

Writer's Craft—Text Features

Organizational Features

(Organizational features help readers find important information in a text)

Main Title--a descriptive heading for a book chapter, a magazine article, or a speech—gives readers hints about the topic of the text

Sub-Title—heading beneath the main title that is in smaller font and further explains the topic of the main title

By-line-- the name of the author of an article in a newspaper or magazine, printed at the head of the article

Sub-Heading (section title)-- bold descriptors that help “chunk” or group information and help readers predict the subject of the paragraph or section—help readers see organizational patterns in a text

Font—Bold, Italics, Colored, Underlined, Increased Size—signals important words to the reader

Bullets/Bulleted List—used in technical writing to introduce a list and series of items of equal importance

Text Box—a section of offset text which further explains or enhances meaning of the main text

Sidebar—off-set text which provides additional explanatory information

Graphic Features

(Graphic features provide a visual representation of information to help readers further understand topics/concepts being discussed. Graphic features expand meaning of the writing.)

Picture—drawn, painted, or photographed objects—helps the reader see what the topic being discussed actually looks like

Caption-- a title or explanation for a picture or illustration—helps the reader further understand the picture or photograph

Chart-- a diagram or table displaying detailed information—helps the reader summarize/compare information

Graph--diagram showing relationships between varying quantities—helps the reader understand the relationship between factors/conditions being discussed

Map—a drawing of a route or location used to extend/illustrate meaning and summarize the text

Illustration—picture/graphic that complements text--helps explain a topic or concept

Diagram-- a simple explanatory drawing showing the basic shape, layout, or workings of a topic or idea

Table--an arrangement of information or data into columns and rows or a condensed list—helps the reader summarize/compare information

Timeline-- a graphic, chronological representation of key events, often consisting of visuals—helps the reader understand sequence of time or chain of events.

Print Features

(Print features guide readers through the organizational pattern of a text.)

Table of Contents--The table of contents generally lists part, chapter, and unit and section titles; students can see how it summarizes the major concepts and ideas to be covered in the course.

Glossary--A list of key terms in alphabetical order with definitions.

Appendix- An appendix provides additional information and support materials that may be referenced in various parts of the text.

Index—an alphabetical listing of the key names, terms, events, and topics with page numbers.

Preface—an introductory section in a book by the book's author or editor, setting its purpose and scope, expressing acknowledgment of assistance from others, etc.

Electronic Text Features

All of the previous organizational, graphic, and print features, plus:

Homepage—serves as an index from which to navigate to other pages on the site; provides overview information and sets the organizational structure for the site

Header—an organizational title for the page; usually appears on each page as a dominant organizer; provides a consistent design throughout the site; helps remind the reader of the topic/site they are visiting

Navigation Menu—a list of specific tabs or links to organize and help direct the user to other pages and topics on the site; it may be located along the top or either side of the site

Search Boxes—a long text box for typing in topics of interest for quickly accessing information on the site

Links—active clickable connections to other websites, documents, or pages within the site (may also be called hyperlink to denote an active link); there may be a section at the bottom of the page or a separate tab that connects the user to other specific sites or information related to the topic

Footer—located at the bottom of the page, may include credits, authorship, and copyright for information and resources on the page