

Patterns of Writing: Matching Structure to Purpose

Word Wise

purpose
descriptive
informational
persuasive
procedural
sequential
comparative
personal

See also charts on pages 92–93 in Appendix E.

Over the next few pages, different kinds of writing are presented in chart form, with examples. Consider using these or other samples as models with your students, and complete a similar chart after examining the writing samples.

Descriptive writing	Example
<p>Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins with a general statement that identifies the topic • Ideas are described in such a way that the reader can envision the topic. • Language appeals to the five senses and helps to paint the picture. <p>Examples</p> <p>observations examples connections comments questions predictions</p> <p>key words</p> <p>sensory words</p>	<p>My Rock</p> <p>The rock was small; about the size of a toy car. You could hold it easily in your hand. It felt rough and chalky, like there was a fine residue on its surface. The edges of the rock were jagged and sharp. It had obviously chipped off a larger rock and had not weathered much yet. The color of the rock was white. When you looked closely you could see small flecks or crystals that looked shiny or clear. There were some brown streaks in the rock too.</p>
Informational writing	Example
<p>Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins with a general statement that identifies the topic • Each paragraph describes one of the subtopics. • Ideas are presented factually. • Language is neutral and impersonal. <p>Examples</p> <p>reports essays</p> <p>key words</p> <p>technical terms</p>	<p>Ramadan</p> <p>Ramadan is an Islamic holy month that is recognized by Muslims world wide. Ramadan is always the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, so it falls on different dates each year.</p> <p>During Ramadan Muslims fast during daylight. They do not eat, drink or smoke tobacco from sunrise to sunset. Each day begins before dawn with a meal called <i>Sahoor</i> and ends after dusk with a meal called <i>Iftar</i>.</p> <p>Prayers are also an important part of the Muslim faith and part of Ramadan. Each day begins with prayers from the <i>Qu'ran</i> (Koran). Throughout the day there are 5 daily prayers.</p> <p>When Ramadan is over, there will be a feast known as <i>Id al-Fitr</i>. Family and friends will get together to share presents and eat fancy foods.</p> <p>Ramadan is a time for Muslims to feel closer to their families, to the poor, to their communities, and to their faith.</p>

Persuasive writing	Example
<p>Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins by stating the topic and position • Ideas or opinions are then supported with evidence or a convincing argument. • Often includes statistics, reasoning, and use of emotional or strong language • May include possible counter arguments and the rationale for their ineffectiveness • Concludes by reiterating the initial argument and position <p>Examples</p> <p>letters to the editor proposals judgments or arguments advertisements résumés</p> <p>key words</p> <p><i>must</i> <i>essential</i> superlatives (<i>most, greatest, least</i>) testimonials (<i>research shows, experts say</i>)</p>	<p>The European Union: A Great Idea</p> <p>The rest of the world can learn a lot from the European Union. The European Union was formed after a lengthy evolution, and presently includes 15 countries. This Union and the resulting cooperation have had many benefits for the citizens of its member countries, as well as benefits for non-citizens. It has been so successful that other continents such as Africa, Asia, and South America would be wise to consider such a Union.</p> <p>One of the greatest benefits of the EU has been economic. It has resulted in the elimination of all tariffs between member countries, and as a result the volume of trade among member countries has increased substantially. It has been so successful that the combined imports and exports of the EU are greater than any single country in the world. Because of increased trade, citizens have also enjoyed an increased standard of living. In continents such as Africa, South America, and Asia, where the standard of living is much lower, such a move towards cooperation would certainly improve the lives of the people.</p> <p>Freedom of movement has also improved for EU citizens. Anyone who is a citizen of an EU country can live and work anywhere in the Union. This freedom also allows them to vote in any Union or local election in the country in which they live (even if they are not a citizen of that country). This has definitely resulted in the people having a greater say in the governing of their own and nearby nations.</p> <p>Freedom has also been a benefit for tourists. Open borders and a common currency have made travel from country to country much easier. Tourists no longer have to go through customs or convert money as they leave one country and go to another. This freedom and ease of travel means more people are likely to travel to Europe, further boosting the economy and the quality of life.</p>

Procedural/Sequential writing	Example
<p>Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins with a goal or purpose • Is sequential or linear in nature, explaining the steps or process involved • Each step or part of the process is easily identified and clearly explains the event or task. 	<p>How to Play Video Games</p> <p>Everyone loves video games. Playing video games is easy. To get started you have to set up the machine. First off, you plug the console into the TV. After you do that, plug the controller into the console. Next, turn on the TV and the console. Now you are ready to put the game into the console. After waiting for it to load, you press Start on your controller. Now you are ready to have fun.</p> <p><i>or</i></p>

<p>Examples</p> <p>timelines directions/instructions lab reports</p> <hr/> <p>key words</p> <p><i>first</i> <i>next</i> <i>following</i> <i>finally</i></p>	<p>Magic Raisins</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add 5ml of baking soda to 250 ml of water. 2. Stir until the baking soda is dissolved. 3. Add 6-7 raisins. 4. Add 25 ml of vinegar 5. Observe 6. Record observations
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Comparative writing	Example
<p>Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins by identifying the items to be compared and possible criteria for comparison • Describes the qualities or characteristics of the individual items, and explains their similarities and differences <hr/> <p>Examples</p> <p>consumer reports metaphors analogies</p> <hr/> <p>key words</p> <p><i>unlike</i> <i>just as</i> <i>more</i> <i>most</i> words ending in <i>-er</i></p>	<p>Comparing Fast Food Options</p> <p>When asked to consider the best options for fast food there are many things one must consider. Top of this list of considerations are taste, variety, and value.</p> <p>The first and most important consideration to true food lovers is the taste or quality of the food being served. Burger joints generally offer a half dozen standard burgers, many of which are pre-made and waiting for you when you step up to the counter. Pizza shops prepare the pizza once you have placed the order and allow the customer to choose the toppings. Likewise, your sub is made to order. However, in the case of a sub, it is usually made right in front of you.</p> <p>A second factor to consider is variety or options. In the case of burgers, your variety is often limited to the size or number of patties and a few basic toppings. Pizza, while it offers choice of toppings, is essentially the same product: a round piece of dough with sauce and a combination of meat and vegetables chopped and spread over the top. Sub shops provide even greater opportunity for individuality. Here the choices begin with the type of bread, and also include the main filling, toppings, and any sauces your heart desires. This choice gives the customer the chance to ask for more of this and less of that in an effort to create the perfect sandwich.</p> <p>Finally one must consider price. In this category, burger joints are generally the best option. In most cases you can get a simple burger for around a dollar. Even the smallest pizza will cost you at least 5 to 10 dollars; that is, unless you can buy your pizza by the slice, where you are compromising taste and variety in the name of price. Subs, while not as cheap as burgers, do offer the chance to earn “frequent buyer points” and ultimately get you something everyone wants—a free sub.</p> <p>In conclusion, it seems obvious that when one considers taste, variety, and price, the best bet is a sub. Tasty, made to order just the way you like it, and with a chance to get free food, subs are the way to go. Try one. I think you’ll like it.</p>

Personal writing	Example
<p>Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins with the date and topic • Proceeds to describe the topic, event, or idea from a personal point of view • May include likes and dislikes, opinions, suggestions • Opinions should be supported with a rational and evidence • May include visual forms of representation such as sketches, charts, etc. 	<p>May 27, 2005</p> <p>Today in science we learned about fluids. We had to put 4 different fluids on 3 different surfaces (tin foil, plastic wrap, waxed paper) and observe them. I noticed that each of the fluids behaved a little differently on each of the pieces of paper. The fluids kept their shape the best on the tin foil. On the waxed paper they kind of soaked in.</p> <p>One of the things I wondered is if it would have made a difference if we had used the other side of the tin foil (we used the shiny side)?</p> <p>We also poured the left-overs all together in a glass. They looked like this:</p>
<p>Examples</p> <p>diaries journals self-assessments logs reflections on learning opinion pieces</p>	<p>I think the fluids we used were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A- maple syrup B- liquid dish soap C- cooking oil D- red wine vinegar
<p>key words</p> <p><i>I think...</i> <i>I believe...</i> <i>I learned...</i> <i>I wonder...</i> <i>This reminds me of...</i></p>	