

Five texts about children’s screen time, physical activity and sleep

Pages 1 & 2 are for teacher reference. Do not hand out to learners.

Overview

Aimed at Early Years students and/or learners who are parents. A set of five texts about young children’s sleep, physical and sedentary activity, and screen time. The texts can be used in various combinations for Functional Skills (FS) speaking, listening and communicating; reading and writing activities. Teachers can pick and choose texts and create related DARTs (directed activities related to text), writing tasks and discussion topics to suit. There will also be pre-prepared resources on www.skillsworkshop.org. When selecting texts consider the interests and levels of your learners, **and** what type of text and purpose you want to focus on. Tables 1, 2 and 3 may help.

Scope of study			
DfE 2018 Subject content functional skills: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/functional-skills-subject-content-english The content at each level of qualification subsumes and builds upon the content at lower levels.			
	Speaking, listening and communicating should include:	Reading learners should read texts that include:	Writing learners should write texts that include:
E1	simple narratives, information and instructions, and short statements, explanations, discussions, questions and exchanges.	short simple texts that inform, describe and narrate .	short simple texts such as messages and notes
E2	short narratives and explanations, discussions and straightforward information and instructions	Short, straightforward texts that instruct, inform, describe and narrate .	short, straightforward texts such as letters, e-mails and simple narratives
E3	straightforward narratives, accounts, explanations, discussions, instructions, information and descriptions.	straightforward texts that instruct, describe, narrate and explain .	straightforward narratives, instructions, explanations and reports
L1	narratives, explanations, discussions, instructions, information, descriptions and presentations all of varying lengths.	straightforward texts on a range of topics and of varying lengths that instruct, describe, explain and persuade .	straightforward narratives, instructions, explanations and reports of varying lengths
L2	extended narratives and information (which may be on technical, concrete or abstract topics), discussions, detailed explanations and presentations, all of varying lengths.	straightforward and complex texts on a range of topics and varying lengths that instruct, describe, explain and persuade	straightforward and complex articles, explanations, narratives, and reports of varying lengths

Table 1

Purpose of texts

<i>The 6 listed purposes are specifically mentioned in the Reformed FS Content. Texts often have more than one purpose and it is important that learners (E3 upwards) can recognise the main purpose. Although other purposes such as entertain, record, analyse, argue and find out are not mentioned, you don’t have to avoid them!</i>			
Purpose	For level:	This type of text:	Example
Inform	E1 upwards	gives the reader clear facts about something	Broadsheet news reports, government help sheets, event posters, invitations
Describe	E1 upwards	provides details or builds up a picture of an event, place, person or object.	Travel & guide books, estate agent ads, TV reviews, diaries, academic writing
Narrate	E1 upwards	re-tells events (often in chronological order)	Newspaper report, letters (e.g. about a recent holiday), eye-witness accounts
Instruct	E2 upwards	orders or advises the reader how to do something	Flat pack instructions, directions, recipes, safety notices, medicine labels
Explain	L1 upwards	makes it clear to the reader how or why something works / happens	DIY and gardening books, car manuals, letters answering a query /complaint
Persuade	L1 upwards	attempts to influence / change the reader’s opinion / behaviour / actions	Newspaper editorials, letters from charities, junk mail, advertisements

Table 2

Five texts about children’s screen time, physical activity and sleep



Text types (open to interpretation – you may disagree)

Text	Text type / format	Level	Word count	Complexity	The purpose is to:
A WHO recommendations	report / guidance	L1-L2	300	complex	inform advise
B NHS Behind the headlines	article / web page	L2	750	complex	inform advise analyse
C The Sun – Switch Off	newspaper article	L1- L2	550	straightforward	inform narrate persuade
D Sleep & daily activity	poster / leaflet	E2-E3	240	simple	advise inform
E Get a good night’s sleep	poster / leaflet	E1-E2	200	simple	advise inform

Table 3

Pre-reading activities

Pre-reading tasks give learners a reason for reading texts and ‘hook them in’. After the discussion, learners use one or more of the texts to check facts or find more information. **Possible discussion or brainstorming topics include:**

Do you think young children get enough sleep?	The WHO is a reliable source of information.
Is it ok for 4-year olds to have their own phone?	Where’s the best place to get childcare advice?
Did you play outside for long periods when you were a young child?	TV doesn’t do kids any harm.
What are your tips for getting a good night’s sleep?	The best way to prevent childhood obesity is... Children learn skills when watching TV.

Glossary

Adapted from: DfE 2018 Subject content functional skills: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/functional-skills-subject-content-english>

Common words are those that occur frequently. Someone who is unable to read or spell these words will therefore be at a disadvantage. A number of attempts have been made (e.g. by Dolch) to identify those words that students most need to acquire in order to advance in their learning.

Complex texts could include one of more of the following: abstract ideas, unfamiliar topics, complex sentence structures, specialist words and unfamiliar vocabulary. The text type or formatting (e.g. academic excerpt with footnotes) or the intended audience could also be less familiar.

Narrative: Text or speech that re-tells events, often in chronological sequence.

Short text: Denotes words, sentences and texts of such a length as to be accessible to students and to enable them to experience a sense of achievement at having successfully decoded them. A short text is typically used to communicate everyday or functional information such as in notices, announcements, instructions, messages and invitations.

Simple: When applied to narratives, words or sentences, this means a basic, uncomplicated structure. A simple sentence structure, for example, follows the standard pattern of subject, verb and, optionally, object. A simple narrative will follow a chronological sequence and be told from one viewpoint only.

Specialist words are those that have a specific meaning within a certain context, such as words related to a specific job or work environment, a pastime or hobby, or a certain area of study.

Straightforward: subjects and materials that students often meet in their work, studies or other activities. Straightforward content is put across in a direct way with the main points easily identifiable; usually the sentence structures of such texts consist of more than one subject or more than one independent clause (i.e. compound sentence), and students will be familiar with the vocabulary. Straightforward texts are more demanding than simple texts containing simple sentence structure. The vocabulary of straightforward texts will typically consist of a range of familiar and **common words**, and some specialist words.

Source: Guidelines on physical activity, sedentary behaviour and sleep for children under 5 years of age. World Health Organisation, 2019. Pages 10-11 (Summary of recommendations): <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/311664>

Text A – p1

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 24-HOUR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, SEDENTARY BEHAVIOUR AND SLEEP FOR CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS OF AGE

These guidelines are for all healthy children under 5 years of age, irrespective of gender, cultural background or socio-economic status of families and are relevant for children of all abilities; caregivers of children with a disability or those with a medical condition, however, may seek additional guidance from a health professional.



In a 24-hour day,

For the greatest health benefits, infants, and young children should meet all the recommendations for physical activity, sedentary behaviour and sleep in a 24-hour period.

Replacing restrained or sedentary screen time with more moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity, while preserving sufficient sleep, can provide additional health benefits.

infants (less than 1 year) should:

Be physically active several times a day in a variety of ways, particularly through interactive floor-based play; more is better. For those not yet mobile, this includes at least 30 minutes in prone position (tummy time) spread throughout the day while awake.

Not be restrained for more than 1 hour at a time (e.g. prams/strollers, high chairs, or strapped on a caregiver's back). Screen time is not recommended. When sedentary, engaging in reading and storytelling with a caregiver is encouraged.

Have 14–17 hours (0–3 months of age) or 12–16 hours (4–11 months of age) of good quality sleep, including naps.



WHO guidelines on physical activity, sedentary behaviour and sleep for children under 5 years of age

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For better resolution and clarity download and print Text A as a separate A4 PDF from the source above.

Source: Guidelines on physical activity, sedentary behaviour and sleep for children under 5 years of age.

World Health Organisation, 2019. Pages 10-11 (Summary of recommendations): <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/311664>

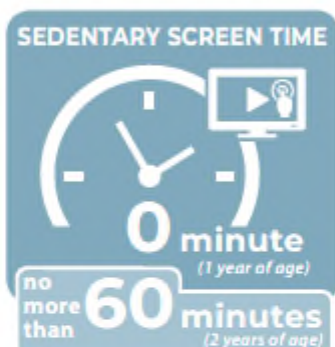
Text A – p2

children 1–2 years of age should:

Spend at least 180 minutes in a variety of types of physical activities at any intensity, including moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity, spread throughout the day; more is better.

Not be restrained for more than 1 hour at a time (e.g. prams/ strollers, high chairs, or strapped on a caregiver's back) or sit for extended periods of time. For 1-year-olds, sedentary screen time (such as watching TV or videos, playing computer games) is not recommended. For those aged 2 years, sedentary screen time should be no more than 1 hour; less is better. When sedentary, engaging in reading and storytelling with a caregiver is encouraged.

Have 11–14 hours of good quality sleep, including naps, with regular sleep and wake-up times.

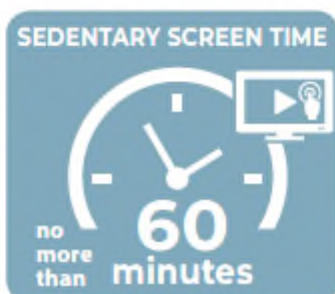


children 3–4 years of age should:

Spend at least 180 minutes in a variety of types of physical activities at any intensity, of which at least 60 minutes is moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity, spread throughout the day; more is better.

Not be restrained for more than 1 hour at a time (e.g. prams/ strollers) or sit for extended periods of time. Sedentary screen time should be no more than 1 hour; less is better. When sedentary, engaging in reading and storytelling with a caregiver is encouraged.

Have 10–13 hours of good quality sleep, which may include a nap, with regular sleep and wake-up times.



For better resolution and clarity download and print Text A as a separate A4 PDF from the source above.

NHS Behind the Headlines

A guide to the science that makes the news

Adapted from: <https://www.nhs.uk/news/pregnancy-and-child/who-guidelines-screen-time/>



[Home](#) > [Behind the Headlines](#) > [Pregnancy and child](#)

Text B – p1

Guidelines issued on activity and screen time for babies and toddlers

Thursday 25 April 2019

"Kids under two should never be allowed to watch any screens – or they'll get fat," warns the Sun.

The alarming headline gives the flavour of reports in much of the UK media about the World Health Organization's (WHO) recommendations on how much time each day children under age 5 should spend on physical activity, sedentary behaviour and sleep.

The headlines focus on one recommendation: that children aged less than 2 years should not spend any time passively watching screens. For children aged 2 to 5 they advise no more than 1 hour of sedentary screen time in 24 hours, though "less is better".

But that recommendation has been challenged by UK experts, who say there's not enough evidence to back it up.

The WHO says the recommendation is evidence-based and screen time should be replaced with other activities, allowing more time for interaction, physical activity and sleep.

What are the recommendations?

The WHO researchers break their recommendations down into age ranges.

They say children less than 1 year old should:

- be physically active several times a day in a variety of ways, for at least 30 minutes, particularly through "interactive floor-based play"
- not be restrained in a push chair or high chair for more than an hour at a time and have no screen time, but instead be "engaged in reading and storytelling with a caregiver" while sedentary
- have 14 to 17 hours of good-quality sleep a day before 3 months and 12 to 16 hours after 3 months, including naps

They say children aged 1 to 2 years should:

- be physically active for at least 180 minutes a day, with a variety of types of physical activity spread through the day
- not be restrained for more than 1 hour at a time and not use screens until age 2, and for no more than 1 hour after age 2, preferably less
- have 11 to 14 hours of good-quality sleep a day, including naps

They say children aged 3 to 4 years should:

- be physically active for at least 180 minutes a day, with at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity, spread through the day
- not be restrained for more than an hour at a time, and have no more than 1 hour a day screen time, preferably less
- have 10 to 13 hours of good-quality sleep, with regular sleep and wake times

The researchers say all their recommendations are "strong recommendations", but based on "very low-quality evidence".

NHS Behind the Headlines

A guide to the science that makes the news

Adapted from: <https://www.nhs.uk/news/pregnancy-and-child/who-guidelines-screen-time/>

How were the recommendations reported by the media?

The focus on screen time in most of the reporting risks distracting attention from other important points in the guideline, such as the need for young children to get plenty of physical activity throughout the day and have enough time for good-quality sleep at night.

None of the reporting seems to have considered that the guideline development group categorised the evidence behind their recommendations as being "very low quality".

BBC News and the Mirror gave good basic overviews of the recommendations and criticisms from UK experts.

The Mail Online said "babies and one-year-olds should not spend any time at all looking at electronic screens", while the Sun reported "kids under two should never be allowed to watch TV, tablets or smartphones".

This may be a slight overstatement. The WHO report differentiates between "sedentary screen time", where children sit passively looking at screens, and active screen-based games, where physical activity or movement is required.

The Guardian focused on criticism of the guidelines by UK doctors, but made an error in reporting what recommendations had been made, saying children under 3 should not use screens.

Expert response

Professor Kevin McConway, Emeritus Professor of Applied Statistics at The Open University, pointed to a "surprising feature" of the WHO guidance.

"Under every one of its lists of recommendations, the report explicitly says 'strong recommendations, very low-quality evidence'," he says.

He added: "It seems a little strange that the public health experts who produced the report should feel able to make 'strong recommendations' on the basis of such weak evidence."

Dr Tim Smith, Reader in Cognitive Psychology at the Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development, Birkbeck, University of London, said parents had been "bombarded with conflicting recommendations and guidelines" in recent months, and that the WHO "does not help to clarify the situation".

The UK's Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) does not set time limits for different age groups because there's a lack of evidence.

They recommend that parents should approach the issue on a case by case basis, rather than trying to use a "one-size-fits-all" approach.

Sun report on WHO Guidelines

Source: <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/8929504/kids-under-two-no-tv-screens-obesity-who/>

Text C – p1



SWITCH OFF Kids under two should never be allowed to watch ANY screens – or they'll get fat, WHO warns

The World Health Organization has released its first ever guidelines to parents to try and combat childhood obesity

[Nick McDermott](#) 24 Apr 2019, 14:34 |

KIDS under two should never be allowed to watch TV, tablets or smartphones, according to the World Health Organisation.



Kids under the age of two should not be allowed to watch any screens, the World Health Organisation said.

The first ever global guidance on physical activity and sleep for young children recommends zero screen time for tots.

Swap TV for play time

Experts say for those aged two to four, the maximum daily limit is just one hour, with the less the better. They claim limiting telly time and smartphone use helps boost brain development and physical skills, and slashes obesity risk.

Kids should instead be encouraged to run around, play and read stories with adults.

'Flimsy' findings

But UK researchers said the advice is based on flimsy evidence.

The report says parents of over-1s should ensure their children get a minimum of three hours exercise. At least 60 minutes of this activity should be vigorous – such as football, swimming and dancing - for those aged three and four.

Youngsters should also not spend periods of longer than an hour in car seats, high chairs, prams or carriers, according to the guidelines aimed at under-5s.

WHO experts admit the strict limits may be hard for busy parents to enforce – but said the benefits outweigh any potential harms.

Sun report on WHO Guidelines

Source: <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/8929504/kids-under-two-no-tv-screens-obesity-who/>



Text C – p2

Sitting fuels obesity

The guidance concludes: “Physical inactivity has been identified as a leading risk factor for global mortality and a contributor to the rise in overweight and obesity.

“Sedentary behaviours, whether riding motorised transport rather than walking or cycling, sitting at a desk in school, watching TV or playing inactive screen-based games are increasingly prevalent and associated with poor health outcomes.”

Earlier this year, the nation’s top doctors said TVs should be turned off every couple of hours and phones put away during meal times.

In the first official UK advice on screen time, the Government’s medical advisers said parents must ensure devices do not interfere with children’s sleep, exercise and education.

But the Chief Medical Officers’ report fell short of stating a “safe” amount of daily use due to a lack of scientific evidence.

New advice from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health also opposes screen time limits.

Blunt limits aren't helpful

Responding to the new guidance, Dr Max Davie from the RCPCH, warned blunt limits may have “unintended consequences”.

He said: “While it is important for children to be as active as possible, the barriers are more frequently to do with housing, work patterns, family stress, and lack of access to play spaces rather than actively choosing to be sedentary.

“The restricted screen time limits suggested by the WHO do not seem proportionate to the potential harm. Currently there is not strong enough evidence to support the setting of screen time limits. Also, it is difficult to see how a household with mixed-age children can shield a baby from any screen exposure at all.”

The WHO guidance also states kids aged one to four should get around 12 hours sleep daily.

Dr Mike Brannan, from Public Health England, said: “Being active plays an important role in good health and development from an early age.




“We need to help our children move more and sit less – every movement counts, whether playing, dancing or walking.

Guidelines for children's sleep and daily activity

Adapted and simplified from: Pages 10-11 <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/311664>, WHO (2019).

Text D

Sleep and daily activity guidelines for children up to 5 years.

Children under 1 year old:	Children aged 1 and 2 years:	Children aged 3 to 4 years:
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> should be active several times a day, for at least 30 minutes (tummy time). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> should be active for at least 3 hours a day, with a variety of types of physical activity spread through the day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> should be physically active for at least 3 hours a day, with at least 1 hour of vigorous activity.
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> should not be kept in a stroller, baby carrier or high chair for more than an hour at a time. should have no screen time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> should not be restrained for more than an hour at a time. should have no screen time until age 2, and then for no more than 1 hour a day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> should not be restrained for more than an hour at a time. should have no more than 1 hour a day screen time.
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> should have 14 to 17 hours of sleep a day before age 3 months and 12 to 16 hours after 3 months old. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> should have 11 to 14 hours of good-quality sleep a day, including naps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> should have 10 to 13 hours of good quality sleep, with regular sleep and wake times.

* **Screen time** means watching a TV, computer or mobile device.

* **Restrained** means not able to move freely. For example, a child in a push chair.







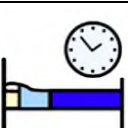



Child's guide to a good night's sleep

Source: <https://www.gosh.nhs.uk/medical-information/procedures-and-treatments/sleep-hygiene-children>

Text E

A guide for children Getting a good night's sleep.



	Sleep is very important. It lets your body and mind rest after a busy day.
	Everyone has trouble sleeping sometimes. There are things you can do to help you sleep better.
	Think about what you drink in the afternoon and evening. Cola drinks can keep you awake. Don't eat too much before bedtime and have at least an hour after dinner to let your food go down.
	Try to get some fresh air each day. You don't have to do a sport every day. Just going outside is good.
	Try not to have your bedroom too hot or too cold.
	Put a nightlight on if you like to have some light. Try dark curtains if you don't.
	Try to go to bed at the same time each day. This should be the same at weekends as well as on school nights.
	Have a warm bath or shower before bed to relax you. A milky drink could also help you sleep.
	Don't watch the television or use a phone or tablet before bed. The light they give off can wake up your brain.
	Remember to go to the toilet before you go to bed.