

Non-Fiction Toolkit Focus: Recount Texts

Recounts are one of the easier text-types to learn. Because recounts focus on re-telling what happened, they have many of the same key ingredients as stories. The main difference is that, whereas stories are imagined, recounts tell or, purport to tell, events that actually happened, in the first person if it is a personal recount or third person if the events happened to others. Recounts are a common form non-fiction writing with applications throughout the school and in most areas of the curriculum, ranging from formal and accurate reporting to anecdotes and jokes. Like narrative, effective recounting relies on the ability of the writer to relate events in interesting ways. Like all text types, variants of recounts can occur and they can be combined with other text types. For example, newspaper 'reports' on an event often consist of a recount of the event plus elements of explanation or directions, information from other text types. The recount toolkit ideas below can be used in conjunction with ideas drawn from the fiction toolkits e.g. to develop character, settings plot, suspense etc. where they may be equally relevant depending on the topic and the audience.

Year R,	Year 1, 2	Year 3, 4	Year 5, 6
<p>Imitation: learn and retell simple recounts based on real experiences that all children in the class have shared</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using maps and props, adapt model(s) to retell other experiences in sequence Use complete sentences in sequence Use past tense Use some simple time connectives e.g. <i>first, then, after that, finally</i> 	<p>Building on N/YR work: Organise recounts in sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening to describe <i>When? Who? What? Where?</i> to create introductory sentences which capture the main event e.g. <i>Last Thursday afternoon Mrs James took us to the fire station to see the fire engines.</i> A middle section to expand opening and describe events in detail, e.g. <i>We went by coach after lunch. The fire officer, who was called Mr Bunday, showed us the fire engine. I sat in the driver's seat then. ... Next we looked at the ladders and hoses. ... Luckily there were no fires so ... etc.</i> A conclusion to round it off, and show how it felt. <i>When we got back to school my mum was waiting. I liked the blue flashing light and the siren but ... etc</i> <p>Use past tense consistently and correctly Use a range of time connectives and conjunctions to sequence sentences <i>first, after that, when, but, then, so, or, because</i> etc. Use technical vocabulary for accuracy e.g. <i>windscreen, siren, valve</i> . Choose adjectives and similes to add detail and precision e.g. <i>brass nozzles, flashing blue light, as high as ...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add information using <i>who/which</i> clauses: <i>The fireman, who showed us his helmet, said ...</i> <p>Use first person consistently: <i>we, us</i> for shared experiences; <i>I, me</i> for personal experiences.</p>	<p>Building on Y1/Y2 work: Create well-crafted openings using complex sentences to capture reader's attention e.g. Organise text into paragraphs introduced with topic sentences</p> <p>Link paragraphs appropriately with a range of connectives to steer readers through the sequence, and provide hooks inviting them to read on e.g. to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sequence events: <i>firstly, secondly, later, etc ...</i> add information: <i>also, additionally, furthermore, not only ... etc.</i> change direction: <i>but, however, although</i> etc. conclude and summarise: <i>finally ... , in the end ... , at last ... , etc.</i> <p>Use past tenses verb appropriately e.g. <i>We climbed up the slope ...</i> (simple past); <i>While we were climbing up the slope ...</i> (continuous past); <i>when we had climbed up the slope ...</i> (past perfect); <i>We had been climbing up the slope while ...</i> (past perfect continuous); - NB no need to name these</p> <p>Create 1st person recounts based on individual and shared experiences, show how you feel – your emotions and attitudes by describing settings, people, objects so the reader can see through your eyes.</p> <p>Create 3rd person recounts for specific audiences e.g. newspaper reports police reports Use sentences of different types and lengths to vary the pace, combine information, create emphasis, effect e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> long and short sentences: <i>We left the house full of energy and looking forward to trying out the raft for the first time. ...; 'Got it', he shouted ... etc.</i> sentences with 'drop-in' phrases and clauses <i>The beaver, with the rope between his teeth, was heading for the weir ... etc.</i> a variety of sentence openers: <i>The beaver began chewing hungrily ... , Hungrily, the beaver began chewing ... , etc.</i> Questions and exclamations: <i>Why would he swim so close to the raft? we wondered ... , Look out, or he'll start eating the rope!</i> 	<p>Building on Y3/4 work: Create recounts for a wide range of purposes with varying degrees of formality e.g. letters to friends; reporting facts accurately to inform others; an official police report</p> <p>Use recounts to explore alternative points of view e.g. from stories or linked to other subjects of the curriculum, writing in role as a character e.g. as an evacuee, a Roman soldier etc.</p> <p>Use 1st and 3rd persons to recount and report, and as well as using past tense for narrating, experiment with using present tense, as in a sports commentary – explore the effects of changing from one tense to another.</p> <p>Create and use banks of specific and technical vocabulary (nouns, verbs, adjectives, subordinate clauses) to make meaning precise and accurate e.g. <i>The tractors ran on diesel fuel and had specially designed caterpillar tracks to climb the steep inclines left by the quarrying ...</i></p> <p>Use direct and reported speech appropriately: <i>'Don't put your fingers near the machinery,' said our guide; (direct) ... our guide told us to keep our fingers away from the machinery ... (indirect/reported) etc.</i></p> <p>Vary sentence structure, length and type e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> complex sentences to combine information effectively: <i>we decided, without thinking about what might be inside, to force open the lid ...</i> Sentences with lists of three: <i>... then the box, the shelf and the chair all came crashing down ...</i> Active and passive voices: <i>Jack left the ladder where it was ... but the gate had been fastened with a piece of wire ...</i> Conditional and hypothetical (<i>if ... then</i>) sentences e.g.: <i>If we had wanted (I had we wanted ...) to take the dog with us, we could not have gone on the bus ...</i> Varied sentence openers ... Questions and exclamations ...