

Text Set for Exploring Text Structure

To give students practice identifying and comparing text structures in the books they read, divide your class into seven groups and give each team one of the following books:



Fanatical About Frogs by Owen Davey (description)

Frog or Toad? How Do You Know? by Melissa Stewart (compare and contrast)

Frogs by Nic Bishop (description)

Frog Song by Brenda Z. Guiberson (list)

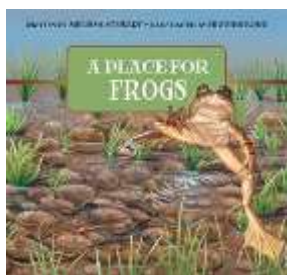
The Hidden Life of a Toad by Doug Weschler (sequence)

A Place for Frogs by Melissa Stewart (main text = cause & effect, sidebars = problem-solution)

Red-Eyed Tree Frog by Joy Cowley (sequence)



Invite each group to examine and read portions of their book, identify its text structure, and make a list of the kinds of information the author would have had to research to write the book. When all the teams have completed this task, ask each group to rotate to a different station, taking their lists with them but leaving the books behind, and repeat the process. After the teams have reviewed all the books, encourage the groups to share and compare their lists.



Do the teams agree about the text structure of each book? Some students will probably classify *A Place for Frogs* as cause & effect, while others may classify it as problem-solution. Ask the groups to explain their rationale. During the discussion, guide students in realizing that a book can have more than one major text structure. In the case of *A Place for Frogs*, the main text has a cause & effect structure, while the sidebars have a problem-solution structure.

Ask students why they think the author decided to use two different structures. (The main text provides general ideas and is written in a way that help readers realize that their actions can have

a positive impact on the animals that share our world. The sidebars provide specific supporting examples of how scientists and citizens have worked together to protect wildlife and wild places.)

Next, ask the class if any of the books they reviewed had the same text structure. (*Fanatical About Frogs* by Owen Davey and *Frogs* by Nic Bishop both have a description text structure. *The Hidden Life of a Toad* by Doug Weschler and *Red-Eyed Tree Frog* by Joy Cowley both have a sequence text structure) How are the books in each set similar? How are they different? In each case, did the students prefer one book over the other? Encourage students to explain their rationale. Do the books in each set have much overlapping information?



Finally, point out that *Frog or Toad? How Do You Know?* and *A Place for Frogs* were written by the same author. Then ask the class if they think Melissa Stewart used the same body of research to write the two books. (No, there is almost no overlapping information.) This is a great opportunity to point out that text structure often dictates the kinds of information authors need to collect as they do research. When a writer chooses a text structure early in the process, it can make the research process more focused and efficient.

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