

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

ANCHOR 5

English Language Arts Standards Reading: Literature **ANCHOR 5**

Reading Anchor 5: Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

K	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Recognize common types of texts (e.g., storybooks, poems).	Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information, drawing on wide reading of a range of text types.	Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.	Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as <i>chapter</i> , <i>scene</i> , and <i>stanza</i> ; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.	Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.	Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.

Demonstration 77

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Decision Tree for **Reading: Literature** ANCHOR 5

Do my students need focused instruction in relation to Reading Anchor 5?

Anchor 5 is aimed at helping students learn to *use text structure to support meaning making*. (Refer to your grade-level standards for specific details.)

When some or all of your students could use support in this area, it is recommended that you start the process by implementing three types of instruction in sequence over the course of about a week:



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Independent Application
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The initial demonstration requires just one session (to be repeated as needed), leaving one or two days for collaborative engagement, and one or two days to begin the independent applications, which become ongoing as you choose. If you find during any phase of the instruction that some or all of your students could use intensified support, it is recommended that you move to the lessons for intensifying the instruction.



Do my students need intensified support with considering structure?

Considering structure is a comprehension strategy that supports students in connecting the different parts of a text into a meaningful whole. Students who seem to have difficulty holding meaning across the pages of a text can benefit from support with considering structure. See page 80.

Demonstration

Anchor 5 is aimed at helping students learn to *use text structure to support meaning making*. Having a sense of a structure—an idea about how texts are organized—can do two important things: It can support students in holding meaning across the pages of a text, and it can support them in pulling together all of the critical pieces of information. For example, when reading stories or dramas, students learn to expect a plot. Knowledge of plot structures provides a mental frame for organizing the material and pulling together the parts of the story. With poetry, the same holds true. Understanding the purpose of structural elements such as verses, stanzas, and line breaks can help students pull together ideas and consider how they are related.

When teaching students about text structure, we don't want to send the message that readers should consider the parts of a text simply to demonstrate their knowledge of such. Instead, we allow students to read for meaning and, when they are intrigued, to discuss the particular devices that author has used to create the dramatically or aesthetically pleasing effects. The present lesson builds a common language for discussing and analyzing text structure in ways that contribute to aesthetic appreciation and meaning making.

1. **Choose the text.** Any text can be used to teach about structure, but the key over time is variety in terms of the elements that are represented. Gather a set of texts that represent the structural elements you are to teach at your grade level. Figure RL 5.2 features an example set of elements. You will need just one text per lesson.
2. **Introduce the text and the concept.** Show students how you do a quick preview that highlights the overarching structure. You may wish to read the whole text (or a meaningful segment) aloud before discussing its structure in depth. This allows for a full focus on enjoyment and meaning. Either before or after reading the text or segment, on chart paper, write the structural features you want to highlight.
3. **Demonstrate and discuss the concept.** Use the text to show students how you make use of the key structural features you are highlighting for the lesson. Figure RL 5.1 offers a starter set of prompts.

READING ANCHOR 5: Prompts to Support Teacher-Led Modeling and Discussion of Text

Kindergarten and First Grade

Stories, Poetry, and Informational Books

Why do you think the author wrote this?

Look at where the author put the writing (refer to structural elements such as titles, stanzas, captions, and so on). Why did the author do this? What looks like writing you have seen before? Which parts are different?

What stands out about the format? What are the words or phrases or sentences like?

What are the illustrations for?

Just for Poetry

How are line breaks used? Let's listen to what the poem sounds like without the line breaks.

Why do you think the poet chose this format?

What makes this poem fun to say? Why does it make us want to move?

Second Grade

Stories

Let's examine how the story was introduced. How did we meet the characters? How/when was the problem set up? How/when was it solved? (Figures RL 2.3 and RL 2.5 provide templates for summarizing.)

Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades

Stories, Dramas, and Poetry

Look at the way the author organized this (refer to structural elements such as stanzas and line breaks in poetry, scenes in dramas, and chapters in stories). Why do you think the author organized the ideas this way?

Let's jot down the big idea from each section. This will help us think about how the author organized this whole piece.

Figure RL 5.2

Some Important Elements of Structure

Elements to Teach and Discuss in Relation to Stories

- **Title.** A heading that gives insight into the content of the story
- **Plot.** The series of events: a beginning that draws in the reader and provides information about the characters and setting; a middle that develops a conflict; a high point in action when the conflict is about to be solved; and an ending or resolution
- **Theme.** The often unstated idea, meaning, or message that ties together the characters, setting, and plot. Stories often have more than one theme
- **Caption.** A description of what is happening in an illustration
- **Speech or thought bubbles.** Graphic features showing the speech or thought of a given character
- **Chapter.** Sections of text grouping the ideas into logical parts

Elements to Teach and Discuss in Relation to Poetry

- **Title:** A heading that gives insight into the content of the poem
- **Rhyme:** Words that sound alike, often linking one concept to another
- **Rhythm:** The beat that results from the stress pattern of syllables
- **Meter:** The rhythm in a line of poetry
- **Line breaks:** Where lines of poetry end; a way to create and enhance meaning
- **Stanza:** A grouping of lines in poetry
- **Verse:** A line or division/grouping of lines in a poem

Elements to Teach and Discuss in Relation to Drama

- **Title:** A heading that gives insight into the content of the drama
- **List of characters:** A listing of information about the characters
- **Scene:** A description of the setting
- **Stage directions:** Directions throughout a script that offer information about the characters' actions
- **List of props:** A listing of items the characters use on stage
- **Dialogue:** What the characters say
- **Plot:** The series of events: a beginning that draws in the audience and provides information about the characters and setting; a middle that develops a conflict; a high point in action when the conflict is about to be solved; and an ending or resolution

Figure RL 5.3

INTENSIFYING THE INSTRUCTION

Consideration of Structure

Considering structure is a comprehension strategy that involves attending to the structure of text and the ways in which its parts are related.

1. Choose a book or poem for demonstration and have available a bin of books/poems for partners to use. You may wish to have all students use *either* fiction, poetry, or nonfiction the first few times you teach the structure lesson. You can differentiate by having books representing a range of difficulty.
2. Show students the surface structure of the book/poem you are using for demonstration, and tell them everything you notice (title, author, chapter headers, speech bubbles, captions, stanzas, verses). (See Figure RL 5.2.)
3. Ask the students to turn through their books and note any special features. Students may work with a partner for this step of the lesson.
4. Have students report their observations back to the whole group and remind them that previewing before reading can help them begin to build understanding.
5. Read the demonstration text and discuss the deeper structural elements such as plot or meter. (See Figure RL 5.2.) Help students understand that authors use particular structures to help organize their writing and create aesthetically or dramatically pleasing effects.

For English Learners

- Before reading, use conversations about structure as a frame for discussing content or vocabulary that may be unfamiliar.
- For step 3 of this lesson, place English learners with experienced English speakers.

Collaborative Engagement

The prompts in Figure RL 5.4 are designed to help students explore structure together. Students should work in small groups.

Figure RL 5.4

READING ANCHOR 5:
Prompts to Support Student-Led Group Discussion of Text

Kindergarten and First Grade

- Gather a bin of books for each group. Each bin should contain ten to twelve books. Students sort the books into three piles: stories, poetry, and books that give information. They may read from any pile.
- Create enough storyboards for each group. A storyboard is made up of cut-apart pages of a picture book. You may use fiction or informational text. Be sure the sequence is predictable (as with a life cycle or plant growth). Students place the storyboard pictures in order. You can select key pages for the group to work with. You may wish to laminate the pages on colored construction paper, placing pictures from the beginning on green, middle on yellow, and end on red (Tompkins 2001).

First Grade

- Gather a bin of books for each group. Each bin should contain five to seven books. Students sort the books into two piles: stories and informational books. They go through the two piles and make a chart to show what is the same and different in the two types of books. (Figure RL 5.5 provides a template.)
- Students take turns reading aloud from the pages of a story or an informational text. Choose texts that students can easily read with success.
- Students read a professionally published reader's theatre script.

Second Grade

- Prepare a set of cards with some typed-out beginnings and endings from stories. (Type them out rather than photocopying the pages.) Students read the parts and match the beginnings with the endings. (This may occur before or after the stories have been read in full.)

(continues)

Figure RL 5.4 (continued)

Second Grade (continued)

- Students collaborate to draw a picture of the beginning and the ending of a familiar story on large chart paper. They write one sentence to describe each.
- Create enough storyboards for each group. A storyboard is made up of cut-apart pages of a picture book. Students place the storyboard pictures in order. You can select key pages for the group to work with. You may wish to laminate the pages on colored construction paper, placing pictures from the beginning on green, middle on yellow, and end on red (Tompkins 2001).
- Students take turns reading aloud from the pages of a story or an informational text. Choose texts that students can easily read with success.
- Students read a professionally published reader's theatre script.

Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades

- Each group member draws a picture from one part of the text and writes one detail-rich sentence to describe it. Students work with their group to place their pictures in order. When the groups are finished, the whole class works through the same process, placing the pictures in order. The piece is then bound into a class book.
- Give each group a set of lines or passages from a text that has been cut into several parts. Students read the parts and place them in logical order. (This may occur before or after the piece has been read. The whole text need not be used.)
- Students work together to fill in a semantic feature analysis chart that contains key text elements from different genres. (Figure RL 5.6 provides an example.) Students place checks in the appropriate boxes. After they have placed the checks, they add five terms of their own, and place checks in the appropriate boxes.
- Students take turns reading aloud from the pages of a story or an informational text. Choose texts that students can easily read with success.
- Students read a professionally published reader's theatre script.