

Basic Terms and Terminology Relating to Recognizing the Structure of Texts in Various Formats

The various formats and types of texts include:

- Narrative Texts
- Descriptive Texts
- Expository Texts
- Problem and Solution Texts
- Cause and Effect Texts
- Persuasive Texts
- Argumentative Texts
- Compare and Contrast Texts
- Informative Texts
- Entertainment and Humor Texts

Narrative Texts

A narrative text tells a story and, often, this story can be a personal story about the author themselves, a story about another actual person, or a story about someone or something that is fictional and not an actual true story.

Narrative texts typically follow chronological order in ascending order from the earliest event to the latest event but they can also be authored and in descending order from the latest event to the earliest event in reverse chronological order. For example, autobiographies and biographies typically begin with their earliest memories and events in one's life and then they move throughout the life with later and later events and memories with an accurate chronological sequence of events.

At times, there are flashback narrative texts that tell a story in ascending order after the most recent event has been discussed and described. For example, a narrative text can begin with a massive disaster and massive fatalities and then proceed in chronological order from the first through the last event in correct ascending chronological order that

occurred and impacted on the final event which was the massive disaster and the resulting massive fatalities.

Some of the clue words that can signal the fact that a text is a narrative type of text include words like those that:

- Signal time like today, yesterday, in a few days and a few days ago
- Signal the sequence of events like first, last, instantly, recently, previously and not long ago

When the story is about oneself, that is the author of the narrative text, it is written in the first person. When the narrative text is written about a person other than the author, the text is authored in the third person. Additionally, fictional texts are authored in the third person.

As you should recall, speech and writings can be in the first person, the second person and the third person.

The first, second and third person relate to the author or speaker themselves, the person that the author or writer is communicating to and with, and a person other than the author or the speaker and the person that the author or speaker is communicating to and with, respectively.

For example, some first person pronouns that address the author or speaker themselves are:

- I
- Me
- Mine
- Us
- We
- Ours

Second person pronouns reflect the person that an author or speaker is communicating to and with.

Some second person pronouns that are directed to a person that you are communicating with are:

- You
- Yours
- Your

- Yourself

Third person pronouns reflect a person other than the author or speaker and also a person other than the person that the author or writer is communicating to and with.

Some third person words that refer to a person other than our self and the person we are communicating with include:

- Them
- They
- Their
- He
- She
- Him
- Her

Some examples of narrative texts in the first person can include things like the author's autobiography, the author's first memory as a child, a recollection of one's last summer vacation or one's personal goals and how the author intends to meet these life goals.

Some examples of narrative texts in the third person can include things like fictional prose, poetry, essays and other forms of writing, a non-fictional biography of a person other than the author, a non-fictional story about an historical event, a fictional or non-fictional anecdote, a fictional short story, and other stories about people, places and things.

Descriptive Texts

Descriptive texts describe people, places and things with vivid detail that gives the reader of the descriptive text an opportunity to gain a deep understanding of and appreciation of the topic that is being discussed.

Expository Texts

The expository text, as the name suggests, exposes and relates facts and facts alone in order to provide the readers of the text with the opportunity to get an analysis of subject or topic of the text and the facts relating to it. For this reason, expository texts are often referred to as analytical texts. This type of text is in the present tense because the author of the expository or analytical text is expressing their current thoughts relating to something even though the events, for example, may have occurred in the past.

Expository texts examine a particular topic or subject in depth, then they analyze it and then finally they interpret the analysis of it. They provide the reader with an explanation, rather than an opinion, about a theme, an issue and even a work of art or literature including a short story, a fictional or non-fictional book or a poem, for example. Expository texts often include facts, including statistics and other objective data and information.

Examples of expository texts include details and statistics about the rise or fall of the Ottoman empire and an analysis of how these details impacted on this rise or fall, the current composition of the Democratic or Republican political parties and how and why the current composition of these parties have evolved over time, the evolution of standardized testing in elementary schools and an analysis of its merits and short comings.

In summary, expository texts present a claim, some evidence and an analysis of the topic at hand. These claims and evidence can logically progress from the most important and significant to the least important and least significant, or from the least important and significant to the most important AND significant.

Some of the clue words associated with an expository text include the most important, the least important, then, later, after and first.

Problem and Solution Texts

Problem and solution texts are a special type of a persuasive text. A problem and solution text consists of the presentation of a problem, some possible solutions to the problem and what the reader can do to solve the problem.

Examples of problem and solution texts can include a problem such as social injustice, the opioid crisis in America and the gun violence in our schools. Specifically, an author can present a full explanation and details about opioid addiction in this nation and then present possible, feasible and multiple solutions to this opioid crisis, after which the author will ask the readers to take some action in order to decrease or eliminate this major health care and mental health problem in our nation.

Some of the clue words that can be found in a problem and solution text can include problem, solution, because, and the possible alternatives for action.

Cause and Effect Texts

Cause and effect texts present the cause or causes of a particular effect or event and why these causes occur.

Some examples of cause and effect texts can cover and discuss home grown terrorism, global warming and the occurrence of a certain disease, disorder or illness. Specifically, an author can compose a text about the occurrence of a certain disease, disorder or illness such as AIDS/HIV. Some of the causes and risk factors of AIDS/HIV, such as shared needle use, unprotected sex and the handling of blood and body fluids, for example, are presented in this cause and effect text about the causes and risk factors associated with AIDS/HIV. After these causes are presented, the author will then describe how each of these causal factors impacts on the person's getting AIDS/HIV.

Some of the clue words that can be found in cause and effect texts can include cause, causes, impacts on, leads to, due to and results from.

Persuasive Texts

Persuasive texts persuade and convince the readers of the text to accept the author's position, their opinion, their recommendations and their point of view. The text contains the author's proving this position and opinion in a skillful, logical and systematic manner so that the readers will be convinced, and persuaded, to accept the author's opinion, belief, point of view and recommendations.

The author's beliefs and opinions are communicated to the readers with sound reasoning and strong solid and accurate evidence based on a number of arguments. These arguments are presented in a smooth and logical manner from one point to the next. Some of these opinions are those of known experts and their sound logical reasoning for their beliefs and opinions so that the readers of the text can be convinced and persuaded to agree with the author's stance because it is the correct position to take. A strong but not overly passionate conclusion should also be a part of this type of text.

Some examples of persuasive texts can include the reasons for and rationale for supporting one political candidate over another, and the reasons for and rationale for supporting public education or why the refugee crisis must be addressed and corrected. The editorial columns in newspapers have persuasive and argumentative texts.

Some of the clue words that are often found in persuasive texts include based on, the fact that, in my opinion, I believe that, without a doubt, certainly and it is my belief.

Argumentative Texts

Argumentative texts are highly similar to persuasive texts but they are a little bit stronger and more assertive in terms of its tone and its tenor. Argumentative texts focus more on a comparison of the author's arguments with details about the pros and the cons of the argument so that the author can strongly bolster their argument and refute the cons against the author's argument, respectively.

Because argumentative texts are similar to persuasive texts, with the exception of the stronger and more assertive tone of the argumentative text, the topics and clue words for these types of texts are highly similar as well. For example, an argumentative text can strongly and assertively present the reasons for and rationale for supporting one political candidate over another and the reasons for and rationale for supporting public education or why the refugee crisis must be addressed and corrected.

Some of the clue words that are often found in argumentative texts include based on, the fact that, in my opinion, I believe strongly that, without any doubt, most certainly and in my strong opinion or it is my firm or strong belief.

Compare and Contrast Texts

Compare and contrast texts explore the similarities and differences between and among different things.

For example, a compare and contrast text can explore and present a detail description about the similarities of and the differences between:

- Aristotle, Plato and Socrates and their philosophic views
- At least the different kinds of sentences or essays
- Arithmetic, geometry and statistics and their applications in the world of mathematics
- Globalism and nationalism and how each impact on global policies
- The Republican Party, the Democratic Party and the Independent Party

Some of the clue words that can be found in compare and contrast texts include similar, similar to, like, commonalities, different, different, differentiated from, different from, in contrast to, and as compared and/or contrasted to.

Informational Texts

Informational texts inform the readers by providing information and/or education. These passages can include things like chapters in a text book, facts that the reader may not be familiar with and new, novel things that have not yet be known about by the general public.

For example, an information text can be authored to teach the public about the hazards associated with skate boarding, how infections, such as the flu virus, are spread among people in a specific population and how to assemble a toy or a piece of furniture with a step by step sequential procedure.

Some of the clue words that can often be found in informational texts include, first, next, because, the fact that and for this reason.

Entertainment and Humor Texts

Some reading passages intend to simply provide the reader with entertainment, including humor. Examples of these writings can include fictional romance novels, humorous poems and a dramatic play.

Entertainment and humor texts are typically fictional rather than non-fictional

Simile and Metaphor—What’s the Difference?

While both similes and metaphors are used to make comparisons, the difference between similes and metaphors comes down to a word. Similes use the words *like* or *as* to compare things—“Life is like a box of chocolates.” In contrast, metaphors directly state a comparison—“Love is a battlefield.”

Here are some examples of [similes](#) and [metaphors](#):

Life is like a box of chocolates. (Simile) *My life is an open book.* (Metaphor) *That baby is as cute as a button!* (Simile) *Baby, you’re a firework.* (Metaphor)

Similes

Example:

Life is like a box of chocolates: you never know which one you’re going to get.

Let’s use this example to understand what a **simile** is:

- A **simile** is a phrase that uses a comparison to describe. For example, “life” can be described as similar to “a box of chocolates.”
- You know you’ve spotted one when you see the words *like* or *as* in a comparison.
- **Similes are like metaphors. But metaphors aren’t the same as similes.**
- Similes are great for famous authors, public speakers, and folks who want to make their writing as exciting as a spontaneous show of fireworks

Metaphors

A **metaphor** is a figure of speech that describes an object or action in a way that isn’t literally true, but helps explain an idea or make a comparison.

Here are the basics:

- A **metaphor** states that one thing *is* another thing
- It equates those two things not because they actually are the same, but for the sake of comparison or symbolism
- If you take a **metaphor** literally, it will probably sound very strange (are there actually any sheep, black or otherwise, in your family?)

Metaphors are used in poetry, literature, and anytime someone wants to add some color to their language