Teaching Text Structures and Features
So... What’s the difference?

- **Text Features** - Special parts of the text that offer visual aids or cues that help interpret the information.

- **Text Structures** - Organization of the text that provides the frame for how the information is presented.
List it, Librarians!

After the “Go”, List as many text features or Structures as you can think of...

- Text Features earn you 1 point
- Text Structures earn you 2 points
  - Defining a text structure earns you an additional point
# Do You Know the Difference?

## Text Structures
The organizational pattern an author uses to structure the ideas in a text.

- Descriptive
- Compare/contrast
- Sequential
- Cause/effect
- Problem/solution
- Argument/persuasion

## Text Features
Additional information and illustrate information to help readers understand the text.

- Table of contents
- Glossary
- Index
- Charts and graphs
- Headings
- Inserts and sidebars
- Maps
- Diagrams and cutaways
- Bullets, asterisks and starts
- Captions and labels
- Timelines
- Types of print
- Photos and pictures
Why teach text structures and features?

- Questions about text features are found directly on Acuity and NeSA assessments.
- Questions about text structures are found indirectly. Questions are asked about the organization Structure.
How do I know if it is important for my students?
Acuity- Item Analysis by Grade Level using NE LA Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd Grade Language Arts</td>
<td>Online, Untimed</td>
<td>08/26/12</td>
<td>Acuity Omaha LA Grade 3 Predictive Form A</td>
<td>Omaha Public Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report Date:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Test Name:</td>
<td>Dates Test Completed:</td>
<td>Number of Students Assigned Test:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>09/13/12 - 09/25/12</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Number in Grade who Completed Test:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>49 out of 49</td>
<td>Number of Students partially scored:</td>
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### Multiple-Choice Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage of students who selected answer</th>
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| 2nd Grade | Correct Answer. | #/%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Identify a use of rhyme patterns - 94636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of a compound word based upon its word parts - 53552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Use knowledge of contractions to determine the meaning of a word - 9745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 2.1.5.c</td>
<td>Identify and use context clues (e.g., word and sentence clues, re-reading) and text features (e.g., illustrations, graphs, titles, bold print) to help infer meaning of unknown words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 2.1.5.d</td>
<td>Identify semantic relationships (e.g., patterns and categories, synonyms, antonyms, multiple meanings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Use context clues to determine the meaning of unknown words - 96436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Use context clues to determine the meaning of unknown words - 53382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Use context clues to determine the meaning of unknown words - 5652</td>
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<tr>
<td>LA 2.1.6.a</td>
<td>Choose a synonym for a level-appropriate word - 38273</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Omitted</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>6%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>71%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
How do I teach it?

- Direct instruction of specific types
- Scavenger Hunt of Text Features
- Games focused on identifying text features.
  - Marrs Magnet example
“Informational text is the most complicated type of nonfiction because the purposes are so varied. The purpose of informational text dictates the structure. Not all informational texts have the same structure.”

- Buss & Karnowski, Reading & Writing Nonfiction Genres
Text Structures

Why is it important that readers can recognize and understand text structures? (Besides inclusion on the state test!)
Write the number from memory!
Try writing the numbers again, but this time think…

American Revolution / Declaration of Independence

Minutes / hours / days

Emergency!
Better?

1776
60-24-365
911
Why teach this?
The better a reader understands text structures and features the higher the comprehension.
Matching Magic

• After the “Go”, match the structure with the Signal Questions/Words.
In the library setting, strategic readers must

• process information targeted at wide diverse articles both in print and on-line

• garner meaning from text that is often above grade level
Online Text Features

*We need to teach these explicitly as well...*

- School librarian is ideally suited to promote literacy skills for reading comprehension on the Web.
- As we you, students seek a mix of multimedia and text sources online!
Description
Concept Map

- Describes something
  - looks like
  - smells like
  - feels like
  - examples are
    - for example
    - to begin with
    - in addition
    - most important
    - in front
    - about
    - has

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signal Words</th>
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<th>Signal Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>characteristics are also such as another beside is have</td>
<td>for instance in fact to illustrate furthermore near are does</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Tompkins, 2006)
Shared by Beckv Cox, Valley Center)
Examples

Places Fish Live by coral, pond, by sponges, water, lake, ocean, sea, beach, river, island, under the ice, earth

Things Fish Do play with frogs swim

Colors & Patterns polka dots, stripes, orange, white, red, black, purple, pink, rainbow, blue, gold, green, yellow, brown, sparkly

Fish Shapes circle, oval, square, triangle, rectangle

Fish Parts skin, teeth, fins, bones, mouth, skeleton, tail, two eyes

Things Fish Eat bread, fish food, corn, worms, bugs, flies, popcorn
Sequence Structures provide a series or steps


Timelines
Chronological

Event 1
Event 2
Event 3

Steps/Directions
(similar to list, but with an order)

AND...
Sequence Structures cont.

Cyclical/Circle
(Process continues with no end)
Ex.- Water cycle

Signal Words
first
on (date)
next
then
second
not long after
at the same time
before
after that
finally
Comparison and Contrast

Compares and contrasts the similarities and differences between two things

**Contrast**
- different from
- in contrast
- although
- more than
- less than
- instead of
- however

**Compare**
- same as
- alike
- not only...but also
- either...or
- likewise
- similarly
- similar to
- compared with
- as well as
- resemble

**Contrast**
- on the other hand
- on the contrary
- as opposed to
- but not
- while
- unless

(Adapted from Tompkins, 2006)
Compare/Contrast Structures

T-Chart

U.S Civil War and French Revolution

Alike
Different

Venn Diagram

Spider Monkeys
Orangutans
Gorillas
Compare/Contrast Resource

What’s the Difference by Judy Diehl and David Plumb
On T.R.A.C.K.S. Web Resource

Google: Animal Look Alikes Color on TRACKS for 14 One-page articles with animal comparisons
Cause-Effect Structure
Branching Tree

Signal Words
- because
- therefore
- this leads to
- accordingly
- may be due to
- for this reason
- if...then
- since
- so that
- because of
- effects of
- as a result
- consequently
- nevertheless
- in order to
- thus
Problem Solution Structure

Author lists a problem and one or more possible solutions.

- Problem
- Solution(s)
- Fishbone

Signal Words

- the problem is
- the puzzle is
- solve
- question...answer
- one reason for the problem

- the dilemma is
- the question is
- a solution
- one answer is
## Text Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Signal Words</th>
<th>Graphic Organizers</th>
<th>Summary Questions</th>
<th>Paragraph Frames</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td>The author explains a topic, idea, person, place, or thing by listing characteristics, features, and examples. Focus is on one thing and its components.</td>
<td>For example Characteristics are Such as Looks like Consists of For instance Most important *Look for topic word (or synonym) to be repeated throughout the text.</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Concept Map" /></td>
<td>What specific person, place, thing, event, or concept is being described?</td>
<td>A ________ is a type of ________. It is made up of ________ and looks like ________ Some ________ have ________ such as ________. For example, ________. Now you can recognize the ________.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sequence</strong></td>
<td>The author lists items or events in numerical or chronological order. Describes the order of events or how to do or make something.</td>
<td>First, second, third Next Then, after Before, prior to Not long after While, meanwhile Simultaneously At the same time Following Finally At last In the end On (date) At (time) Directions</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Timeline" /> <img src="image" alt="Steps/Directions" /> <img src="image" alt="Cycle/Circle" /></td>
<td>What sequence of events is being described? What are the major events or incidents that occur? What are the steps, directions, or procedures to follow? (What must be done first, second, etc.?) What is the beginning event? What other events or steps are included? What is the final outcome, event, or step?</td>
<td>Here is how a ________ is made. First, ________. Next, ________. ________. Then, ________. Finally, ________. On (date) ________ happened. Prior to that ________ was ________. Then ________. After that ________. In the end, ________.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compare and Contrast</strong></td>
<td>The author explains how two or more things are alike and/or how they are different.</td>
<td>Differs from Similar to In contrast Alike Same as As well as On the other hand Both Either, or Not only, but also Yet, although, but, However On the other hand * Also look for “est” words: best, fewest, tallest, etc.</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Venn Diagram" /> <img src="image" alt="T-Chart" /></td>
<td>What items are being compared? What is it about them that is being compared? What characteristics of items form the basis of the comparison? What characteristics do they have in common; how are these items alike? In what way are these items different?</td>
<td>________ and ________ are alike in several ways. Both ________ and ________ have similar ________. Both also ________ as well as ________. On the other hand, there are some differences as well. One way they differ is ________. Another difference is ________. Although they share ________, only ________ is the ________est.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Let’s Practice!

1. Identify the text structure of the paragraph you are given.

2. Underline signal words and clues that helped you identify the text structure.

3. Create a graphic organizer on the WorkMat
Example:

Wild chimpanzees are rapidly disappearing. Some people are trying to solve this problem. Otherwise, chimpanzees may one day exist only in zoos. People are trying to save the rain forests and woodlands where the chimps live from being cut down. It will take many people working together to solve this problem.
Signal Words:
Wild chimpanzees are rapidly disappearing. Some people are trying to solve this problem. Otherwise, chimpanzees may one day exist only in zoos. People are trying to save the rain forests and woodlands where the chimps live from being cut down. It will take many people working together to solve this problem.
Looking for Lessons to Use with Secondary Students?

Check out The NYT Learning Network’s Lessons on

**Compare-Contrast, Cause-Effect, Problem-Solution: Common ‘Text Types’ in The Times**
Interested in Text Features?

www.reallygood stuff.com has excellent text feature posters (12 for $20)
What do you see on a web site that serves the same purpose as traditional text features in a book?
# Text Structure Book List

## Books that Exemplify the Use of Informational Text Structure

- **P** = primary grades (K-2); **M** = middle grades (3-5); **U** = upper grades (6-8)

### Chronological Sequence:


### Cause and Effect:

- Blos, Joan W. *Old Henry.*
- Brown, Marc. *Arthur’s Eyes.*
- Brown, Marc. *Once a Mouse.*
- Christelow, Eileen. *Five little monkeys jumping on the bed.* Clarion.
- Gackenbach, Dick. *Harry and the Terrible Whazit.*
Food for Thought…

How study of text features/structures changes as in an increasingly digital environment?

Thank you, and have a great day!
Works Cited