

Graphic Organizers for Text Structures

College- and Career-Ready Standards Addressed: ELA-Literacy RI. 6.5 and 7.5

- Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.
- Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text.

Objective: Students will use graphic organizers to organize information they read.

Materials

- One narrative and six expository short texts (one text exemplar for each expository text structure) at the student’s instructional level. (*Note:* The teacher will need to preview the text in advance to select a text that represents the graphic organizer included in the Text Structure Cue Sheet.)
- Pencil
- Paper or Notebook
- Text Structure Cue Sheet (this resource is available for download on the National Center for Intensive Intervention [NCII] website)

Suggested Schedule and Group Size

Schedule: Daily, no more than 5 to 10 minutes per session

Recommended group size: Small group, although exact group size will vary depending upon grade level

Note: The following script is intended as a model. It is likely that this may take two or three class periods, depending on available minutes of instruction.

Activity

Intervention Principle

Use precise, explicit language to introduce the lesson.

Sample Script and Procedures

Establish the purpose of using graphic organizers to help students organize information for reading comprehension.

Good readers use graphic organizers to help them organize information they read. A graphic organizer is a visual diagram that represents the information in the text. Refer students to the Text Structure Cue Sheet for visual examples. A graphic organizer can be used before, during, or after reading to present the information from the text in a visual or graphic representation. There are many types of graphic organizers that can be used to organize information from narrative texts and expository texts. Today we are going to focus on using graphic organizers to represent information we read from both narrative text structures and expository text structures.

Adapted with permission from Denton, C. A., Bryan, D., Wexler, J., Reed, D., & Vaughn, S. (2007). Comprehension. *In Effective instruction for middle school students with reading difficulties: The reading teacher’s sourcebook* (pp. 108–122). Austin, TX: Meadows Center.

Activate background knowledge.

Remember that the purpose of narrative text is to entertain the reader or present a story. Narrative text will often use one text structure that includes a beginning, middle, and end of a story. The purpose of expository text is to inform the reader of an event or provide general information. Conversely, expository text can use six common types of text structures within one text.

Quick check for understanding. *Ask students:*

- **What is a graphic organizer?** *[Students should answer: a visual representation of information from the text.]*
- **What are the two types of text structures we will encounter?** *[Students should answer: narrative text structure and expository text structure.]*
- **What are we going to learn today?** *[Students should answer: using graphic organizers to visually represent information we read from both narrative text structures and expository text structures.]*

Use study aides to help students practice applying new information.

Introduce the Text Structure Cue Sheet to serve as a guide for the students to use while they identify text types, structures, and graphic organizers. Referring to the cue sheet, briefly review the purpose, text structure, definition, and signal words of both narrative text and expository text. Explain to the students that the visual in the graphic organizer in the right-hand column represents one example of a graphic organizer for that text structure type.

Earlier I told you that we could use different graphic organizers to represent the information from the text. Look at the graphic organizer column on the Text Structure Cue Sheet. You can see that each text structure has a different graphic organizer to visually present the information. Let's look at the graphic organizer for narrative text structure. The story map graphic organizer is only one example of a graphic organizer that we could use to represent the information from a narrative text structure. We could use other graphic organizers that include the same information but visually organize the information slightly different. Today we will only use the graphic organizers included on the cue sheet.

Provide a narrative text at the students' instructional level. You might homogeneously group students according to their reading level to present them with the most appropriate text for their reading ability.

Provide explicit instruction to teach new concepts.

Narrative text structure uses a story structure that includes story elements, such as setting, characteristics, conflict, plot (rising action, climax, falling action), and resolution. Narrative text structures follow a story plot with a beginning, middle, and end. Let's begin with identifying the type of text we will read and then we'll identify the type of text structure used to help us determine which graphic organizer is best to represent the information from the text.

Group the students in pairs. Hand out the narrative passage. Read the title and continue to read about half of the passage and allow for comment on any graphics in the text, and then transition to partner reading to finish reading the passage. The teacher should monitor the students' discussions and text reading.

We will read the title together. I will read the first paragraph. Then we will transition to partner reading. Everyone put your finger on the title. Partners check to make sure that you have the correct passage in front of you. Good job. We are all ready to read the title together. Let's begin. The teacher might use choral reading during this activity.

Model think-aloud procedures to demonstrate.

While reading the text aloud, acknowledge when you encounter a story element in the text. For example, after you read about the setting, explicitly state where the setting of the story is or describe it as the author did. Make the connection that it is important to look for the text structure while reading the text. Upon completion of reading the story, provide a think aloud to help students understand how to accurately identify the text structure.

I am going to model what I am thinking about while I read the text. This is called a think aloud.

The think aloud will depend on the text presented. The teacher will need to preview the text in advance to prepare a think aloud for this activity.

An example of a think aloud might include an explanation of the story elements that are present in the text to indicate that the text structure is narrative.

Another example of a think aloud might include a reference to the signal words on the cue sheet as another reason to have confidence that the text structure is narrative.

Paired practice.

Allow the students adequate time to read the text in pairs and identify the text structure with reasons why. Remind students to use the cue sheet handout as a reference when identifying text structures.

One strategy that helps readers remember the text type is to underline the signal words when you read them. When I read a text, I write the signal words on a separate sheet of paper or put a little check on my cue sheet to help me log which signal words were in the text. Signal words were introduced in the Identifying Narrative and Expository Text Structures Cue Sheet from lesson one. Read the first sentence with your partner. While you read, look for signal words. If you encounter a signal word, tell each other the word(s). Continue to read the remainder of the paragraph together and identify signal words to help you determine the text structure.

Provide positive reinforcement.

After partners are finished reading the passage, allow pairs to share the story elements and the location in the text to confirm why the text is narrative. The teacher may encourage student engagement by doing the following:

- Use student responses as models.
- Provide points toward academic engagement for the paired reading practice and participation.
- If students make errors, provide immediate and corrective feedback. Explain the correct reasoning or evidence for the text type.
- Note the correct location in the passage and provide a think aloud to illustrate how a good reader can use the information to determine the correct text type.
- Have the student repeat the correct response.

Check for understanding.

Ask students:

- **What type of text structure is used in this text?** *[Students should correctly answer: narrative text structure.]*
- **What story elements can you locate in the passage?** *[Students' answers will vary. Student may say any of the following: setting, characters, conflict, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.]*

Teacher model.

After the students have identified the narrative text structure, read the passage with their partner, and discussed the story elements in the passage, allow the students time to fill in the story map graphic organizer for narrative text structure.

Now that we identified that the passage is a narrative text structure, we can use the story map graphic organizer to represent the story elements included in the passage. *The teacher might have the students copy the graphic organizer to a separate sheet of paper or provide the template as a handout. Let's begin with the setting and main characters. We will write where the story took place in the box labeled **beginning**. The setting of the story is _____. (The answer will vary depending on the passage.) Turn to your partner and discuss who the main character(s) is in the story. Raise your hand when your team has an answer. (After a majority of the students raise their hands, have the students share their responses chorally. Again, the answer may vary by the number of characters in the text.) Let's add the main character to the beginning box. The main character is _____.*

Look at the arrow pointing to the box labeled climax. We need to write the rising action, or the events that are leading up to the climax, on the lines provided. In the climax box, we need to record the big event or the running point in the story. The falling action is the events that occur after the climax to conclude the story. In the box labeled **end**, we will record the resolution or the conclusion of the story.

Work with your partner to complete the story map graphic organizer. Does anyone have questions about the task? Afterward, I will help you to fill in the story map graphic organizer with correct information from the text.

Paired practice.

Allow the students an opportunity to work in pairs to complete the story map graphic organizer while providing supportive practice.

Provide positive reinforcement.

After partners complete the graphic organizer, allow pairs to share the story map graphic organizers on a whole-class visual display, if available. Students may, instead, explain the information represented on their story map to the class.

If students make errors, provide immediate and corrective feedback. Explain the correct story element and how and why it is the correct element to include in the area on the story map. Note the correct location in the passage and provide a think aloud to illustrate how a good reader can use the information to determine the correct story element to accurately represent the information from text. Have the student repeat the correct response.

Provide opportunities for teacher-led and paired practice to learn new procedures.

After students have practiced how to use a narrative text structure graphic organizer, the remaining time will be spent on practicing how to use an expository text structure graphic organizer. When providing an overview of each graphic organizer, review the expository text structure definition of each type.

Now that we practiced how to use a narrative text structure graphic organizer, we will spend the remaining time on practicing how to use an expository text structure graphic organizer. Because each of the six common expository text structures have their own different graphic organizer, we will refer to the graphic organizer included on the Text Structure Cue Sheet. Let's look at each expository text structure graphic organizer.

- 1. First, look at the cause-effect graphic organizer. There might be several causes or reasons why an event happened. However, there could be one main cause and several effects or results from an event. The cause-effect passage that we will read today will have several causes and one main effect.**
- 2. Second, the chronology/sequence graphic organizer looks like a list of order of events. We could put the order of events on an arrow timeline instead. Today, we will list the sequence of events in chronological order using the chronology/sequence graphic organizer.**
- 3. Third, the compare/contrast graphic organizer is a Venn diagram. In the two outer circles, we can include how the topic or item is different. In the middle, overlapping portion of both circles is space to write how the topic is similar. We could also use a T-chart to describe how two things are alike in one column and then how they are different in the other column.**
- 4. Fourth, the description/categorization graphic organizer is a main idea web. This is a common graphic organizer used to help us explain something or define its characteristics. We will write the topic in the middle circle and the characteristics of the topic in the smaller circles that branch out from the main, middle circle.**
- 5. Fifth, the problem-solution graphic organizer includes a problem of what is wrong and an arrow pointing to a solution of how to fix it. There could be several solutions to a problem. Today we are going to read a problem-solution passage with one main problem and one main solution.**
- 6. Sixth, the position-reason graphic organizer includes the position or stance on an issue and then includes the reasons why a point or an idea should be supported.**

Today, we will read a passage that uses each of the six common expository text structures and represents the information from the passage in the graphic organizer for each expository text structure.

Provide an expository text at the students' instructional level. You might homogeneously group students according to their reading level to present them with the most appropriate text for their reading ability.

Remember that the purpose of expository text is to provide the reader with information. Unlike narrative text that uses one text structure, expository text may use one, two, or sometimes three text structures in the passage to organize the information. This requires you as the reader to monitor your

reading very closely to identify what the text structure is and whether it changes to a new text structure. Regardless of how many text structures are used, the author's purpose is still to present the information. When we read, we use the text structure to organize the information we are reading to understand the passage. Today we will represent that information visually in the graphic organizer for that specific expository text structure. The passages today have only one text structure.

Hand out the cause-effect expository text structure passage. Read the title and continue to read about half of the passage to allow for comment on any graphics in the text, and then transition to partner reading to finish reading the passage. The teacher should monitor the students' discussions and text reading.

Model think-aloud procedures to demonstrate.

We will read the title together. I will read the first paragraph. Then we will transition to partner reading. Everyone put your finger on the title. Partners check to make sure that you have the correct passage in front of you. Good job. We are all ready to read the title together. Let's begin. *The teacher might use choral reading during this activity.*

While reading the text aloud, acknowledge when you encounter a text feature (e.g., boldface words, table, diagram) or a signal word (e.g., because, before, in comparison) in the text to alert the students that this is an expository text. Make the connection that the signal word is related to the respective text structure. It is important to help the students identify the text structure while reading the text. While reading the passage, provide a think aloud to help students understand how to accurately identify the text structure.

I am going to model what I am thinking about while I read the text. This is called a think aloud.

- The think aloud will depend on the text presented. The teacher will need to preview the text in advance to prepare a think aloud for this activity.
- An example of a think aloud might include an explanation of the text features present in the text to determine that the text structure is expository.
- Another example of a think aloud might include a reference to the signal words on the cue sheet as another reason to have confidence that the text structure is expository.
- A third example of a think aloud might include the connection of the signal words to a text structure type to recognize that the author organized the information using that text structure.

Provide opportunities for paired practice to learn new procedures.

Allow the students adequate time to read the text and identify the text structure with reasons why. Remind students to use the cue sheet handout as a reference when identifying text structures.

One strategy that helps readers remember the text type is to underline the signal words when you read them. When I read a text, I write the signal words on a separate sheet of paper or put a little check on my cue sheet to help me log which signal words were in the text. Read the first sentence with your partner. While you read, look for signal words. If you encounter a signal word, tell each other the word(s). Continue to read the remainder of the paragraph together and identify signal words to help you determine the text structure.

Check for understanding.

Ask students:

- a. **What type of text structure is used in this text?** [*Students should correctly answer: expository text structure.*]
- b. **What text features can you locate in the passage that helped you determine the text type?** [*Students' answers will vary. Students may say any of the following: titles, headings, subheadings, boldface words, charts, tables, diagrams, or graphics.*]
- c. **What expository text structure was used in this text?** [*Students should correctly answer: cause-effect text structure.*]

Provide opportunities for teacher-led and paired practice to learn new procedures.

After the students have identified the expository text structure, read the passage with their partner, and discussed the text structure of the passage, allow the students time to fill in the cause-effect graphic organizer for expository text structure.

Now that we identified that the passage is an expository text structure, we can use the cause-effect graphic organizer to represent the information included in the passage. *The teacher might have the students copy the graphic organizer to a separate sheet of paper or provide the students with the template as a handout. Let's begin with identifying the causes. We will write each cause in the boxes labeled causes. The first cause is ____ (answer will vary depending on the passage). Turn to your partner and discuss another cause. Raise your hand when your team has an answer. (After a majority of the students raise their hands, have the students share their responses chorally. Again, the answer may vary by the number of causes in the text.)*

Let's add the next cause in the box. The second cause is ____. *Good job! Again, turn to your partner and discuss another cause. Raise your hand when your team has an answer. The third cause is ____.*

Now we need to determine the effect of these causes. Turn to your partner and discuss the effect. The effect is ____. *Good work completing the cause-effect text structure graphic organizer.*

Now you will work with your partners to read the chronology/sequence passage and complete the chronology/sequence graphic organizer. Does anyone have questions about the task? I will help you to fill in the chronology/sequence graphic organizer with correct information from the text.

Allow the students an opportunity to work in pairs to complete the chronology/sequence graphic organizer while providing supportive practice.

After partners complete the graphic organizer, allow pairs to share their graphic organizers on a whole-class visual display, if available. Students may, instead, explain the information represented on their graphic organizer to the class. If students make errors, provide immediate and corrective feedback. Explain the correct information from the text and how and why it is the correct information/detail to include in the graphic organizer. Note the correct location in the passage and provide a think aloud to illustrate how a good reader can use the information to accurately represent the information from text. Have the student repeat the correct response.

Repeat the following routine for each of the five remaining expository text structure graphic organizers.

Error Correction

Provide immediate and explicit error correction.

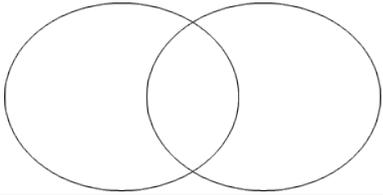
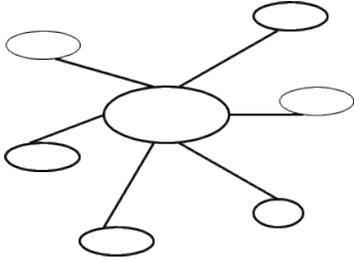
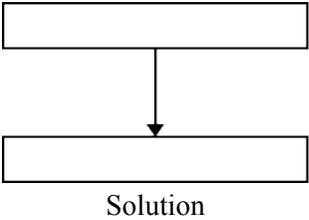
- While students read, monitor their discussion of text and reasoning. Provide students with corrective feedback if they misidentify the text structure or do not recognize a signal word. If students finish reading while others are still reading, prompt students to review the cue sheet and confirm the text structure based on their reasoning.
- While students complete the graphic organizer, monitor the accuracy of their story maps. Provide students with corrective feedback if they incorrectly include a story element in an area of the map. Show students where in the story to find the correct story element to include on the story map. If students finish the graphic organizer before others, prompt students to write the paragraph number and line next to each story element to verify where in the text they found the information.
- While students read, monitor their discussion of text and reasoning. Provide students with corrective feedback if they misidentify the text structure or do not recognize a signal word. If students finish reading while others are still reading, prompt students to review the cue sheet and confirm the text structure based on their reasoning.

Text Structure Cue Sheet: Identifying Narrative and Expository Text Structures

This handout should serve as a guide for students while learning text structures. Students may reference the two main types of text, narrative and expository, and the common text structure types, definitions, signal words, and graphic organizers used to visually represent the information in the text.

Text Structure Type and Definition	Signal Words	Graphic Organizer
Narrative Text		
<i>Purpose: To entertain the reader or present a story</i>		
Story elements = Organized around a set of story elements or story grammar, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Setting ▪ Characters ▪ Conflict ▪ Plot (Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action) ▪ Resolution 	First So Then Finally At last	Story map
Expository Text		
<i>Purpose: To inform the reader of an event or provide general information</i>		
Text Structure Type and Definition	Signal Words	Graphic Organizer
Cause-Effect = How or why an event happened; what resulted from an event	Because Due to Since therefore So that As a result of Consequently	Cause-effect semantic map
Chronology/Sequence = The order of events/steps in a process	Afterward Before During Immediately Last Previously	Timeline 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____

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Text Structure Type and Definition	Signal Words	Graphic Organizer
Compare/Contrast = How two or more things are alike/different	As opposed to Both In common In comparison Opposite Similarly	Venn diagram 
Description/Categorization = How something looks, moves, works, etc.; a definition or characterization	Appears to be For example Identify Refers to Such as To illustrate	Web 
Problem-Solution = What's wrong and how to fix it	Problem Resolution Response Solution To fix the problem	Problem-solution relationship 
Position-Reason = Why a point or ideas should be supported; what's wrong with an idea	As illustrated by Because Consequently For instance For this reason In conclusion	Position-reason flowchart 