

## Common Types of Informational Text Structure

| Structure                  | Description  | Examples  | Signal Words   |
|----------------------------|--|---|--|
| <b>Sequence</b>            | Information or arguments are constructed in a chain, so that the writer can lay out steps in a process, series of events, or a hierarchy.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recipes</li> <li>• Directions to a mall for using an appliance</li> <li>• A timeline for product development</li> <li>• Steps to follow in a workplace process</li> </ul>  | <b>First, next, last, earlier, then, finally, before, preceding, following, ultimately</b>   |
| <b>Comparison/Contrast</b> | Describes similarities or differences between objects, places or events, and the similarities or differences qualify as beneficial or harmful.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports programs that do two opposing teams</li> <li>• News article comparing candidates' policies on issues</li> <li>• Descriptions of multiple health insurance options</li> <li>• Advertisements for two related tools or products</li> </ul>                                  | <b>Like, similar to, unlike, in contrast, whereas, while, although, different from, as opposed to, instead of, however, as well as, likewise</b> |
| <b>Description</b>         | Explores a topic, often in considerable detail. Often the text is broken into sections, each with a main idea and details that elaborate on it.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information sheets about products for sale, such as a car, an appliance, a house, etc.</li> <li>• Articles outlining to do a vacation destination</li> <li>• Sections of an employee manual that discuss workplace policies</li> </ul>   | <b>For example, in particular, for instance, to illustrate, such as, meeting-related, another</b>  |
| <b>Cause/Effect</b>        | Focused on a event or occurrence, the writer names the event/circumstances and then tells the effects it has (on other events, on people, on jobs) or vice versa: the event/circumstances and then tells what caused it to happen. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An editorial discussing the possible consequences of implementing a policy</li> <li>• A troubleshooting guide for the office copy machine that outlines possible causes of malfunctions</li> <li>• Warning label warning possible side effects of using a product</li> </ul>     | <b>Therefore, as a result, leads to, because of, in order to, for this reason, thus, if-then, may be due to</b>                                  |
| <b>Problem/Solution</b>    | Describes a problem and several possible solutions. The writer may also describe the pros and cons of each solution.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An newspaper editorial outlining a current difficulty, proposing some solutions and advocating the use of them</li> <li>• A study becomes stating why a certain rule has been put in place</li> <li>• A political speech proposing a remedy for a troubling situation</li> </ul> | <b>The problem is, the difficulty is, it is possible, if that, one challenge is, therefore</b>   |