

Text Structure Lab

Mission: Authors organize information in different ways, and signal words are the clues. Read five paragraphs about monarch butterflies, tap the signal words, and match each paragraph to the graphic organizer that fits its structure.

Big question: How do signal words reveal how an informational text is organized?

★ Warm-up: Signal word sort

Which structure does each signal word suggest?

"As a result" ✓ **Cause and effect.**

"Similarly" ✓ **Compare and contrast.**

Key vocabulary

Text structure	How an author organizes information.
Signal words	Words that give clues about the structure.
Chronology	Time order.
Graphic organizer	A drawing that shows how ideas connect.

1 Box 1

All five paragraphs

In the simulator: Find the signal words in EVERY paragraph.

What did you notice?

2 Box 2

Match the organizers

In the simulator: Choose the organizer that fits each paragraph.

Record each paragraph's structure.

Sort: ¶1 A Monarch's Life · ¶2 Monarch or Viceroy? · ¶3 Why Monarchs Are Disappearing · ¶4 Helping the Monarchs · ¶5 The Amazing Monarch

Chronology	Compare/contrast	Cause/effect	Problem/solution	Description
¶1 A Monarch's Life	¶2 Monarch or Viceroy?	¶3 Why Monarchs Are Disappearing	¶4 Helping the Monarchs	¶5 The Amazing Monarch

3 Box 3

Tricky one

¶ 4 has the word "when." Why is it problem and solution, not chronology?

- ☐ The paragraph is mostly about a problem and how people fix it
 ☐ "When" always means chronology
☐ It has no signal words

✓ **The paragraph is mostly about a problem and how people fix it**

4 Box 4

Structure → main idea

What is the main idea of ¶ 3?

- ☐ Losing milkweed has caused monarch numbers to drop ☐ Roads are important ☐ Caterpillars are picky eaters
☐ Farms grow food

✓ **Losing milkweed has caused monarch numbers to drop**

5 Box 5

Write with a structure

Write 3 sentences about your morning routine using CHRONOLOGY. Use at least three signal words.

Look for: Uses "first"; Uses "next/then/after"; Uses "finally/last"; at least 20 words

6 Box 6

Legend: rewrite a structure Legend only

Rewrite the idea of ¶ 3 as a PROBLEM AND SOLUTION paragraph (2 to 3 sentences).

Look for: Names the problem; Gives a solution; at least 20 words

7 Box 7

Why it matters

Explain how knowing a text's structure helps a reader.

Look for: Mentions structure or signal words; Explains how it helps

Exit ticket: answer the big question in your own words

How do signal words reveal how an informational text is organized?

Look for: Informational texts use structures: chronology (first, next, finally), compare and contrast (both, however, unlike), cause and effect (because, as a result, so), problem and solution (problem, solution, solve), and description (for example, such as). Knowing the structure helps you find and remember the main ideas.

Completion codes

Students see a code like **ABC-I3** when they finish. The first part must match below. The letter is the level (E = Explorer, I = Investigator, L = Legend), and the number at the end is how many stars they earned.

Level	Code starts with
 Explorer	1EH-E
 Investigator	14F-I

 Watch for these misconceptions

- "The main idea is always the first sentence." It can be anywhere or not stated at all.
- "The most interesting detail is the main idea." The main idea is the point the details support.
- "Texts only have one structure." Authors often mix structures; look for the main one.