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**FUNCTIONAL SKILLS**

English Level 1



**Area: Reading**

Criterion: 14. Understand organisational and structural features and use them to locate relevant information (e.g. index, menus, subheadings, paragraphs) in a range of straightforward texts

**Organisational features**

Organisational features are things that you can see within a text that help you find information. Highfield use the term ‘organisational features’ to cover both organisational and structural features.

**Title** – Titles, or headings, are a great example of an organisational feature.

The title tells the reader what the text is about. In the example below, the title clearly tells us that this text will be the writer’s opinion on museums without reading the entire text.

Why I HATE museums

By Tracy Smith

I’ve always disliked museums, but I decided to give them one more chance. I was greatly disappointed!

**Subheadings** – Subheadings are similar to titles. The difference is that a title is used at the beginning of a text, whereas subheadings are used throughout the text to introduce new paragraphs or sections.

Why I HATE museums

By Tracy Smith

I’ve always disliked museums, but I decided to give them one more chance. I was greatly disappointed!

**Boring**

Museums are just boring. There’s rows and rows of different sized rocks in glass cases that all look the same, each with a plate of writing that tells you what it used to be. I couldn’t read most of it because it was sending me to sleep!

**Quiet!**

Everyone’s so afraid to speak and disturb the silence. It’s ridiculous. I’d probably enjoy museums more if I wasn’t scared of being told off by a member of staff that looks suspiciously like my old teacher.

**Bullet points** –Bullet points can be used to break up a long list, making it easier to read.

Ingredients:

* flour
* sugar
* butter
* 2 eggs

**Numbered list** – A numbered list can also be used to give an order to a list. We can improve on the method section above by using a numbered list.

Method:

1. Mix the sugar and butter until it’s smooth
2. Fold in the flour and eggs
3. Add in a few drops of vanilla extract
4. Pour the batter into a cake tin

**Captions** – A caption is used to give additional information or context, by linking an image to the text.

Method:

1. Mix the sugar and butter until it’s smooth
2. Fold in the flour and eggs
3. Add in a few drops of vanilla extract
4. Pour the batter into a cake tin

The batter should be smooth and easy to pour into the tin

**Text boxes** – Text boxes are just what they sound like. They are boxes that offer extra information. They’re quite popular in adverts as they capture the reader’s attention and can be read quickly, so they’re perfect for a summary.

Come and visit the Highfield Café!

We’d like to welcome you to our brand-new café at   
12 Lowfield Street. After a fantastic opening, we   
want to keep the fun going so we’re offering a   
25% discount on all hot drinks for the next week.

Our talented baristas can make lattes, mochas, espresso, hot chocolate and many more!

25% discount on all hot drinks!

**Table** – A table is made up of columns and rows. They often contain facts and can be used to compare information, as well as organise it.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Highfield café work schedule** | | | |
|  | **6:30-10:00** | **10:00-14:30** | **14:30-19:30** |
| **Monday** | Tasha | Steph | Mike |
| **Tuesday** | Richard | Steph | Lee |
| **Wednesday** | Richard | Steph | Mike |
| **Thursday** | Tasha | Richard | Lee |
| **Friday** | Tasha | Nina | Mike |
| **Saturday** | Nina | Sharon | Lee |
| **Sunday** | Nina | Sharon | George |

*Note: Rows go across and columns go down.*

*This table tells us who is working on each day and at what time.*

**Footnote** – A footnote is another way to give additional information and can be found at the bottom of a text. The information is linked to the main body of the text, often shown by an asterisk \* or small numbers1.

**Memo for Highfield Café staff**

Hi team,

We’ve added a new item to our menu. We now sell pecan pie\* – a rich buttery filling of roasted pecans inside a flaky, golden crust. As always, our pies can be served with ice cream, whipped cream or custard.

\*Allergen and dietary information: pecan pie contains **nuts**, **eggs** and **dairy**.

**Using the information provided above, answer the following questions.**

**Question 1**

Identify each organisational feature in the text below.

You should be able to find **three** organisational features.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| How to save money on your weekly shop  Many people find that the cost of food can quickly add up. However, with a few smart choices, you can save money and still eat well. Here are some tips to help you save on your next shopping trip.  First, always make a shopping list. This will help you avoid buying items you don’t need. Try to plan your meals for the week so you can be sure you only buy what you’ll use. Second, look for discounts and offers. Supermarkets often have sales or deals on items like bread, fruit and vegetables. Buying in bulk can also save you money in the long run.  Next, consider buying supermarket own-brand products. These are often much cheaper than branded items but are still of good quality. Finally, avoid shopping when you’re hungry. Studies show that people tend to buy more when they shop on an empty stomach!  Here is an example of how you could plan your meals for the week and track your spending:   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Day** | **Meal** | **Estimated cost\*** | | Monday | Pasta and veg | £4 | | Tuesday | Chicken stir-fry | £5 | | Wednesday | Jacket potato | £3 | | Thursday | Soup and bread | £3 | | Friday | Fish and chips | £6 |   \*Prices are approximate and may vary depending on the supermarket. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Organisational feature 1:**  **Organisational feature 2:**  **Organisational feature 3:** |

**Question 2**

Explain how the organisational features in the text below help the reader.

|  |
| --- |
| Easy ways to save energy at home  By making small changes to your daily routine, you can reduce the amount of energy you use and lower your bills.    Turn off appliances  One of the easiest ways to save energy is by turning off appliances when you’re not using them. Things like TVs, computers and lights can use up a lot of electricity if left on for too long. Make sure to switch them off when you’ve finished.  Saving energy at home is important for both the environment and your wallet  Use energy-efficient bulbs  Energy-efficient light bulbs, such as LED bulbs, use much less electricity than standard bulbs. They also last longer, which means you won’t have to replace them as often. Switching to energy-efficient bulbs is a simple way to save both energy and money.  Check your heating  Heating is one of the biggest energy users in most homes. To save energy, try setting your thermostat a few degrees lower in winter. You can also close your curtains at night to keep the warmth in.  Small steps to save energy:   * turn off the lights when you leave the room * unplug your chargers when you’re not using them * wash clothes at 30 degrees * use a clothesline instead of a tumble dryer |

|  |
| --- |
| **Organisational feature 1: title**  **Organisational feature 2: subheadings**  **Organisational feature 3: caption to image**  **Organisational feature 4: bullet points** |

**Exam practice**

**Text A**

|  |
| --- |
| **The benefits of walking**  Walking is one of the easiest and most effective ways to stay healthy. It doesn’t require any special equipment and you can do it almost anywhere. Whether you’re walking to work, school or just around the neighbourhood, adding more walking to your day can have a big impact on your health.  Walking helps improve your heart health by lowering your risk of heart disease. It’s also a great way to maintain a healthy weight. Regular walks can help reduce stress and improve your mood too.  To add more walking to your day, you could:   * walk instead of driving short distances * take the stairs instead of the lift * go for a walk during your lunch break * walk your dog, or offer to walk a friend’s dog * set yourself a daily step goal |

**Exam practice 1**

In Text A, which organisational feature is used?

Tick (P) **one** box

(1 mark)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Subheadings |  |
| **B** | Caption |  |
| **C** | Bullet points |  |
| **D** | Footnote |  |

**Text B**

|  |
| --- |
| **Improving recycling in Highfield**  Recycling plays an important role in reducing waste and protecting the environment, but many people in Highfield do not recycle enough. The following report outlines some of the key issues and suggests practical ways to increase recycling.  The main problems affecting recycling in Highfield include:   1. Lack of knowledge about what can be recycled 2. Not enough recycling bins in public areas 3. Unclear information on recycling collection days   To improve recycling rates\*, we should:   1. Launch a campaign to inform people about recyclable materials 2. Increase the number of recycling bins in parks, streets and shopping areas 3. Provide clear reminders about collection days   Taking these steps can make a big difference in encouraging more people to recycle, which will help to reduce waste and improve our environment.  \*These recommendations are based on recent surveys of local residents. |

**Exam practice 2**

Explain how the following organisational features in Text B help the reader.

(2 marks)

|  |
| --- |
| **Numbered list:**  **Footnote:** |

**Answers**

**Organisational features**

**Question 1**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| How to save money on your weekly shop  Many people find that the cost of food can quickly add up. However, with a few smart choices, you can save money and still eat well. Here are some tips to help you save on your next shopping trip.  First, always make a shopping list. This will help you avoid buying items you don’t need. Try to plan your meals for the week so you can be sure you only buy what you’ll use. Second, look for discounts and offers. Supermarkets often have sales or deals on items like bread, fruit and vegetables. Buying in bulk can also save you money in the long run.  Next, consider buying supermarket own-brand products. These are often much cheaper than branded items but are still of good quality. Finally, avoid shopping when you’re hungry. Studies show that people tend to buy more when they shop on an empty stomach!  Here is an example of how you could plan your meals for the week and track your spending:   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Day** | **Meal** | **Estimated cost\*** | | Monday | Pasta and veg | £4 | | Tuesday | Chicken stir-fry | £5 | | Wednesday | Jacket potato | £3 | | Thursday | Soup and bread | £3 | | Friday | Fish and chips | £6 |   \*Prices are approximate and may vary depending on the supermarket. |

**Organisational feature 1:**

Title

**Organisational feature 2:**

Table

**Organisational feature 3:**

Footnote

**Question 2**

|  |
| --- |
| **Organisational feature 1: Title**  This tells the reader that the text is about saving energy at home.  **Organisational feature 2: Subheadings**  These tell the reader what the next paragraphs are going to be about.  **Organisational feature 3: Caption to image**  This tells the reader how the image links to the main text.  **Organisational feature 4: Bullet points**  The bullet points break the list up and make it easier to read. |

**Exam practice**

**Exam practice 1**

The correct answer is C) Bullet points

**Exam practice 2**

|  |
| --- |
| **Numbered list:** (1 mark)  The numbered list gives the list an order and makes it easier to read.  **Footnote:** (1 mark)  The footnote gives additional information and tells us where the recommendations have come from. |

**Your functional skills exam**

Your functional skills exams will consist of 2 papers.  
These papers will take place over the following time periods:

* Reading – 60 minutes
* Writing – 60 minutes

Further information on the format that your test will take can be obtained from your training provider.

**Hints and tips**

* Find out what format your exam will be in. It may be paper-based   
  or on-screen.
* Plan what you are going to revise in advance. Don’t leave it until the last minute.
* Do as many past papers as you can so you are prepared for the day. If possible, try to complete the past papers following the same format as the actual exam.
* Find a quiet place to study and revise. It helps to sit at a table or a desk, don’t revise in bed.
* Don’t stay up all night revising the night before your exam. It’s important to have a good rest so you feel refreshed and ready to go.
* Read the question 3 times. The first time to ensure you understand what is being asked, the second time to get an understanding of what you need to do, and a third time to figure out exactly what maths techniques you should be applying.
* If you are struggling with a question, skip it and come back to it later. Try not to sit getting worked up about a difficult question, it will only waste exam time. Move on and come back to it after you have answered the other questions.
* Take note of the number of marks available. This will give you an indication of how much working out you must show. For example, 1 mark will need an answer only and more marks will need you to show your working out.
* When you’ve finished the exam, go back and check your answers. If you still have time remaining, use it to check your answers and when you have checked your answers check them again.