Identifying Expository Text Structure

College- and Career-Ready Standards Addressed: RI. 6.5, 7.5, 8.5

- Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.

- Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text.

Objective: Students will learn to examine and identify different types of expository text.

Materials

- Three expository short texts (approximately one page each) at student-appropriate instructional level. The first and third texts should each demonstrate one text structure; the second text should demonstrate two text structures.

- Pencil.

- Paper or notebook.

- Text Structure Cue Sheet (see below).

Suggested Schedule and Group Size

Schedule: Daily, no more than five minutes to 10 minutes per session.

Recommended group size: Small group, although exact group size will vary depending upon grade level.

Note: The following script is intended as a model.

Activity

Intervention Principle	Sample Script and Procedures
Use precise, explicit language to introduce the lesson and explain its purpose.	**Today we are going to learn about expository text structure. Text structure is the organization of text. What is text structure?** *(The organization of the text.)* **That's right, text structure is the organization of the text. Good readers use text structure to help them understand what they read. Once we determine the text structure, we can use the structure to find key information to help us understand the passage.**

Activate background knowledge and connect the lesson to relevant knowledge and skills.	**In an earlier lesson, we focused on identifying narrative text structures. Who remembers what narrative text structure is?** *(It tells a story; has a beginning, middle, and end.)* **That's right, narrative text structure usually tells a story and has a beginning, a middle, and an end.** **Today we are going to focus on identifying expository text structures. Expository text provides the reader with information. What does expository text do?** *(Provides readers with information.)* **Each time we encounter new text, we will first determine if the text is narrative text or expository text. Then, we will identify what type of text structure is used in the text. There are six common types of expository text structures, which means we will have to carefully examine the text to correctly identify the expository text structure used. Today, we will learn each of the six common types of expository text structures.**
Use study aides such as graphic organizers to help students learn and practice a new strategy.	Introduce the Text Structure Cue Sheet to serve as a guide for the students to use while they identify text structures. **Look at the Text Structure Cue Sheet. We will learn each of the expository text structure types and their definitions.**
Use explicit instruction to introduce new content. Break components into smaller steps as needed.	Pause to discuss examples of each text structure type as you review. Depending on needs of students, you may decide to introduce the six types of text structure over more than one lesson. 1. **The cause-effect text structure informs the reader how or why an event happened, which is referred to as the cause, and what resulted from an event, which is referred to as the effect. For example, a newspaper article could present a cause as "cold temperatures in the mountains" and an effect as "heavy snowfall conditions in the mountains."** 2. **The chronology/sequence text structure informs the reader of the order of events or steps in a process. For example, a historical document could present the sequence of events on a timeline to show the chronology—or the order in time—of when each event occurred.** 3. **The compare/contrast text structure informs the reader of how two or more things are alike or different. For example, a political speech could present how two presidential candidates are alike and how they are different.** 4. **The description/categorization text structure informs the reader of how something looks, moves, or possibly works; or it may inform the reader of a definition or characterization. For example, an instruction manual could present a description of the features on a car and how to operate the features.** 5. **The problem-solution text structure informs the reader of what is wrong and how to fix it. For example, a scientific account could present a problem—tigers are an endangered species—and a solution—preserving the landscape where tigers live.**

	6. **The position-reason text structure informs the reader of why a point or ideas should be supported or what is wrong with an idea. For example, a biography of a celebrity could present his or her position on an issue and then include the reasons why a point or an idea should be supported.** **A helpful hint to determine text structure is to look for the signal words or phrases, such as "because," "before," "in comparison," "for example," "a problem for this reason," and so on.** *Indicate where they are on the cue sheet.* **If you read one of these words or phrases in your text, it should alert you that the text might be expository. Let's read the text together and identify the type of our text.** *Group the students in pairs and hand out the first expository passage. Preview the text with the students. Encourage students to record notes about the text. Read the title and continue to read about half of the passage and then transition to partner reading to finish reading the passage. Monitor the students' discussions and text reading.*
Use modeling and think-aloud procedures to demonstrate the new strategy.	**Follow along as I read the first paragraph. Then, we will transition to partner reading. Everyone put your finger on the title. Check with your partner to make sure that you have the correct passage in front of you.** **I am going to model what I am thinking about while I read the text. This is called a think-aloud.** *The think-aloud will depend on the text presented. The teacher will need to preview the text to prepare a think-aloud for this activity. The following examples illustrate what a teacher might highlight. An example of a think-aloud might include a reference to the signal words on the cue sheet as another reason to have confidence that the text structure is expository. Another example of a think-aloud might include the connection of the signal words to a text structure type to recognize that the author organized the information using that text structure.* **One way to remember the text type is to underline the signal words when you read them. When I read a text, I write the signal words on a separate sheet of paper or put a little check mark on my cue sheet to help me keep track of signal words that were used in the text. Read the first sentence with your partner. While you read, look for signal words. If you encounter a signal word, tell each other the word(s). Continue to read the remainder of the paragraph together and identify signal words to help you determine the text structure.** *Provide time for students to complete the passage and ask them what signal words they found. As a group, discuss the signal words to determine the text structure.*

Provide opportunities for partner practice. Check for understanding and provide feedback.	*Hand out the second expository passage and have students work in pairs to identify the text structure. This passage should include two text structures to provide students with opportunities to recognize different signal words that are related to different text structures. Provide students with additional guidance and support to help them recognize signal words and identify the correct text structures.*
	You will read the next passage with your partner. You both should look for the signal words and connect which signal words are related to which text structures. Sometimes authors use two or three text structures in the passage to organize the information. This passage might have more than one text structure. This requires you to monitor your reading very closely to identify what the text structure is and if it changes to a new text structure. Use the Text Structure Cue Sheet handout to help you identify the signal words for text structures in this passage.
	Did you recognize any signal words in the text that might help you identify which text structure is used? (*Possible student responses: Yes. I found a lot of signal words. I do not know which text structure is used because I found signal words from different text structures.*)
	Remember, this passage may have more than one text structure. Let's look at which signal words are used at what point in the passage. It could be that the author begins with one text structure and then changes to a different text structure.
	Review the signal words with the students. Note when the text structure might change based on the different signal words.
	Now that we have reviewed which signal words were used, which text structures do you think are used in this passage? *Pause for student response based on the text.*
	Show me why you think each text structure is used. *Look at the passage with the students while they explain their reasoning. Students might reference the signal words that are associated with that text structure or the definition of the text structure that is represented in the passage content.*
	Those are good reasons to explain your thinking. If we look at the first part of the passage, the signal words for the XX text structure are present. Then, the signal words for the XX text structure are also used. I think we should reread the passage to confirm that the information presented represents the definition of both of these text structures. Let's read together.
	Read with the students to help them confirm which text structures are used.
	After rereading the passage and reviewing the signal words, which text structures do you think are used in this passage? *Pause for student responses.*
	That is correct. Good job! Rereading the passage helped us determine if the text structure definition matched the passage

	organization. We could verify that the signal words used are related to that text structure.
	Hand out the third expository passage. Allow the students an opportunity to work independently while providing supportive practice.
	NOTE: Text 3 should include one text structure to serve as an additional practice opportunity. Depending on the number of text structures you introduced in the lesson, the passage might include a text structure that was not present in the previous two text passages. If students experience difficulty, allow them to ask for peer support while you are assisting other students.
	Now you will read this passage independently. As before, look for signal words and connect which signal words are related to which text structures. Use the Text Structure Cue Sheet handout to help you identify the text structures in this passage.
	After students read the third passage, encourage them to share their answers and reasons with their partners before the whole-class discussion. Provide a few minutes for students to discuss possible differences and edit their responses (i.e., identification of a text structure type). Monitor the students' discussions and remind them that it is okay for them to change their initial answers after their conversations.
	Nice job identifying expository text structures today. These can be tricky, but remember that looking for signal words and using the Text Structure Cue Sheet can help you.
Error Correction	
Provide immediate and explicit error correction. Have students practice the correct response.	If students make errors, provide immediate correction and explain why their answers were incorrect. Review the procedures for identifying text structure to help them determine correct answers. Have them justify their answers.

Text Structure Cue Sheet

This handout should serve as a guide for students while learning text structures. Students may reference the two main types of text, narrative and expository, and the common text structure types, definitions, signal words, and graphic organizers used to visually represent the information in the text.

Narrative Text Purpose: To entertain the reader or present a story		
Text Structure Type and Definition	**Signal Words**	**Graphic Organizer**
Includes story elements or parts, also known as story grammar: • Setting • Characters • Conflict • Plot (rising action, climax, falling action) • Resolution	First So Then Finally At last	Story map

Expository Text Purpose: To inform the reader of an event or provide general information		
Text Structure Type and Definition	**Signal Words**	**Graphic Organizer**
Cause-effect: How or why an event happened; what resulted from an event	Because Due to Since, therefore So that As a result of Consequently	Cause-effect semantic map
Chronology/sequence: The order of events or steps in a process	Afterward Before During Immediately Last Previously	Timeline

Expository Text Purpose: To inform the reader of an event or provide general information		
Text Structure Type and Definition	**Signal Words**	**Graphic Organizer**
Compare/contrast: How two or more things are alike or different	As opposed to Both In common In comparison Opposite Similarly	Venn diagram
Description/categorization: How something looks, moves, works; a definition or characterization	Appears to be For example Identify Refers to Such as To illustrate	Web
Problem-solution: What's wrong and how to fix it	Problem Resolution Response Solution To fix the problem	Problem-solution relationship
Position-reason: Why a point or idea should be supported; what's wrong with an idea	As illustrated by Because Consequently For instance For this reason In conclusion	Position-reason flowchart