Grade 4 Playlist: Describe Text Structure

Aligns with CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.5:

- Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.

Welcome

How do authors know how to present their ideas in informational texts? Authors do not just write facts and ideas in any order. They organize their information in a way that makes sense. The way an informational text is organized is called its text structure. There are several different ways to organize informational texts, so how does a reader know what the text structure is? What steps does a reader need to take to determine the text structure and be able to describe it correctly?

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn how to:

- analyze and describe how informational texts are organized.

- differentiate between chronology, comparison, cause/effect, and problem and solution text structures.

- accurately identify and describe text structures.

Review

Key Terms

- **Text structure** describes the way informational texts are organized.

- A **chronological** text structure lists events, ideas, or information in the order that they occurred.

- A **comparison** text structure orders two or more events, ideas, or information so that they can be compared or contrasted.

- A **cause/effect** text structure presents ideas to explain why something happened or the effects that made something happen.

- A **problem/solution** text structure presents a problem that needs to be solved and then offers solutions that can solve the problem.

Exploring the Standard

Identifying the kind of text structure that an author is using can help the reader make sense of the text. It also can help the reader take notes or find text evidence more easily. Most texts have an overall text structure, but also may use a few within different sections or paragraphs. There are **four** most commonly used text structures. These are chronological, compare/contrast, cause/effect, and problem/solution.

A Closer Look: Types of Text Structures

The text structures that are used most commonly in informational texts serve a purpose: to organize information in a way that make the ideas clear. Take a look at the explanations of the most commonly used text structures.

A **chronological**, **or time order, structure** organizes information in a specific order. This type of text structure is often used to describe events, ideas, or information that require chronology to make sense. For example, if the text is about a historical event, the author may use a chronological structure and explain the events in the order that that they occurred, using dates to track the order.

Watch!

This video explains a chronological text structure.

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZPJK58tySI

Read!

Take a look at this passage about Granville T. Wood.

Notice that the passage uses chronological order, starting from his birth to his death. The author uses dates and number of years to show shifts in time during Wood's lifetime. Think about what words can help a reader determine that the passage uses a chronological structure. Note words that show a shift in time, such as *next*. Think about why this is a good way to structure the information in this passage.

- http://www.k12reader.com/worksheet/african-american-inventors-granville-t-woods/view/

A **compare-and-contrast structure** shows how information is alike and different. This type of structure helps to highlight the smaller details within events, ideas, or information by showing **how** they are alike and different. They often are used when discussing several historical figures or scientific discoveries, for example, within a single text. For instance, a scientist wants to describe two different experiments in order to determine which one is better. He or she may describe the similarities and differences of the experiments, as well as what they have in common. The details of each experiment in comparison to each other build an overall picture of which is most successful.

Teaching Notes: Describe Text Structure

The goal of RI.4.5 is for students to describe the overall text structure of an informational text. Students should be focusing on how the events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text helps them describe text as chronology, comparison, cause/effect, or problem/solution. The following information contains ideas that teachers can incorporate into their classrooms as well as additional resources to peruse and integrate into instruction as appropriate.

Activities

1. Choose an informational book that the class has been reading together. Take a class vote to determine what students think the overall text structure is. Then fill out the appropriate graphic organizer with important information about the text that you decide on together.

Writing Prompts

1. Explain to students that the text structure graphic organizers can be used as prewriting graphic organizers. Ask students to choose a nonfiction topic to write about. Then, direct students to choose the text structure they will use to write their essay. Have them fill in the appropriate graphic organizer to help them collect their research and form their ideas before they write.

2. Direct students to write a short essay that describes each text structure they learned about. They can write one paragraph to describe each text structure, and include examples as needed.

Additional Resources

Consider these additional resources when teaching RI.4.5:

These sources describe text structure, how to teach it, and may include links to graphic organizers:

- http://www.ereadingworksheets.com/text-structure/

- http://education.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/casei/3-01-04-handout%20TextStructureResources%201.pdf

These videos can be used with students to teach and reinforce the concepts of the playlist:

- https://learnzillion.com/lesson_plans/8288-preview-a-text-by-examining-its-organization#fndtn-lesson

- https://www.opened.com/video/identify-and-describe-a-text-s-structure/413549

- https://www.opened.com/video/create-a-timeline-to-keep-track-of-important-information/140153