

Text Structure and Language Features: Example 1



Text Structure - Explanation

Statement of phenomenon

Explanation sequence

Background information

ALUMINIUM RECYCLING

Aluminium is the most abundant metal on Earth. It forms about one - twelfth, by weight, of the Earth's outer layer, the crust. Pure aluminium is very light, but not very strong. However, combined with other chemical elements such as copper, magnesium or silicon, it forms extremely strong alloys, which are mixtures of metals with other metals or substances. In addition, it doesn't rust, so it's used for making aircraft, ships, cooking utensils, cooking foil and takeaway containers for food and drinks.

Aluminium, like many other products, can be recycled. Recycling reduces waste. Recycled aluminium uses only one-twentieth of the energy used to produce aluminium from its ore, which is the original state of the mineral when it's dug out of the earth.

Aluminium drink cans are recycled at a recycling plant. Used cans are collected by rubbish collectors, partly crushed to save space, then taken to the can recycling plant. At the plant, machines compress thousands of cans into a large bale, or square of solid material.

These bales are then melted in a furnace, to produce molten aluminium. Next this molten liquid is cooled and pressed into a thin sheet of metal. The cans are punched out of this metal sheet, then they are decorated and filled.

The entire journey around the aluminium recycling circuit, from being one drinks can to another drinks can, may be as short as one month.

Recycling is a very important way to conserve the Earth's natural resources.

Language Features

Use of timeless present typical of much scientific writing, e.g. Aluminium is one of the most abundant metals on Earth.

Use of word chains to build topic information, e.g. aluminium, metals, elements, combined, alloys

Use of relating verbs, e.g. It forms about one-twelfth

Use of action verbs to build sequence of events, e.g. are collected, crushed, compress, pressed

Use of action verbs to create causal relation, e.g. are melted, are pressed

Use of passive voice, e.g. are decorated and filled (to generalise agency)

Use of contractions e.g. it doesn't rust, so it's used for...

Use of general nouns, e.g. metals, month

Use of technical language, e.g. silicon, molten, crust

Use of classifying adjectives, e.g. recycling circuit, drink cans

Use of detailed noun groups, e.g. the Earth's natural resources

Use of time conjunctions to sequence events, e.g. then, next

Use of adverbial phrases, e.g. into a thin sheet of metal

Use of compound and complex sentences