

Reading Activity - Text Structure*

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Objective: To enable readers to familiarize themselves with how writers organize their texts for an enhanced and faster understanding.

Participation: Individual

Material

Any text; for instance, “The real solution to fake news”

[Source: <https://reboot-foundation.org/the-real-solution-to-fake-news/>]

Preparation

Focusing on how a writer presents his ideas, develops and organises them.

Procedure

1. Read the article, “The real solution to fake news”. The first reading can be faster to get a gist of it.
2. The second reading will focus on how the ideas are presented. Consider the beginning of the text: the writer in the first two paragraphs briefly explains what the problem is and establishes its globalized nature.
3. Having stated the problem, notice how the writer moves on to present the solution. First, he points out the solution attempted so far and the futility of it, and hence proposes a solution that he considers viable and implementable. In the subsequent paragraphs, he analyses the challenges faced in eliminating fake news.
4. Further, consider whether the article suggests several solutions to the issue at hand. (The writer sticks to one solution, underscores the difficulties faced and emphasizes the significance of critical thinking.)
5. Find out how the article is developed. (Having stated that fake news is a problem for students, he extends it by mentioning that it is a serious issue for all and discusses elaborately the importance of logical thinking to combat it.)
6. Focus on the ending of the article. (The writer does not clutter the article with too many

solutions but with just one and forcefully argues its significance and relevance to the 21st century.)

7. Reflect on the overall structure of the article. (Starting with the explicit statement of the problem the writer moves on to deal with the solution and the challenges encountered and emphasizes the significance of the solution.)

8. Lastly, examine how the discourse markers are used in the article. (He tends to employ ‘but’ frequently, whenever he attempts to connect ideas.) Find out how and for what purposes the other discourse markers such as ‘for instance’, ‘after all’, ‘if’, ‘in fact’, and so on are used throughout the article.

(It is a good illustration of a *problem-solution* write up.)

Learning Outcomes

1. Learners realise that, rather than jumping into reading a text blindly, they need to keep the textual structure in mind to comprehend it better.
2. Learners understand that they need to focus on the discourse markers to identify the direction in which the writer is leading the readers.

Further Reading

When any expository text is read, readers should consciously keep in focus its organisational structure.

***Text structure:** It refers to how a text is organised. In expository writing (compare and contrast, cause and effect, problem and solution, argumentative, chronological and descriptive), the structure of the text is quite evident. Along with the organisation of ideas, the discourse markers employed reveal the nature of the text. *Dr K. Elango*, (Formerly) Professor & Head, Department of English, Anna University, Chennai & National Secretary, ELTAI
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