



Leading education
and social research
Institute of Education
University of London

Training teachers of literacy, language and numeracy: a practical example



Sam Duncan, Irene Schwab, Jane Allemano
Institute of Education
February 2012

Programme for session 28 February

- 9.30 Introductions and context setting
- 9.45 What is literacy? (Sam Duncan)
- 10.05 Questions and short discussion
- 10.10 The Four Resources model of reading (Irene Schwab)
- 10.30 Open discussion (with Sam Duncan, Irene Schwab, Jane Allemano)
- 11.15 Break

Approaches to literacy

Sam Duncan

PGCE Adult Literacy Teaching

January 2012

*On a post-it.... in no more than one
sentence each...*

What is literacy?

What does it mean to be literate?

What are we doing when we read?

What are we doing when we write?

So, what is the role of a
literacy teacher?

Prioritize these disciplines in terms of their relevance to adult literacy teaching

- Cognitive psychology
- Language history/development
- Linguistics
- Literary studies
- Neuroscience
- Early years (young children's) literacy development
- School English/literacy studies
- Social history/ 'the history of the book'
- Sociology/anthropology
- Political science
- English as a Foreign Language studies



Each discipline/field has a particular theoretical perspective which influences:

- How it defines reading and writing
- Its research concerns
- How it researches reading and writing
- Its research findings
- How/where its research findings are used

What is a theory?

“Theory is used in both a public and a private sense. Publicly available theories- Piagetian Theory, Symbolic Interactionist Theory, Human Capital Theory, and so on- are systems of ideas published in books, discussed in classes and accompanied by a critical literature which expands, interprets and challenges their meaning [...] Private theories are ideas in people’s minds which they use to interpret and explain their experience.”

Eraut, M. (1994). *Developing Professional Knowledge and Competence*. London: Routledge, p. 59.



Two dominant theoretical approaches to adult literacy development:

- © **A socio-cultural approach/ Social Practice Theory** (aligned with sociology and an ethnographic approach)

- © **Cognitive psychology** (associated with a skills-focused approach)

Reading as a holistic activity

Australia –The Four Resources Model

- Code breaking
- Meaning making
- Text use
- Text analysis



Luke A & Freebody P (1999) <http://www.readingonline.org/research/lukefreebody.html>

http://www.curriculum.org/secretariat/november29_ages.shtml



Code breaker

Key question

- How do I crack this code?

Literacy theory

- Functional or Skills approach (bottom up)

What learners do

- Learners able to decode language at appropriate level, recognising conventions, letters, sounds, words and sentences

Methods

- Phonics; whole word recognition; morphology



Meaning maker

Key question

- What does this text mean to me?

Literacy theory

- Whole language approach (top down)

What learners do

- Learners use their knowledge of the world, other texts, how language works to comprehend texts

Methods

- Activating schemata, comprehension strategies, vocabulary development



Text user

Key question

- What do I do with this text?

Literacy theory

- Genre approach

What learners do

- Learners understand how language varies according to context, purpose, audience and content, and are able to apply this knowledge

Methods

- Modelling what we do with texts, responding to authentic texts



Text analyst

Key question

- What does this text do to me?

Literacy theory

- Critical literacy approach

What learners do

- Learners are able to analyse and challenge the ways texts are constructed to convey particular ideas and influence people

Methods

- Consider how texts position us, whose interests are at play, whose voices are present /absent

What might these involve?

- Phonics
- Whole word recognition
- Morphology
- Etymology

- Schema activation and prediction
- Comprehension strategies
- Vocabulary

Code breaking

Meaning making

Text use

Text analysis

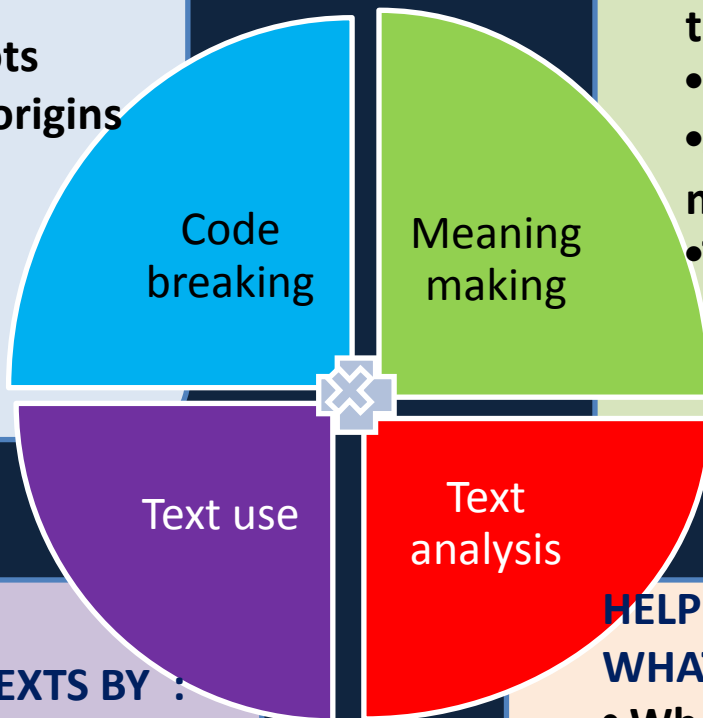
- Understanding genre and what we do with texts
- Finding, using, responding to texts

- Understanding author's purposes
- Understanding how texts position us

What can the teacher do?

HELP LEARNERS TO NOTICE:

- Phonic patterns
- Common words
- Prefixes, suffixes and roots
- How words with similar origins can look similar



HELP LEARNERS TO UNDERSTAND:

- How making use of what they already know can help
- How prediction helps
- Strategies they can use to make meaning
- The meaning of keywords

HELP LEARNERS TO USE TEXTS BY :

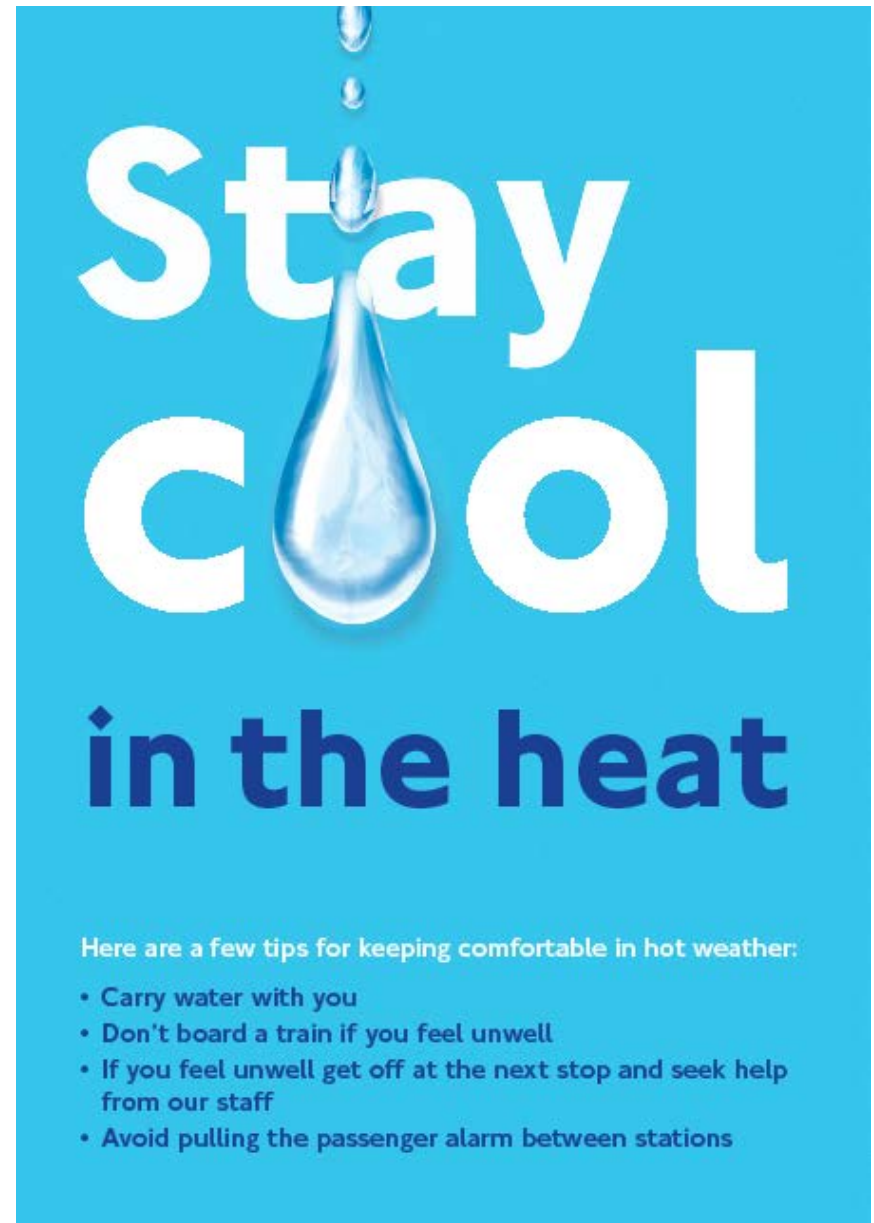
- Making links between purpose, structure and language of texts
- Finding, using and responding to texts in real ways

HELP LEARNERS TO QUESTION WHAT THEY READ BY ASKING:

- Who made this text and why?
- Who is it written for?
- Who is excluded?
- What does it make me think and how does it do this?

How could you plan to use this text to develop skills in:

- Code breaking
- Meaning making
- Text use
- Text analysis



**Stay
cool**

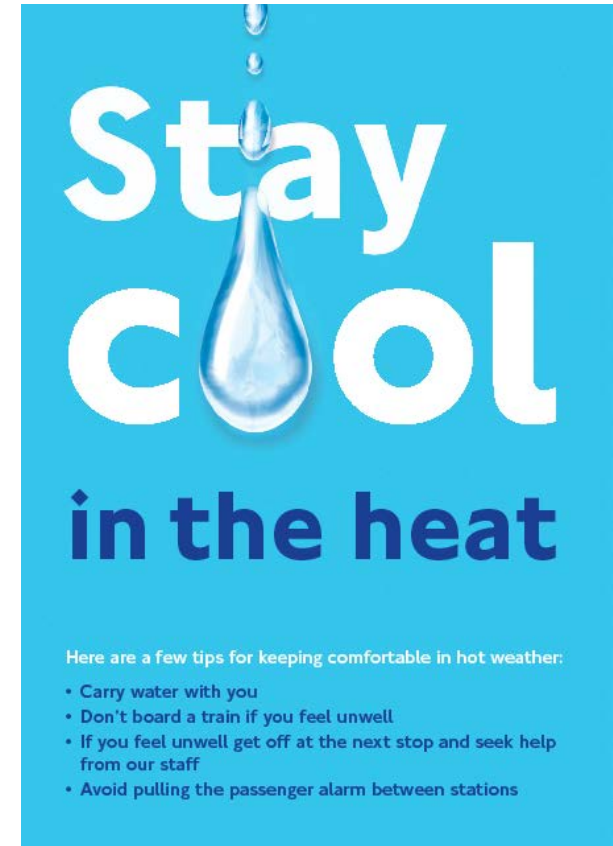
in the heat

Here are a few tips for keeping comfortable in hot weather:

- Carry water with you
- Don't board a train if you feel unwell
- If you feel unwell get off at the next stop and seek help from our staff
- Avoid pulling the passenger alarm between stations

Code breaker

- Pick out phonic patterns at the beginning of words (water, weather); at the end of words (tips, stations); or in the middle (keeping, seek, between)
- Divide longer words into syllables:
pass/en/ger
- Look at unusual patterns e.g. comfortable (similar to: come, some)
- Look at morphological patterns (keeping, pulling). Elicit others with the same ending



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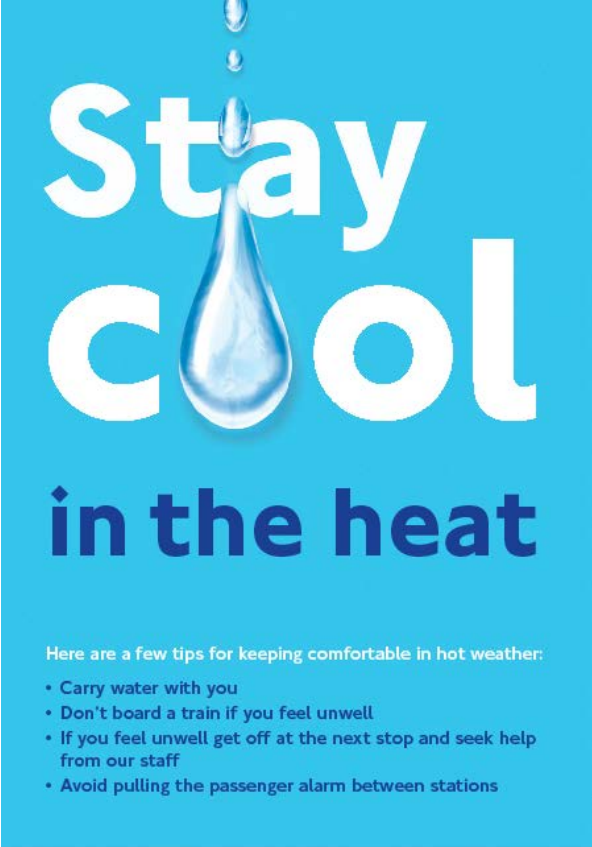
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Code breaker


- Antonyms-**Unwell** as the opposite of **well**. Elicit other words that mean the opposite if you put un in front?
- Find the verbs in these instructions. What sort of verbs are they? Where do they come in the sentence? Is this the same as most other sentences? Why is this? What are these types of sentences called?
- There are two sentences with **if** in them. What sort of a word is **if**? What is its role in the sentence?
- There are two different pronouns used. What are they? Why are they used?



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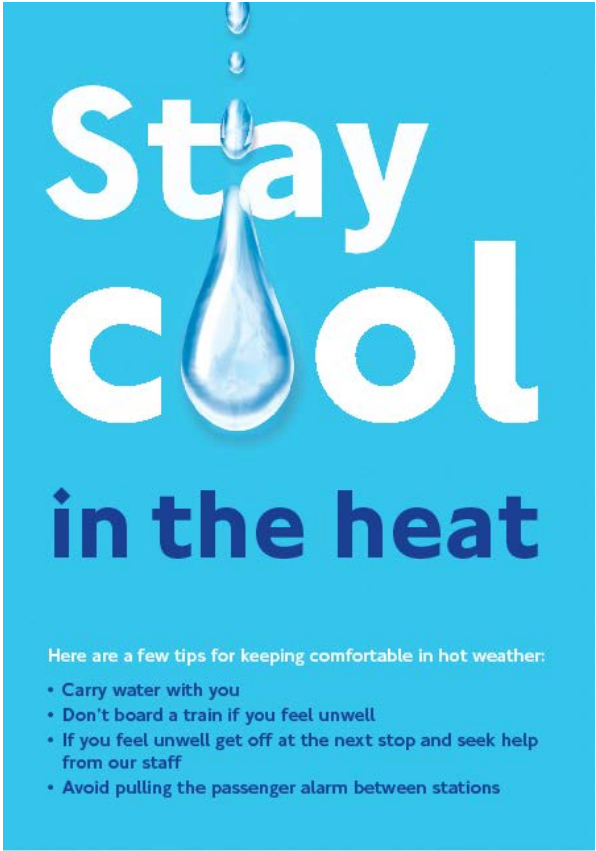
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Meaning maker


- Before reading, consider the heading: ***Here are a few tips for keeping comfortable in hot weather.*** Can you predict what the tips might be?
- Rewrite these instructions in your own words. Do they sound clearer to you? What makes them clearer or less clear?



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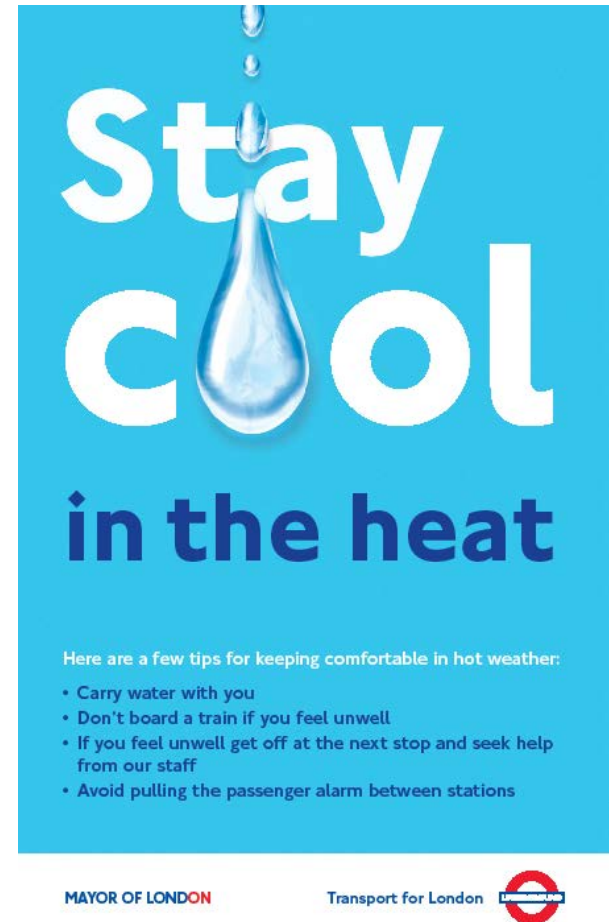
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Meaning maker

- What other words could have been used instead of ***train, unwell, stop, staff, carry***? What difference would it have made if the alternatives had been chosen?
- Sentences giving instructions usually begin with an imperative verb. Three of these do (one is negative); the fourth doesn't. Why do you think this is? What is the effect? Does it sound more or less important than the others?



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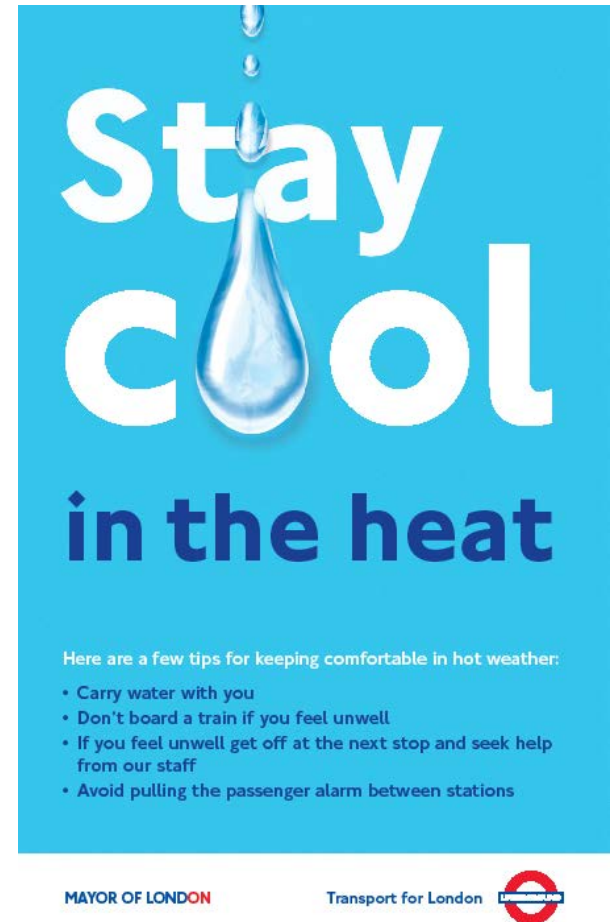
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Text user

- Where would you see these instructions? What might you be doing when you saw them?
- If you spotted this poster, would you read it?
- What might make you read it? What might make you ignore it?



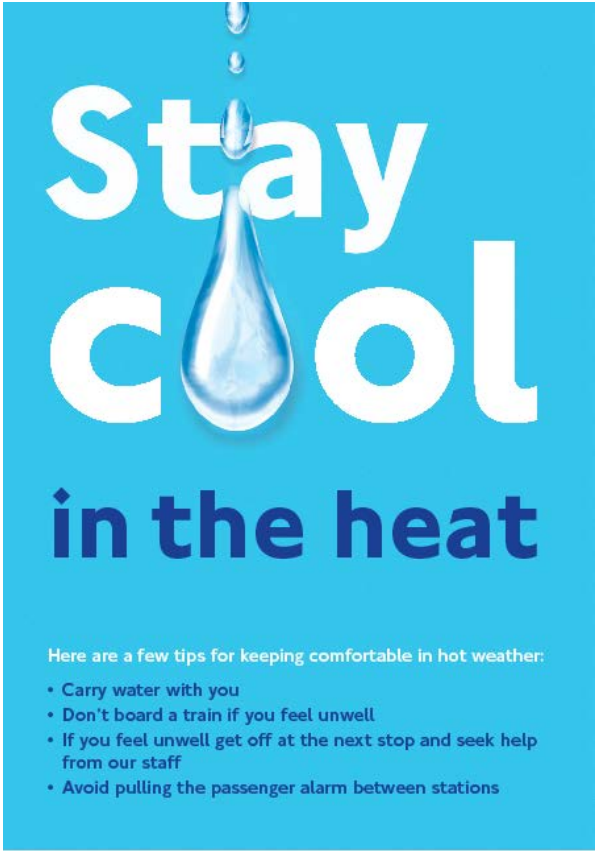
Text user

- When you travel by public transport, what posters catch your eye? Why?
- If you were to design a poster, what features should it have to be effective?
- What other instructions might you want to see on the London Underground?



Text analyst


- Who are these instructions aimed at?
- Who wrote them? How can you tell? What was their purpose?
- Are they helpful? If you did feel unwell, is this what you would want to happen?
- What other ways of writing them could there be? What effect would this have?



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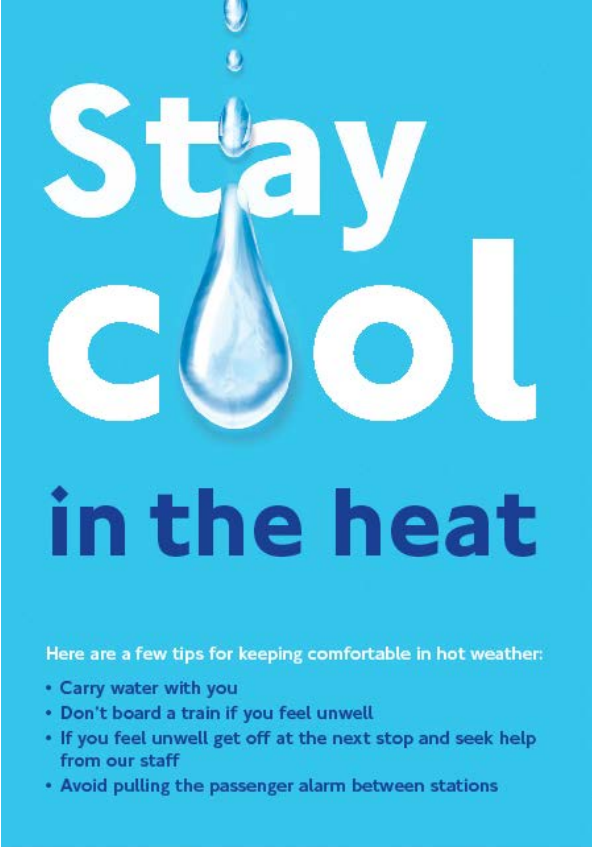
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Text analyst


- What is the logic of the order? What other ways of ordering could there be? (dos and don'ts? most important first?)
- Some are positive (do) and others negative (don't). Does this make a difference? Can you rewrite them so they are all positives or all negatives? What difference does it make?



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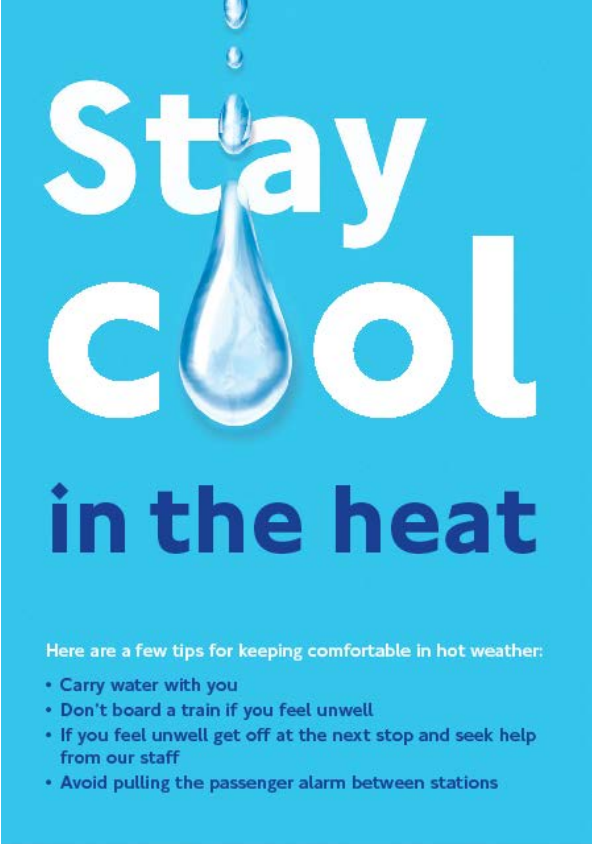
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Text analyst


- Who is responsible for your comfort on the tube according to these instructions? Do you agree?
- What degree of obligation do these instructions demand? Is it the same for all four points? Which ask for most compliance? How can you tell? How could you rewrite them for more or less compliance?



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Four Resources: references

Luke, A and Freebody, P (1999) Further Notes on the Four Resources Model

(rationale for use of the model)

<http://www.readingonline.org/research/lukefreebody.html>

The Four resources model of Literacy

(some useful questions to use)

http://www.kingstonprimary.tased.edu.au/e-Learning/four_resources_model_of_literacy.htm

Four Resources model applied to numeracy

http://www.simerr.educ.utas.edu.au/numeracy/critical_numeracy/critical_numeracy.htm

- http://www.curriculum.org/secretariat/november29_ages.shtml