

## **Description Text Organization/Structure:**

Paragraphs in this pattern list pieces of information (facts, ideas, steps, etc.). The order of the fact listing may reflect the order of importance or simply another logical order.

The author may signal this pattern through the following words: one, two, first, second, third, to begin, next, finally, most important, when, also, too, then, to begin with, for instance, for example, and in fact.

Subjects that commonly employ this text pattern include social studies and science.

### *An example is:*

The Chinese writing system was created nearly 3,500 years ago during the Shang dynasty. The earliest examples of Chinese writing have been found on animal bones. The carvings on these bones show that Chinese writing has always used symbols to represent words. Some of these carvings are pictures. For example, the verb *to go* was represented by a picture of a foot.

From: *World History: Journey Across Time*

## **Sequential or Chronological Organization/Structure:**

This involves putting facts, events, or concepts in order of occurrence. The author traces the development of the topic or gives the steps in the sequence.

The author may signal this pattern through the following words: on (date), not long after, now, as, before, after, when, first, second, then, finally, during, finally, and until.

The main subject that commonly employs this text pattern is social studies.

*An example is:*

Hornbills, nicknamed hide-away birds, follow several unique steps to build their nest. First, they find a tree with a hole in it. Second, the female hornbill climbs into the hole. Third, they make some plaster out of mud. Fourth, the male bird plasters the hole, leaving a small opening through which food can be passed to the female. Finally, after the babies are born, the female breaks the mud from around the hole and takes over feeding the babies. Unlike most species, males and females work cooperatively to make a safe home for their offspring.

From: *Structures for Reading, Writing, and Thinking*

## **Comparison-Contrast Organization/Structure:**

The author points out likenesses (comparison) and/or differences (contrast) among facts, concepts, events, people, etc.

The author may signal this pattern through the following words: however, but, as well as, on the other hand, not only...but also, either...or, while, although, similarly, yet, unless, meanwhile, nevertheless, otherwise, compared to, and despite.

The main subject that commonly employs this text pattern is social studies.

*An example is:*

To a small child, oceans and ponds seem very much the same. However, there are important differences to point out. To begin with, they differ in size. A pond is a very small body of water, and an ocean covers more than half the earth's surface. Ponds are very shallow as compared to oceans, which are many miles deep in most places. Because of the ocean's depth, the sunlight can't reach the ocean floor, hence no green plants grow there. This is in contrast to ponds, which have green plants growing in the muddy bottom. Ponds contain fresh water, whereas oceans contain salt water. These are the major differences between oceans and ponds.

From: *Structures for Reading, Writing, and Thinking*

## **Cause-Effect Organization/Structure:**

The author shows how facts, events, or concepts (effects) happen or come into being because of other facts, events, or concepts (causes).

The author may signal this pattern through the following words: because, cause, since, therefore, consequently, as a result, this led to, so, so that, nevertheless, accordingly, if...then, and thus.

The subjects that commonly employ this text pattern include social studies and science.

*An example is:*

Martin Luther King, Jr., the famous Civil Rights activist of the 60s and 70s, is sometimes referred to as one of the greatest orators of our time. One of the reasons is his very strong voice. An audience also enjoyed a musical tone in his voice when he spoke. As a boy, he was impressed with “big words” and the power of those words. As a result of these qualities, he was able to persuade people to do unusual things by just simply talking to them. His most famous speech, “I Have a Dream,” has been quoted by many speakers worldwide because of its eloquence and power. King was truly an inspirational speaker.

From: *Structures for Reading, Writing, and Thinking*

## **Problem and Solution Organization/Structure:**

The author shows the development of a problem and the solution(s) to the problem.

The author may signal this pattern through the following words: because, cause, since, therefore, consequently, as a result, this led to, so, so that, nevertheless, accordingly, if...then, and thus.

The main subject that commonly employs this text pattern is science.

### ***An example is:***

Astronauts face many problems in space caused by weightlessness. One of these problems is floating around the cabin. To solve this problem, astronauts wear shoes that are coated with a special adhesive. This adhesive sticks to the floor of the cabin. Serving food is another problem. It won't stay put on the table! Experts solved this problem by putting food and drinks in pouches and tubes. Food is "preprocessed" and only needs to be mixed with water. Weightlessness makes the simple task of turning a doorknob or a wrench a real problem. Since there is no gravity to keep the astronaut down, when he exerts a force one way, the opposite force may flip him over completely. Being very careful about how much force one exerts to do these simple tasks usually solves these problems. On earth, life is much simpler, thanks to gravity.

From: *Structures for Reading, Writing, and Thinking*

## **Question and Answer Organization/Structure:**

The writer presents a question and then tries to answer it.

The author may signal this pattern through the following words: how, when, what, where, why, who, how many, the best estimate, it could be that, and one may conclude.

*An example is:*

Where did the first cell come from? Nobody knows, but scientists have ideas. The ancient sea was full of chemicals, and one thing similar chemicals do is stick together. Some scientists think that chemicals called amino acids stuck together and formed little spheres, like amino-acid bubbles filled with water. The amino-acid film that formed the bubble was the ancient cell membrane.

From: *Diversity of Life Resources: Images, Data, and Readings*

## Definition Organization/Structure:

The text defines a difficult term or idea. The definition is stated and expanded with examples and restatements. Look for bold or italic words to emphasize new vocabulary.

The author may signal this pattern through the following words: for example, was, is, are, were, to define, definition, meaning, and use of boldface or italic words.

*An example is:*

**Paramecia** are one-celled, cigar-shaped organisms. They are members of a large group of tiny organisms called **protists**. There are over 50,000 different kinds of protists-more kinds than all the reptiles, mammals, amphibians, fish, and birds combined.

From: *Diversity of Life Resources: Images, Data, and Readings*

## **Classification Organization/Structure:**

This type of structure can be very helpful when writing research reports. All of the information is organized by like groups or types.

The author may signal this pattern through the following words: first, second, another, divided, into, classified, types, kinds, groups, and sort.

*An example is:*

Mammals are divided into orders. This is where humans and dogs split off. Dogs are in order carnivora, along with cats, foxes, weasels, and lots more. Humans are in the order primates, along with the monkeys, baboons, lemurs, apes, and chimps. The carnivores and primates are further divided into families. All the doglike animals (dogs, wolves, jackals, foxes) are in family canidae, and all the humanlike animals are in family hominidae.

From: *Diversity of Life Resources: Images, Data, and Readings*