Use the Sequence-of-Events Text Structure

1. Focus

Explain the Sequence-of-Events Text Structure

Say: Personal narratives tell about something that happened. When you tell about something that happened, you put the events in order or sequence. The sequence-of-events text structure is a way to organize the events in your personal narrative so your readers know their order. You can use certain clue or signal words, such as first, then, after, and finally, to help readers follow the order of events.

Model Identifying the Sequence-of-Events Text Structure

Ask students to listen as you read aloud “Inner Tubing in Colorado.” Read page 10 and the first paragraph of page 11. Note: You may want to display these pages using the interactive whiteboard resources so that students can read along.

Say: When the author writes, “Now here I was on a family vacation in Colorado,” it tells me that before this moment in time, the author has not been in Colorado, but now he is standing on a snow-covered, steep hill wearing winter clothes. When he uses the same word, now, on page 11, it tells me that a little time has passed and a change has occurred: It’s snowing harder. And when he includes the word then in the sentence “Then I jumped on the inner tube,” it’s a signal to me that he has jumped on the inner tube after a blast of cold wind has hit him.

Practice Identifying the Sequence-of-Events Text Structure

Say: Now I’ll read another paragraph, and you listen for other words that help you follow the sequence of events. Read the first paragraph on page 12. Students should notice the word when that signals the author sees a rock in his path.

Create a Class Sequence-of-Events Signal Words Anchor Chart

Say: Writers use signal words to help their readers follow the sequence of events in their writing.

On chart paper, work with students to brainstorm a list of sequence words they might use in a personal narrative. Begin with the words you found in “Inner Tubing in Colorado.” Post this in your classroom as a Sequence-of-Events Signal Words anchor chart that students can refer to throughout the unit. Reread and clarify the meaning of unfamiliar sequencing signal words and phrases.
2. Rehearse

Practice Using the Sequence-of-Events Text Structure in Oral Conversation

**Turn and talk.** Ask students to use sequence-of-events signal words as they tell a partner the order of their actions when they get dressed in the morning. Remind them to consult the anchor chart for ideas.

If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

**Share Ideas**

Bring students together and invite volunteers to share the order of their actions when they get dressed in the morning. Ask students to use sequence signal words and phrases from the anchor chart.

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### Strategies to Support ELs

**Beginning**

Meet with beginning ELs one on one during independent writing and conferring time. Using the interactive whiteboard resources or images you have gathered, display photographs of typical dressing actions. Work with each student to order the photographs so they tell about the sequence of events in his or her dressing routine. Write captions for each image using simple sentences, such as:

- First, I _____.  
- Then, I _____.  
- After that, I _____.  
- Finally, I _____.

**Intermediate and Advanced**

Display the idea bank and sentence frames on chart paper to support ELs and struggling writers as they talk about their dressing routines. You may also wish to display photographs showing typical dressing actions.

**Idea Bank**

- put on socks  
- put on shoes  
- put on pants  
- put on a shirt  
- put on a jacket

**Sentence Frames**

- First, I ____.  
- Then, I ____.  
- After that, I ____.  
- Before I ____, I ____.  
- Finally, I ____.  

**All Levels**

Display images depicting the typical dressing actions either using photos you have gathered or using the interactive whiteboard resources to visually support students’ discussion about the way they get dressed.

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3. Independent Writing and Conferring

**Say:** We learned that writers use signal words to make it easy for readers to follow the order of events. Remember to use sequence-of-events signal words when you tell about the order of the events in your personal narrative.

During independent writing time, encourage students to use sequence-of-events signal language to write about a memory. During student conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to read aloud their sentences in which they used sequence-of-events signal language.