

Exploring Text Structures

Worksheet 4 of 5 from the Paragraph Writing series.



Objective

Students will understand and identify five key text structures commonly used in informational writing:

1. Chronological Order
2. Compare and Contrast
3. Cause and Effect
4. Problem and Solution
5. Description

What Are Text Structures?

Text structure refers to **how information is organized in a paragraph or passage**. Writers choose different structures depending on what they want to explain, describe, or argue.

The 5 Key Text Structures

Structure	What It Does	Signal Words
Chronological Order	Shows events in time order	first, next, finally, later, then, dates
Compare and Contrast	Shows how things are alike or different	like, unlike, both, however, similarly, in contrast
Cause and Effect	Shows why something happened and what happened as a result	because, so, since, as a result, due to
Problem and Solution	Shows a problem and how it is solved	problem, solution, solve, issue, answer
Description	Gives details about a person, place, thing, or idea	for example, such as, includes, characteristics, features



PART 1: Match the Structure

Directions: Read each passage and choose the correct structure.

1. Max woke up late, missed the bus, and had to walk to school. By the time he arrived, class had already started.
Structure: _____
2. The cheetah is the fastest land animal, while the elephant is one of the slowest. Both have unique adaptations for survival.
Structure: _____
3. Plastic pollution is harming sea life around the world. One solution is to reduce the use of single-use plastics.
Structure: _____
4. Many students enjoy reading fantasy novels. These books often include magical worlds, heroic journeys, and mysterious creatures.
Structure: _____
5. Because the power went out, the refrigerator stopped working and the food spoiled.
Structure: _____
6. Jasmine wanted to bake cookies, but she realized she was out of sugar. She decided to ask her neighbor for some, and luckily, they had extra.
Structure: _____
7. Soccer and basketball are both team sports that require coordination and practice. However, soccer is played mostly with your feet, while basketball uses your hands.
Structure: _____
8. Penguins have thick feathers, a layer of fat, and huddle together to stay warm. These traits help them survive in the cold Antarctic environment.
Structure: _____



PART 2: Signal Word Hunt

Directions: Circle the signal words in each sentence below and label the structure.

1. First, she packed her lunch. Then, she grabbed her backpack and headed to school.
Structure: _____
2. The desert is dry and hot, while the rainforest is humid and full of life.
Structure: _____
3. The library was too noisy, so Jordan couldn't concentrate on his homework.
Structure: _____
4. The tornado destroyed several homes, so the community came together to rebuild them.
Structure: _____
5. Because of the loud thunderstorm, the dog hid under the bed.
Structure: _____
6. The school play and the talent show both feature student performers, but the school play tells a story while the talent show has separate acts.
Structure: _____
7. My little brother spilled juice on the floor, so I had to clean it up.
Structure: _____
8. The author includes details such as fur color, size, and habitat to describe the fox.
Structure: _____
9. First, mix the flour and sugar. Next, add the eggs and stir. Finally, bake for 30 minutes.
Structure: _____
10. Unlike cats, dogs usually enjoy going on walks and playing fetch.
Structure: _____



PART 3: Write with a Structure

Directions: Choose a structure and **write a short paragraph** about one of the following topics:

- The best or worst school lunch
- How to stay safe during a storm
- Two video games you've played
- A pet or animal you admire

Be sure to include:

- Signal words
- A clear topic sentence
- At least 2 supporting details



PART 4: Reading Activity - Why Cats Keep Sickness a Secret

Before You Read:

As you read the passage below:

- **Underline or highlight** any **signal words** that show how the ideas are connected.
- Try to figure out what kind of **text structure** the author is using to organize the information.

Why Cats Keep Sickness a Secret

Cats are known for being quiet and independent animals. But did you know they often hide their illnesses? In the wild, cats learned to stay quiet about pain or sickness. If they looked weak, they could become targets for predators. So, even though your pet cat lives safely at home, it still has this instinct to hide signs of being sick.

Because of this, it can be hard for people to know when their cat needs to go to the vet. Instead of limping or crying, a sick cat might just sleep more or hide under the bed. Some cats may stop eating or act more distant, but these signs can be easy to miss.

As a result, many cats don't get help until their illness becomes serious. That's why it's important for pet owners to watch for small changes in behavior. By noticing early signs, you can help your cat feel better sooner.

1. Label the structure used in the passage:

Structure: _____

2. Explain your reasoning in 1–2 sentences:

ANSWER KEY

PART 1: Match the Structure

1. Chronological Order 2. Compare and Contrast 3. Problem and Solution 4. Description	5. Cause and Effect 6. Problem and Solution 7. Compare and Contrast 8. Description
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PART 2: Signal Word Hunt

Students were asked to **circle signal words** and **label the structure**. Suggested answers:

1. Structure: Chronological Order Signal Words: <i>First, Then</i> 2. Structure: Compare and Contrast Signal Words: <i>dry and hot, humid and full of life, while</i> 3. Structure: Cause and Effect Signal Words: <i>so</i> 4. Structure: Cause and Effect Signal Words: <i>so</i> 5. Structure: Cause and Effect Signal Words: <i>Because</i>	6. Structure: Compare and Contrast Signal Words: <i>both, but</i> 7. Structure: Cause and Effect Signal Words: <i>so</i> 8. Structure: Description Signal Words: <i>such as</i> 9. Structure: Chronological Order Signal Words: <i>First, Next, Finally</i> 10. Structure: Compare and Contrast Signal Words: <i>Unlike</i>
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PART 3: Write with a Structure

(Answers will vary—this section requires student-generated writing.)

PART 4: Reading Activity – Why Cats Keep Sickness a Secret

1. **Structure:** Cause and Effect

2. **Explanation:**

The passage explains **why cats hide their illness** (cause: instinct from the wild) and what **happens as a result** (effect: people don't notice until it's serious). It uses signal words like *because*, *as a result*, and *that's why*.



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