



# EXPOSITORY FRAMEWORKS

## DESCRIPTION

Through this activity students learn to reorganize their notes to reflect the ideas and relationships embedded in a repertoire of common discourse patterns. Expository frameworks are the structures that commonly organize most types of nonfiction text, and students can learn to recognize and easily interpret these frameworks. By gaining familiarity with expository frameworks, students develop a facility with a variety of logical ways in which to structure their thinking and their notes. They can then use this repertoire strategically to enable flexible and productive note-taking. The most common expository frameworks include:

- Establishing background, context, or perspective
- Definition
- Description
- Compare-contrast
- Ordering
- Explanation (cause-and-effect)
- Rule-example or principle-example
- Problem-solution
- Argument-support

**LEARNING STRATEGIES** Connecting, Metacognition, Synthesizing, Visualizing

**LESSON PLAN STAGE** Investigation, Reflection, Synthesis

**SKILLS** Metacognition

## PREPARATION

- Find or create models of each expository framework that you will be teaching. For example, if you want to teach compare-contrast, then find a brief text or portion of text that is structured around comparing and contrasting two phenomena. If you want to teach establishing background or context, then identify the beginning portion of a text that provides readers with essential background knowledge to understand the rest of the piece.
- Identify the set of notes you want students to reorganize.

### ACTIVITY STEPS

### TEACHING TIPS

1

Teacher models the target expository framework(s) of the day.

While these frameworks are common to most forms of discourse, students will require explicit instruction and practice to gain comfort with using them consciously. Plan initially to devote at least a day to focus on each framework. After students are familiar with them they can easily use multiple frameworks in the same activity.



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### ACTIVITY STEPS

### TEACHING TIPS

- | ACTIVITY STEPS | TEACHING TIPS  |  |
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| 2              | Students take out a set of notes taken in a recent class.  | You will want to select a set of notes that is recent enough so that students still recall the material. If they don't remember the content then this task becomes much more challenging.  |
| 3              | Students reorganize all or portions of their notes, so that the structure represents one or more of the expository frameworks. | Students will benefit from your modeling this process with a sample set of notes. Help them to consider multiple ways to visually represent the relationships represented in the expository frameworks.  |
| 4              | Students examine their matrices, noticing trends, and synthesizing information across topics and subtopics.                    | This step can be completed independently, in groups, or as a whole class. It can be helpful to ask students to summarize the information from each topic and subtopic. For example, a process can be structured with a linear numbered list, or through a flowchart. Students should be encouraged to try several methods to find what works best for them in their representation of these expository frameworks. |
| 5              | Students reflect on their learning process, either in conversation or in writing.  | Students should respond to questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How did this revision process change your notes?</li><li>• How might it affect your learning to take notes in this format?</li><li>• What types of relationships are most important to express in your notes?</li></ul>  |