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## Instructional Text

### Focus Lesson

Recipes, directions, user guides, and forms are all examples of **instructional text**. They teach you how to do something, such as how to bake a cake, how to take great pictures, or how to plant a garden.

An instructional text should list the materials, equipment, or ingredients you need to complete a project. Knowing the materials you need helps you follow the directions. The **directions**, or steps, of a project need to be completed in the right order to get the correct result.

Many instructional texts have charts, maps, and pictures to help you learn from what you read. These **text features** give you extra information and clues that make it easier to understand what you are reading.

Read this passage and answer the questions that follow.

### Make a Nature Trail Guide!

Making a nature trail guide is a great project for your classroom. Many people walk nature trails without really stopping to see, hear, smell, and feel what is around them. Your guide can highlight all the facts, details, and simple beauty of the trail. Here's how:

#### Materials

- photographs and illustrations
- colored paper
- pens, colored pencils, or markers
- scissors
- glue
- stickers or other flat decorations

Numbers or special symbols point out items on a list.

What do the bullets (•) in this passage list?

## FOCUS LESSON: INSTRUCTIONAL TEXT

Title: Make a Nature Trail Guide!

Genre: How-To

Lexile® Measure: 900L

Skill Focus: Sequence

Graphic Organizer: Sequence Chart

### Vocabulary

To help with comprehension, review these vocabulary words with students before they read the passage. Write the words on the board and keep them displayed so students can refer to them when they read independently.

**bog, poison ivy, trail**

### Focus Lesson: INSTRUCTIONAL TEXT

1 Use lots of photos and illustrations. You can scan them, draw them, or use clip art. Use these items to show readers what certain animals and plants look like. You may want to point out a plant to avoid, like poison ivy.

2 Make your guide informative but not too wordy. Don't bog down your readers with too much text. Simply note special features along the trail. Include facts and details that will make the reader's walk more enjoyable.

3 Refer to certain signs along the trail. These signs often refer to items in that spot. For example, *This maple tree is known as a home to lots of squirrels. Blue jays nest in this tree every summer.* (This would be a great place to show a picture of a squirrel or a blue jay. This way, readers will know what to look for.)

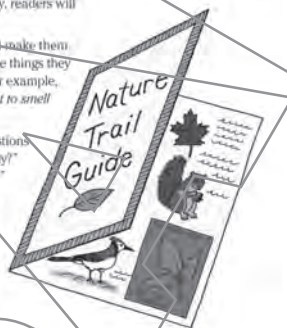
4 Add something for visitors to do at each stop. This will make them slow down and look around them. They will start to notice things they haven't before. They might even learn something new! For example, *Feel the soft leaves of this lamb's ear plant. Take a moment to smell the sweet scent of wild lavender.*

5 Now it's time to check all your facts. Ask yourself questions such as, "Have you named all plants and animals correctly?" "Have you identified plants that people should not touch?"

6 Print your brochures on colored paper and laminate them, if possible. This will make them last longer.

An illustration, or picture, does not tell you how or when something happened. It can help you see the way something should look.

What does the illustration in this passage show?





Focus Lesson: **INSTRUCTIONAL TEXT**

1. Part A **RI.4.2**  
What is the purpose of this article?

Look at the title and the first paragraph again. What is the article about?  
The article gives instructions for how to make a nature trail guide.

Part B **RI.4.8**  
Think about the purpose of the article from Part A. What are three things the author did to achieve this purpose?

The purpose of the article is to explain how to make a nature trail guide. To do this, the author gives step-by-step directions for making a guide, shows a bulleted list of materials you need to make the guide, and shows a picture of a completed guide as a sample.

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**Common Core State Standards**

**RI.4.2** Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

**RI.4.8** Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.



## GUIDED PRACTICE

**Title:** The National Historic Landmark Photo Contest

**Genre:** Expository Text: Flyer

**Lexile® Measure:** N/A

**Skill Focus:** Sequence

**Graphic Organizer:** Sequence Chart

### Vocabulary

To help with comprehension, review these vocabulary words with students before they read the passage. Write the words on the board and keep them displayed so students can refer to them when they read independently.

**appreciation, awareness, designations**

### Common Core State Standards

**RI.4.1** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

**RI.4.3** Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

Lesson 3 **Informational Text**


**Guided Practice**

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

**The National Historic Landmark Photo Contest**

It's time to visit National Historic Landmarks and explore the stories that make our nation great:

- **Discover sports**—a baseball stadium, a racetrack, college bowls, and more.
- **Explore the sciences**—radar testing, a giant antenna, and a jet propulsion laboratory.
- **Appreciate the craftsmanship**—design schools, Gilded Age mansions, handcrafted cabins.
- **Understand the sacrifice**—battlefields, battleships, civil rights sites.
- **Feel the artistry**—studios, theaters, museums, and more.
- **Surprise the kid inside**—roller coasters, merry-go-rounds, and many trains.
- **Be inspired**—designed landscapes, religious buildings, and great vistas.



Fellingwater.

National Historic Landmarks tell tales in neighborhoods, cities, parks, and landscapes all across the country. Get out your camera. Visit a site. Listen to the stories. Share your observations.

**Rules and Entry Information**

We invite you to share—in your own photographs and words—your experience of your favorite National Historic Landmarks (NHLs) across the country. This year's contest is open for entries from Monday, April 1, through Tuesday, July 9 (midnight EST).

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**Guided Practice: INFORMATIONAL TEXT**

**Contest Purpose:** The NHL Photo Contest is a free photography contest held each year by the National Historic Landmarks Program of the National Park Service (NPS) to raise awareness of and appreciation for our NHLs and the conscientious efforts of their owners and managers to preserve these places and objects for future generations. The Secretary of the Interior has designated more than 2,500 NHLs. A NHL is a place that tells an important story that relates to our nation's history.

**Guidelines for Photography at National Historic Landmarks**

After being sure the place is a National Historic Landmark, find out if the place is open to the public. Please do not trespass on private property. In the photo description space, please include the NHL name, city, state, and include an observation—either about the NHL itself, or about why you entered that photograph. You will need to read and agree to the contest rules before you can advance to the group page. Upload your image to the website.



USS Constitution

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Guided Practice: INFORMATIONAL TEXT

**RULES:**

- 1) All entries must be entered before the close of the contest on July 9.
- 2) All photographs that you enter must be your own work and you must own the rights to share the entry.
- 3) All eligible entries must show a National Historic Landmark. A list of NHLs can be found on the National Park Service website at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).
- 4) Only one image per NHL.
- 5) All entries must include the name and location of the NHL, the name of the photographer, and an email where the photographer can be reached.
- 6) Any entry including an individual in the photograph of the NHL must be accompanied by a photo release. However, this is required only if you can recognize the individual in the photograph. If the person is too far away for his or her face to be seen, a photo release is not needed. If your photo is selected, you will be required to provide a signed release form for any recognizable individual in your photograph.
- 7) Many NHLs are privately owned or located on private property. If the NHL is not open to the public, you must obtain and submit written permission from the property owner. Please do not enter onto NHL sites that are not open to the public without permission of the property owner.
- 8) By adding your entry to the 2013 NHL Photo contest, you authorize the National Park Service to:
  - Use your entry for any educational and informational purposes forever.
  - Crop or change your photograph or edit your text.
  - Use your name and state where you live.
- 9) NPS is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, or incomplete entries.
- 10) Judging is based on image quality and expressing the experience of visiting the NHL.

**Contest Entries:** If your photograph is chosen, you will be contacted by NPS staff in August. You must respond by email within seven days or another winner will be selected. Winners will be announced on the NPS.gov NHL Photo Contest page in September. All decisions are final.

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Guided Practice: INFORMATIONAL TEXT

**1 Part A RI.4.3**

What should a photographer do to determine if a place is a National Historic Landmark?

A photographer should check the National Park Service website to determine if a place is a National Historic Landmark.

Look at the rules again. Which rule answers this question?

**Part B RI.4.3**

What should a photographer do right after he or she has determined that a place is a National Historic Landmark?

The photographer should make sure the place is open to the public, so that he or she can take photographs of it.

Read the article again carefully. What should the photographer do once he or she finds a National Historic Landmark to photograph?

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Guided Practice: INFORMATIONAL TEXT

**2 Part A RI.4.3**

What should the photographer do if he or she takes a picture of a person along with a National Historic Landmark?

The photographer should have the person sign a release form.

Carefully read Rule 6. What do you need to ask a person if you take a photograph of them?

**Part B RI.4.3**

When is the action taken in Part A not necessary?

It is not necessary if the person is not recognizable. For example, you do not need a signed release form if the person is standing very far away.

Try to remember the information given in Rule 6. If you can't remember, reread this rule.

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Guided Practice: INFORMATIONAL TEXT

**3 Part A RI.4.1**

What are two types of places that might be National Historic Landmarks?

A baseball stadium and a battlefield might be National Historic Landmarks.

Reread the beginning of the article. Many examples are given here.

**Part B RI.4.3**

Why would these places be National Historic Landmarks?

A National Historic Landmark is a place that has a connection to an important person, event, or discovery. A Civil War battlefield would be connected to the development of our history. A baseball stadium might be connected to an important game or player.

What is a National Historic Landmark? How does a place become recognized as one?

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## INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

**Title:** How Pollen Tells Us About Climate

**Genre:** Expository Text

**Lexile® Measure:** 1020L

**Skill Focus:** Cause and Effect

**Graphic Organizer:** Cause-and-Effect Chart

### Vocabulary


To help with comprehension, review these vocabulary words with students before they read the passage. Write the words on the board and keep them displayed so students can refer to them when they read independently.

**core sample, pollen, problematic, spores**

**Independent Practice: INFORMATIONAL TEXT**  
Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

### How Pollen Tells Us About Climate

by Ross Allen



- 1 People with allergies know what to expect when the flowers are blooming and the bees are buzzing. Every year around springtime, pollen spores cause problems for thousands of people. They suffer from runny noses, uncontrollable sneezing, and itchy, watery eyes. But how can these problematic spores help scientists learn about the climate in the past?
- 2 Pollen grains are the reproductive bodies of seed plants, including flowering plants. Each of these grains has its own special shape depending on what plant it comes from. The walls of the spores are very firm and strong.
- 3 When pollen grains are washed or blown into water, such as lakes or rivers, their tough outer walls protect them. The grains may sink into the mud at the bottoms of ponds, lakes, or oceans. They may stay in these layers of mud for thousands of years, the same way shells and plants sometimes do. Scientists can then sink a tube into the mud and lift out a core sample. This is like when you stick a straw into a milkshake, cover the top with your finger, and lift the straw. Some of the milkshake stays inside the straw. The scientists study the shapes of the pollen grains in the samples. They may find out what kinds of plants were growing at the time the grains sank to the bottom of the water. Knowing this helps the scientists to make educated guesses about the climate at that time. They use information about where plants grow now and in the past and the climates of those areas to understand more about the past.
- 4 Once they take a core sample, the scientists separate the pollen and spores from the rocks and other materials. They use both chemicals and special tools for this work. The grains are very small. Many thousands could fit on the head of a pin. The scientists count and label the grains using a microscope. They may create pictures and charts of the type and amount of pollen in their samples.

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### Common Core State Standards

**RI.4.1** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

**RI.4.4** Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.

**RI.4.5** Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.



## Independent Practice: INFORMATIONAL TEXT

5 By studying pollen from dated core samples, scientists can create records of changes in plants going back for millions of years. Not only can pollen records tell us about the past climate, but they can also tell us how we are affecting our climate. Comparing changes in plants from the last few thousand years to recent changes can also help scientists understand how human actions have affected an environment.

## 1 Part A RI.4.1

Which statement about pollen grains is true?

- ☒ A They are very small.
- ☐ B They have soft walls.
- ☐ C They do not last long.
- ☐ D They do not sink in water.

## Part B RI.4.1

Which sentence from the article supports your answer to Part A?

- ☒ A "Many thousands could fit on the head of a pin."
- ☐ B "Pollen grains are the reproductive bodies of seed plants including flowering plants."
- ☐ C "Each of these grains has its very own special shape depending on what plant it comes from."
- ☐ D "They may stay in these layers of mud for thousands of years the way shells and plants sometimes do."

## 2 Part A RI.4.5

Which organizational pattern best describes paragraph 3?

- ☒ A sequential
- ☐ B comparison
- ☐ C cause/effect
- ☐ D problem/solution

## ANSWER ANALYSIS

**1A** Choice A is the correct answer. Paragraph 4 tells that pollen grains are very small. Choice B is incorrect because pollen grains have firm and strong walls. Choice C is incorrect because they can last for a long time in water. Choice D is incorrect because they do sink in water.

**B** Choice A is the correct answer because this supports the answer in Part A that pollen grains are very small. Choices B, C, and D are incorrect because these statements do not give details about how small the pollen grains are.

**2A** Choice A is the correct answer. Paragraph 3 explains how scientists study pollen grains, step by step in a sequential manner. Choices B, C, and D are incorrect because paragraph 3 doesn't compare things, show a cause and its effect, or tell about a problem and how it was solved.