

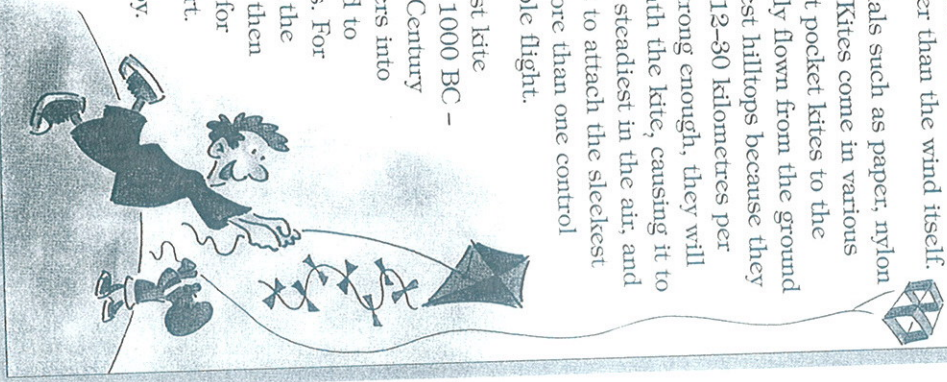
How Kites Fly

Kites are a form of airborne craft that are heavier than air but are not powered by anything other than the wind itself.

Kites can be made of lightest materials such as paper, nylon or cotton as long as they are strong. Kites come in various shapes and sizes – from the smallest pocket kites to the largest display kites. They are usually flown from the ground and are easiest to fly from the highest hilltops because they need quite a strong breeze of about 12–30 kilometres per hour to stay up. If the wind is not strong enough, they will not fly. The breeze pushes underneath the kite, causing it to lift upwards. To keep the kite at its steadiest in the air, and stop it dipping and diving, you have to attach the sleekest tail. It can also be useful to have more than one control line to help maintain the kite's stable flight.

The Chinese are the world's greatest kite flyers – they have flown kites since 1000 BC – but it was not until the Thirteenth Century that kites were introduced by traders into Europe. At one time they were used to frighten off evil spirits from houses. For this reason they were flown late in the darkest night from rooftops. Since then kites have been used by the army, for signalling, for fishing and as a sport.

Kite flying can be a fun-filled hobby. Try it. Feel the breeze uplift the swiftest kite to great heights – and feel your spirit fly too!



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Read the text and discuss the following questions.

- 1 Who would have written a text like this – and what did they need to know before they began writing?
- 2 Where might you read this text?
- 3 Identify the sentence where the writer explains how a kite actually gets up into the air.
- 4 In the sentence you have identified, which is the key word?

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5 Find all the examples of superlative adjectives being used in paragraph two. Complete a chart like this one:

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
light	lighter	lightest

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6 Take a subject that you know about, such as *How to keep warm*, *How to separate solids from liquids* or *How friction works*. Write an explanatory text.

Use the following structure as a guide, and select any adjectives carefully.

Para 1: Introduction

Para 2: Explanation of the subject

Para 3: Further interesting facts

Para 4: Concluding points for reader to remember

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9A Comparatives and Superlatives



Complete the chart filling in the comparative and superlative forms of the different adjectives.

adjective	comparative	superlative
small	smaller	smallest
tall		
funny		
good		
bad		
short		
mysterious		
kind		
intelligent		
beautiful		
expensive		
lonely		
green		
sunny		
hot		
many		
little		

Create simple rules to guide the spelling of comparatives and superlatives.

9B Selecting adjectives



Fill the gaps in the following paragraphs. The adjectives are listed below – some are used more than once.

There are _____ types of brake used in _____ vehicles. One is based on disc brakes and the other uses brake drums. In a disc brake there are _____ pads that press harder and harder against both sides of a _____ disc attached to the axle. The harder they press the more the car slows. The brake literally grips the _____ disc. Bicycles use a similar technique. They have a _____ brake which involves _____ pads that pinch the wheel as it spins round. The harder the cyclist squeezes the brakes, the more the brake blocks squeeze the wheel, and so the slower the wheel spins. If you feel the brake blocks on a bicycle after you have braked, you will find that they are quite hot to touch. This is because the friction causes heat. Cars use oil as a lubricant, otherwise it could be quite dangerous.

