

Critical Concepts 8.5A Non Fiction Lesson Plans

Skill Focus: CC.8.5A – Analyze the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining key concepts.

Vocabulary Word Bank: structure, contribute, development, refine, concept, evidence

January Lesson Objectives

- **SWBAT** identify the structure of a paragraph (cause/effect, chronological, comparison, description, problem-solution, or sequence).
- **SWBAT** cite words or phrases from the paragraph that support determination of structure.
- **SWBAT** identify the key concept of a paragraph.
- **SWBAT** analyze how individual sentences develop and refine that key concept.
- **SWBAT** use academic vocabulary (structure, contribute, development, refine, concept, evidence) in speaking and writing.

Non-Fiction Texts Suggestions for January (text selections are suggestion only, teachers can change the text to fit their classroom needs, if choosing another text it should come from the Educational Epiphany Curriculum)

- *Fireside Chat Recovery Program* – Franklin D. Roosevelt
- *The Secret Life of Cats* – Jenny Searford
- *Voting Rights Act of 1965* – author unknown
- *Life on the Mississippi, The River and Its History* – Mark Twain

Graphic Organizer: Citing Evidence Refer to your Educational Epiphany Critical Concepts Binder: Graphic Organizers Tab: CC 8.5A-1 (pages 105-108 in the Graphic Organizers Tab)

I Do (Teacher Model – 15 mins)

Text: *Fireside Chat Recovery Program* (Roosevelt)

Steps:

1. Distribute CC 8.5A graphic organizer; display on smartboard.
2. Read aloud one key paragraph from Roosevelt's speech.

Teacher Think-Aloud:

- **Step 1 – Identify Structure**

"Let me pause. The paragraph lists the steps the government is taking—first the banks closed, then they reopened with safeguards, then depositors regained confidence. That sounds like **sequence structure**, because it describes steps in an order."

- **Step 2 – Cite Evidence for Structure**

"I notice words like 'first,' 'next,' and 'finally.' Those signal sequence."

- **Step 3 – Identify Key Concept**

"The key concept here is that Roosevelt wants people to trust that the recovery plan is working."

- **Step 4 – Sentence Analysis (3 examples)**

1. "This sentence says, 'First, we closed the banks to prevent panic.' That contributes by showing the **first step** of the plan."
2. "Next, the sentence, 'We reopened only those banks found to be secure,' refines the concept by explaining how safety and confidence are restored."
3. "Finally, 'Confidence of the people has returned,' develops the key concept by showing the result of the steps—it reinforces trust."

Sample Student Response (I Do):

- Structure: Sequence
- Words/Phrases: "first," "next," "finally"
- Key Concept: The recovery plan restores trust in banks.
- Sentence 1: "First, we closed the banks to prevent panic." → shows first step.
- Sentence 2: "We reopened only those banks found to be secure." → refines idea by explaining how safety is ensured.
- Sentence 3: "Confidence of the people has returned." → shows the result and strengthens the key concept.

We Do (Guided Practice – 20 mins)

Text: *Voting Rights Act of 1965* (first body paragraph)

Steps:

- Read aloud as a class.
- Complete organizer together.

Teacher Think-Aloud:

- "I see dates and events—'March 1965,' 'August 1965.' That signals **chronological structure**."
- "Words like 'then,' 'afterward,' confirm this."
- "The key concept is that the law responded to racial injustice."
- Sentence 1: "In March 1965, protesters in Selma were attacked." → shows the problem.
- Sentence 2: "President Johnson introduced legislation soon after." → develops solution.
- Sentence 3: "Congress passed the Voting Rights Act in August." → refines concept by showing the solution became law.

Sample Class Organizer Response:

- Structure: Chronological
- Words/Phrases: "March 1965," "soon after," "in August"
- Key Concept: The law was created as a response to racial injustice.
- Sentence 1: "In March 1965, protesters in Selma were attacked." → shows problem.

- Sentence 2: "President Johnson introduced legislation soon after." → develops solution.
- Sentence 3: "Congress passed the Voting Rights Act in August." → refines concept by showing final step.

You Do with Partner (Collaborative Practice – 30 mins)

Text: *The Secret Life of Cats* (Searford)

Steps:

- Partners read one descriptive paragraph.
- Work together to complete organizer.
- Teacher circulates with prompts:
 - "What signal words show structure?"
 - "What is the key concept?"
 - "How does each sentence add to or refine that concept?"

Sample Partner Response:

- Structure: Description
- Words/Phrases: "Cats use their whiskers to measure space," "Their tails communicate mood."
- Key Concept: Cats use body features to communicate and survive.
- Sentence 1: "Whiskers detect whether they can fit into tight spaces." → contributes by explaining one survival feature.
- Sentence 2: "Tails swishing show annoyance." → refines concept by adding communication.
- Sentence 3: "Their ears rotate to capture sounds in every direction." → develops concept by showing another survival feature.

You Do Independently

Text: *Life on the Mississippi* (Mark Twain, "The River and its History")

Steps:

- Students read one paragraph independently.
- Complete organizer individually.
- Teacher provides scaffolding to groups that need support:
 - "Look for clues: Does Twain tell a story in order? Does he describe features? Is he comparing past vs present?"
 - "Underline words or sentences that show the structure."
 - "Circle the sentence you think is most important, then explain how it develops the key concept."

Sample Student Response (Independent):

- Structure: Comparison
- Words/Phrases: "In earlier times... now," "used to... today"
- Key Concept: The river used to be dangerous for steamboats, but improvements made it safer.
- Sentence 1: "In earlier times, the shifting channels sank many boats." → develops problem.
- Sentence 2: "Now, trained pilots map every turn of the river." → refines by showing improvement.
- Sentence 3: "Today, steamboat travel is far safer than in the past." → final refinement by comparing then vs now.