

# 11 Organization

B.3.3.1 B.3.3.4

Authors use **organizational patterns** to create a **structure** that makes it easier for readers to follow what is happening and find information. Presenting information in a logical order highlights what is important. For example, *sequence* or *time* order presents things in the order they happen or should be done. This pattern is very common in stories and in instructions such as recipes, travel directions, and assembly instructions.


**Look** Other common patterns include: *lists* (like this one); *problem and solution*; *question and answer*; *description or definition*; *cause and effect*; and *comparison and contrast*. These patterns may be used to structure the entire selection, or just a section of it.

## Example

The author organizes the section titled “Taking a Stand” by presenting

- (A) a definition and description of segregation.
- (B) a sequence of key steps in the fight against segregation in education.
- (C) comparison and contrast between segregation in public and private schools.
- (D) the cause of segregation in schools and its effects on students.

<b>D I S C U S S</b>	(A) The previous section <b>describes</b> segregation. This section, however, focuses on what people did about it.	(C) The author mentions that law schools and colleges were challenged before public schools. But is the section structured to <b>compare and contrast</b> them?
	(B) <b>Time or sequence</b> order is often used to discuss history. If you make a list of dates in the section, you can see that events are described from earliest to latest.	(D) The section does mention some <b>effects</b> of segregation, such as students being left behind, or having to travel great distances to get to school. But is that the focus of the section?

 **Connections** Timelines are a good way to keep track of **time and sequence** as you read. Use the timeline below to take note of key dates in the *Brown* case provided by the passage.



Authors want their organizational patterns to be easy to find and understand. But each pattern emphasizes a different relationship among the events or pieces of information. That is why authors often use words and phrases to signal *what* kind of relationship they are discussing. The chart below gives some common examples.

Organizational Pattern	Key Words and Phrases
cause/effect	<i>because, as a result, reason for, in order to, if . . . then, so</i>
compare/contrast	<i>like/unlike, similar/different, on the other hand</i>
description/definition	<i>is a, which/that is, refers to, in other words</i>
listing	<i>first/next/last, first/second, one/two/three, another</i>
problem/solution	<i>problem, issue, concern, solution, answer</i>
question/answer	<i>?, question, ask, answer, reply, response</i>
sequence/time	<i>first/next/last, first/second, then, before/after, meanwhile</i>

**Solve** Graphics and charts are another way to show relationships clearly. Authors may include them with the text, but readers may also find it helpful to create them. This lesson shows two such organizers: the timeline on the previous page and the table above. You will learn more about graphics and charts in Lesson 12.

### Example

What words or phrases does the author use to show which organizational pattern he uses in the section titled “Waiting for a Decision”?

- (A) “Finally, he dropped . . .”
- (B) “in the room—and in the nation . . .”
- (C) “Was this the end of the battle?”
- (D) “first major decision . . .”

<b>D I S C U S S</b>	<p>(A) The author describes what happened as if the reader were watching events unfold. The word <u>finally</u> is a clue that it describes the last in a <b>sequence</b> of events.</p> <p>(B) This choice might suggest <b>comparison and contrast</b>, but the room and the nation are not described. They are not the author’s focus for the section.</p>	<p>(C) This question could be part of a <b>question/answer</b> pattern. While the author does answer the question, he presents both at the <i>end</i> of the section. They do not organize the text.</p> <p>(D) The word <u>first</u> could suggest either <b>listing</b> or <b>sequence</b>. However, is there a <u>second</u> or a <u>next</u>? Is it important that this was Warren’s “first major decision”?</p>
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