About the Genre: Routines

What is it?
Explanatory writing tells the reader facts, or true information, about a topic. It uses real facts, not opinions, to support the topic. It can tell the reader how to do something, such as how to fix a car or how to cook a chicken. It explains the steps in a process. To show the order of steps, it also uses signal words such as first, second, before, after, and then.

Explanatory writing is often used to describe a routine. A routine is a series of activities that you do regularly for some purpose. For example, some people have an exercise routine to stay fit. A description of a routine tells people about each step in the routine. They can be found in magazines, books, or on websites.

What is the purpose?
The purpose of a description of a routine is to show people how to do the something. It is also used to inform readers about the benefits of the routine. Some descriptions are written to persuade the reader to use the new routine.

What is the structure?
A routine is usually short. It often has a short introduction that tells the goal and benefits of the routine. It may also tell what kind of person will enjoy the routine. For example, a description of a dance routine will explain if it is for beginners. The introduction may also explain what tools or materials you need to do the routine.

After the introduction, the author explains the steps in the routine. Each step is usually a short sentence, each on a separate line. This helps the reader to see each step separately.

Routines may also include pictures or diagrams. These help the reader understand each step. For example, a dance routine can have a diagram of where dancers put their feet.

A routine may not have a conclusion. They may end at the last step. Or the routine may end with a short conclusion that summarizes the benefit of the routine. The conclusion may tell how long and how often to do the routine.

Comprehension Questions
1. Explanatory writing is used to describe a routine for which reasons? Choose two.
   a. Explanatory writing tells the reader the author’s opinions about a routine.
   b. Explanatory writing tells someone the steps in a process, as in a routine.
   c. Explanatory writing uses precise words and signal words, which help in describing a routine.
2. The purpose of a routine is NOT which of the following?
   a. to persuade the reader to use the new routine
   b. to show the reader the benefits in the process
   c. to make something difficult look easy
3. Why does the author write each step of a routine on a separate line?