Patterns of Organization

Authors use organizational patterns to develop main ideas in paragraphs, essays, stories, novels, poems, and more. Topic Sentence \rightarrow Paragraph

Thesis Statement \rightarrow Essay

Theme \rightarrow Story, Novel, Poem

Type of Organization	Signal Words Transition Words	Used For	Example of Thesis Statement
Chronological Order	first, third, next, finally,	It is used for describing steps and stages,	The famous Leaning Tower of Pisa has
Sequential Order	eventually, following this	narration, and to show the sequence of	been tilting for over 800 years and recent
Process Order	how to, in the process of, the following steps,	events. It is used in anthropology, history, art history, and political science.	improvements should allow it to continue tilting for another 300 more.
When did it happen?			
In what order did it			The moth and butterfly undergo several
happen?			changes between hatching from an egg to mature adulthood.
List of Items	In addition, moreover, furthermore, as well as, plus,	It answers questions regarding proof, back- up, or support. It is used in history, social	Many modern people are turning themselves into social victims. One
What examples support	in fact	sciences, political science.	example is
the main idea?			
What proof is there?			
Comparison and	Similarly, like, in the same	It is used to show the similarities and	Gangs and fraternities share many
Contrast	way, compared to, likewise, but, yet, on the other hand,	differences between two topics.	characteristics, but are also quite different.
How are two things	nevertheless, on the		
similar?	contrary		Poetry and literature, while being quite
How are two things			different, also have many similarities.
different?			
Cause and Effect	Because, for this reason, due to, on account of, as a	It is used to describe how an action or event is caused by another event or action.	Research has shown that birth defects have various causes.
Why did something	result, since consequently,		
happen?	resulting		Smoking is the single most preventable
What were the results			risk factor for fatal illnesses in the United
of a particular event?			States.

Definition and	Defined as, is, known, is used	It is used to introduce, explain, and	Ragtime music is a style that developed at
Example	to mean, for example, to illustrate, for instance, such	describe a word or concept. It has three parts—a term, a definition, and an	the turn of the twentieth century.
What is it?	as	example.	
Classification	Categories, classifications, groups, classes, elements,	It is used to categorize a topic into parts that have common characteristics. This	There are many people involved in the publishing of a magazine.
How do the parts work with the whole?	features, kinds, types, varieties, methods	pattern is often used with a chart or graphic to help readers understand or visualize categories.	
Order of Importance	Central, principal, chief, major, main, key, primary,	It is used to show information from either the least important part to the most	While the most important part of an essay is a solid thesis statement, topic sentences
Which point is the most	significant,	important part OR vice versa. It is used in	and supporting details are also critical.
important? Which	finally, lastly, most important	sciences, especially lab texts and	
point is the least		experiments.	
important?			
What element is crucial?			
Problem and Solution	Problem, need, difficulty,	It presents and explains a problem. It	Since
	dilemma, challenge, issue,	proposes a possible solution to solve the	Since pollution has a detrimental impact
What is the problem?	answer, propose, suggest,	problem. If there is no solution, only the	on modern living standards, a key solution
What is a possible solution?	indicate, solve, resolve, plan	problem is presented. It is used in essays and letters to the editor.	is increased recycling of waste products.
Spatial Order	Behind, next to, diagonally, horizontal, in front of	It describes where something is in space, or where something is in relation to others.	The Grand Canyon is in the northwest corner of Arizona.
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Mixed Order	Sometimes authors mix it up and use a variety of organizational patterns in a paragraph or essay.		

http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/~steuben/Patterns%20of%20Organization.pdf