

Text Structure

Look at how the author organized the ideas.

Ask yourself

How did the author put the ideas together?

Which signal words do I see?

Why did the author choose this structure?

Sentence starters

- The author organized this by ...
- Signal words like ... show ...
- This structure helps because ...

Structure (circle): Sequence · Compare and contrast · Cause and effect · Problem and solution · Description:

Signal Words

(first, because, however, as a result, similar...)

How the Ideas Connect

(Write the parts in order or in pairs.)

Why This Structure

(How does it help the reader?)



The signal words are the clue: find them first, then name the structure.

Text Structure: Discussion Cards

Cut apart. Take a card. Talk with a partner.

Which signal words did you find?

Could the author have used a different structure?

How does the structure help you remember the ideas?

Find the structure in a different text.

Text Structure: For the Teacher

Built for the student who guesses the structure: the signal words come first, as the evidence.

Show this first (a model)

"First, the caterpillar hatches. Next, it eats leaves. Then it makes a chrysalis. Finally, a butterfly comes out." Structure: sequence. Clue words: first, next, then, finally.

Works with any text or topic the class is already using: nothing here is tied to one book, so it can be used again all year.

More support: fill in the first row or column together as a model, and let the student draw or say answers while you write.

Less support: fold back the sentence starters, then the questions under the headings. The columns stay, so the thinking stays the same.