

Internal Text Structures of Nonfiction

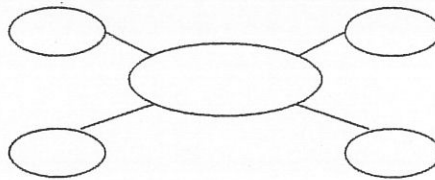
Transparency

→ *Nonfiction follows basic structures, and the following five are the most common.*

1. **Description / Listing** – provides information, such as facts, characteristics, and attributes about a subject, event, person or concept (most commonly found in textbooks).

The dinosaurs were four to eight feet long, about the size of kangaroos. They had small heads and long necks, and they walked on two or four legs.

Web / Concept Map



2. **Sequence / Time Order** – presents a series of events that take place in a time order.

Trouble had been brewing for more than 10 years. In 1763 Britain defeated France in the French and Indian War. Britain then tried to tighten control over its 13 American colonies and tax the colonies more heavily.

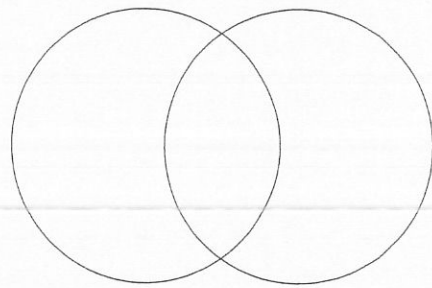
Timeline



3. **Compare & Contrast** – points out the likenesses and/or differences between two or more subjects.

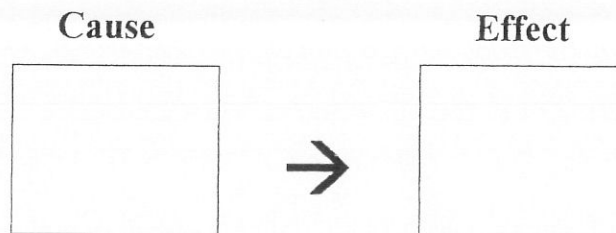
The cheetah can run 70 mph. In the 1996 Olympic Games, Michael Johnson set a world record and captured the gold medal when he ran 200 meters in 19.32 seconds. That's 23 mph.

Venn Diagram



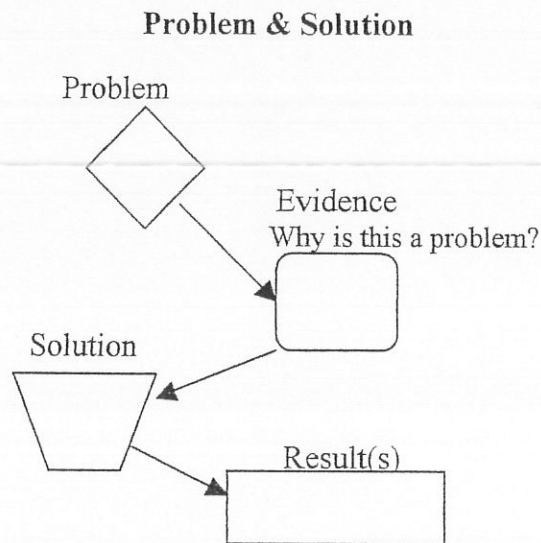
4. **Cause & Effect** – attempts to explain why something happens; how facts or events (causes) lead to other facts or events (effects). A single cause often has several effects, and a single event may have several causes.

As the left plate slides down in to the earth, it enters the hot mantle. Rocks in the sliding plate begin to melt, and they form magma.



5. **Problem & Solution** – describes a problem and presents one or more solutions to that problem.

Environmentalists are battling to save remaining native species. Scientists and private citizens are attempting to preserve 4,000 acres on the island of Hawaii by literally fencing them off against alien invader species.



Boynton, Alice, and Wiley Blevins. Teaching Students to Read Nonfiction. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2003.