

Learning about procedures

Level: students aged 5-7 years old

Genre focus: simple procedure

Rationale

The aim of this unit is to introduce students to very basic procedures. It assumes that students have already done some work on simple recounts, which may have included writing some procedural recounts. If this is the case, then they should have some idea of what the schematic structure of a recount means and what a recount looks like. However, if this is the students' first introduction to the notion that a text has a 'structure', you will need to do a lot of work familiarising them with the schematic structure of a procedure.

As well, students will be introduced to the grammar of participants, processes and participants, which we can be described as transitivity). Procedural texts provide an ideal starting point for learning about transitivity because the participants, processes and circumstances are all closely connected to the material reality of the students: they involve action processes that they can see and do (add, cut, mix...), participants that the student can see and touch (strawberries, oranges, apples...) and circumstances that they can easily understand (in the bowl, into bite size pieces, slowly...).

Another obvious point of grammar that can be introduced here is the use of the imperative mood at the beginning of the clauses in the method section. All the clauses begin with a process in theme position and when we add the use of colour it makes it an obvious and clear marker that distinguishes procedures from other texts.

If this is the first time students have attempted to write a procedure, they will need a carefully sequenced set of activities that will scaffold their understandings about the notion of structure and then in turn about the grammar. As you will see, the module has a focus on the speech function of commands and on getting children to begin to understand different ways we can make commands.

Before beginning the unit, you will need to find suitable resources that you can use throughout the unit. These would include big books, suitable reading material and other media resources [some suggestions welcomed].

As with other units, you should feel free to introduce other related activities that will enhance the unit. For example, in this unit, you might read one or two suitable narratives [some suggestions welcomed] that will contain a lot of commands. In fact, this can become one of the foci for this unit with students engaging in other activities where they 'command' each other.

Also note that as with other units, there are a number of optional activities which can be included depending on time, interest and the prior experiences and language level of your students. This unit could be part of a wider unit of work on Health education where the students are learning about good healthy eating.

Setting the context

Step A

- You could begin with a discussion with the children about the various favourite dishes that their parents/caregivers make for them and ask some of them how they are made.
- Make some yoghurt with the students using some powder and some warm milk and placing in a jar overnight. Check it the next day and discuss any changes.

Step B

- Introduce a number of recipes if possible from a range of cultures and languages. Explore with the students the common purpose of these books. Discuss with students differences and similarities between the recipes.
- Explore questions like ‘Why do we have recipes like this?’, ‘Who writes recipes like this?’, ‘Who reads recipes like this?’. Depending on other units of work undertaken, compare with other big books of other genres already studied (narratives, recounts) and reflect with students on the different purposes of other genres already studied. Get the students to complete page 1 of their workbook as below, for example.

Name of text	Genre	Purpose
How Maisy found her lost toy	Narrative	To entertain, teach us lessons/morals
A Trip to the Farm	Recount	To retell events
My favourite toy	description	to describe something in detail

- If the above has already been done, just get students to add Recipes in page 1 of their workbook.

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A Trip to the Farm	Recount	To retell events
My favourite toy	description	to describe something in detail
Recipes	procedure	to tell us how to make something in a series of steps

- Tell students that they will be looking carefully at recipes, which are the kind of texts that tell us how to make something in a series of steps. Explain to the students that, as they do the various activities in the following unit of work, they will be able to write their own recipe and choose their favourite recipes, which could be put into a class cookbook.
- Using magazines, packaging, and pages from websites, ask students to find a range of recipes. Explore with the children how they were able to identify a recipe. Discuss the role of the visuals as part of the recipe. Some of the discussion could centre on the way recipes, particularly from cookbooks, make the final result look very impressive.

Modelling and deconstruction

Step C

- Once students have seen and discussed various recipes from different sources, use the following recipe for ‘Banana Surprise’ and make it in class. Tell the students that you will be making a healthy dish called ‘Banana Surprise’ and get them to guess what might be in it. Ask them to predict what it will look like given the recipes they have met elsewhere.
- Show the recipe (Teacher Resources page 1) on a wall chart or a screen, read it through carefully as you work your way through it.
- Then, do the recipe as a whole class linking the activity of making the ‘Banana Surprise’ closely

with the text itself.

- So, begin by asking questions like ‘What are we going to make?’ ‘Where does it say that?’ ‘What ingredients do we need?’ and so forth. In other words, a very close unpacking of the meanings in the text. Continue with this close questioning as you work your way through the method section: ‘What is the first thing we do?’ (Peel the banana) How do you know that?’ (It is the first thing in the list...it says the number one...) ‘What do we do to the banana?’ (Peel it).
- Continue with ‘In step 2 it says to cut something...What should we cut? (the banana) and ‘How should we cut it?’ (in half lengthways).

In doing this close work with the text, you are both helping the students to read the text carefully and at the same time preparing them for the functional groupings that they will be identifying in the next stage.

Once you have made the Banana Surprise, you might allow the children to eat it then or leave it till an appropriate break.

- Ask students to open their workbooks at Activity 1 on page 2 and tell them that you will now look closely at how a recipe works. Ask the children questions that establish what the recipe is about for example:
 - What can we make if we follow this recipe?
 - How do we know that?
 - How are the words at the top different from the other words in the recipe?
- Tell the students that this group of words at the top is called the title and explain its function. Write the word in the box and ask the students to do the same.
- Then, explore with the children the function of the sub-heading ‘You will need’ using similar questions to those above. Explore the different font size and the fact that it is in bold. Explore with the children what is under this heading and note any responses they might give. For example, some students might notice that there are not sentences here. Others might see that the dates and almonds need to be prepared beforehand or that the ingredients are in the order that you used them. Tell the students that this section is called the ‘List of ingredients’ and write that in the space provided.
- Now begin to explore the third section with the students by asking them what the next heading says and what it means. Tell the students that another word for telling us what to do is ‘Method’ and write this in the space provided.
- Ask the students to say how the numbers help us in making the recipe. So, ask the students what would happen if we started at Step 6, for example.
- Remind the children about the activities they did earlier about action words where they matched the action with the pictures from magazines. Read Step 1 and ask them to identify the action word ‘Cut’. Both you and the students circle this word in green and note that it begins with a capital letter. Repeat this process for the next step and circle the word ‘Place’ in green as before. In the subsequent processes ask the students to identify the action. Once all processes have been identified ask the students to make any observations. They will of course note that all these actions are coming at the front and that the actions are telling us to do something. Tell the students to note down on their page that these are all called action processes and in this recipe they are commanding us to do something.

If they have met the notion of a ‘process’ before, this will be straightforward. If this is the first time, then you will need to spend some time explaining the why we use the word ‘process’ and that some students may have heard of the word ‘verb’ and that these mean the same thing.

- Hand out another recipe and have the children in pairs identify the action processes in the method section.

It would be good if this recipe had some steps with two clauses in them so that the students could see that the action process can come in other places in the sentence.

Step D

At some later date, explore with the students the importance of giving clear and precise instructions. Some suggested activities are as follows:

- A barrier game where the students can see some simple object such as a triangle and they have to tell you how to draw it so that it looks exactly the same shape. You play the role of ‘difficult’ interpreter whereby you loosely interpret what the children are saying and only draw the final object when there is no possible choice about what to do.
- Practice giving instructions as a whole class on how to get from A to B in some space.
- Have the students play the barrier game in Teacher Resource pages 2-3 where one has to instruct the other how to get from A to B on a simple street map.

Step E

- Emphasize with the children the importance of giving clear and precise instructions and remind them of the previous activities.
- Tell the students they will be now learning how to write a procedure but first they will have to do some more activities that will help them do so.
- Reintroduce the recipe used above and tell the children that they are going to look at ways of making sure they are giving precise instructions but they need to do some language work first. Here it is important that the children understand that they are not just doing grammar for the sake of it but to help them with their writing and that they will be writing a procedure after they have done this work. Refer back to the activities where they were trying to be very precise in giving directions.
- Perhaps write some of these examples on the whiteboard, for example:
 - Turn left at the first street
 - Keep going past the Post Office
 - Cut the banana in half lengthways
- Remind students about the way they identified the action process at the beginning of the sentence and jointly identify the action process in the above examples and in the recipe. Tell the students that they will now identify other groupings in each of the sentences by asking particular questions.
- Show the Banana Surprise text and tell the students that they will be focusing on the method section.
- Read out the first sentence and ask the students to circle the action process in green. Remind students why it is called an action process and that when it is used on its own like this it is one way of commanding someone to do something. Remind them of how in other circumstances that this could be seen as very rude talking to somebody like that.
- Now ask the children to respond to the following question: ‘Cut what?’ or re-phrase it as ‘What should I cut?’ And they will answer ‘the banana’. Explain that is called a participant and we will colour it red. Now tell the students we will ask another kind of question: ‘How should we cut it?’ and circle the answer ‘in half lengthways’ in blue. Tell the students that this is called a circumstance, and its function is to tell the reader how or where something happens.
- Repeat for the rest of the text. When you have completed the whole text, revise with the students what each of the groupings is doing: process that describe the action, participants that tell us what is being used and circumstances that tell us where and how something should be done.

Guided Construction

Step F

- Tell the students that you are going to jointly write a recipe for fruit salad as a whole class. Ask them to open up at Activity 2 on page 3 of their workbooks and write in the three major stages of a procedure: title^ingredients^method in the boxes. Write ‘Class Fruit Salad’ on a whiteboard and ask the students to write it in their books using their blank pro-forma of the procedure in the same row as the word ‘title’.
- Brainstorm a reasonable set of ingredients for this fruit salad and decide, using a high degree of control here as teacher, on five or six ingredients and write them on cards that can be manipulated on the white board. Leave space on each card to write in the amount. A possible example follows:

apples

bananas

pineapple juice

strawberries

oranges

- Now, negotiate the amounts of each after deciding that you will make it for say 4-6 people. In doing this, you are showing the students that we can not only write in the amount or quantities of each ingredient but we can also further specify something else about that ingredient. In the examples below, you can see that we have added words like ‘crisp red’ and ‘ripe’.

2 crisp red apples

2 ripe bananas

a cup of pineapple juice

a punnet of strawberries

2 oranges

There are a number of grammatical aspects that you could raise with your students in this activity:

—The fact that there is no process in each of these groups of words

—What do we mean by a cup? This varies and is somewhat indefinable and this happens a lot in recipes

—Words that may be unfamiliar to them like ‘punnet’

—Sometimes there are numbers or an amount and sometimes just ‘a’ or ‘an’ so pay attention to the quantity at the front

- Form the students into groups of three and hand out cards that they use to copy those on the board. This could also be done using iPads or similar technology. Ask them in their groups to work out a possible order and why they might put them in a particular order.
- Tell them that you will be putting them in the order in which you do the steps in the method. We will assume the order seen in the final recipe below.
- So, under the method section now write 1. and write in ‘Wash the apples and dice them into bite size pieces’. Ask the students to identify the action processes. Ask them ‘What are we washing?’ (‘the apples’) and remind students that this is a participant. Explore the meaning of the word ‘dice’ with the students and then ask ‘How should we dice the apples?’ ... into bit-size pieces’. Remind students that this is a circumstance and this helps us to explain how the action takes place. Also note the ellipsed participant in the third clause where all we have is the action process ‘Place’ and the circumstance ‘into a large bowl’. Discuss why all these actions go as part of the first step.
- Discuss how some things are assumed in a recipe as in above ellipsed participant but also in missing out certain ‘obvious’ actions like ‘Peel the banana’ (which is different from the recipe for Banana Surprise).

Also, note that when you get to the last step, you will have the opportunity to discuss both the function of circumstances like ‘gently’ and their position—the fact that in this case it comes at the front of the sentence. And why this might be so (to make sure the action is done in this way).

- Repeat this process for the rest of the text, finishing up with a text as below:

Class Fruit Salad

Ingredients

2 crisp red apples

2 ripe bananas

2 oranges

a punnet of strawberries

a cupful of pineapple juice

Method

1. Wash the apples and dice them into bite size pieces.
2. Slice the bananas
3. Dice the oranges
4. Wash the strawberries and cut into quarters
5. Gently mix all ingredients in a large bowl.

Serve with yoghurt or ice-cream

Step G

- Now that you have the final text, jointly go through each step of the method and analyse for processes, participants and circumstances.
- Use the usual key questions:
 - For processes: What action is going on here? What do we have to do?
 - For participants: Process followed by what (Peel what? Slice what?)
 - For circumstances: Process followed by how or where (Dice how? Cut how?)

It should look like this:

1. Wash the apples and dice them into bite size pieces.
2. Slice the bananas
3. Dice the oranges
4. Wash the strawberries and cut into quarters
5. Gently mix all ingredients in a large bowl.

Serve with yoghurt or ice-cream

- Discuss again the main features of this procedure:
 - ‘Commanding’ action processes mostly at the front
 - participants are the ‘what’
 - the circumstances tell us the ‘how’ and ‘where’
 - circumstances can come at the front as well
 - the only items that don’t get coloured are the conjunctions in black

Independent Construction

Step G

- Now, students write out their version of their favourite fruit salad using the scaffold of the proforma and help from you or their parents or caregivers.
- Remind students of all the things have learnt about procedures and revise before they attempt their own recipes for fruit salad which they can write up as Activity 3 on page 4 of their workbooks.

<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 30px;"></div>	My fruit salad
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 30px;"></div>	Ingredients:
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 30px;"></div>	Method:

Step D

- When the students have completed their recipes, encourage students to try them out and, if possible, take a photo of the finished product. You could type them up and have them printed in a Class Fruit Salad book with pictures.