

# Lesson Skill: Identifying nonfiction text structures

---

## Strand Reading--nonfiction

**SOL** 6.6  
7.6  
8.6

## Materials

- Copies of the attached Nonfiction Text Structures handout
- Internet access for each student

## Lesson

In order to increase the comprehension of informational text, students should be able to identify the type of text structure. One way to do this is to recognize signal words that indicate text structures.

1. Distribute copies of the attached “Nonfiction Text Structures” handout, and review each of the five structures listed. (In order to engage the students during this instruction, you may alter the handout to be one requiring fill-in-notes.)
2. After the handout has been reviewed, have students illustrate the five types of nonfiction text structures.
3. Have students access several current nonfiction articles from a Web site(s) that provides nonfiction articles written for children.
4. Have students read the articles, circling signal words that indicate text structure.
5. Have students identify the type of structure of each article.
6. For additional practice, have students repeat this process with teacher-selected passages.

**Nonfiction Text Structures**

<b>Text Structure</b>	<b>Signal Words</b>	<b>Signal to Reader</b>
Description or list	<i>for example, to begin with, in front, beside, near, has/have, is/are, eats, lives, looks, some characteristics are, for instance</i>	A list or set of characteristics, such as attributes, facts, and details about a general or specific topic
Sequence or time order	<i>first, second, last, before, until, on (date), not long after, after, at the same time, at (time), by then, following, finally, by, lastly, 1, 2, 3,...</i>	A main topic supported by details presented in a specific order; a sequence of events or ordered steps in a process
Compare-and-contrast	<i>like, unlike, in contrast, on the other hand, also, too, as well as, likewise, similar to, same as, as opposed to, different from, nevertheless, in like manner, alike, resembles</i>	Likenesses and differences between two or more subjects or topics
Cause-and-effect	<i>since, because, this led to / leads to, on account of, due to, may be due to, as a result of, for this reason, consequently, then, so, therefore, thus so that, in order to</i>	Reasons why something happens or exists
Problem-and-solution	<i>one reason for that, a solution, try, attempt, have solved this problem, by, a problem, has caused, so, to / in order to</i>	A problem, its causes, and its solution(s)

