify a list of specific people or things or events or ideas. Some simple examples are:
  - activities such as cycling, walking and swimming
  - countries such as Britain, Australia and New Zealand
  - subjects such as Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics
- 2 Students read the text about Bettaworld and identify general nouns which label information in other parts of the text by classifying it. They decide if the general noun summarizes information from earlier in the text, or advertises something that comes next. They highlight the information each noun refers to and transfer this to a table.
- 3 Students decide if the writer views the information as positive or negative or neutral, and note this in the final column of the table.
- 4 You can guide students to notice the use of the demonstrative pronoun *This* in the last sentence of the text. It is not very clear what this pronoun refers to, and the writer could make it clearer by adding a general noun which points more precisely to previous information.

#### Follow-up

Students can do similar exercises with authentic texts they have been reading, in which they identify noun phrases, the information they summarize or advertise, and whether they show the writer's stance. They can also practise adding general nouns to their own texts, in appropriate places, in order to make the links between ideas more explicit and to show their viewpoint.

## KEY

The noun phrases with general nouns which classify are highlighted, and information they summarize (S) or advertise (A) is underlined. The completed table is shown below the text.

Bettaworld is a very profitable and competitive company. Its success has led to the company creating new departments and taking on large numbers of new managers and office staff. At first, this expansion led to difficulties in communication between the larger departments and their managers. In order to solve this problem, the company introduced new ways of working. Departments were reorganized into project-based teams and communications were improved by supplying staff with individual computers and telephone lines. The company had to borrow large amounts of capital to finance this equipment and the staff training needed to make these changes. However, the investment was well worthwhile because it resulted in significant improvements, both in customer service and staff satisfaction. This increased the company's profits to an even higher level.

Noun phrase	S or A	Information summarized or advertised	Writer view
Its success	S	a very profitable and competitive company	positive
this expansion	S	creating new departments and taking on large numbers of new managers and office staff	neutral
this problem	S	difficulties in communication	negative
new ways of working	A	Departments were reorganized into project-based teams and communications were improved	neutral
this equipment	S	computers and telephone lines	neutral
these changes	S	Departments were reorganized into project-based teams and communications were improved	neutral
the investment	S	borrow large amounts of capital	positive
significant improvements	A	in customer service and staff satisfaction	positive

*This* refers to both the changes and the investment described in the paragraph. It would be clearer if a noun phrase such as *These developments* was used instead.

# Tasksheet: The role of general nouns

Find the general nouns which classify in the text, and write them in the table below.

For each of these nouns, decide whether it summarizes information earlier in the text, or advertises what is coming next. Write S or A in the second column of the table.

Underline the information in the text which these nouns summarize or advertise, and write it in the third column of the table.

For each of the general nouns, say whether the writer views the summarized or advertised information as positive or negative or neutral. The first one is done as an example.

Bettaworld is a very profitable and competitive company. **Its success** has enabled the company to create new departments and take on large numbers of new managers and office staff. At first, this expansion led to difficulties in communication between the larger departments and their managers. In order to solve this problem, the company introduced new ways of working. Departments were reorganized into project-based teams and communications were improved by supplying staff with individual computers and telephone lines. The company had to borrow large amounts of capital to finance the equipment and the staff training needed to make these changes. However, the investment was well worthwhile because it resulted in significant improvements, both in customer service and staff satisfaction. This increased the company's profits to an even higher level.

Noun phrase	S or A	Information summarized or advertised	Writer view
Its success	S	a very profitable and competitive company	positive

What does the demonstrative pronoun *This* refer to in the last sentence?  
 What general noun could you use in the last sentence to make this reference clearer?

## 2.5: Topic development

### Teacher's notes

#### Background

When writers construct a clause or sentence in English, they choose to name something in the subject position and say something about it in the rest of the sentence. However, they have to decide which ideas will come first. This decision is often presented as a choice about whether to include people (i.e., the agents) in a sentence. However, it is more often a choice about the starting point of the sentence, and the way this is determined by the topic of the paragraph. This task assumes that students understand the form of one-clause sentences and the passive form of transitive verbs.

#### Aims

- to understand how writers decide what to put first in a sentence
- to understand how this decision determines the form of sentences

#### Material

Tasksheet containing two short texts about a fictional company, Bettaworld

#### Procedure

- 1 Elicit some sentences from the students which contain transitive verbs. These could be from a text they have been studying. Write pairs of sentences showing the active/passive contrast. Identify which form was used in the original text and discuss how the writers decided which form to use, i.e., what information to put first in each sentence. Students may suggest some of the following:
  - the most important information
  - information you want the reader to notice
  - information the reader should focus onHowever, they may also not have thought about this question before.
- 2 Students read the two texts and decide the topic of each one. The following list of topics is provided for students to choose from: *sales, clients, Bettaworld, efficiency, staff duties, management*. However, advanced level students can be asked to specify the topic without being given this support. Note that students sometimes specify *efficiency* as the topic of paragraph A, rather than *staff duties*. You should point out that the first sentence of a paragraph does not always contain the topic.
- 3 Ask students to study sentences 3 and 4 in each text. Students who have an advanced level of English can be asked to say how the sentences differ from each other between the two texts. Lower level students can be asked to complete the table comparing the topics of the paragraphs with the subjects of sentences 3 and 4.
- 4 Explain that the subject of each sentence says what that sentence is about (the topic of the sentence). When sentences combine in a paragraph, their subjects work together to show what the paragraph is about (the topic of the paragraph). Because the topic of the two paragraphs is different, their sentences need to start with different subjects, even though they present the same information.

## Follow-up

Students can analyze texts they have been reading to see how the sentences work together to show the development of the topic. This analysis leads on to consideration of the flow of information in texts from given to new ideas, which is developed and practised in Classroom materials 2.6, *Information flow*.

## KEY

The topic is underlined in each text. Note that the topic of Text A is the second sentence not the first. The paragraph is mainly about how ‘we value efficiency’, i.e., by being clear about staff duties. This example shows that the concept of topic sentence as the first sentence in a paragraph can be misleading. Topics can be carried in other sentences in a paragraph besides the first one.

- A At Bettaworld, we value efficiency in our workforce. We are very clear about the duties of each member of staff. The sales assistant deals with enquiries over the phone. The manager contacts clients personally. This ensures that there is no duplication of effort.
- B At Bettaworld, we value our clients. They make our business a success. Their enquiries are dealt with immediately by the sales assistant. Some clients are contacted personally by the manager. This ensures that they continue to do business with Bettaworld.

Subjects are underlined in sentences 3 and 4 of each text. Active verbs are shown in italics; passive verbs are shown in bold.

- A (1) At Bettaworld, we value efficiency. (2) We are very clear about the duties of each member of staff. (3) The sales assistant *deals with* enquiries over the phone. (4) The manager *contacts* clients personally. (5) This ensures that there is no duplication of effort.
- B (1) At Bettaworld, we value our clients. (2) They make our business a success. (3) Their enquiries **are dealt with** immediately by the sales assistant. (4) Some clients **are contacted** personally by the manager. (5) This ensures that they continue to do business with Bettaworld.

Paragraph/ sentence	Subject	Active verb	Passive verb	Paragraph topic
A/ 3	the sales assistant	deals with		staff duties
B/ 3	their enquiries		are dealt with	clients
A/ 4	the manager	contacts		staff duties
B/ 4	some clients		are contacted	clients



## Tasksheet: Topic development

Here are two paragraphs with two different topics. What is the topic of each paragraph? You can choose from the topics listed in the box.

sales	clients	Bettaworld	efficiency	staff duties	management
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- A At Bettaworld, we value efficiency in our workforce. We are very clear about the duties of each member of staff. The sales assistant deals with enquiries over the phone. The manager contacts clients personally. This ensures that there is no duplication of effort.
- B At Bettaworld, we value our clients. They make our business a success. Their enquiries are dealt with immediately by the sales assistant. Some clients are contacted personally by the manager. This ensures that they continue to do business with Bettaworld.

### Advanced level

Sentences 3 and 4 contain the same information in both paragraphs but it is in different places in the sentence. How have sentences 3 and 4 been changed from paragraph A to paragraph B to achieve this?

- A (1) At Bettaworld, we value efficiency. (2) We are very clear about the duties of each member of staff. (3) The sales assistant deals with enquiries over the phone. (4) The manager contacts clients personally. (5) This ensures that there is no duplication of effort.
- B (1) At Bettaworld, we value our clients. (2) They make our business a success. (3) Their enquiries are dealt with immediately by the sales assistant. (4) Some clients are contacted personally by the manager. (5) This ensures that they continue to do business with Bettaworld.

### Intermediate level

Sentences 3 and 4 have been underlined in each paragraph. Complete the following table to compare how these sentences have been changed from paragraph A to paragraph B. What is the form of the verb in each sentence?

Paragraph/ sentence	Subject	Active verb	Passive verb	Paragraph topic
A/ 3				staff duties
B/ 3	their enquiries			
A/ 4		contacts		
B/ 4			are contacted	

## 2.6: Information flow

### Teacher's notes

#### Background

Writers make information flow logically through their paragraphs by ensuring that the themes, which locate and orient the message within a sentence, usually contain given information, while the rhemes, which develop the message, usually contain new information. Because information in themes is familiar to readers, it is presented in summary form. Rhemes often contain quite long complex phrases or clauses because new details have to be clearly explained to readers. This logical flow of ideas is a very powerful resource for creating cohesion in texts. It is what university lecturers are referring to when they tell students to write clearly and logically.

#### Aims

- to raise awareness of the choices a writer has when deciding where to put information in the sentences in a developing text
- to understand that the flow of information from given to new helps readers to process the ideas in the text

#### Material

Tasksheet containing a short text, *Groups and Group Formation*, for which each sentence (apart from the first) is shown together with two grammatically correct alternatives. The information in these alternative sentences has simply been moved to a different part of the sentence in each case. This exercise works best if the sentences are numbered, 2a, 2b, 2c, etc., and then cut into strips.

#### Procedure

- 1 Remind students that the choice of what to put first in a sentence is normally related to the topic of a developing paragraph. You can refer to Classroom materials 2.5, *Topic development*.
- 2 Arrange students in groups of two or three. Give them the set of sentences cut into strips and ask them to construct the text by putting the strips in order. The strips are numbered but there are three choices for each number and they must choose the best sentence to construct the text each time. You can ask them to complete the first four sentences and then check their choices, or you can monitor their progress and make suggestions.
- 3 Ask students to think about the reasons for their choices each time. This task can be done intuitively, but encourage students to look for patterns in the developing text.
- 4 When they are finished, each group of students can go and look at the texts constructed by other groups, and decide if they want to change any of their choices.
- 5 Finally, students make a map of the text with arrows which demonstrate the flow of information from given to new.

#### Follow-up

Students can analyze familiar texts to see how the sentences work together to show the flow of information through a text from what is familiar to what is new.

Teachers can rewrite texts the students have been working on so that information, which was originally in the themes of several sentences, is moved to the rhemes (or vice versa). Students then find and correct the sentences so that the paragraph is more coherent. Once students are aware of this feature of coherence, the teacher can incorporate it into feedback on the students' writing.

## KEY

The text as it was originally written is shown below with the themes underlined. The information in *italics* appears in subsequent themes or rhemes. Notice that the themes of sentences 6a and 7b are used to contrast two different types of group. This is a very common way to handle contrast in texts. Notice also that the idea in the rheme of sentence 5c (achieve common goals) is developed further in the rhemes of sentences 6a and 7b.

### Groups and Group Formation

- 1 The group is an important unit in the study of organisational behaviour.
- 2 a Studying groups is especially valuable when group dynamics are analysed.
- 3 b Group dynamics is concerned with the interactions and forces among group members in a social situation.
- 4 b When the concept of group dynamics is applied to the study of organisational behaviour, the focus is on the dynamics of members of formal or informal work groups and teams in the organisation.
- 5 c For behavioural scientists a group consists of two or more people interacting interdependently to achieve common goals.
- 6 a Formal work groups are established by organisations to achieve organisational goals.
- 7 b Informal work groups form naturally in response to the common interests of organisational members.
- 8 a Even relatively simple groups are actually complex social devices that require a fair amount of negotiation and trial-and-error before individual members begin to function as a true group.

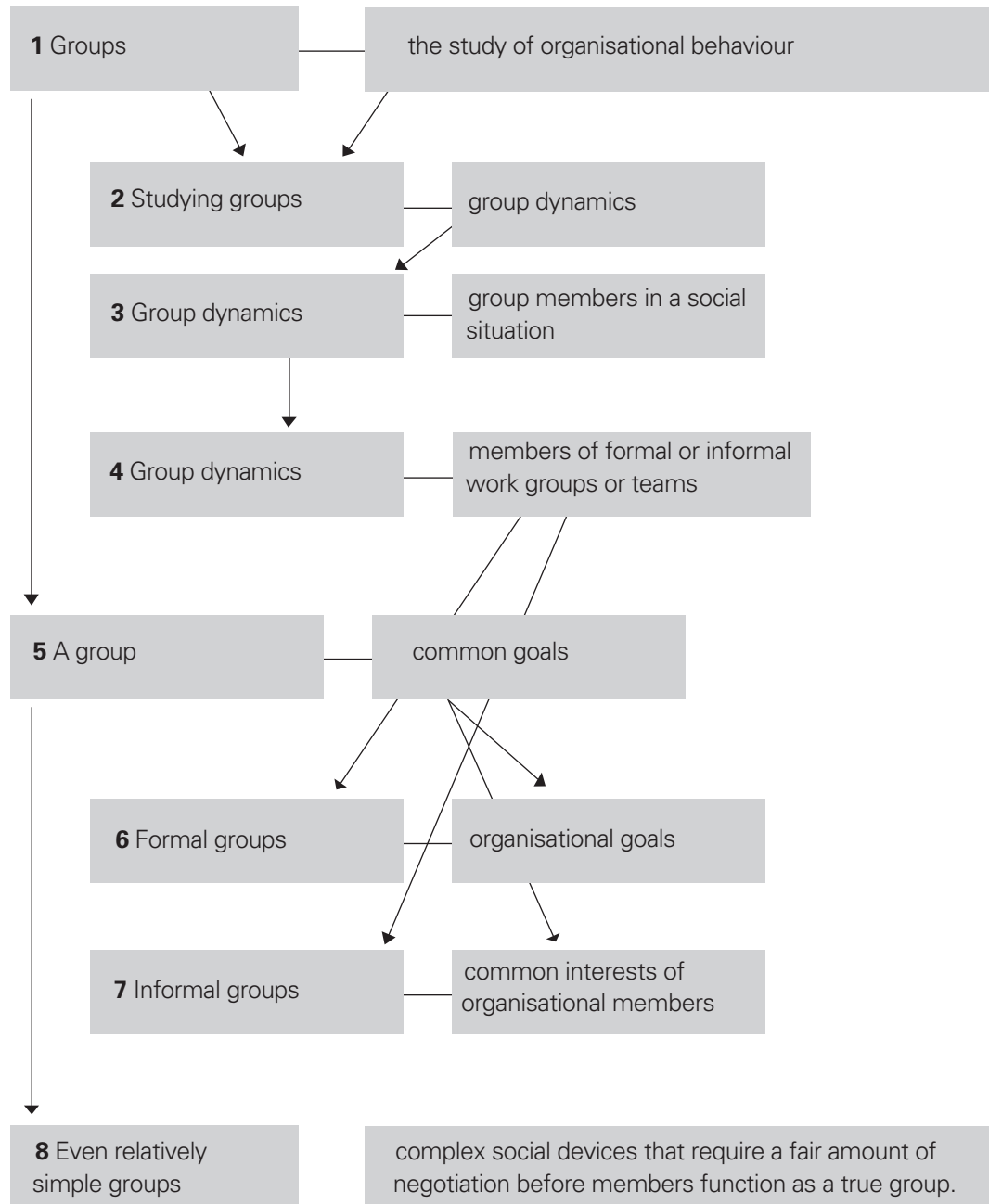
The main aspects of thematic development in texts are as follows:

- Readers need familiar information (usually the topic) in mind before they read something new about it.
- Familiar or given information is usually in the themes of sentences.
- Rhemes usually contain new information which is temporarily the focus of attention.
- Detailed explanations in complex phrases or clauses are easier for readers to understand if they are in rhemes.
- Information in rhemes reappears in subsequent themes in summary form because it has moved to the background.
- This movement of information from rheme to theme links the developing text to what has gone before and helps to maintain the topic.

These aspects of thematic development should be seen as tendencies rather than rules. Writers usually follow them, but sometimes they have good reasons for not doing so, e.g., sometimes they want to force a marked reading of the text, so they put new information into the theme and thus into the background, where it can be considered as given. On other occasions, they place old information into the rheme to emphasize it.

The arrows in the diagram show how the new information is linked to the familiar topics. In the last box, you can see that the new information is in a long complex noun phrase containing relative clauses.

## Topic or subtopic      New information about the topic



## Tasksheet: Information flow

Below are eight sentences of a text about Groups and Group Formation. The first sentence is given, but for the remaining text there is a choice of three possible sentences. All sentences are grammatically correct but only one maintains the logical flow of ideas in the paragraph. Construct the text by choosing the most appropriate sentence in each case.

- 1 The group is an important unit in the study of organisational behaviour.
- 2 a Studying groups is especially valuable when group dynamics are analysed.
- 2 b Analysing group dynamics is especially valuable for studying groups.
- 2 c What is especially valuable for studying groups is group dynamics.
- 3 a The social situation in which interactions and forces among group members occur is the concern of group dynamics.
- 3 b Group dynamics is concerned with the interactions and forces among group members in a social situation.
- 3 c The interactions and forces among group members in a social situation is the concern of group dynamics.
- 4 a The dynamics of members of formal or informal work groups and teams in an organisation are the focus when the concept of group dynamics is applied to the study of organisational behaviour.
- 4 b When the concept of group dynamics is applied to the study of organisational behaviour, the focus is on the dynamics of members of formal or informal work groups and teams in the organisation.
- 4 c The focus when the concept of group dynamics is applied to the study of organisational behaviour is on the dynamics of members of formal or informal work groups and teams in the organisation.
- 5 a A group consists of two or more people interacting interdependently to achieve common goals for behavioural scientists.
- 5 b Two or more people interacting interdependently to achieve common goals is what constitutes a group for behavioural scientists.
- 5 c For behavioural scientists a group consists of two or more people interacting interdependently to achieve common goals.
- 6 a Formal work groups are established by organisations to achieve organisational goals.
- 6 b Organisations establish formal work groups to achieve organisational goals.
- 6 c The achievement of organisational goals is the purpose of formal work groups.
- 7 a The common interests of organisational members prompt informal work groups to form naturally.
- 7 b Informal work groups form naturally in response to the common interests of organisational members.
- 7 c In response to the common interests of organisational members, informal work groups form naturally

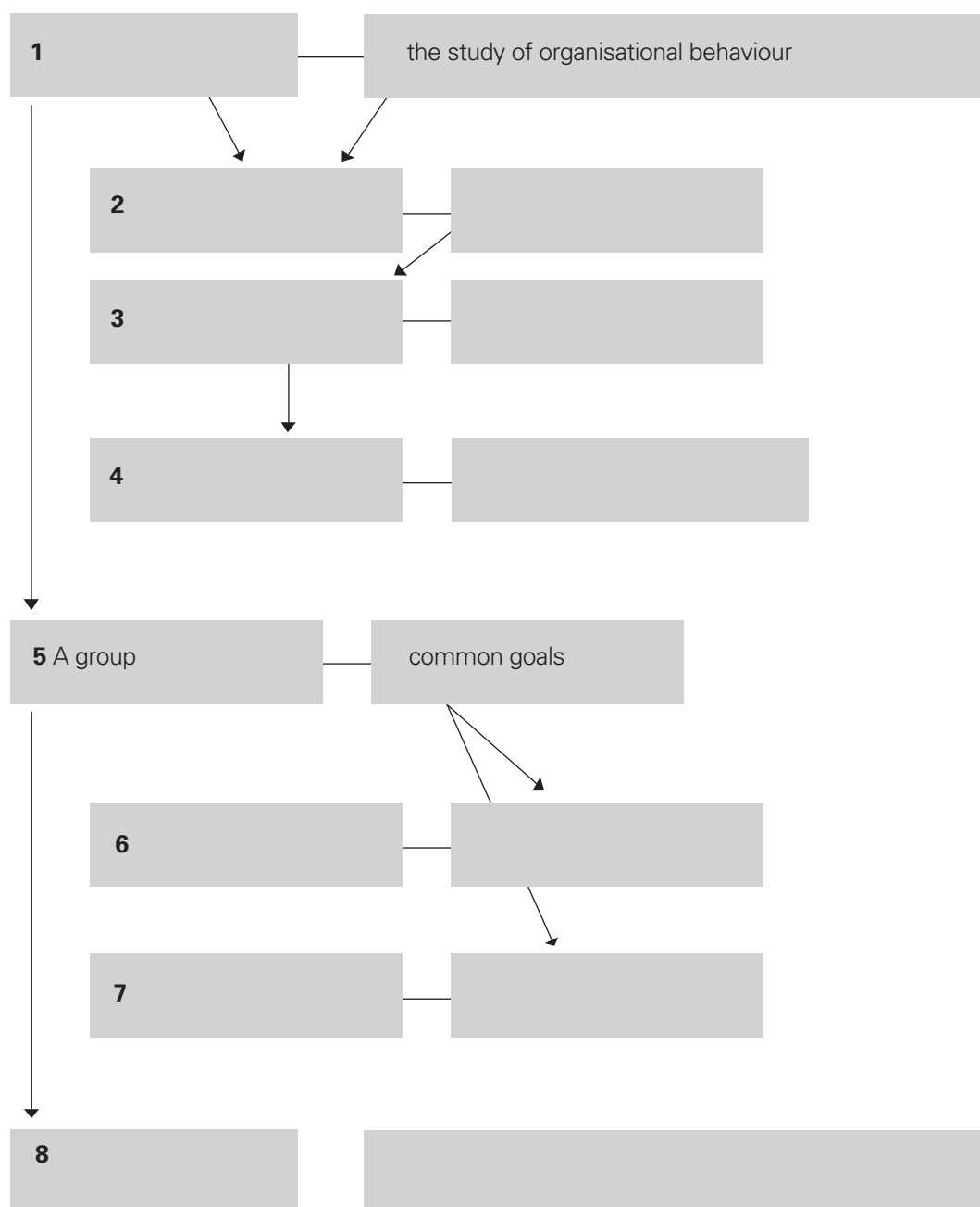
- 8 a Even relatively simple groups are actually complex social devices that require a fair amount of negotiation and trial-and-error before individual members begin to function as a true group.
- 8 b Complex social devices that require a fair amount of negotiation and trial-and-error before individual members begin to function as a true group are what even relatively simple groups actually are.
- 8 c Before individual members begin to function as a true group, even in relatively simple groups, they require a fair amount of negotiation and trial-and-error because they are actually complex social devices.

Check the answer key to find out which choices were made by the original writer of this text.

Now make a map of the way information flows through the original text. Use the diagram on the next page, as follows:

- a Underline the noun phrase near the beginning of each sentence which contains the word *group*. The first one is done for you.
- b Decide if the noun phrases you have highlighted show the main topic or a more specific aspect of the main topic (a subtopic). Write them in the numbered boxes on the left-hand side of the diagram on the next page. One is done for you.
- c Underline new information at the ends of the sentences. Do not underline the whole verb phrase but just the new information. One is done for you.
- d Complete the diagram by adding the new information about each topic (in note form) to the right hand boxes. Two are done for you.
- e Draw lines between the boxes to show how information in one sentence reappears in a following sentence. Some of the lines have been drawn for you. Draw the rest.

## Topic or subtopic      New information about the topic



From the diagram you have just completed you can see how a writer can make information flow logically through a paragraph. The paragraph starts with a topic (1), *The group*, that is familiar to the reader (because it was in the title). The first sentence says something about the topic that is new to the reader.

However, once this information has been introduced, it is familiar to the reader and can be repackaged (i.e., presented in a different form) so that it can become the topic of the next sentence (2). Sometimes the writer wants to go back to an original topic (5) so that he can say something else about it that is new to the reader. This new information can



be developed in more detail at the ends of following sentences (6, 7). In each sentence, the writer tries to give the reader some familiar information as a starting point for new information. This is the way writers show the flow of the topic through their texts.

The familiar information at the beginning of each sentence, which forms the starting point for the new information, has usually been repackaged in short summary form. This is because it is now in the background. The reader has already seen the information and only needs to be reminded about it, e.g.:

the study of organisational behaviour —————> studying

However, the new information, presented at the end of each sentence, is often put into quite long complex phrases or clauses because the new details have to be clearly explained to the reader. It is easier for a reader to understand long complex phrases and clauses if they are at the end of a sentence. They are the last things he reads so he does not have to remember them while he reads the other information in the sentence, e.g., 8a below is easier to read and understand than 8b.

- 8 a Even relatively simple groups are actually complex social devices that require a fair amount of negotiation and trial-and-error before individual members begin to function as a true group.
- b Complex social devices that require a fair amount of negotiation and trial-and-error before individual members begin to function as a true group are what even relatively simple groups actually are.

These guiding principles are really what tutors mean when they tell students to write clearly and logically. They can be summarized as follows:

- Make sure your reader has familiar information (the topic) in mind before you tell him something new about it.
- Put the familiar information at the beginning of your sentences and the new information you want your reader to focus on at the end.
- As soon as you have introduced new information, you can repackage it in the following sentences in a shorter summary form. This just reminds your reader that this information is now in the background, i.e., already part of the picture building up in his mind.
- Put detailed explanations in complex clauses at the ends of your sentences so they are easier for your reader to understand.

These are guiding principles not rules. Writers usually follow them, but they sometimes have good reasons for not doing so, e.g., sometimes they want new information at the beginning of the sentence because they want the reader to see it as familiar and in the background. This flow of information is a very powerful way of linking ideas together in texts. It is what university lecturers are referring to when they tell students to write clearly and logically.

## 2.7: It's in the news

### Teacher's notes

#### Background

Once students can recognize noun phrases in texts and identify their basic structure, they can investigate how noun phrases contribute to the logical development of texts. This task uses the development of a story in the news to take students through the steps of repackaging the ideas in the previous sentence. It promotes fluency in student writing by helping students to use a strategy that experienced writers use to develop their ideas in a text. This is a playful task and should be treated as a language game rather than a recipe for constructing texts.

#### Aims

- to practise repackaging given information in noun phrases
- to raise awareness of grammar patterns and order of information in noun phrases

#### Material

Individual copies of the photocopiable tasksheet for constructing noun phrases  
A visual of the tasksheet for recording suggested answers

#### Procedure

- 1 Demonstrate the first group of sentences with the whole class. Ask how all the information in the first sentence could be included in a phrase forming the subject of sentence b. If students are unsure, you can ask them to make a noun from the verb *chew* to begin building the noun phrase. Once students have worked through the first example, they complete the other groups of sentences individually or in pairs.
- 2 Use the teacher's visual to record students' suggested phrases. Compare them with the answers suggested in the key. Note that these are suggested answers and other combinations are possible.
- 3 Draw attention to the way each new noun phrase draws information from the key idea at the end of the previous sentence, i.e., the new information is repackaged as given information.
- 4 Point out that, in 2b and 3c, the summarized information is not the subject of the verb and that given-to-new is a common pattern not a prescriptive rule.
- 5 Emphasize that complete sequences of sentences like these would not form a natural text, although the final sentence achieves an appropriately academic style. Ask students to suggest how the sentences could be altered to make a more natural text.

#### Follow-up

Other developing news stories or situations of interest to the class can be used for further practice in repackaging information into noun phrases. The students can also find complex sentences consisting of several long noun phrases, and try to produce the shorter sentences from which they are derived.

## KEY

Note that the following are suggestions and other combinations are possible. Shortened forms would also be possible, especially in news headlines, e.g., *dental health benefits*, *bird flu outbreak*.

- 1 a People chew gum.
  - b Chewing gum is supposed to benefit dental health.
  - c The benefit to dental health of chewing gum is supported by medical opinion.
- 2 a An outbreak of bird flu is possible.
  - b The public are anxious about the possibility of an outbreak of bird flu.
  - c Public anxiety over the possibility of an outbreak of bird flu is increasing.
  - d Increasing public anxiety over the possibility of an outbreak of bird flu is causing a fall in stock market prices.
- 3 a Smoking and fatal diseases are linked.
  - b In health education, there is information about the links between smoking and fatal diseases.
  - c People have begun to respond to health education information about the links between smoking and fatal diseases.
  - d The response to health education information about the links between smoking and fatal diseases has led to a decline in cigarette smoking.

These sequences of sentences produce an artificial text, so it is important to agree with students how to transform the result into a more fluent text, e.g., 2c might be reduced to *This anxiety is increasing*. However, very often the final sentence achieves an appropriate academic style.

## Tasksheet: It's in the news

Add all the information in each sentence to the gap in the next sentence, using a noun phrase.

1 a People chew gum.

b \_\_\_\_\_ is supposed to benefit dental health.

c \_\_\_\_\_ is supported by medical opinion.

2 a An outbreak of bird flu is possible.

b The public are anxious about \_\_\_\_\_

c \_\_\_\_\_ is increasing.

d \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ is causing a fall in stock market prices.

3 a Smoking and fatal diseases are linked.

b In health education, there is information about \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

c People have begun to respond to \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

d \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ has led to a decline in cigarette smoking.

## Teacher's visual

1 a People chew gum.

b \_\_\_\_\_ is supposed to benefit dental health.

c \_\_\_\_\_ is supported by medical opinion.

2 a An outbreak of bird flu is possible.

b The public are anxious about \_\_\_\_\_.

c \_\_\_\_\_ is increasing.

d \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ is causing a fall in stock market prices.

3 a Smoking and fatal diseases are linked.

b In health education, there is information about \_\_\_\_\_.

c People have begun to respond to \_\_\_\_\_.

d \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ has led to a decline in cigarette smoking.

## 2.8: Summarizing noun phrases

### Teacher's notes

#### Background

Once students can recognize noun phrases in texts and identify their basic structure, they can practise writing noun phrases which fit appropriately into gaps in texts. This requires students to consider which information has already been presented in the text, and how the noun phrase fits in with the logical development of the text. This task provides scaffolding for student writing by helping students to use a strategy that experienced writers use to develop their ideas in a text. It is assumed that students understand the way noun phrases contribute to the development of a text.

#### Aims

- to practise writing noun phrases which summarize information in other parts of a text
- to notice how this contributes to the logical development of the text

#### Material

Tasksheet containing an authentic text\* with some noun phrases removed

#### Procedure

- 1 Remind students of the basic structure of noun phrases, and the way topics develop through the noun phrases in a paragraph. These ideas were introduced and practised in Classroom materials 2.4, 2.5 and 2.7.
- 2 Students choose which of the noun phrases in note form fits into each of the numbered gaps. They use the clues from the notes provided, and the context of each gap, to construct an appropriate noun phrase to fit the gap.
- 3 Check that the students have written accurate noun phrases, and discuss any other versions they have produced which may be acceptable, e.g., 6) *the data which measured student performance*.

#### Follow-up

This kind of practice activity can be developed from any text that students are reading. Students with a lower level of proficiency can be given the first part of the text unchanged to help them to understand the ideas in the text. Postgraduate students can work on abstracts, which make use of complex noun phrases to condense information.

Before students begin a piece of writing, they can do some pre-writing activities in which they identify noun phrases they will need to use, and attempt to write these accurately.

\*The example given here is from Ehrenberg, D. *et al* (2001) The influence of class size on academic achievement in Slaght, J. (2004) *English for Academic Study: Reading Source Book*. Garnet Education: Reading.

## KEY

## The Influence of Class Size on Academic Achievement

There is growing concern in both Britain and the United States that children from lower-income groups are not doing as well at school and university as children from the middle and upper classes. In addition, recent studies have shown that (0) most children in these countries perform poorly when compared to Asian and European students of the same age. If western countries want to compete in the global marketplace the education of their children must be improved to provide an effective workforce in future years.

A number of ideas have been put forward to suggest how education could be improved but the most attractive of these is the proposal to reduce the size of classes, i.e., the number of pupils for each teacher. (1) This reduction in class size would be very expensive as it requires more teachers, more classrooms and more equipment and resources. On the other hand if smaller classes really do improve the quality of education for poor children, (2) the economic benefits which come from a better educated workforce could far outweigh the costs.

(3) The increased interest in smaller class sizes has prompted a review of several studies which investigated whether small classes really do improve school achievement. Many of these studies were poorly designed and the findings were unreliable because it is very difficult to isolate the effects of class size from (4) the other factors which influence performance at school. However, one study, known as Project STAR, did give more reliable results. (5) Pupils who were entering school for the first time were randomly assigned to one of three kinds of classes, a small class, a normal sized class or a normal sized class with both a teacher and a teaching assistant. They remained in these classes for four years and then joined a normal classroom. After the study finished (6) the data measuring student performance were analysed but there was disagreement about the findings. From the data it seemed that there was (7) a significant improvement in pupil performance in the smaller classes after two years and this seemed to persist after the pupils rejoined a normal class. However, other researchers criticized the project and its conclusions. They claimed that the data could not be used to argue that the improvement persisted after the pupils had returned to normal sized classes because of (8) the influence of other factors such as a supportive home.

Researchers also point out that schoolchildren in Japan and China tend to do much better at school than children in Britain and the United States despite the fact that they normally study in much larger groups. (9) Typical classes in China or Japan consist of 40 or 50 pupils and one teacher. It has been suggested that the reason large class sizes do not adversely affect (10) academic achievement in these countries is due to the fact that these societies are more homogeneous with less ethnic diversity. Teachers find it easier to impose discipline on large groups of children.

## Tasksheet: Summarizing noun phrases

The text on the following page, entitled *The Influence of Class Size on Academic Achievement* contains a number of gaps where noun phrases are missing. The missing noun phrases are shown in the list below in note form.

The phrases are not in the order they appear in the text. Decide which information is required for each gap in the text, and construct an appropriate noun phrase from the notes in order to fill the gap. You may have to add determiners such as *the/these*. Pay attention to the developing text to help you decide how to construct the noun phrase.

- a factors / influence / performance / school
- b reduction / class size
- c economic benefits / come from / educated workforce
- d children / countries
- e academic achievement / countries
- f influence / factors / supportive home
- g data / measure / student performance
- h increase / interest / small class size
- i significant improvement / pupil performance / smaller classes
- j pupils / enter school / first time
- k typical classes / China / Japan

Write your answer in the space provided below. The first one is done for you.

- 0 most children in these countries \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_



## The Influence of Class Size on Academic Achievement

There is growing concern in both Britain and the United States that children from lower-income groups are not doing as well at school and university as children from the middle and upper classes. In addition, recent studies have shown that (0) \_\_\_\_\_ perform poorly when compared to Asian and European students of the same age. If western countries want to compete in the global marketplace the education of their children must be improved to provide an effective workforce in future years.

A number of ideas have been put forward to suggest how education could be improved but the most attractive of these is the proposal to reduce the size of classes, i.e., the number of pupils for each teacher. (1) \_\_\_\_\_ would be very expensive as it requires more teachers, more classrooms and more equipment and resources. On the other hand if smaller classes really do improve the quality of education for poor children, (2) \_\_\_\_\_ could far outweigh the costs.

(3) \_\_\_\_\_ has prompted a review of several studies which investigated whether small classes really do improve school achievement. Many of these studies were poorly designed and the findings were unreliable because it is very difficult to isolate the effects of class size from (4) \_\_\_\_\_. However, one study, known as Project STAR, did give more reliable results. (5) \_\_\_\_\_ were randomly assigned to one of three kinds of classes, a small class, a normal sized class or a normal sized class with both a teacher and a teaching assistant. They remained in these classes for four years and then joined a normal classroom. After the study finished (6) \_\_\_\_\_ were analysed but there was disagreement about the findings. From the data it seemed that there was (7) \_\_\_\_\_ after two years and this seemed to persist after the pupils rejoined a normal class. However, other researchers criticized the project and its conclusions. They claimed that the data could not be used to argue that the improvement persisted after the pupils had returned to normal sized classes because of (8) \_\_\_\_\_.

Researchers also point out that schoolchildren in Japan and China tend to do much better at school than children in Britain and the United States despite the fact that they normally study in much larger groups. (9) \_\_\_\_\_ consist of 40 or 50 pupils and one teacher. It has been suggested that the reason large class sizes do not adversely affect (10) \_\_\_\_\_ is due to the fact that these societies are more homogeneous with less ethnic diversity. Teachers find it easier to impose discipline on large groups of children.

## 2.9: General to specific

### Teacher's notes

#### Background

Texts which explain and persuade usually follow a general to specific development of ideas. The writer states the main claim or the point of the paragraph in the first sentence, and then develops this point or claim with specific evidence and examples in the remainder of the paragraph.

#### Aims

- to raise awareness of a common paragraph structure in academic writing
- to model the writing process and support students in redrafting their work

#### Material

A means of recording and displaying students' responses

#### Procedure

- 1 Ask students to have a pen and paper ready because you are going to ask some questions, and you want them to write their responses down each time. All students should write a response to the questions, but if the class is large you may want to elicit example responses from only a small number of students.
- 2 Choose a suitable question from the following, depending on the level of the class:
  - a *What ties a text together?* (advanced)
  - b *How do we learn to write?* (upper intermediate)
  - c *How do we learn new vocabulary?* (intermediate)

Ask students to write down quickly the first idea that comes into their heads, without thinking too much. The response is likely to be a short noun phrase, e.g., *by reading*, *by noticing new words*. Students should not copy the question, just respond to it.

- 3 Elicit some example responses, and record these on a visual next to the name of each student. Encourage students who have not written anything to respond, by saying that everyone must have a response before you can continue.
- 4 On the visual, under the first set of student responses, write a new question which incorporates their responses and asks for more specific details, e.g., *But how does [reading] help you to learn to write?* Go round the class in turn, providing each person with a new question which incorporates their response.
- 5 Students now write a longer response to the second question. You should not provide any models or clues to the kind of responses you expect at this stage. Students are free to write whatever they want, but you can tell them that their response is likely to be longer.
- 6 Again, you should elicit some example responses from the same students as before, and write these on the visual underneath the second question. These might include a description of a learning process, e.g., *When you read, you can notice the way writers use vocabulary and grammar*. At this stage, you can ask students to clarify their ideas or you can challenge any ideas that are not realistic.

- 7 When all students have a response, you should formulate, and write on the visual, a third question, which incorporates their second response, e.g., *But how does [noticing vocabulary and grammar] help you to learn to write?* The response to this question will again be longer and more detailed.
- 8 The students now have a set of answers to three questions. You can ask them how the answers are different, and elicit responses such as the following: *longer, more detailed, more specific*. You can then explain that this is the way writers often construct paragraphs, from general to specific, because they are developing and clarifying ideas for their readers. Finally, you can ask what else helps readers to understand ideas. You can suggest that students provide an example to illustrate their responses.
- 9 The students' responses can then be turned into a paragraph using a paragraph frame similar to the following:

*We learn to write by* \_\_\_\_\_

*This helps because* \_\_\_\_\_

*In particular,* \_\_\_\_\_

*For example,* \_\_\_\_\_

Here is an example written by an advanced level student:

*We can improve our writing by reading and learning new vocabulary. This helps because seeing the word in a context enables us to understand how it is used. In particular, a wide range of reading allows us to see the same words used in different subject areas. For example, words used to describe data in tables and graphs can also be used metaphorically to describe the fluctuations in the stock market.*

- 10 It is important to emphasize to students that the process of generating ideas can be done with questions and responses, but that these should be mental activities which help with brainstorming. The questions and responses should be changed into statements for the final written paragraph. The paragraphs can also be made more academic by removing personal pronouns and replacing them with passive or nominal structures, e.g., *Writing can be improved by reading and learning new vocabulary*. This allows students to see that their texts might have to be redrafted several times to be appropriate for an academic audience.

## Follow-up

Students can analyze texts they have been reading to see how the ideas develop from general to specific. You can also provide texts in which the sentences have been jumbled, and ask students to reorganize them to follow a general to specific development. You might find examples with a different development, e.g., specific to general, or with a general statement at the end which summarizes the ideas and prepares for the next paragraph.

When giving students feedback on their writing, you can use the term *general to specific* to comment on the organization of their paragraphs.