



Text Structures

Text structure, also referred to as an organizational pattern, refers to how a text is organized. Below are six common text structures used by authors of expository texts.

Note: Some signal words/phrases appear in more than one text structure.

<u>Text Structure</u>	<u>Descriptor</u>	<u>Signal Words/Phrases</u>	<u>Example</u>
Description	Information is presented in sections that often begin with a central idea and are followed by an elaboration of the features, characteristics, or examples of the subject at hand.	Characteristics of; details; for example; for instance; includes; in particular; specifically; such as; to illustrate.	A story about panthers is organized into four sections, each section describing a different characteristic of a panther.
Problem and Solution	Information is conveyed as an issue or a problem of concern and solution(s) are proposed or explained.	An answer to; a consequence of; a possible solution to; challenge of; dilemma; in order to solve; issue; problem; question; reason; resolution; resolved.	An author addresses the diminishing panther population by explaining the reasons for the decline, and offering suggestions for improving the species' survival rate.
Chronological	Facts, events, or details are presented in the order in which they occurred in time. * <i>*(not to be confused with sequential)</i>	On, at (date, time); before; earlier; eventually; following; next; not long after; now; presently; previously; prior to; then; recently; simultaneously; soon; until; when.	An author writes an article about the evolutionary history of the Florida panther and organizes significant historical events based on the corresponding year each occurred.
Compare and Contrast	The similarities and/or differences of two or more people, things, concepts, or ideas are presented.	Alike; also; as opposed to; both; but; comparatively; conversely; different; however; in contrast; instead of; not only; on the other hand; opposite from; same; share; similarly;	An author explains how to distinguish a panther from a bobcat by providing characteristics shared by each, and emphasizing their distinctive features.
Cause and Effect	Information reflects a causal relationship. The description of what happened is the <i>effect</i> and the detail(s) related to why it happened is the <i>cause</i> .	As a result; as such; because of; cause; consequently; due to; for this reason; led to; since; so; reason; result of; therefore; unless.	An article explains the effects of increasing construction on the habitats of endangered species.
Sequence	Information is presented as a series of instructions or steps in a process.	First; second; third; at once; after; before; during; finally; following; last; next.	An instructional guide provides a detailed explanation of how to assemble a model Florida panther, step-by-step.