

# Patterns of

Authors use organizational patterns to develop main ideas in paragraphs, essays, stories, novels, poems, and more.

Topic Sentence → Paragraph

Thesis Statement → Essay

Theme → Story, Novel, Poem

Type of Organization	Signal Words Transition Words	Used For	Example of Thesis Statement
<b>Chronological Order</b> <b>Sequential Order</b> <b>Process Order</b>  <i>When did it happen?</i> <i>In what order did it happen?</i>	first, third, next, finally, eventually, following this how to, in the process of, the following steps,	It is used for describing steps and stages, narration, and to show the sequence of events. It is used in anthropology, history, art history, and political science.	The famous Leaning Tower of Pisa has been tilting for over 800 years and recent improvements should allow it to continue tilting for another 300 more.  The moth and butterfly undergo several changes between hatching from an egg to mature adulthood.
<b>List of Items</b>  <i>What examples support the main idea?</i> <i>What proof is there?</i>	In addition, moreover, furthermore, as well as, plus, in fact	It answers questions regarding proof, back-up, or support. It is used in history, social sciences, political science.	Many modern people are turning themselves into social victims. One example is. . .
<b>Comparison and Contrast</b>  <i>How are two things similar?</i> <i>How are two things different?</i>	Similarly, like, in the same way, compared to, likewise, but, yet, on the other hand, nevertheless, on the contrary	It is used to show the similarities and differences between two topics.	Gangs and fraternities share many characteristics, but are also quite different.  Poetry and literature, while being quite different, also have many similarities.
<b>Cause and Effect</b>  <i>Why did something happen?</i> <i>What were the results of a particular event?</i>	Because, for this reason, due to, on account of, as a result, since consequently, resulting	It is used to describe how an action or event is caused by another event or action.	Research has shown that birth defects have various causes.  Smoking is the single most preventable risk factor for fatal illnesses in the United States.

<b>Definition and Example</b>  <i>What is it?</i>	Defined as, is, known, is used to mean, for example, to illustrate, for instance, such as	It is used to introduce, explain, and describe a word or concept. It has three parts—a term, a definition, and an example.	Ragtime music is a style that developed at the turn of the twentieth century.
<b>Classification</b>  <i>How do the parts work with the whole?</i>	Categories, classifications, groups, classes, elements, features, kinds, types, varieties, methods	It is used to categorize a topic into parts that have common characteristics. This pattern is often used with a chart or graphic to help readers understand or visualize categories.	There are many people involved in the publishing of a magazine.
<b>Order of Importance</b>  <i>Which point is the most important? Which point is the least important? What element is crucial?</i>	Central, principal, chief, major, main, key, primary, significant, finally, lastly, most important	It is used to show information from either the least important part to the most important part OR vice versa. It is used in sciences, especially lab texts and experiments.	While the most important part of an essay is a solid thesis statement, topic sentences and supporting details are also critical.
<b>Problem and Solution</b>  <i>What is the problem? What is a possible solution?</i>	Problem, need, difficulty, dilemma, challenge, issue, answer, propose, suggest, indicate, solve, resolve, plan	It presents and explains a problem. It proposes a possible solution to solve the problem. If there is no solution, only the problem is presented. It is used in essays and letters to the editor.	Since Since pollution has a detrimental impact on modern living standards, a key solution is increased recycling of waste products.
<b>Spatial Order</b>	Behind, next to, diagonally, horizontal, in front of	It describes where something is in space, or where something is in relation to others.	The Grand Canyon is in the northwest corner of Arizona.
<b>Mixed Order</b>	Sometimes authors mix it up and use a variety of organizational patterns in a paragraph or essay.		