

Teaching Text Structure Guide

Patterns of Organization

One important feature of text complexity is the organizational structure of various texts. This is especially true in science where students may encounter a wide range of text structures. Students who recognize the patterns of text organization are able to more effectively read and extract meaning from the text. Students need opportunities to read texts that have different patterns of organization.

Effective readers use text structure to:

- Predict what they are about to read
- Comprehend/understand text
- Observe the way the author has organized the text
- Look for key words and concepts
- Note the different headings and subheadings
- Notice and interpret graphics

Using Text Structure to Enhance Understanding of Text

Students can use their understanding of text structure to increase their ability to read and extract meaning from science texts. Helping students learn how to recognize common text structures can help them monitor their comprehension. Students who can identify text structure when they begin reading a new text are better able to figure out how the following sections of a text fit.

Strategies for Helping Students Identify Text Structure

- Begin by explaining to students that science texts often have different organizational patterns.
- Introduce the following text structures:
 - Description
 - Sequence and Order
 - Compare and Contrast
 - Cause and Effect
 - Problem and Solution.
- Show examples of paragraphs that correspond to each text structure.
- Provide students with signal words that are commonly found in each text structure.
- Examine topic sentences that clue the reader to a specific structure.
- Model the writing of a paragraph that uses a specific text structure.
- Have students try write paragraphs that follow a specific text structure.
- Have students diagram these structures using a graphic organizer.

- Set up a matching game that students can use to match signal words with specific patterns of organization.
- For more proficient readers, use the strategies with longer passages and more complex graphic organizers

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<http://www.adlit.org/strategies/23336/>

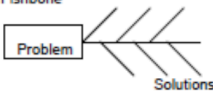

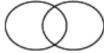
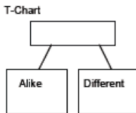
Optional Resource for Review:

More strategies on teaching text structure:

http://www.adlit.org/xarpages/adolescent_literacy_search/?q=text+structure&sa.x=0&sa.y=0

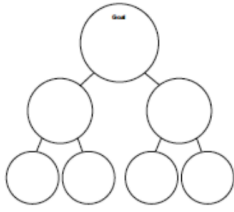
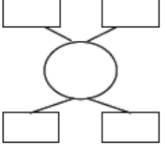

This document, introduced in Module 2, may assist students in identifying signal words and questions to ask and answer in order to be able to determine text structure.

Text Frames

Identifying Text Frames	Text Frames	Sample Questions to Ask	Signal Words
<p>Is there a problem that needs solving?</p> <p>If the focus of the text seems to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is wrong and how it can be taken care of • What needs to be improved, changed, fixed, remedied • Who is confronting problems in history 	<p>Problem/Solution</p> <p>Fishbone</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the problem? Who has the problem? • What is causing the problem? • What are negative effects of the problem? • Who is trying to solve the problem? • What solutions are recommended or attempted? • What results from these solutions? • Is the problem solved? Do any new problems develop because of the solutions? 	<p>problem is, dilemma is, if-then, because, so that, question, answer, puzzle is solved</p>
<p>That certain conditions lead to certain results?</p> <p>If the focus of the text seems to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why or how something works • Why or how something happens • Why things happen in science 	<p>Cause/Effect</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happens (or happened)? Causes? • What are the important elements or factors that cause this effect? • How do these factors or elements interrelate? • Will this result always happen from these causes? Why or why not? • How would the result change if the elements or factors were different? 	<p>if-then, reasons why, as a result, therefore, because, so that, for, due to, consequently, since, hence</p>
<p>That certain things are similar or different?</p> <p>If the focus of the text seems to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How things are alike/different • How things are positive/negative • What choice or options are possible 	<p>Compare/Contrast</p> <p>Venn Diagram</p>  <p>T-Chart</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is being compared and contrasted? • What characteristics are compared and contrasted? • What makes them alike or similar? • What makes them not alike or similar? • What are the most important qualities that make them similar? Different? • In terms of what's most important, are they more alike or more different? 	<p>however, on the other hand, but, different, alike, same as, either/or, just like, likewise, in comparison, whereas, yet, nevertheless, similarly, wheras</p>

Source: Buehl, D. (2007). A professional development framework for embedding comprehension instruction into content classrooms. In J. Lewis & G. Moorman (Eds.), *Adolescent literacy instruction: Policies and promising practices* (p. 200). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Text Frames

<p>That someone is doing something for a specific reason?</p> <p>If the focus of the text seems to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is trying to do something How to do something What steps, directions, or procedures to follow 	<p style="text-align: center;">Goal/Action/Outcome</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the goal? What is to be accomplished? Who is trying to achieve this goal? What actions/steps are taken to achieve this goal? Is the sequence of actions/steps important? What are the effects of these actions? What happens? Were these actions successful for achieving the goal? Are there unexpected outcomes from these actions? Would other actions have been more effective? Could something else have been done? 	<p>as a result of, first, second, third, then, after, while, meanwhile, finally, at last, in the end, resulting in, affect of</p>
<p>That a concept needs to be understood?</p> <p>If the focus of the text seems to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What something is or looks like How something can be described How something can be classified 	<p style="text-align: center;">Concept/Definition</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the concept? What category of things does this concept belong to? What are its critical characteristics? How does it work? What does it do? What are its functions? What are examples of it? What are examples of things that share some but not all of its characteristics? 	<p>for example, characteristics, for instance, such as, is like, including, to illustrate</p>
<p>That a viewpoint is being argued and supported?</p> <p>If the focus of the text seems to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why accept an opinion, hypothesis, theory, or argument What viewpoint is expressed in a review, editorial, persuasion, or appeal How conclusions are based on research results or studies 	<p style="text-align: center;">Proposition/Support</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the general topic or issue? What viewpoint, conclusion, theory, hypothesis, or thesis is being proposed? How is this proposition supported? Are examples/data provided to support the proposition? Is expert verification provided to support the proposition? Logical argument? Does the author make a convincing case for the proposition? What are alternative perspectives to the author's proposition? 	<p>for example, therefore, first, second, third, before, after, then, finally, in conclusion</p>

Source: Buehl, D. (2007). A professional development framework for embedding comprehension instruction into content classrooms. In J. Lewis & G. Moorman (Eds.), *Adolescent literacy instruction: Policies and promising practices* (p. 200). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Below is a site with more grade-level texts worksheets that may be used to assist students in identifying text structure.

<https://www.ereadingworksheets.com/text-structure/>

Worksheets Works allows you to create your own graphic organizers for free using their templates. <https://www.worksheetworks.com/miscellanea/graphic-organizers/compare-contrast.html>

Tip: Graphic organizers may be differentiated according to the student's abilities. After modeling, ask advanced students to draw their own graphic organizer.