Finding the Text Structure for an Entire Article

Learning Target: I can analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of ideas.

Today’s notes do not begin until you see RED text.
1. We have learned that a text structure is the foundation of a writing; it's the way the author organizes the information. Just like blueprints organize and plan the structure of a house.
The Road So Far...

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2. We have learned about the 5 most common non-fiction text structures.....

   Compare & Contrast      Cause & Effect
   Problem & Solution      Chronological Order/Sequence
   Statement & Support/Description
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3. We have practiced identifying text structures in individual paragraphs by using transition words AND examining the author’s purpose.
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4. We have learned that writers sometimes use a PRIMARY (main) text structure and a SECONDARY (helping) text structure.
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4. We have learned that writers sometimes use a PRIMARY text structure and a SECONDARY text structure.

5. We have written paragraphs to fit a specific text structure.
However....

1. We can’t stop there! Our learning target for analyzing a text structure applies to ENTIRE PASSAGES--not just a few single paragraphs.

2. So, we have to WIDEN our learning lens (like zooming out on a camera when you want to fit all your friends in the picture) and learn how we can use what we know about text structures to analyze an entire article--that’s the big picture.
Finding an Article’s Text Structure

To find the text structure of an entire passage, follow the same steps you used for text structures in paragraphs:

1) Look for transition words (but do not rely on them completely). In an entire article, the transition words may show the SECONDARY text structure instead of the PRIMARY one.

Ask yourself:

- What transition words or phrases do I see?
- What text structure uses these transitions?
Finding an Article’s Text Structure

To find the text structure of an entire passage, follow the same steps you used for text structures in paragraphs:

2) Look at the entire text and figure out what the author’s purpose is. The author’s purpose controls the text structure he/she uses.

Ask yourself:

• What does the title tell me? (Titles often show the purpose).

• What big ideas is the author trying to show me?

• What is this article mainly about OVERALL?
Finding an Article’s Text Structure

To find the text structure of an entire passage, follow the same steps you used for text structures in paragraphs:

3) Decide the PRIMARY and SECONDARY text structures based on steps 1 and 2. PRIMARY fits the whole article; SECONDARY fits individual sections or paragraphs.

Ask yourself:

• What text structure best fits with the author’s purpose? This will be the PRIMARY text structure.

• What text structure is used in most of the individual paragraphs? This will be the SECONDARY text structure.
4) Explain how specific paragraphs and sections help the author accomplish his/her purpose.

It’s not enough to find the structure. You also have to ANALYZE it—which means you have to discuss how the parts/sections/paragraphs relate to the article’s overall purpose.

Ask yourself:

- What important information does this section/paragraph show me?
- How does this section/paragraph help the author achieve his/her purpose?