

FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

Following multi-step directions improves reading comprehension by providing much-needed practice in reading for specific information. Read all directions carefully and follow them in step-by-step order.

SEQUENCING

Look for signal words in a passage to help you order events correctly. Time-order words such as *next, then, finally, last, after, now, first, immediately, soon, before, after, until* and *later* are helpful. Space-order words such as *near, beside, above, right, left, under, behind, top, outside* and *below* are also useful.

USING CONTEXT CLUES

There are several types of context clues readers can look for when confronted with new vocabulary; they include definitions, synonyms, antonyms and more-detailed information.

Definitions: Sometimes a word is defined in the same or next sentence. This is the most obvious clue.

Synonyms: Sometimes a word with a similar meaning is used before or after the new word.

Antonyms: Sometimes a word with the opposite meaning is used before or after the new word. Look for other key words that indicate an opposite idea, such as *but, however, not* and *although*.

Further Information: Sometimes more information is given in the following text. The following is an example: The bear hibernated in the cave. It remained asleep throughout the winter.

MAIN IDEA AND SUPPORTING DETAILS

The main idea is the most important part of a paragraph. It is the main thought that the author is trying to get across to the reader. The rest of the paragraph contains the details that support the main idea. Often the main idea is located in the first sentence of the paragraph. Sometimes, however, the main idea is found at the end or even in the middle of the paragraph.

PREDICTING OUTCOMES

Predicting outcomes is the same as trying to figure out what will happen next. A situation can have several possible outcomes but only one actual outcome. For example, suppose a student loses her homework. The reader can guess that the teacher will give her a bad mark or that the teacher will allow her time to do it in class without any penalty. The real outcome is what actually happens. Readers should look for information in the text and pictures to help predict outcomes. For example, if the girl usually has her homework on time you might predict the second choice; if she has lost her homework many times, you might predict the first choice. Carefully read all the facts and use your prior experiences to help you make predictions about what will happen.

MAKING INFERENCES

Information is not always stated directly. Figuring out unstated facts and opinions is often called “reading between the lines” or “making inferences.” Use prior knowledge and experiences, story clues, chapter titles and picture clues to make reasonable guesses about a passage. For example, if a story character loses his dog, you can infer that the character is sad.

COMPARING AND CONTRASTING

When developing an idea, writers often compare people, places, things or ideas to present their thoughts. Comparisons can help us make choices. *Compare* may focus on likenesses alone or on both likenesses and differences. *Contrast* always emphasises differences. Some words and phrases that help us compare are *both, like, as...as, in the same way, similarly* and *also*. Some words and phrases that help us contrast are *on the other hand, although, but, however, unlike* and *in contrast*.

IDENTIFYING CAUSE AND EFFECT

Writers often use the relationship between cause and effect to develop their ideas. Some words and phrases which help make this connection are *caused by, due to, if...then, as a result, therefore, so, because, for* and *brought about*.

The following sentence is an example of the cause-and-effect relationship: I forgot to study for the test, so I did poorly on it. “I forgot to study” is the cause and “I did poorly on it” is the effect. Sometimes – as in the following sentence – the cause is not stated directly: Jane tripped on the ball that was left in the middle of the floor. Even though no words such as *because* were used, we can infer that Jane tripped *because* the ball was left in the middle of the floor. “The ball was left in the middle of the floor” is the cause and “Jane tripped” is the effect.

INTERPRETING AND EVALUATING INFORMATION

Interpreting Information: Information is often presented in the form of charts, graphs and tables. These graphics help us organise relationships. Carefully examine information presented in non-text formats when reading or looking for information.

Evaluating Information: There are different types of writing. Each type of writing calls for different kinds of evaluation. When reading narrative writing, you must know whether the story is **fiction** (an imaginative creation) or **nonfiction** (based on facts); some writing, called historical fiction, has elements of each. When reading persuasive writing, you must know whether the author is stating **facts**, which can be proved, or **opinions**, which cannot be proved. You should also be able to determine whether the author is **for** or **against** an idea.

Following Directions

State Scramble

Following Directions: Following multi-step directions improves reading comprehension by providing practice in reading for specific information.

Unscramble the mixed-up state or territory names in the first column and write the correct spelling for each. Then find the correct capital city for each state or territory in the box and write it in the second column. In the last column, write the postal abbreviation for each state or territory.

Hobart	Melbourne	Brisbane	Canberra
Adelaide	Perth	Darwin	

1. OCTAIRVI _____

2. HTNREONR TIRRETYRO _____

3. ENSEULNDAQ _____

4. TNEEWRS AAATILUSR _____

5. SNAMAAIT _____

6. ALIANUSTRPA CLATIR
RTIREOYRT _____

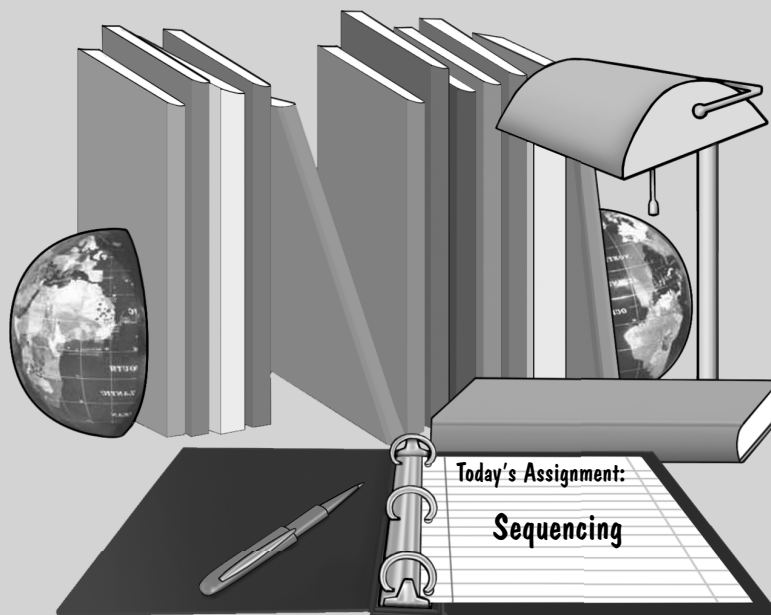
7. UOHTS LIATSURAA _____

Challenge Activity

Create your own scrambled-word game. Write specific instructions. Exchange with your classmates to solve.

Sequencing

In order to understand what the writer is trying to tell us, we must understand the order in which events occur. There are words and phrases which help clarify that order. Most stories and news articles are told to us in time order – the order in which things happen in time. Some words and phrases which clarify time order are *first*, *second*, *third* and so on; *after*; *finally*; *to begin*; *next*; *then*; *before*; *in conclusion* and *at last*. Sometimes things are described to us in space, or position, order. Some words and phrases which clarify space order are *near*, *far*, *beneath*, *in front of*, *top*, *bottom*, *right*, *left*, *underneath*, *inside*, *above*, *nearby*, *in between* and *behind*.



Sequencing

A Confusing Message

Sequencing: To understand what the writer is trying to tell us, we must know the order in which events occur. There are words and phrases which help clarify that order.


The sentences on the postcard below are not in the proper sequence. Use signal words to help Alex put them in the correct order so he can learn about Edward's holiday in Queensland.

June 25

Dear Alex,

Each theme park had so many rides and shows that it was impossible to see and do everything. I am really enjoying our family holiday in Queensland and wish you were here too. Yesterday, the fourth day of our trip, we went to the marine park, home to many interesting sea animals. Our next and final stop will be Noosa. I will be home next Tuesday! I loved watching the dolphins and whales do their incredible tricks! We spent the first three days visiting the four theme parks near our hotel. We will visit our relatives there and will do some fishing near Noosa Heads.

Your friend,
Edward



Rewrite the message in the correct sequence in the space provided.
