**Instructional Focus**

**DESCRIPTIVE TEXT PATTERN**
Writing that describes the attributes of a person, place, thing, or concept is organized using descriptive text pattern. Descriptive text pattern has a main topic and often a number of subtopics. Details are used to describe the topic. A wide variety of writing forms are organized using descriptive text pattern, including information reports, brochures, and advertisements.

**Instructional Approach**

**SHARED READING**
Transparency 10: A Grassland Food Chain
“Be an Arctic Explorer!” Student Book 4a, p. 57

Selection available on audio CD.

**Expectations**

**LANGUAGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral (O)</th>
<th>Reading (R)</th>
<th>Writing (W)</th>
<th>Media Literacy (ML)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicate ideas and information orally in a clear, coherent manner</td>
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<td>Demonstrate understanding of a text by summarizing important ideas and citing supporting details</td>
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<td>Recognize different organizational patterns in texts and explain how text patterns help readers understand</td>
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<td>Identify elements and characteristics of some media forms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Produce media texts for specific purposes and audiences, using appropriate media forms, conventions, and techniques</td>
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**SCIENCE CONNECTION**

**Life Systems:** Recognize that animals and plants live in specific habitats because they are dependent on those habitats and have adapted to them.

**About This Selection**

This inviting travel brochure describes the land, climate, animals, plants, and visitors on a trip to Canada’s Arctic.

The straightforward text and the photographs make the brochure accessible to most students. Some vocabulary may be a challenge to students unfamiliar with the Arctic.

**ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING**

**Ongoing Observation**

- Students who understand will recognize that all the text is about a single topic
- Identify chunks of text that present attributes of the topic
- Use details to understand and visualize the topic
- Explain how recognizing the characteristics of descriptive text pattern helps the reader to understand what is read

**Differentiated Instruction**

- If students do not understand, use Using a Familiar Context (see Differentiated Instruction: Extra Support, p. 52).

For extra challenge,

- Use Recognizing Descriptive Text Pattern (see Differentiated Instruction: Extra Challenge, p. 53).

**Assessment**

**Key Assessment Questions**

- What are the characteristics of descriptive text pattern? Provide an example of each characteristic from “Be an Arctic Explorer!”?
- How did recognizing the characteristics of descriptive text pattern help you to understand what you read?

**Assessment Tools**

- BLM 2: Oral Language Tracking Sheet
- BLM 3: Small-Group Observation Tracking Sheet
- BLM 17: Strategy Rubric Strip—Identifying Characteristics of Descriptive Text Pattern
Shared Reading

Transparency 10

Use Transparency 10: A Grassland Food Chain and its related teacher notes in Transparencies for Shared Reading and Modelling to model how readers aid comprehension by recognizing the characteristics of descriptive text pattern.

Before

Predicting

1. Tell students to imagine they are going on a trip to a destination of their choice. Challenge them to brainstorm questions they would have as they prepare for the trip. Record these questions on the board.

   (How hot will it be? Can you rent snorkelling equipment?)

   Challenge students to group the responses and name the resulting categories of information. (temperature, sights, activities, special clothes or equipment, hotels and restaurants)

2. Point out that thinking about how information is organized and presented can help them to understand what they are reading.

3. Remind students of how identifying the characteristics of descriptive text pattern in Transparency 10: A Grassland Food Chain aided their comprehension.

Vocabulary

camouflage a physical appearance that makes a person, animal, or thing blend into its natural surroundings
caribou a reindeer living in the northern areas of North America
kayaks narrow boats with pointed ends that have a small opening in the middle for the user
lichen a flowerless plant that grows on rocks and trees
muskoxen large, shaggy, horned animals
tundra a treeless plain in arctic regions

Strategy Tip: Using the dictionary to find meaning

Ask students to look up the word “lichen” in the dictionary and read the definition. Help them to pick out familiar words from the definition, such as flowerless and plant, to arrive at a general understanding of the word. Challenge students to locate the word in the text on Student Book page 58 and combine the dictionary definition with context clues to deepen their understanding. You may wish to use Word Study Master 5.
During

INTRODUCING THE TEXT

1. Let students preview the brochure briefly. Ask:
   - What is a brochure? (a folded piece of paper or small booklet with information)
   - What is this brochure about? (Canada’s Arctic)
   - What kind of information do you expect to find out by reading the brochure? (what the Arctic is like in summer and winter; what animals are found there; what sports are played there)

2. Direct students’ attention to the photographs. To preview vocabulary, use the word “caribou” as students look at the photograph on page 58 and the word “camouflage” as students look at the photograph of a polar bear on page 59.

3. Read Understanding Text Patterns on Student Book page 57 aloud to students. Tell them that they will be learning to identify characteristics of descriptive text pattern as they read this travel brochure.

READING AND DISCUSSING THE TEXT

1. Have students read the title, the introductory sentence, and the sticky notes on page 57. Ask:
   - What characteristics of descriptive text pattern do you see right at the beginning? (topic is clearly identified)

2. Direct students to read the heading and the sticky note at the top of page 58. Ask:
   - What is a chunk of text? (a section of text about one idea)
   - How do you know you are reading a new chunk of text? (new heading; new paragraph)
   - What is this chunk of text about? (summer in the Arctic)

Differentiated Instruction: Extra Support

Using a Familiar Context
Use a familiar habitat context to help students understand descriptive text pattern. Have students choose an example they are familiar with, for example, a forest. Ask questions such as the following to draw out categories of information:

- What is it?
- What does it look like?
- What grows there?
- What lives there?

Use a web to capture students’ ideas. Organize the ideas to show that they are about one topic or thing and that they can be organized into categories, or chunks of information.
3. Have students read the first two paragraphs on page 58 and then read the second sticky note. Ask:
- **What details do you learn about what the Arctic looks like?** (soil is thin; poppies, lichen, and wintergreen grow in it)
- **What are all the sentences in this chunk about?** *(the Arctic land)*

4. Instruct students to read the third paragraph on page 58. Ask:
- **What details do you learn about Arctic wildlife?** *(variety of animals, such as caribou, whales, snowy owls)*
- **What are all the sentences in this chunk about?** *(Arctic wildlife)*

5. Have students read the heading at the top of page 59. Ask:
- **What is this chunk of text about?** *(winter in the Arctic)*

Have students read to the end of page 59. Read the last sticky note together. Ask:
- **What details help you imagine yourself on an Arctic vacation?**

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**Differentiated Instruction: Extra Challenge**

**Recognizing Descriptive Text Pattern**

Challenge students to locate examples of descriptive text pattern in classroom and library resources. Let students work in pairs or small groups to create webs showing how information in different texts is organized in descriptive text pattern. Ask them to identify the purpose and audience for each example.

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**After**

These questions and activities give students the opportunity to share and consolidate their learning about identifying characteristics of descriptive text pattern. You may use BLM 2: Oral Language Tracking Sheet and BLM 3: Small-Group Observation Tracking Sheet to track student progress through the unit.

**REFLECTING ON THE STRATEGY**

1. Tell students that a web can be used to show descriptive text pattern. Guide students to construct a web for this brochure. Draw the web on the board. Ask:
- **What is the topic of the travel brochure?** *(vacationing in the Arctic)*
• How can we show that this is the main topic? (put it in the centre of the web)

• What two chunks of information (attributes) did we read? (Arctic summer and winter)

• What kind of details were in the summer chunk? (what it looks like, what animals live there).

2. Complete the web with students.

3. Remind students of the Before activity in which they identified categories of information they would need to plan a vacation. Ask:

• Do you think it would be easy to add chunks of text to this brochure using the same text pattern? (yes, because you can have as many chunks as you want as long as they are about the same topic)

• If you added these chunks of text to the brochure, what would you need to find out? (details about each new chunk, such as a list of restaurants)

• Where would you put these chunks on the web? (new line coming from the centre of the web)

4. Talk about how recognizing descriptive text pattern can help readers. Ask:

• How does a clearly defined topic help you? (helps me organize information in my head)

• How does recognizing descriptive text pattern help you to read? (helps me figure out how information will be presented; helps me remember information)

ORAL: DISCUSSING THE TEXT

1. Why might a person decide to take a vacation in the Arctic? (to see the landscape and wildlife; to participate in winter sports; to experience an Arctic winter; to learn about an exciting habitat)

2. Do you think the Arctic is a popular vacation spot? Why? (no, because it is very cold and far away; probably expensive to get there)

3. Do you think it is good for tourists to visit the Arctic? (no, it might harm the animals and the environment; yes, people can see animals they’ve never seen before)

4. If you visited the Arctic, what would you like to see the most?

5. What are travel brochures designed to do? (attract tourists)

6. What kinds of information would you not expect to see in a travel brochure? (crime rates; news of high prices; discussion of ugly sights; anything negative)

7. Whose point of view is represented in travel brochures? (people who have positive feelings about a place; people who want to attract customers, usually because they are selling something, such as travel packages) Whose is not? (people who dislike a location or dislike tourists are not represented)

MEDIA: ADDING TO THE BROCHURE

1. Have students listen as you read pages 58 and 59 aloud. Ask:

• Imagine you have not seen the travel brochure. What information do you get from hearing the text? (the same facts) What information is missing? (you don’t get pictures, so you don’t know what animals or landscape looks like; you don’t see the design, which makes it look more exciting)

2. Give students a few minutes to study the travel brochure. Ask them what features give the brochure a distinctive look. (jazzy headings, snowflake background, photos and captions, the special “Remember!” note).

3. Remind students of their earlier discussion about what information they would like to have if they were planning a trip. Let students draft text and sketch a layout for another brochure page that gives information on one or more of the topics they would be interested to know about (for example, what special clothing or equipment is necessary, where to stay, what to eat).

4. Encourage students to store their writing and sketches in their writing folders.
**ORAL: PROS AND CONS OF ZOOS**

1. As a class, make a list of the animals mentioned in “Be an Arctic Explorer!” Ask:
   - **Have you ever seen any of these animals? Where?**

   Most likely students will have seen these animals in zoos and animal parks as opposed to in their natural habitat. Use this point as a springboard to a discussion about zoos. Ask students if they think people should build zoos. If necessary, introduce the concept of “pros and cons” and, with the class, identify some examples of each.

2. Organize students into groups of four and give them 5 minutes to discuss the pros and cons of zoos. Each group should find at least three pros and three cons. Have each group member assume a role in the discussion: leader, recorder, timekeeper, presenter. Instruct groups to record their work on chart paper.

3. Ask each group to present its pros and cons to the class.

4. When all groups have presented, give students a few minutes to consider all of the pros and cons and then make up their own minds as to whether or not they support zoos. Take a class tally on the result.

5. Guide students to think about how writers select facts and ideas to suit their purposes. Ask:
   - **If you wanted to write a letter asking people to contribute money to the zoo, which ideas on our lists would you use?** (pros)
   - **If you wanted the government to ban zoos, which ideas on our lists would you use?** (cons)
   - **If you wanted your local zoo to get more land for large animals, which ideas would you use?** (probably a combination of pros and cons)

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**Word Study**

**Verbs: Powerhouse of Writing**

1. Write the following sentence on the board:
   
   Get in one of our dogsleds or snowmobiles.

   Ask students to visualize what is happening in this sentence.

2. Have students turn to Student Book page 59, locate the part about dogsleds and snowmobiles in the brochure, and read the sentence. Write the sentence on the board:
   
   Jump on one of our dogsleds or snowmobiles.

3. Underline the verbs in the two sentences. Ask:
   - **Which sentence gives you a better picture of what is happening? Why?** (*“jump on” is more active than “get in”*)

4. Have students locate other verbs in the brochure that help them visualize, such as *speeding down a rushing river* and *snapping photos*.

5. Ask students to each select one piece of writing from their folders and find a sentence in it with a verb that could be replaced with a stronger one. Encourage them to revise the sentence, strengthening the verb and making any other improvements they can find. You may wish to post the pairs of sentences for others to read.
### Key Assessment Questions

Students may respond to the Key Assessment Questions either in writing or orally in a conference. Ask:

- What are the characteristics of descriptive text pattern? Provide an example of each characteristic from “Be an Arctic Explorer!”
- How did recognizing the characteristics of descriptive text pattern help you understand what you read?

Record individual progress on BLM 17: Strategy Rubric Strip—Identifying Characteristics of Descriptive Text Pattern.

### Next Steps

For students who need extra support with identifying characteristics of descriptive text pattern, use “Marshes” in Student Book 4a, pp. 60–62, for guided reading.

For students who understand the characteristics of descriptive text pattern, use “Marshes” in Student Book 4a, pp. 60–62, for independent practice.

### Rubric Strip: Strategy Identifying Characteristics of Descriptive Text Pattern

A full-size version of this rubric, suitable for recording assessments, is provided on BLM 17.

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### Cross-Curricular Application

- applies the knowledge of descriptive text pattern in other areas of the curriculum

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Nelson Literacy 4 Teacher's Resource: Habitats and Communities