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# Meaning behind the Structure: 4th Grade Nonfiction Text Structure and Summary Unit

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## Meaning behind the Structure: 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Nonfiction Text Structure and Summary Unit

Stage 1 – Desired Results		
<p>Established Goals (e.g., standards)</p> <p>4.11 - Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about expository text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.</p> <p>4.11A - Summarize the main idea and supporting details in text in ways that maintain meaning.</p> <p>4.11C - Describe explicit and implicit relationships among ideas in texts organized by cause-and-effect, sequence, or comparison.</p> <p>4.11D - Use multiple text features (e.g., guide words, topic and concluding sentences) to gain an overview of the contents of text and to locate information.</p> <p>Fig19E - Summarize information in text, maintaining meaning and logical order.</p>	<b>Transfer</b>	
	<p><i>Students will independently use their learning to...</i></p> <p>Determine the structure of a nonfiction text and either write or tell a summary of the text that demonstrates their understanding of the text's structure.</p>	
	<b>Meaning</b>	
	<p><b>Understandings</b> <i>Students will understand that....</i></p> <p>The structure of a text helps the readers organize information that they learn from the text.</p> <p>Authors choose a certain structure for their writing to help the readers understand the text.</p> <p>Summarizing a text allows the reader to show their understanding of what the text says and how it is organized.</p>	<p><b>Essential Questions</b></p> <p>Why is the structure of a nonfiction text important?</p> <p>Why is it important to be able to summarize a text?</p> <p>How is summarizing a nonfiction text different than summarizing a fictional text?</p> <p>What is a good supporting detail?</p>
	<b>Acquisition</b>	
<p><b>Knowledge</b> <i>Students will know...</i></p> <p>Common nonfiction text structures include cause-and-effect, sequence, compare-and-contrast, and description.</p> <p>The definitions of the following words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main idea: the overall message of an entire text or section of a text</li> <li>• Details: support the main idea by telling how, when, what, where, why, how much and how many</li> <li>• Summary: a shorter version of a text that includes the main idea and supporting details</li> <li>• Text structure: the way that a text is organized</li> </ul> <p>That both the entire text and sections of a text can be summarized.</p>	<p><b>Skills</b> <i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <p>Identify the structure of a text.</p> <p>Identify and state the main idea of a text and provide factual details that support the main idea.</p> <p>Write, represent and tell a summary of a nonfiction text.</p>	

**Stage 2 – Evidence**

<b>CODE</b> (M or T)	<b>Evaluative Criteria</b> (for rubric)	
	See Figure 8	<p><b>Performance Task(s)</b> <i>Students will demonstrate meaning-making and transfer by...</i></p> <p>Reading four nonfiction texts and identifying their text structure and then choosing one of the texts to write, type or tell a summary</p> <p>-----</p> <p>---</p> <p><b>Other Evidence (e.g., formative)</b></p> <p>Pre-assessment ranking activity Walk-n-talk High 5 “Nonfiction Text Structures” graphic organizer Bubble map summary Human sequence line 4 finger summary Written summary “Connect the Dots” map Gallery walk</p>

**Stage 3 – Learning Plan**

<b>CODE</b> (A, M, T)	<p><b>Pre-Assessment</b> <i>How will you check students’ prior knowledge, skill levels, and potential misconceptions?</i></p>	
	<p><b>Day 1:</b> Pre-assessment (15 minutes) Prior to the lesson, write each of the following terms on an individual index card: main idea, details, summary, text structure. Create enough sets of cards for your entire class to be divided into groups of about 5 students. Once class begins, divide the class into groups of 4 or 5 students. Pass out a set of cards to each group. Have the students rank the cards based on how easy they think the concepts are or will be to learn - easiest at the top, most difficult at the bottom. Then have each group share their reasoning behind why they ranked the concepts in the order that they did. Listen carefully to students’ responses in order to notice any misconceptions they may have about these concepts and allow this to inform your teaching as you move forward in the unit.</p>	
A	<p><b>Learning Activities</b></p> <p><b>Day 2:</b> Introduction to Text Structures (25 minutes) Have students pair up and “walk-n-talk” for 2 minutes around the room about the question, “What is a structure?”. Come back together and discuss their answers. Some students may mention comments related to a building or the shape of an object. Use these responses to help students see that structure is the way something is formed or organized. Explain that all authors think about the way that they want to organize what they are going to write before they write the text. Refer back to strategies used to create summaries for fictional stories (i.e. “Somebody Wanted But So Then” or “Beginning Middle End”,</p>	<p><b>Progress Monitoring</b> (e.g., formative data)</p> <p>Walk-n-talk about the word “structure”</p>
M		

M	<p>etc.) Read aloud a nonfiction text<sup>1</sup>. After reading, have a discussion with the students about the author's thoughts when he/she started to write the text by asking, "How do you think the author wanted to organize this text?". Finish by asking the students, "What are some of the other possible ways that an author might try to organize their writing?". Record answers on a brainstorming anchor chart. Accept all answers and leave the technical naming of these structures until later in the week.</p>	<p>Anchor chart of student responses regarding text organization</p>
A	<p><b>Day 3: Main Idea (25 minutes)</b>          Begin by rereading the nonfiction text that was read yesterday with the whole class. After reading, have students stand up and "high 5" four of their classmates. When they get to the fourth person, the two students should stop and decide together what the text was mostly about in one complete sentence. Once students have had time to discuss their sentence, have all students return to the carpet. Have a few pairs share the sentence that they developed. Record the sentences on the board. Choose as a class the sentence that they think best sums up what the entire text is about. Then explain to the students that they just discovered the text's <b>main idea</b> - the overall message of an entire text or section of a text. Explain that over the next few days, we are going to see how the main idea and the text's structure are very closely connected.</p>	<p>"High 5" to discuss main idea</p>
A	<p><b>Day 4: Using Subtitles (30 minutes)</b>          Provide a copy of yesterday's text to each student. Ask the students what they notice when they look at the text. After someone notices the section headings, or subtitles, tell the students to circle or highlight all of the section headings in the sample text. Brainstorm as a class why the writer put the section headings into the text. Make a list of the purposes for the section headings on the board. Possible ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tell the reader what to expect in the upcoming section</li> <li>○ Hint at the main idea of the upcoming section</li> <li>○ Help the reader organize the article's ideas</li> <li>○ Provide a preview of what the whole article is leading up to</li> <li>○ Provide a transition between the last section and the next one, which has a new main idea</li> <li>○ Allow the reader to make connections with concepts that he or she is already familiar with before reading the entire article</li> </ul>	
M	<p>Then, tell them that you are going to read the text aloud, while thinking about why the writer included the section headings in the text. Display a second article with the headings replaced with blank lines (a Scholastic or Newsela article would be useful for this activity). On the board, write the section headings the original article or text contained. Tell students that they will act as detectives to figure out where these</p>	

<sup>1</sup> Great websites for nonfiction articles:  
<http://magazines.scholastic.com/News-Archive>  
<https://www.tweentribune.com/category/junior/>  
<https://www.dogonews.com/>  
<https://newsela.com/>  
<https://www.sikids.com/>

I enjoy using these texts because they include articles on recent events are generally very interesting to the students. You can choose to print off the articles or allow students to read them on digital devices. If you are unable to print or view the articles, choosing an assortment of nonfiction books from your local library is an excellent option as well. You could even choose all books or articles that relate to a topic that the students are currently studying in Social Studies or Science. Scholastic News and Newsela generally both include subtitles, which can be helpful to review nonfiction text features and also help students determine the main idea of sections of text.

A	<p>headings belong in the text. Read the article aloud and discuss where each section heading belongs and how they arrived at their conclusions. Ask students, "How are subtitles helpful to the reader? What is their connection to the concept of main idea?" Tell students that subtitles can often be used to help reader know that main idea of the section below. Subtitles are similar to chapter titles in longer nonfiction texts, but both help the reader in the same way.</p>	"Nonfiction Text Structures" graphic organizer
A	<p><b>Day 5: Description Nonfiction Texts (30 minutes)</b>          Pass out a copy of the "Nonfiction Text Structures" graphic organizer (see Figures 1 and 2 – use either depending upon students' skill level) and have students glue it into their Reading notebooks. Explain that we will use this worksheet to record information about different texts that we will be reading over the next few days. Begin by reading a nonfiction text that follows the "description" text structure. As you read, think aloud words and details that would help you, as the reader, know that this is a text that is about one topic and has many details to describe it. Model forming a main idea statement that would encompass all of the text's information. Then have students think of a graphic organizer that might show how the text is organized. Draw a bubble map (see Figure 3) on an anchor chart titled "Description Nonfiction Texts" and have students draw a bubble map on their "Nonfiction Text Structures" sheet. Refer back to the text in order to show words that prove that this is a description text and record them on the anchor chart as students record them on the worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for example, for instance, characteristics include, specifically, in addition</li> </ul> <p>Write the main idea statement in the middle of the bubble map on your anchor chart, but students do not have to record this on their worksheet. Have students help you brainstorm some of the most important details that support that main idea (for this type of text, that <i>describe</i> the topic of the text). Verbally, read the main idea statement and the 3-4 supporting details out loud to the students. Explain that this is all that it takes to create a summary of a description text! Ask students, "Why is it important to be able to summarize a text?" and record their answers on the brainstorming anchor chart from Day 2.</p>	Bubble map summary
A	<p><b>Day 6: Description Nonfiction Texts (25 minutes)</b>          Have students read a nonfiction description text independently and highlight any keywords that prove that it is a description text. After they are finished reading, have the students draw a bubble map with 3 outer bubbles in their reading notebooks, writing the main idea statement in the middle. Share a couple of the responses and help any students that may be struggling to complete a main idea statement. Model writing one supporting detail in the outer ring of bubbles, reminding students that this should be a factual statement about the text. Allow students time to complete an additional supporting detail and have one student share his/her supporting detail. Then have students complete the remaining one supporting detail bubble on their own.</p> <p><b>Day 7: Sequential Nonfiction Texts (30 minutes)</b>          Begin by reading a nonfiction text that follows the "sequence" text structure. As you read, think aloud words and details that would help you as the reader know that this is a text that occurs in a particular order but is not exactly like a chronological text because it does not happen at a particular time or date. Model forming a main idea statement that would encompass all of the text's information and write it on an anchor chart titled "Sequential Nonfiction Texts". Explain that a flow map best represents a sequential text because the arrows show that one event is dependent upon the next. Draw a flow map</p>	"Nonfiction Text Structures" graphic organizer

M	<p>(see Figure 4) on the anchor chart and have students draw one on the “Nonfiction Text Structures” sheet. Refer back to the text in order to show words that prove that this is a sequence text. Write these words on the anchor chart and have students record these keywords on their worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• before, in the beginning, to start, first, next, during, after, then, finally, last, in the middle, in the end</li> </ul> <p>Then have each student think of a detail from the text that you could not leave out. Give the students 4 minutes to arrange themselves in a line in the order of their supporting details. If two students share the same detail, one student can just stand behind the other student. Briefly share out the details that the students developed and decide which ones would be most essential to a summary of the text. Draw a flow map underneath the main idea written on the anchor chart and fill in the 3 most important details from the text. Ask students, “How might you turn the main idea statement and the flow map into a summary of the text?”. Lead students to the understanding that when you state the main idea and then read the supporting details in order, you have created a summary of a sequential text!</p>	Human sequence line
M	<p><b>Day 8: Sequential Nonfiction Texts (25 minutes)</b>  Ask students, “What graphic organizer do we use to model a summary of a sequential text?”. Have one student come to the board and draw a flow map. Explain that today we are going to read a second sequential text together as a class and while we do so, they should be thinking of the main idea statement and 3 important details that would belong in the flow map boxes. After reading, allow students time to think about the main idea statement and 3 supporting details. If they would like, they can draw their own flow map in their reading notebooks and write down their sentences. Once complete, have students group up and share their summaries verbally. Have both the speaker and the listener hold up a finger whenever the speaker states a new sentence. If students are following the main idea plus flow map example, they should have 4 sentences total. (This will help students make sure that they only include the important details and remind them that summaries are brief.) Walk around the room and listen in on groups in order to determine if students are grasping the concept of summaries for sequential texts.</p>	4 finger summary
A	<p><b>Day 9: Compare-and-Contrast Nonfiction Texts (30 minutes)</b>  Refer back to the brainstorming anchor chart from Day 2. Circle the words description and sequence if they were included on the list. If not, add them. For fun, have students guess which text we may be looking at today. Read a compare-and-contrast text without telling them the structure. As you read, think aloud words and details that would help you, as the reader, know that this is a text that compares and contrasts two things. After reading, have students think about what text structure it follows. Explain that a double bubble map (see Figure 5) best represents a compare-and-contrast text because it is like two bubble maps combined, which each describe a topic. Draw a double bubble map on an anchor chart titled “Compare-and-Contrast Nonfiction Texts”. Have students draw a double bubble map on the “Nonfiction Text Structures” sheet and then record any keywords that you discovered together.</p>	“Nonfiction Text Structures” graphic organizer
M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• similar, alike, same, just like, both, different, unlike, in contrast, on the other hand</li> </ul> <p>Model verbally retelling a summary of this text by stating a main idea, one sentence about the first topic, one sentence about the second topic and one sentence about a similarity between the two topics.</p> <p><b>Day 10: Compare-and-Contrast Nonfiction Texts (25 minutes)</b></p>	Written summary

A	<p>Have students pair up and read a second compare-and-contrast text. Have students write their own summary of the text following the format below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. main idea statement</li> <li>2. one sentence stating a unique fact a topic one</li> <li>3. one sentence stating a unique fact a topic one</li> <li>4. one sentence stating a similarity between the two topics</li> </ol> <p>Have students turn in their work and check to see how students have grasped the concept of compare-and-contrast summaries.</p> <p><b>Day 11: Cause-and-Effect Nonfiction Texts (30 minutes)</b>  Show an interesting picture that would cause students to have to infer what caused the event to happen (tip: google search “writing prompt pictures”). Explain that their thought process when figuring out what happened in the picture represents another type of text structure - cause-and-effect. Read a cause-and-effect text and draw a multi-flow map (see Figure 6) on an anchor chart titled “Cause-and-Effect Nonfiction Texts”. Have students draw their own multi-flow maps on the “Nonfiction Text Structures” graphic organizer and then have them record key words that you write on the anchor chart as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• since, because, if, due to, as a result of, so, then, leads to, consequently</li> </ul> <p>Model determining what the entire text was mostly about, the main idea, and write this statement above the multi-flow map on the anchor chart. Next, elicit student responses for what was the main event that took place in the text and write a sentence within the multi-flow map (either to the right or to the left depending upon whether there was one event that had many effects or several causes that led to one effect). Then fill in at least two more boxes of the multi-flow map as either additional causes or effects. Type the main idea statement along with the sentences in the multi-flow map on a projected screen in front of the students. Finish by reading the summary out loud and reviewing its elements.</p>	“Nonfiction Text Structures” graphic organizer
M		Free choice summary
T	<p><b>Day 12: Cause-and-Effect Nonfiction Texts (25 minutes)</b>  Have students read a second cause-and-effect text. After reading, students can choose either to draw the graphic organizer, retell the summary, or write or type a summary of the text. Return to the brainstorming anchor chart and circle compare-and-contrast and cause-and-effect. Discuss whether any of the other structures they had previously listed are similar to structures we studied or could be another type of structure that we simply didn’t discuss (e.g. problem/solution).</p> <p><b>Day 13: Performance Task (45 minutes)</b>  Print out and hang four nonfiction articles<sup>2</sup>, each of which following one of the four text structures previously discussed, around the room. Have the students rotate quietly around the room to read the texts and decide which text structure it follows. Have students record their answers on the “Text Structures Assessment” worksheet (see Figure 7). Once complete, have students choose one of the four articles to write a summary of using one of the following formats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written</li> <li>• Typed</li> <li>• Drawing of Graphic Organizer</li> <li>• Verbal</li> </ul>	“Text Structures Assessment” and summary

<sup>2</sup> [http://teacher.depaul.edu/Reading\\_Passages\\_NONFICTION.html](http://teacher.depaul.edu/Reading_Passages_NONFICTION.html) This website includes various nonfiction articles that are organized based upon grade level, therefore allowing you to differentiate texts based on students’ reading levels.

M, T	<p>Show students your expectations for the assessment by previewing the “Performance Task Rubric - Text Structures Assessment” (see Figure 8). Remind students to refer to the four anchor charts on the wall to help remind them of the various text structures and how to develop their summaries.</p>	“Connect the Dots” map
M, T	<p><b>Day 14:</b> Wrap-up (25 minutes)          Finish by revisiting the original concept words that they students ranked at the beginning of the unit - main idea, details, summary, text structure. Before class begins make about four “Connect the Dots” maps on large butcher paper, adapted from the Lead4Forward website<sup>3</sup>, which is an excellent site to find research-based instructional strategies (click on the “Instructional Strategies - Comprehensive List” in order to see a visual of the “Connect the Dots” map). Write the four concept words in the middle of a circle in the corners of the piece of butcher paper, drawing lines connecting the words with arrows on the ends of each line to form a rectangle. Assign students to groups of 4-5 and have them complete the “Connect the Dots” map by writing connections between the two terms on the lines connecting their dots - thinking of ways that they are related or similar and ways that they are different. Tape the concept maps around the room and have students do a gallery walk to see all of the connections they have made between the concepts over the course of the unit. Finish by referring back to the brainstorm anchor chart and ask, “Now that we have learned all about nonfiction summaries, why is it important to be able to summarize a text? When might this be useful in your own life?”.</p>	Gallery walk

\*\*Extension: during writing time, have students write their own texts that follow the particular text structures that are discussed throughout the unit.

<sup>3</sup> <http://lead4ward.com/instructional-strategies>



## Nonfiction Text Structures

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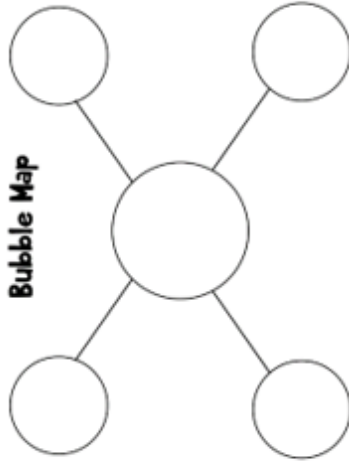
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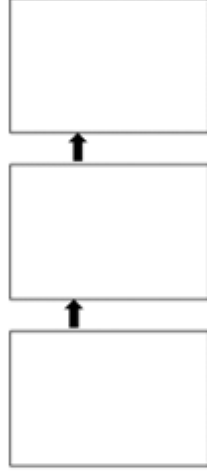
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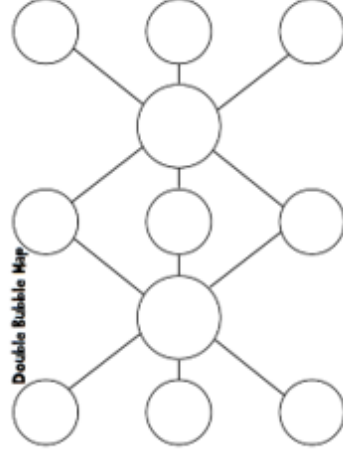
# Nonfiction Text Structures



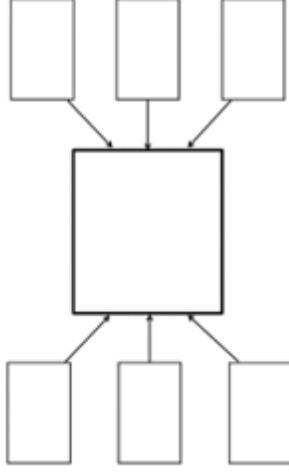
**Flow Map**



**Double Bubble Map**



**Multi-Flow Map**



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Figure 3

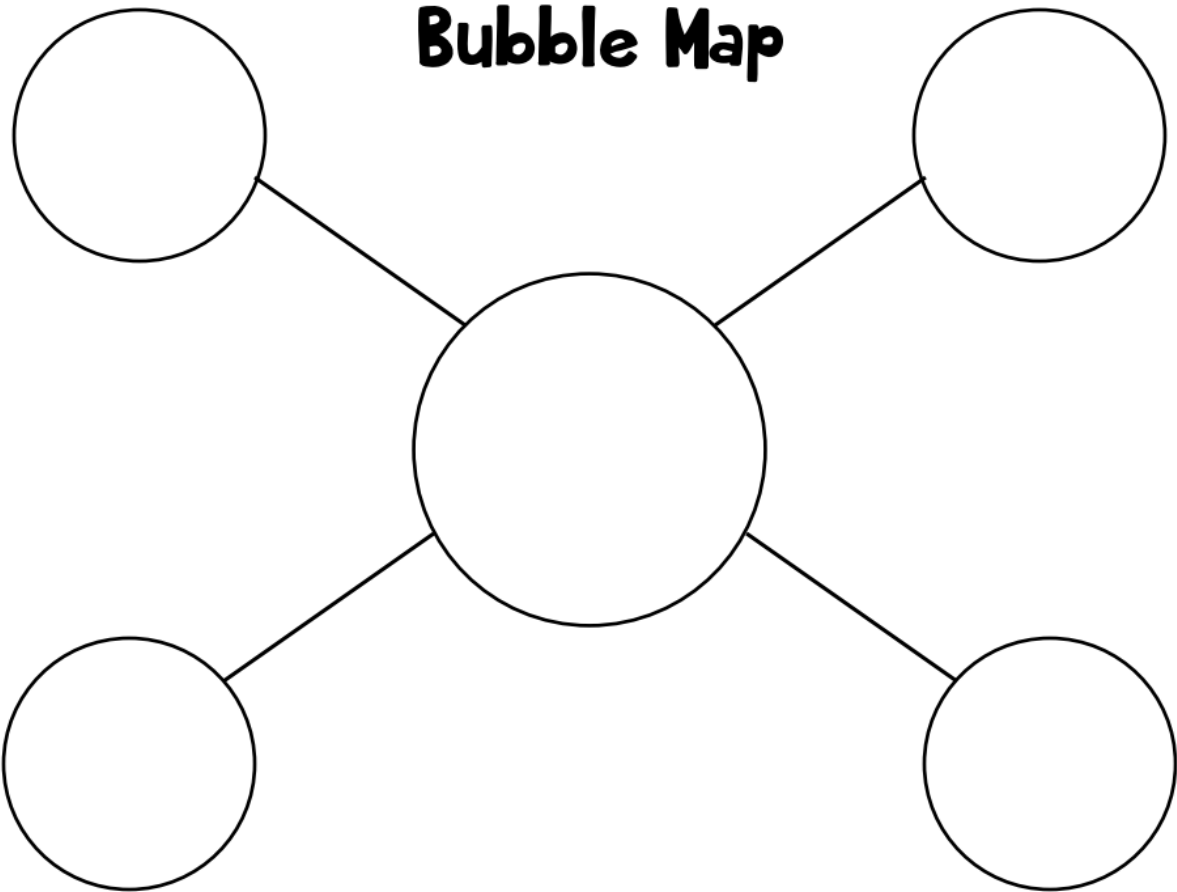


Figure 4

# Flow Map

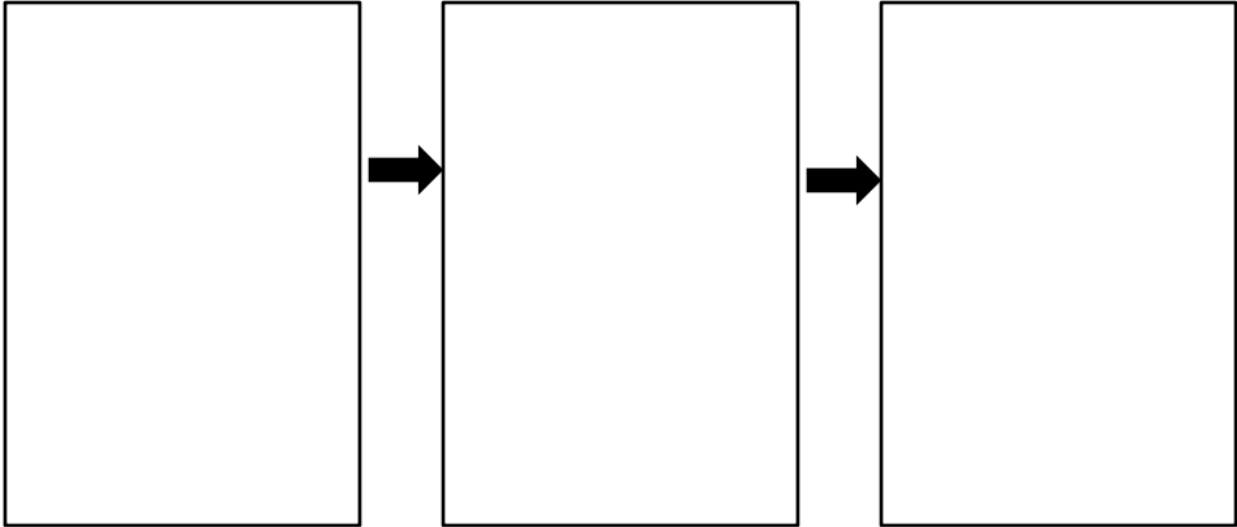


Figure 5

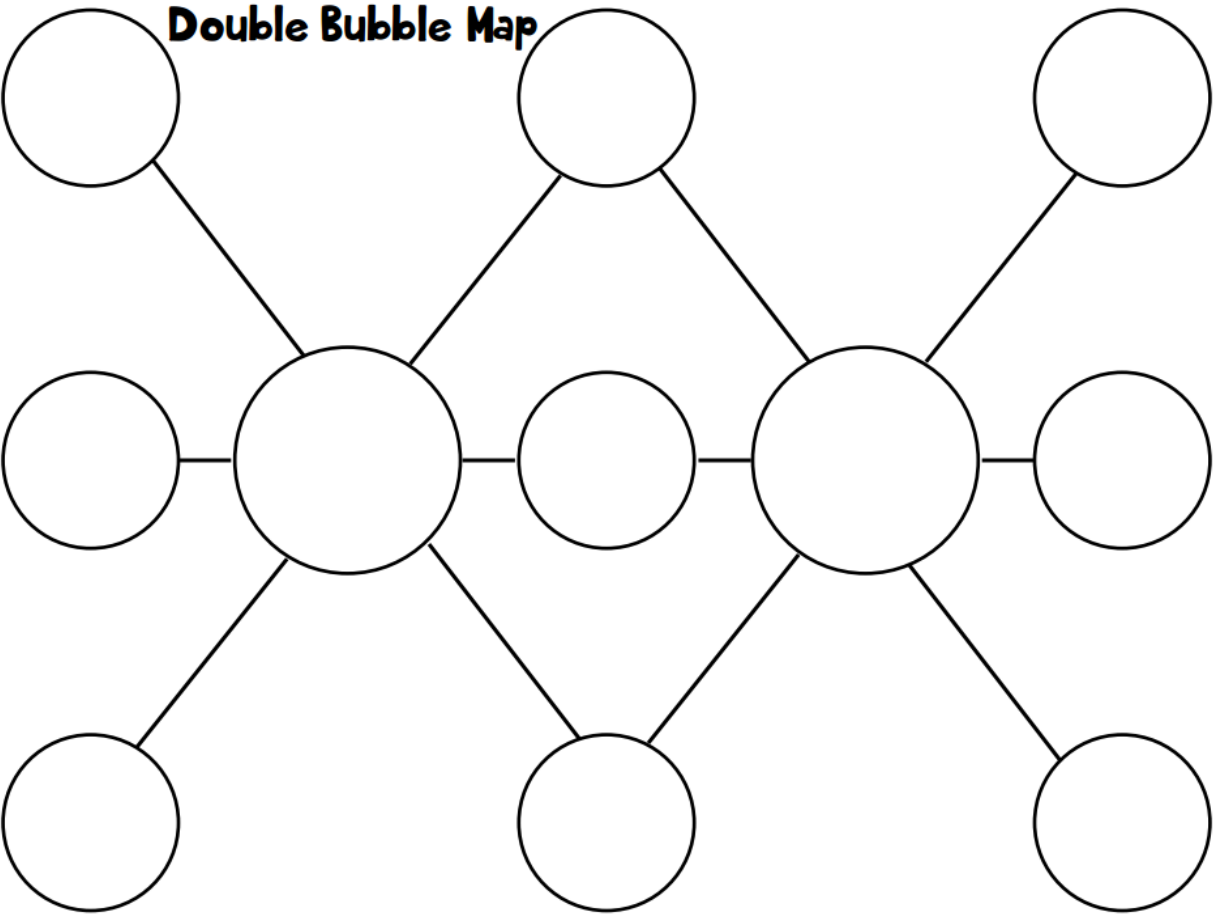


Figure 6

# Multi-Flow Map

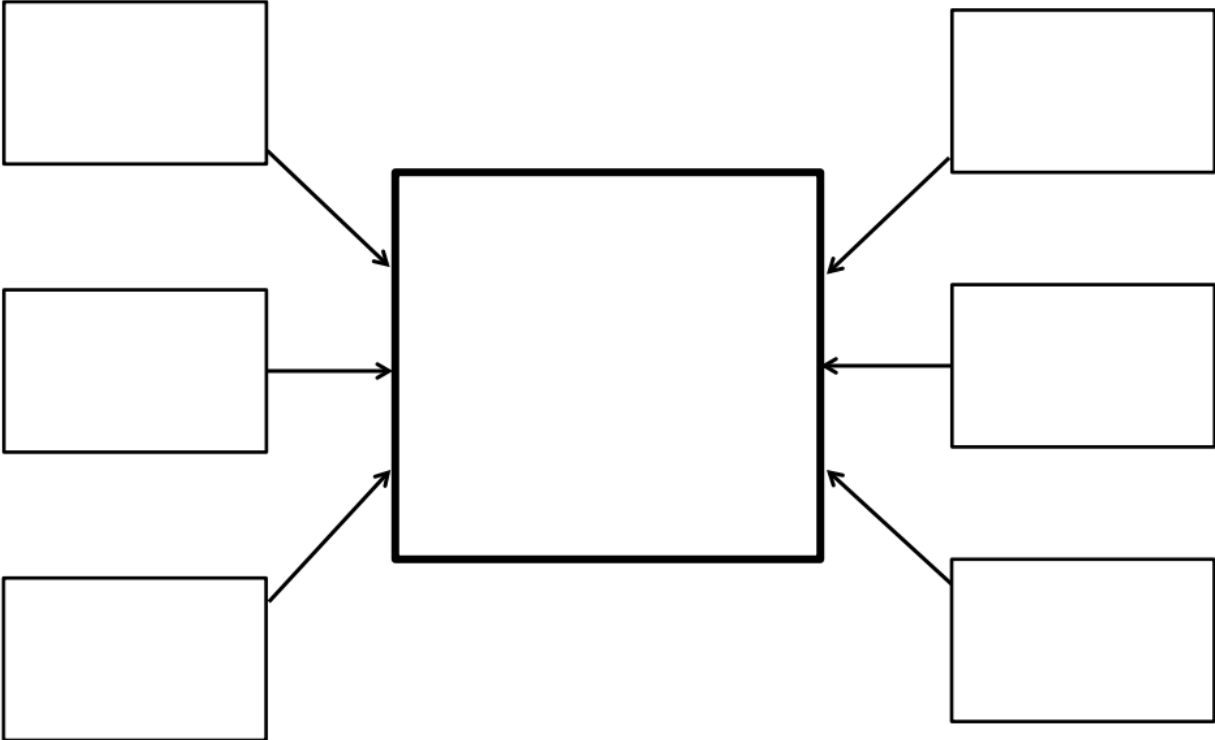


Figure 7

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Text Structure Assessment

Possible Text Structures:

Cause-and-Effect

Description

Compare-and-Contrast

Sequence

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Figure 8

<b>Performance Task Rubric – “Text Structures Assessment”</b>					
	Below – 1	Approaches-2	Meets – 3	Exceeds – 4	Possible Points
<b>Identifying text structures</b>	Correctly labels 1 text structure	Correctly labels 2 text structures	Correctly labels all 4 text structures	Correctly labels all 4 text structures	40
<b>Develops a main idea statement</b>	The summary lacks a main idea statement or includes a main idea that is not connected to the text or is not a complete sentence.	The summary includes a main idea statement that is somewhat connected to the text and is a complete sentence.	The summary includes a main idea statement that is connected to the text and is a complete sentence.	The summary includes a main idea statement that is directly connected to and adds meaning to the text and is a complete sentence.	20
<b>Provides supporting details</b>	The summary includes less than 3 supporting details or the supporting details are not connected to the main idea.	The summary includes 3 supporting details but they are not connected to the main idea or are too specific to represent the most important parts of the text.	The summary includes 3 supporting details that are connected to the main idea and represent the most important parts of the text.	The summary includes 3 supporting details that are directly connected to the main idea and represent the most important parts of the text and maintain the meaning of the overall text.	30
<b>Grammar</b>	The parts of the summary are not complete sentences or are difficult to read.	The parts of the summary are sometimes complete sentences and are only slightly difficult to read.	The parts of the summary are complete sentences and are easy to read.	The parts of the summary are complete or compound sentences, are easy to read and communicate the text’s greatest meaning.	10
<b>Student’s score</b>					