

Explanation

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

Structure: General statement to introduce the topic, eg *in the autumn some birds migrate*

A series of logical steps explaining how or why something occurs, eg *because hours of daylight shorten*

Steps continue until the final state is produced or the explanation is complete

Features: Present tense, eg *many birds fly south*

Connectives that signal time, eg *then, next, several months later*

Causal connectives, eg *because, so, this causes*

Writer's Knowledge:

- Decide whether diagrams, charts, illustrations or a flow chart would help to explain.
- Uses a title that indicates what you are writing about.
- Using *how* or *why* in the title helps. Try to make the title intrigue (interest) the reader, eg *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, 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, eg *Beware - whirlwinds can kill!*
Or use questions, eg *Did you know that...?*
- Draw the reader in, eg *strange as it may seem..., not many people know that...*

Finally, re-read your explanation, pretending you know nothing about the subject - is it clear?