

# Sequencing

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## Sequencing

*Chris Joyce (2008)*

Sequencing involves organising things into a chronological or logical order.

Students can sequence

- statements
- pictures
- numbers
- patterns.

Students can demonstrate a sequence by

- organising picture cards
- organising statement cards
- drawing a series of pictures or patterns
- writing a series of statements
- completing or drawing a flow chart
- completing a number line.

## When to use

Sequencing is useful for assessing students' understanding of the links between events or ideas, for example:

- the development of a plot or character
- observations (e.g., a life cycle, moon phases)
- the logical order to write instructions (e.g., a recipe, planning a fair test or statistical investigation)
- identifying patterns (e.g., ordering numbers from biggest to smallest).

The knowledge or skills being used include:

- recall
- logical thinking
- visual perception
- mathematical knowledge
- vocabulary knowledge.

## The theory

- Sequencing is a tool that helps students organise ideas, information, patterns, or unfolding events.
- As they order things, they need to be looking for evidence to support their decisions. The sequence they put together provides evidence of their thinking processes.
- Sequencing provides a framework for considering cause and effect.

## How the strategy works

As students carry out sequencing activities they have to think about the logical order of events or patterns. This can provide evidence of:

- their comprehension of aspects of written text
- whether they can link pieces of information
- their ability to recognise patterns.

## What to do

- Provide statements, pictures, patterns, or numbers that can be ordered into a logical sequence.
- Put on cards or cut out so students can move them around to experiment with the order.
- Ask students to put in order. The instructions should clearly describe the order expected, such as first to last, biggest to smallest, brightest to darkest.
- Ask students to justify their decisions.
- An alternative is to use a worksheet and number each item. Students put the numbers in the correct sequence. However, this is more difficult for students of all ages.

When interpreting the sequence, look for:

- the logic used to order the parts
- choices made where an alternative is viable
- the degree of correctness. Has one incorrect response influenced other responses?
- whether students can justify their decisions
- the language used when students describe the sequence (e.g., *text connectives* (see Thinking about how language works) such as 'To begin ...', 'Secondly ....', 'In conclusion ...').

## Limitations

- Too many items can make the task too difficult for students.
- Inability to use the language of sequencing may compromise students' ability to describe or recognise a sequence or justify their sequence.

## Adapting the strategy

A more difficult alternative is to ask students to identify and describe sequences occurring in a piece of text. This is especially challenging when events are not described sequentially. Students can

- write their own statements in order
- draw a series of pictures or cartoons, e.g., as a storyboard
- draw or complete a flow chart.

## Examples of ARB resources that use sequencing

There are many sequencing activities in the ARBs. Below is a selection modelling different ways this strategy can be presented.

To find other resources that involve sequencing use the keywords *sequenc(ing)* or *order(ing)* in your search.

Some examples of resources that ask students to use sequencing are:

ARB resource	Context	Presentation
Ordering weight	Weight	Order measurements lightest to heaviest
Decimal places	Decimal numbers	Arrange cards

## Science

### ARB resource

The best mopper upper  
The beech forest III  
Which is hardest?

### Context

Planning A Fair Test  
Events In A Beech Forest  
Hardness

### Presentation

Order statements  
Order statements on cards  
Order objects from hardest to softest

### English Support material

Thinking about how language works provides more in-depth information on connecting and tracking ideas in text.

### Resource List

- Life cycle of a frog
- Delicious Steamed Kai
- Copper sulphate
- Copper sulphate solutions
- Which is hardest?
- How we hear
- Waterfalls
- Erosion
- Pond weed investigation
- Planet years
- Life cycle of the kākāpō
- Life cycle of the white butterfly
- Life cycle of a butterfly
- Paradise Ducks' life cycle
- Life cycle of the Harrier Hawk
- Ordering weight
- Alphabetical order II
- Alphabetical order
- A tale of two donkeys
- Wheels
- The best mopper upper
- A canoe story
- A pumpkin story
- Building a deck
- The beech forest III

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