Progression in Explanation Texts

Purpose:
To explain how or why eg. *to explain the processes involved in natural/social phenomena or to explain why something is the way it is.*

Common Examples:
- Explaining electrical forces, food chains, eg. in science
- Explaining the causes of historical events eg. war, sinking of Titanic
- Explaining phenomena such as journey of river or how a volcano erupts in geography
- Encyclopaedia entries
- Technical manuals – explaining how something works

Generic Structure:
- A general statement to introduce the topic being explained eg. *In the winter some animals hibernate*

- The steps or phases in the process are explained logically, in order eg. *When the nights get longer… because the temperature begin to drop… so the hedgehog looks for a safe place to hide.*

Planning and Preparation:
- Choose a title that shows what is being explained, perhaps using why or how.
- Decide whether to include images or other features to help the reader eg. *diagrams, photographs, flow charts, text box, captions, list, glossary.*
- Use the first paragraph to introduce what you will be explaining
- Plan the steps in the explanation and check that it has included any necessary information about how and why things happen as they do.
- Add a few interesting details.
- Interest the reader by talking directly to them.
- Re-read the explanation as if you know nothing at all about the subject. Check that there are no gaps in the information.
- Remember that you can adapt explanatory texts or combine them with other text types to make them work effectively for the audience and purpose.

Progression in Explanation Texts

Progression in grammatical features	
Year 2	- Consistent use of present tense eg. *Hedgehogs wake up again in the spring.* - Questions can be used in titles (with question marks) eg. *How do hedgehogs survive in the winter? Why does it get dark at night?* - Use conjunctions eg. *so… because….*
Year 3	- Express time, place and cause using: - Conjunctions eg. *so, because, when, if* - Adverbs eg. *first, then, after that, finally* - Prepositions eg. *before, after* - Use paragraphs to organise ideas
Year 4	- Use fronted adverbials eg. *During the night, nocturnal animals…* - Use paragraphs to organise ideas - Create cohesion and avoid repetitions through the use of nouns and pronouns eg. <u>Many</u> mammals…. <u>They</u> feed their young…
Year 5	- Indicate degrees of possibility using adverbs eg. *Perhaps… surely…* OR modal verbs eg. *might, should, will….* - Use layout devices to provide additional information and guide the reader eg. *subheadings, columns, bullets etc.* - Create cohesion within paragraphs using adverbials eg. *therefore, however,* - Relative clauses can be used to add further information eg. *Hedgehogs, which are mammals…* - Parenthesis can be used to add clarification of technical words eg. *oxygen (a gas found in air)*
Year 6	- Adapt degrees of formality and informality to suit the form of the explanation. - An informal tone can sometimes be appropriate eg. *You'll be surprised to know that… Have you ever thought about the way that…?* - A formal authoritative tone can also be adopted eg. *oxygen is constantly replaced in the bloodstream…* - Create cohesion across paragraphs using a wider range of cohesive devices which can include adverbials - The passive voice can also be used eg. *gases are carried* - Brackets, dashes and commas can be used to add extra information eg. *photosynthesis, a process whereby a plant makes it's own food, can never take place without sunlight….*