

Expository Text Structure

Definitions:

Expository text: Usually nonfiction, informational text. This type of is not organized around a story-like structure but is instead organized based on the purposes and goals of the author or by content. Examples include news articles, informational books, instruction manuals, or textbooks.

Text structure / Text frames: The way in which the text or reading material is organized. Examples of expository text frames or structures include cause & effect, concept & definition, sequential, or proposition & support.

Common Expository Text Structures:

Sequential: This could include the description of key events in chronological order as might be found in a history text or it could involve a series of related steps in a process such as might be found in a recipe or instruction manual.

****Key words & phrases:** first, next, after, initially, finally, then, meanwhile, preceding

Descriptive or Concept/Definition: This type of expository text involves the description and/or categorization of something such as a concept (freedom, civil rights), a system such as the respiratory system, or an object such as an element or compound studied in a science class.

****Key words & phrases:** looks like, belongs to, above, behind, appears to be

Compare/Contrast: Discusses the ways in which concepts, ideas, events, or objects are alike and different.

****Key words & phrases:** compared with, although, as well as, different from

Cause & Effect: Discusses problems or events and their results or consequences (such as an article describing the process and consequences of deforestation)

Key words & phrases: as a result, accordingly, is caused by, leads to, consequently

Proposition & Support (Persuasive): The author, in this type of text, is often trying to persuade readers that a problem exists or an issue exists and must be dealt with in a specific manner. The author will generally state a hypothesis and attempt to make a logical argument about what is to be done.

Key words & phrases: because of, the result would be, based on, the data shows