Text Structure: Narrative vs. Informational texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiction</th>
<th>Nonfiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>While parts of the text may be based on the real world, the overall story or ideas are not true.</td>
<td>The information in the text is true. The author does not add imaginary details or facts.</td>
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</tbody>
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<td>The text tells a story. The main character or person in the text faces a problem and tries to resolve the problem. There is a beginning, middle, and end.</td>
<td>The text is written to describe factual information in an understandable format. Examples include: description/list, sequence of events, compare and contrast, cause and effect, and problem and solution.</td>
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</tbody>
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Overview:
1. All fictional texts are narrative while nonfiction texts can be either narrative or informational.
2. Nonfiction text written in story form is called narrative nonfiction.
3. Nonfiction text written using something other than narrative format is called informational text.

Exploring Text Structure in more detail:

**Text structure** is the term used to explain how an author organizes details in his writing. When presenting facts and other forms of nonfiction information, an author will often use different types of common text structures (formats).

Common Informational Text Structures:
1. **Description or List**: includes details to help you picture or get to know a person, place, thing, or idea
2. **Cause and Effect**: explains why something happened (cause) and what happened as a result (effect)
3. **Problem and Solution**: presents a problem and explains how it is solved
4. **Compare and Contrast**: presents the similarities and/or differences between two items, such as a pair of events, time periods, ideas, people, places, etc.
5. **Sequence of Events (or Chronological Order)**: describes events in the order in which they happen

Common questions to ask when reading a text:
1. What is the main purpose of the article? What is the author trying to get the reader to learn or think about?
2. What are some of the facts or other types of information the author uses to support his point?
3. Which text structure(s) does the author use to help organize the information?
4. Why does the author choose to use a particular text structure? How does it assist in getting the author’s point across?