When readers learn to read like writers, they experience much greater success with informational style writing. The reader who is attentive to the author's organizational patterns will usually find it easier to comprehend the information being explained. One way a reader can read like a writer is for him/her to pay attention to the author's style for organizing and explaining information. Whereas stories include a setting, plot, character, problem, and resolution, expository text is framed around different structures. These structures occur in both textbooks and trade books.

**Description or Enumeration Text Pattern.** Paragraphs in this pattern list pieces of information (facts, ideas, steps, etc.). The order of the fact listing may reflect the order of importance or simply another logical order. Subjects which commonly employ this text pattern include social studies and science. The author may signal this pattern through the following words: one, two, first, second, third, to begin, next, finally, most important, when, also, too, then, to begin with, for instance, for example, and in fact.

**Time Order or Sequence Text Pattern.** This involves putting facts, events, or concepts in order of occurrence. The author traces the development of the topic or gives the steps in the sequence. The main subject which commonly employs this text pattern is social studies. The author may signal this pattern through the following words: on (date), not long after, now, as, before, after, when, first, second, then, finally, during, finally, and until.

**Question and Answer Text Pattern.** The author asks a question and then answers it. The main subject which commonly employs this text pattern is social studies.

**Comparison-Contrast Text Pattern.** The author points out likenesses (comparison) and/or differences (contrast) among facts, concepts, events, people, etc. The main subject which commonly employs this text pattern is social studies. The author may signal this pattern through the following words: however, but, as well as, on the other hand, not only...but also, either...or, while, although, similarly, yet, unless, meanwhile, nevertheless, otherwise, compared to, and despite.

**Cause-Effect Text Pattern.** The author shows how facts, events, or concepts (effects) happen or come into being because of other facts, events, or concepts (causes). The subjects which commonly employ this text pattern include social studies and science. The author may signal this pattern through the following words: because, cause, since, therefore, consequently, as a result, this led to, so, so that, nevertheless, accordingly, if....then, and thus.

**Problem and Solution Text Pattern.** The author shows the development of a problem and the solution(s) to the problem. The main subject which commonly employs this text pattern is science. The author may signal this pattern through the following words: because, cause, since, therefore, consequently, as a result, this led to, so, so that, nevertheless, accordingly, if....then, and thus.

Unfortunately, it is not always easy for a reader to identify an expository text pattern and use it to support his/her comprehension. Authors do not write texts in neat, perfectly identifiable patterns. Comprehension typically is stronger when the reader can use the writer's strategies to mentally organize the information while s/he is reading and will find it easier to shift from one pattern to another when the author's explanation signals it.