

MEMO PAD

1

THE LANGUAGE OF SCIENCE

In a scientific text the **simple present** is used to report a scientific truth; the **simple past** is used to tell a story of how a discovery was made.

Example

James Watson and Francis Crick *won* the Nobel Prize for their discovery of DNA's double helix, [...] that *was* one of the most revolutionary discoveries in modern times. They *found* that every living thing (except identical twins) *is* genetically unique, therefore your DNA sequence *is* yours and yours alone. (*DNA – A Biological Identity Card*)

YOUR TURN

- 1 Re-read the other texts in the section and find other examples of these uses of simple present and past.
- From the text *Cloning*
She [the sheep Dolly] the first mammal to be cloned with DNA taken from an adult cell.
The resulting embryo identical to the mother because its DNA *comes* from her only.
 - From the text *Does genetic engineering threaten monarch butterflies?*
Researchers milkweed leaves with corn pollen.
Corn pollen very far.
 - From the text *Artificial Intelligence*
Over the years they have themselves into two factions: those who that the object of the research is to build machines [...] and those who the possibility of creating machines that are genuinely intelligent (strong AI).

2

TYPES OF TEXT

Narrative text: a story is narrated in sequences. There is development of time, often signalled by connectors such as *then, after that, finally*.

Expository text: information is provided, as we find in a guide book.

Argumentative text: a thesis is presented and supported through examples, authoritative opinions, statistics data. Common connectors are: *first, then, to conclude*.

The contrasted thesis is often presented using connectors such as *as on the other hand, but* and then confuted.

YOUR TURN

- 1 For each of the following text, write what kind of text it is.
- Science proves that love is blind*
 - DNA – A Biological Identity Card*
 - Cloning*

3 DEFINITION

A definition is a statement of what a word or an expression means.

Example

Cloning can be defined as the process of creating an identical copy of DNA fragments (molecular cloning), cells (cell cloning) or organisms, like an animal or a plant. (*Cloning*)

How a definition works

First a word/concept is defined with the general terms/concept it is included in; in this case the term 'cloning' is included in 'process'. Then it is further defined with its specific characteristics; in this case "creating an identical copy of DNA fragments (molecular cloning), cells (cell cloning) or organisms, like an animal or a plant".

YOUR TURN

- Now define "GM crop" (from the text *How science can save the world's poor*) with the help of the suggestions below.

General term: GM organism

Specific characteristics: its genetic material has been altered

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4 DEBATING

When debating you may want to express your opinion, to agree or disagree about something that has been said. Below you have some suggestions on how to express your ideas.

Expressing opinion

| | | |
|-------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Strongly | I firmly believe that... I'm absolutely (not) convinced that... | I feel that... In my opinion, ... |
| Tentatively | | I'd say that... |

Expressing agreement

| | | |
|-------------|--|---|
| Strongly | That's exactly what I think That's a very convincing idea | I'd probably agree on that... That sounds like a good idea |
| Tentatively | | That's something to consider |

Expressing disagreement

| | | |
|-------------|---|--|
| Strongly | I don't agree at all I'm not sure I can agree with you | I see what you mean, but... Do you really think...? |
| Tentatively | I'm not really sure | |