

25 Intentional Reading Strategies to Teach Literary and Informational Texts

Reading Assessment Unit

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Fall 2003

Reading Strategies

For Literary Texts or Informational Texts

– Before Reading

- Set a Purpose
- Preview the Text
- Plan How to Organize Your Understanding

– During Reading

- Read with Purpose
- Make Connections

– After Reading

- Pause and Reflect
- Re-Read for Purpose
- Remember and Organize

Literary Texts



Literary Texts—Before Reading

Set a Purpose

- Establish who is telling the story, poem, or essay.
(point of view)
- Who are the characters? (characters)
- Where and when does the story take place? (setting)
- What happens? (plot)
- What is the author's message or theme? (theme)
- How does the author express his or her ideas? (style)

Literary Texts — Before Reading

Preview the Text

- Identify the genre.
- Preview the:
 - Title.
 - Author.
 - Background or biographical information about the author.
 - First paragraph.
 - Names of characters or places.
 - Questions printed at the end of the text.

Literary Texts—Before Reading

Plan How to Organize your Understanding

- Make three “quick conclusions” about the text based on your purpose and preview work.
- Write down your three “quick conclusions” and read actively to discover if you are right.

Literary Texts—During Reading

Read with Purpose (Mark and Question)

– Mark the text

- Underline important issues, details, bits of dialogue
- Circle key words and symbols
- Highlight recurring themes or concepts.

– Ask key questions in the margins

- Pose questions to the author on style choices, names of characters, places or events

Literary Texts—During Reading

Make Connections (React, Predict, Visualize, Clarify)

- React to characters, events, conflict, resolution, or places
- Make connections to other literary texts read featuring similar themes, characters, or ideas (text to text)
- Make connections to personal experience or background knowledge (text to self)
- Make connections to larger social or historical understandings (text to world)
- Predict what will happen to characters or conflicts
- Visualize a character's appearance, or the terrain of the setting
- Clarify your comprehension and understanding by connecting back to what you know already has happened in the literary text

Literary Texts—After Reading

Pause and Reflect

- Return to your three “quick conclusions”. Were they right on?
- Reflect on your understanding about the text before your reading and after the reading.

Literary Texts—After Reading

Re-Read for Purpose

- Return to your purposes.
 - Did you identify all of the components?
 - Were your questions answered?
 - Were your connections revised or confirmed?

Literary Texts—After Reading

Remember and Organize

- Skim and scan the text one more time. Make note of the:
 - Characters.
 - Conflict and Resolution.
 - Theme.
 - Summary.
- Write a summary of the text and paraphrase the theme in your own words.

Informational Texts



Informational Texts—Before Reading

Set a Purpose

- Establish:
 - The subject
 - What the author is saying about the subject?
- Are there opposing sides presented?
- Does the author influence the reader and the subject through a selection of details, quotes, or examples?

Informational Texts—Before Reading

Preview the text

– Preview the:

- Unit title.
- Chapter title.
- Sub headings.
- First and last paragraph.
- Bold face terms.
- Repeated terms.
- Maps.
- Charts.
- Graphs.
- Diagrams.
- Pictures.
- Captions.

Informational Texts—Before Reading

Plan How to Organize your Understanding

- Make three “quick conclusions” about the text based on your purpose and preview work.
- Write down your three “quick conclusions” and read actively to discover if you are right.

Informational Texts—During Reading

Read with Purpose (Mark and Question)

– Mark the text

- Underline main ideas and significant and supporting details
- Circle key terms and important vocabulary

– Ask important questions about:

- Concepts
- Evidence
- Conclusions

Informational Texts—During Reading

Make Connections (React, Predict, Visualize, Clarify)

- React to ideas, events, or examples
- Make connections to other informational texts read featuring similar themes, characters, or ideas (text to text)
- Make connections to personal experience or background knowledge (text to self)
- Make connections to larger social or historical understands (text to world)
- Predict what will happen to subjects or events
- Visualize a subject's appearance, or the terrain of the place, or the situations suggested by historical or scientific understanding
- Clarify your comprehension and understanding by connecting back to what you know already has happened in the informational text

Informational Texts—After Reading

Pause and Reflect

- Return to your three “quick conclusions”. Where they right on?
- Reflect on your understanding about the text before your reading and after the reading.

Informational Texts—After Reading

Re-Read for Purpose

– Return to your purposes

- Did you identify all of the components?
- Were your questions answered?
- Were your connections revised or confirmed?

Informational Texts—After Reading

Remember and Organize

- Skim and scan the text one more time. Make note of:
 - Important ideas.
 - Concepts.
- Write a summary of the text and paraphrase the main vocabulary in your own words.



Classroom Reading Strategies

Support Strong WASL Reading
Achievement

How Do I Teach Kids How To Draw Quick Predictions?

Predictions are early judgments active readers make as they read and plan their reading process.

Quick conclusions provide organizing structures for active readers.

Quick conclusions are based on an initial “sweep” of the text.

The next, close reading of the text provides the reader an opportunity to revise or confirm their earlier judgments.

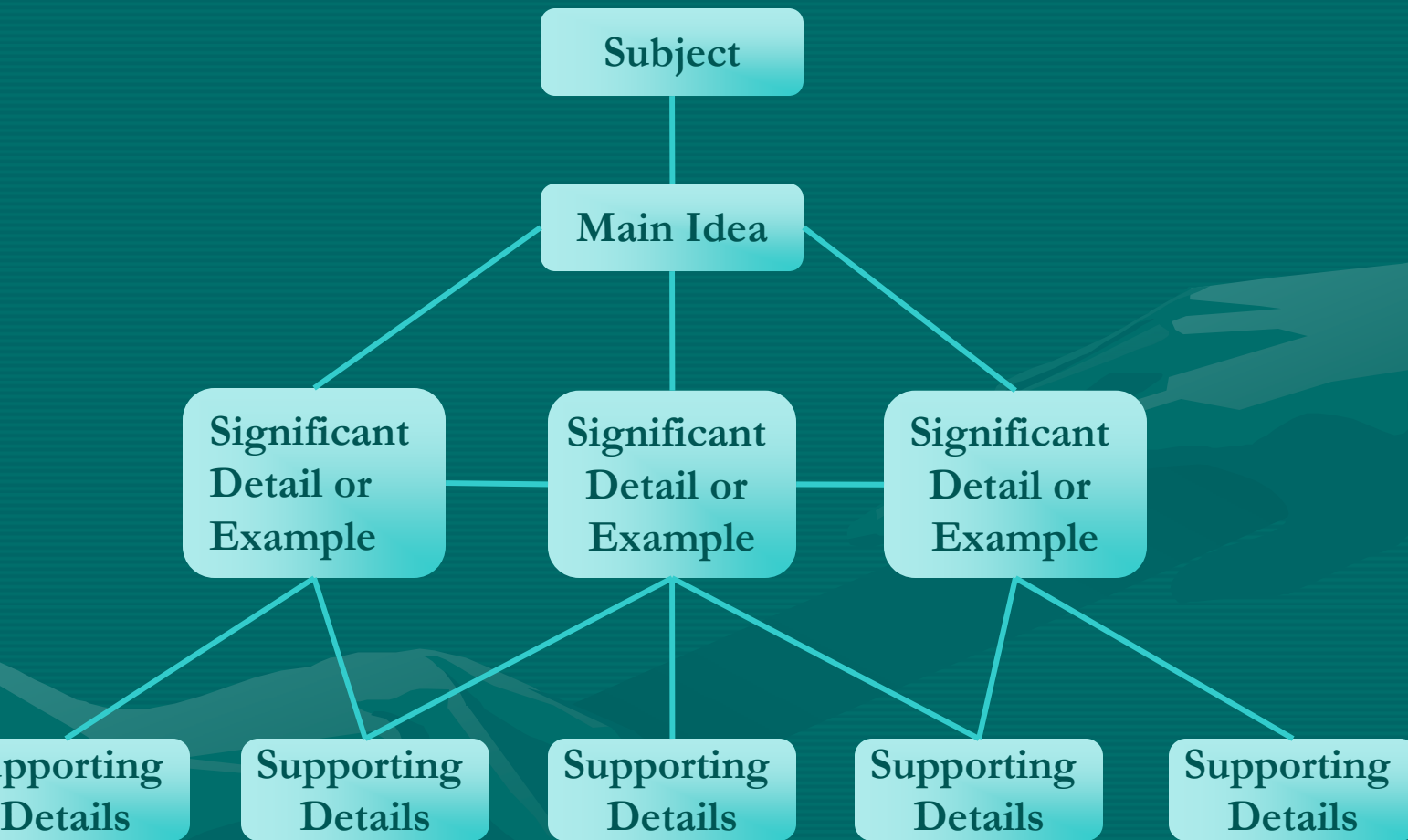
What Are Some Facts I Can Quickly Identify From The Text?	What Predictions Can I Draw Based On At Least Three Facts Used Together?
t or character	
:1	
:2	
:3	
t or character	
:1	
:2	
:3	
t or character	
:1	
:2	

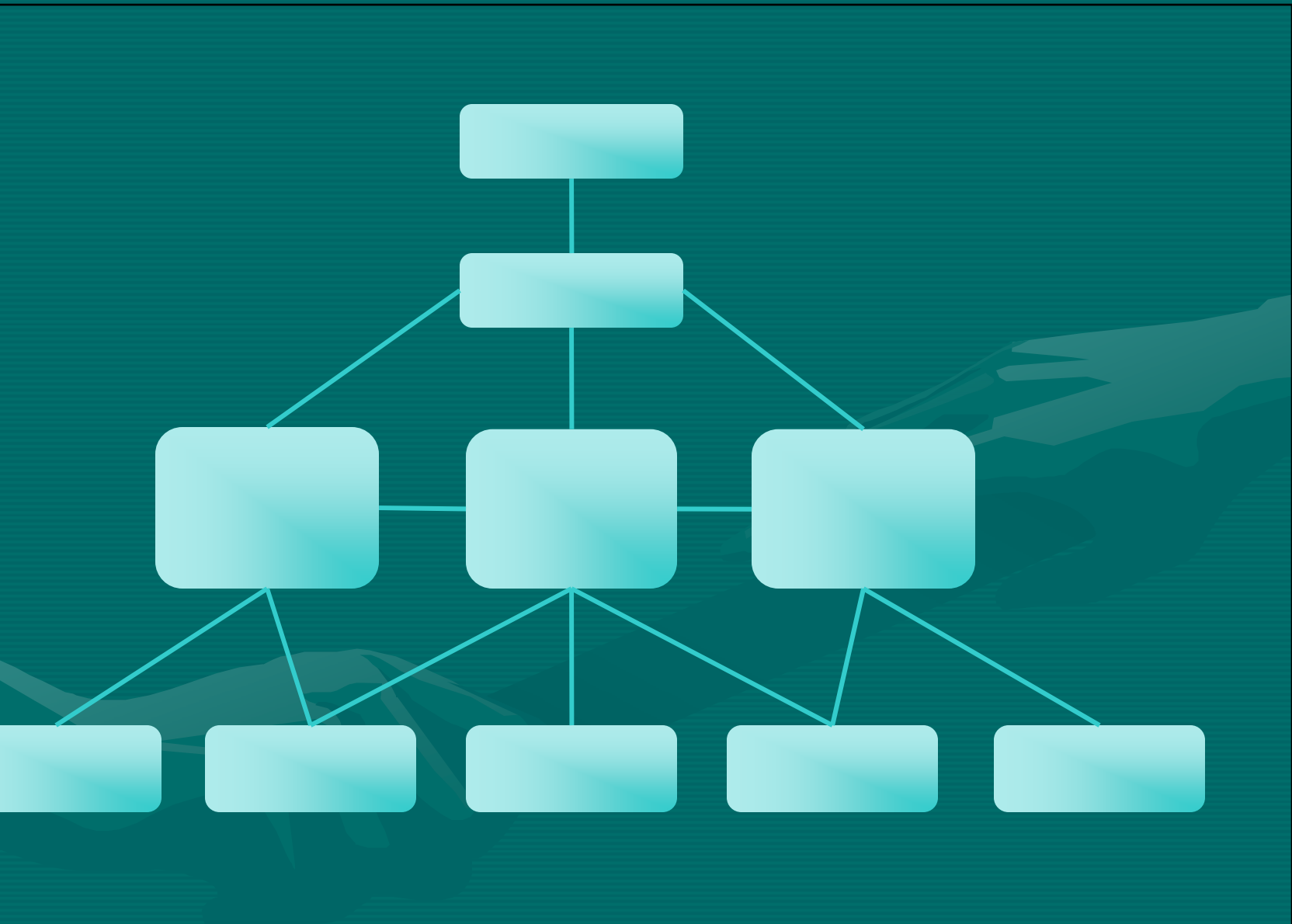
How Do I Teach Kids The Difference Between Subjects, Main Ideas, Significant Details, And Supporting Details?

Main ideas are the abstract concepts that illustrate BIG feelings, ideas, realizations, or conclusions

Significant details and examples are “put your finger” on an event, a description, a quote, or a fact that provides direct compelling support to the main idea.

Supporting details provide “color” and “texture” to the significant details or examples by enabling the reader to see, hear, smell, taste, or touch the event, description, quote, or fact.





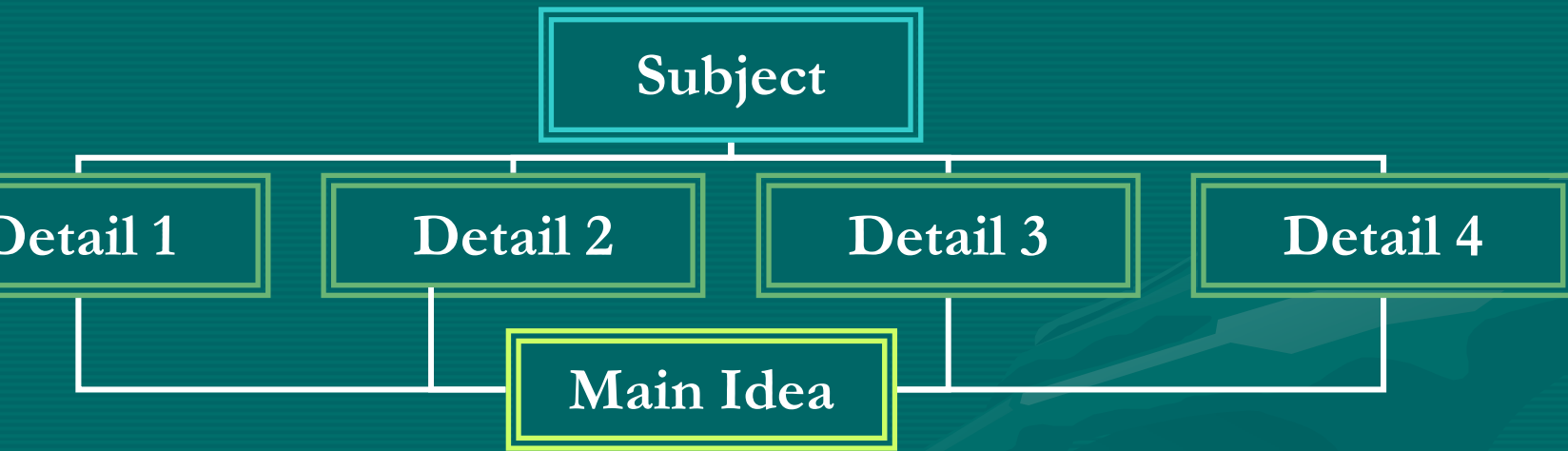
How Do I Teach My Kids To Identify Main Ideas Based On An Understanding Of The Use Of Details?

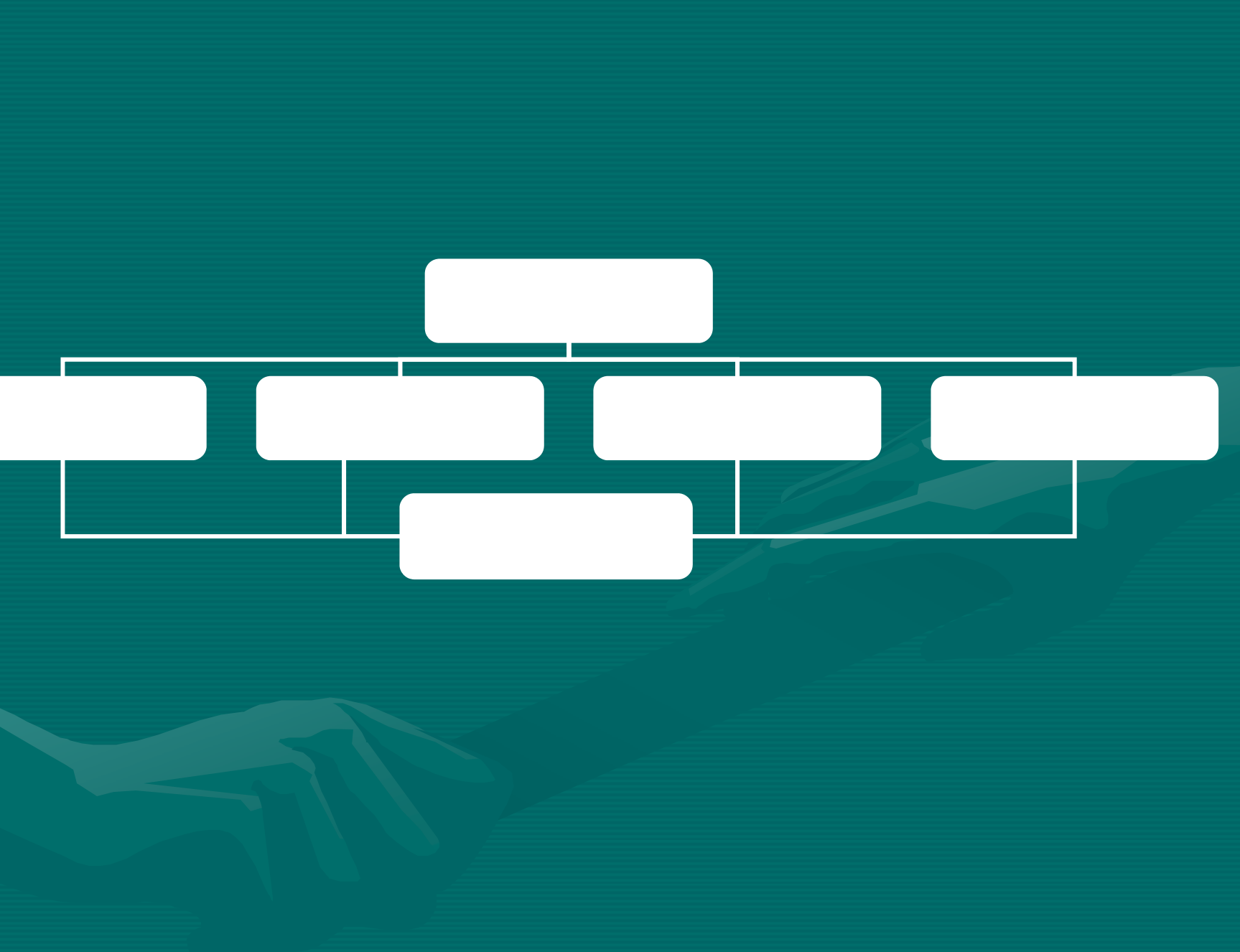
Details “flesh out” main ideas for readers. They define the “who, what, where, when, and how” of the main ideas.

To teach kids to distinguish between main ideas and details, ask them if the section of text they have selected is a fact, a particular event, a statement by someone, or a description of a person, place, event, or subject. All of these are details.

Main ideas are BIG. They capture concepts, themes, interpretations, conclusions, and ideas.

You can’t “put your finger” on an idea because it is made up of a combination of elements that all add up together to create something larger than a detail.





How Do I Teach My Kids To Understand Sequence Or Series Of Events?

List the main events in order in which they happen. Look for key terms such as:

- First.
- Second.
- Next.
- Last.
- Further.
- Then.
- After.
- Before.
- Until.
- Etc.

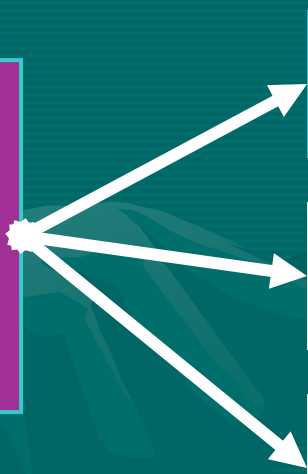
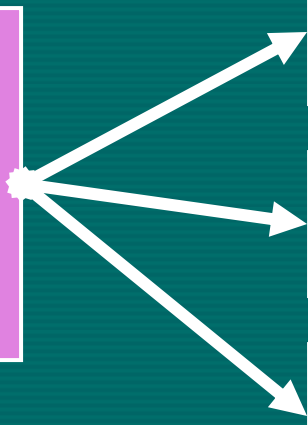
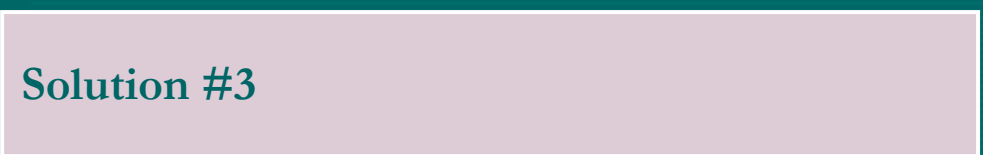
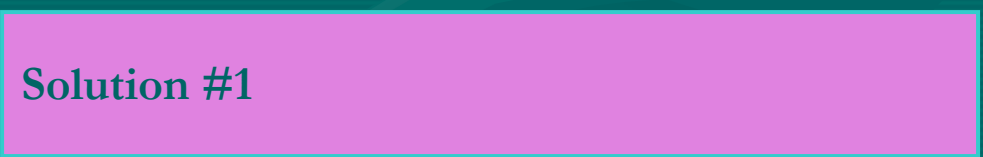
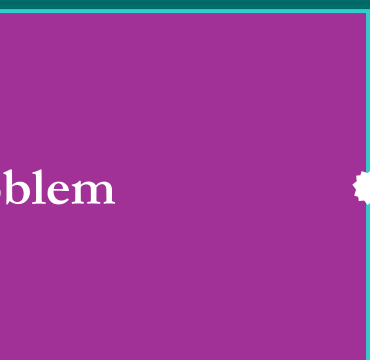
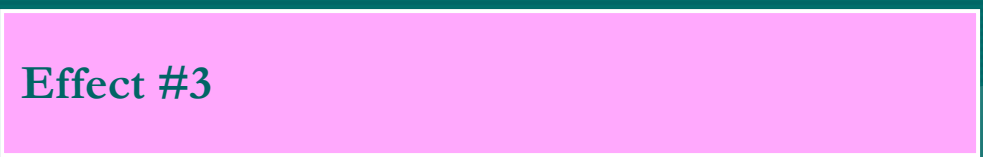
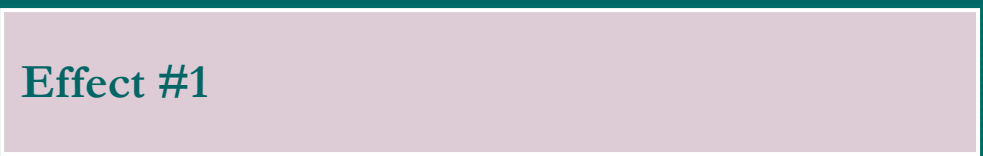
Then, map the events in the order in which they happened

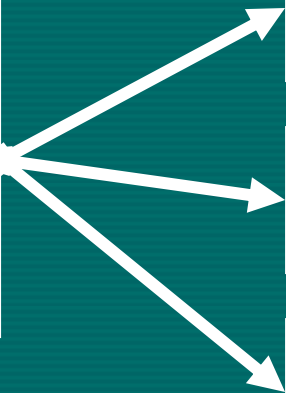
Key Word:		First Event:	
Key Word:		Second Event:	
Key Word:		Third Event:	
Key Word:		Fourth Event:	
Key Word:		Fifth Event:	
Key Word:		Sixth Event:	
Key Word:		Concluding Event:	

How Do I Teach My Kids To Understand Cause And Effect?

Cause and effect is an understanding of the relationship between an important event and all the ensuing events, decisions, and effects the first event;

OR it is an understanding of the relationship between problems and solutions. In this case, a problem in a text arises, and the narrative text author (or character) or the informational text author (or subject) seeks a series of solutions to resolve the problem.

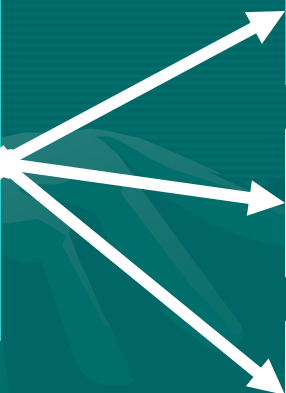




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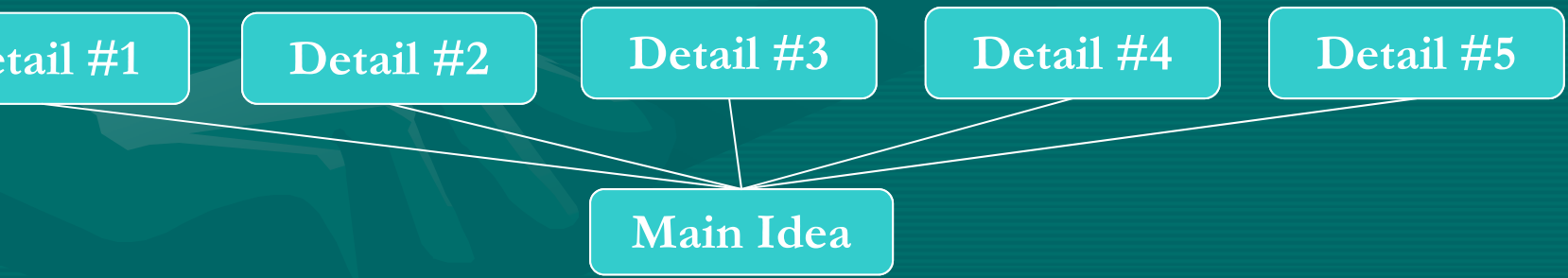
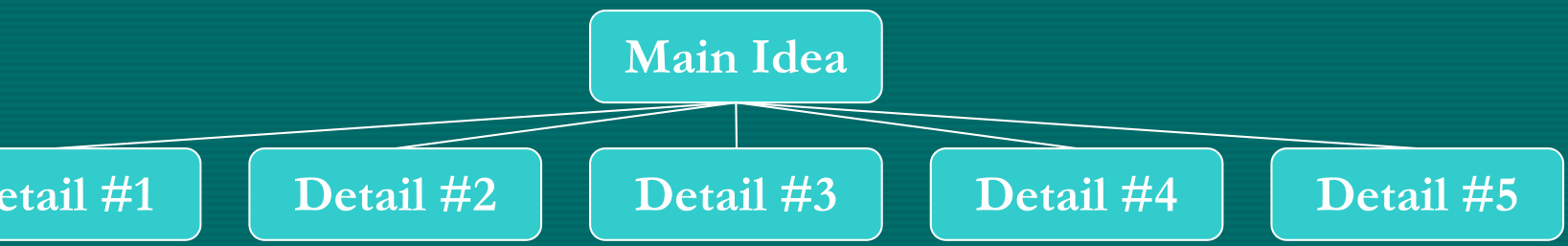
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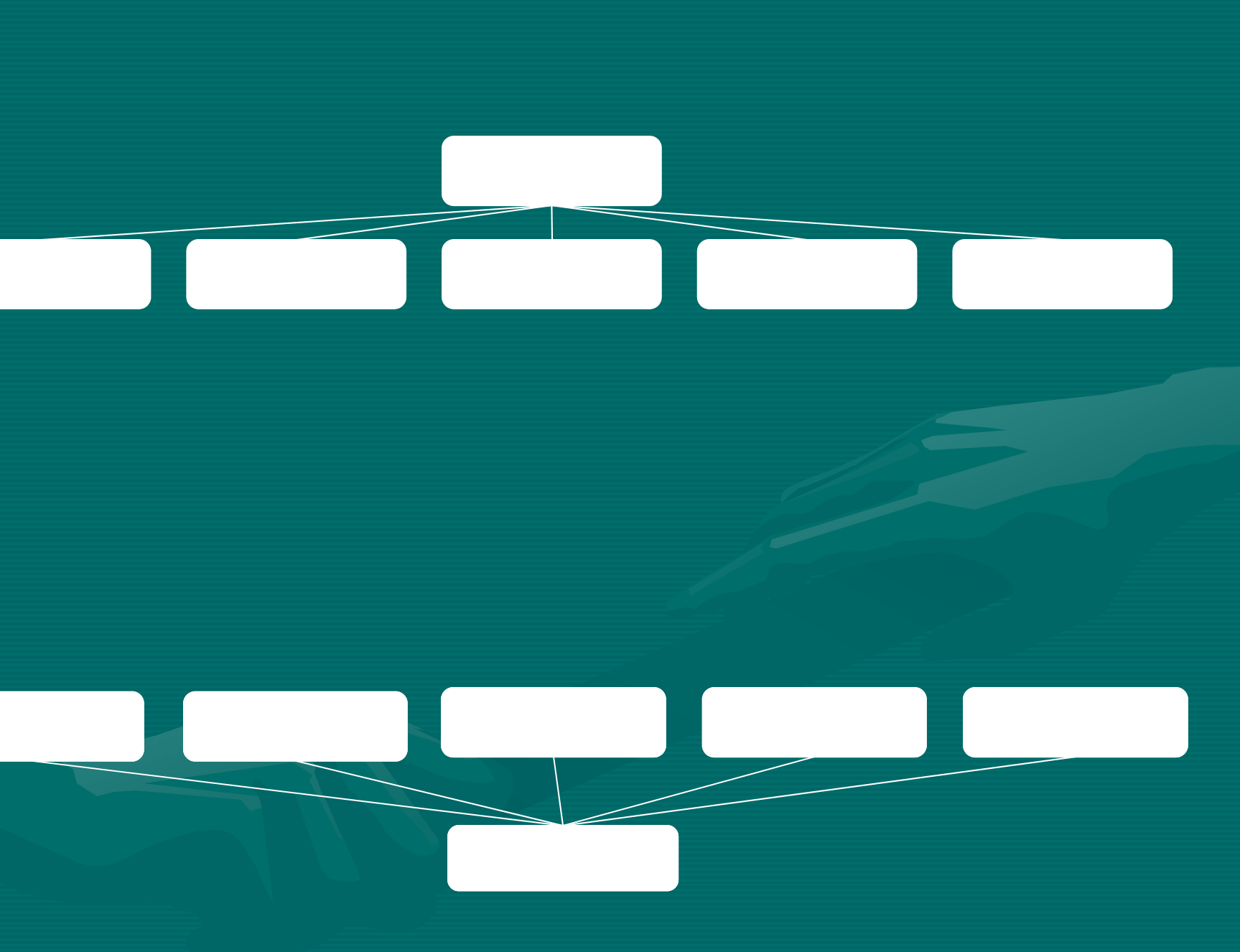
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How Do I Teach My Kids Order Of Importance?

Writers structure their “order of importance” text in two ways.

- One, they list their main idea first, and then support it with a few significant details or examples that illustrate the importance of their main idea.
- OR, writers, list their significant details and examples first and then build up to stating their main ideas last.





How Do I Teach My Kids Comparison And Contrast?

In constructing a comparison contrast of two characters or two subjects, the author shows how the two characters/subjects are alike and different.

Characteristics

Subject #1

Subject #2

Characteristics	Subject #1	Subject #2

How Do I Teach My Kids How To Summarize? What Are The Important Elements To Include In A Summary?

Good summaries always contain:

- The name of the author.
- The title of the piece.
- A description of the who, what, where, when, how, and why of the subject matter.

On WASL assessments, students are asked to include at least three events from narrative texts or three main ideas from informational texts in their summaries.

Subject

no

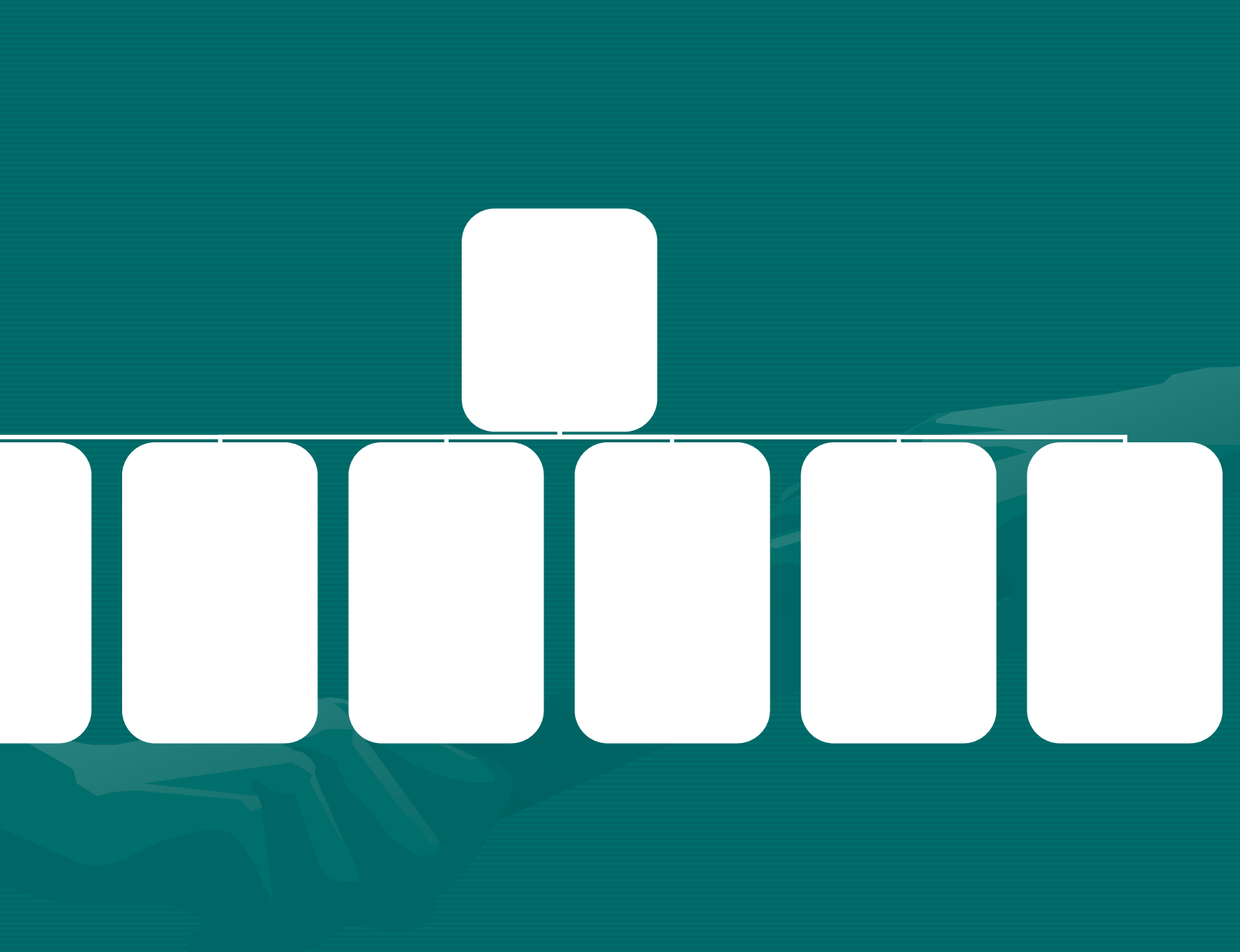
What

Where

When

How

Why



How Do I Teach My Kids How To Organize Their Understanding Of The Timelines And Their Relationship To Major Concepts And/Or Ideas?

Historical time can be described by:

- Ages (the Renaissance age).
- Centuries (the 19th Century).
- Periods (the Modernist period).
- Eras (the Civil Rights era).
- Decades (the 60's).
- A year (2003).
- A month (November).
- A day (Thursday).
- A moment (right now).

Kids need help understanding these terms they represent.

Create a chart that allows them to move from the historical time period, to the concepts that are developed or revealed during this time, and the details, events, or examples that helped illustrate or define this time period and concepts they have come to represent

How Do I Teach My Kids How To Understand The Relationship Between Facts, Ideas, Events, Subjects, And Details?

Active readers move through the layers of reading a text and making connections simultaneously.

Readers that struggle need this process to be made intentional and explicit for them.

A thinking tree illustrates each layer of reading and allows for guided practice so all students can develop the necessary skills to becoming an active reader.

The essential reading skills that students must use in order to achieve reading success are:

- One, developing a literal comprehension of the basic elements of a text.
- Two, making inferences about the material presented by combining previous knowledge and the knowledge on the page in order to draw “quick conclusions”.
- Three, draw conclusions about the information presented in the text and then test that conclusion by constantly monitoring, revising, confirming, and affirming the knowledge gained.
- Four, comparing and contrasting elements of text in order to understand the relationship of the parts to the whole.
- Last, evaluating the information presented and measuring it against other sources of knowledge, logic, or values.

Subject or Title

Comprehension

Who

What

Where

When

How

Drawing Inferences

What do I know?

What does the text tell me?

Drawing Conclusions

What does the information tell me?

What three conclusions can I draw?

Comparing/Contrasting

How are the subjects/characters/events/examples alike? Different?

Evaluating

Do I agree with the information presented?

Why?

What is my evidence?



How Do I Teach Readers The Importance Of Headings, Key Words, And Use Of Details?

Active readers use titles, headings, boldface terms, key vocabulary, and significant details/examples as “signposts” during their reading process.

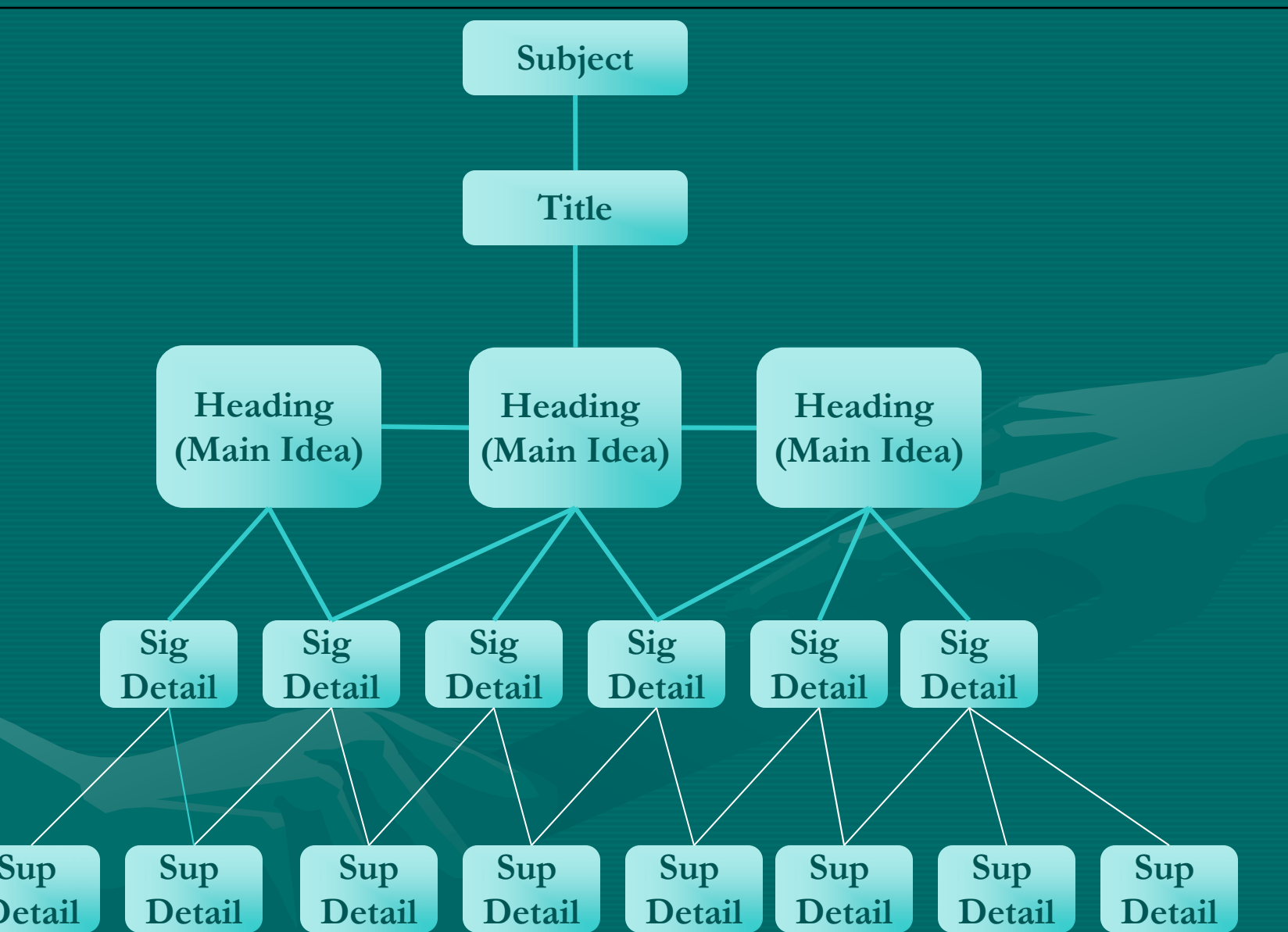
They use titles to determine subject matter, boldface terms to recognize important concepts, key vocabulary as important terms to remember in connection with the subject, and significant details/examples to begin evaluating the strength and worth of an author’s style and message.

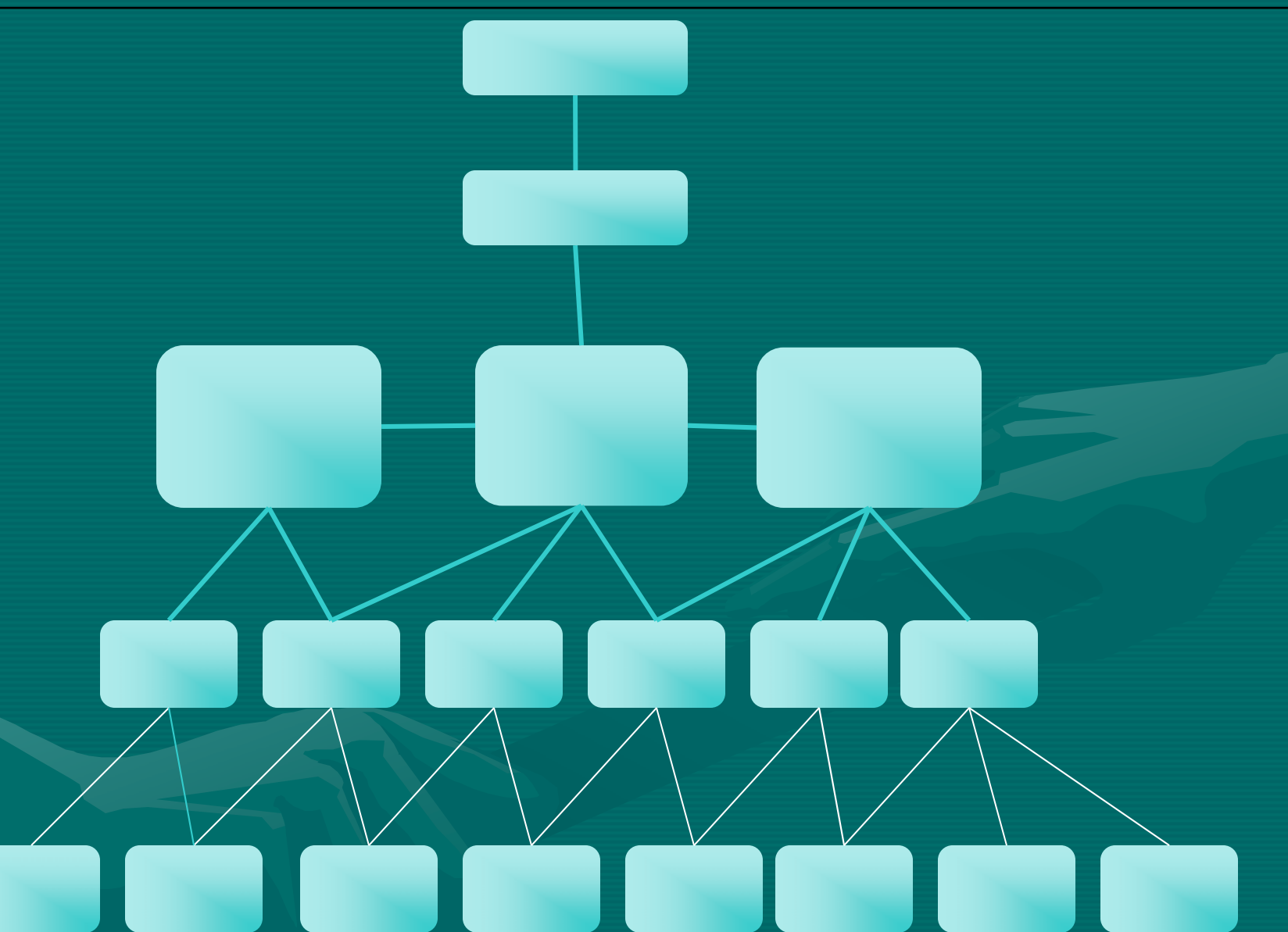
Type of Text Feature	What Are The Words In The Text?	What Do The Words Tell Me Or Mean To Me?
e		
dings		
ded Terms		
y Vocabulary		
ail/Example		

How Do I Teach Readers The Organizational Format Of An Informational Text?

Informational texts are typically highly organized.

Once readers understand the relationship between subjects (huge), main ideas (really big), significant details (medium big), and supporting details (small), they can use a graphic organizer to “map” their understanding of the relationship of the elements.







How Do I Teach Readers That Concepts Are Represented By Details And Examples From an Informational Text?

Active readers recognize the relationship between concepts (abstract) and details/examples (concrete).

Details and examples are used make the concepts real—to illustrate it, to describe it, to define it, to give it shape, color, and texture.

Key Words (Concepts from the Text)	Details/Examples From The Text That Describe The Concept
	

How Do I Help Readers Learn To Question the Author's Style, Theme, And Conclusions?

Active readers engage with authors.

They analyze themes and ask why authors feature certain examples, use distinctive styles, or argue certain points.

Questions students should ask include:

- What is the author's overall message?
- Why does the author use this detail/example/event in their writing?
- What is the author saying in this section of text as opposed to the beginning or the end? How does what the author say here match what he/she said earlier?

Reading Journal For Questioning The Author

My Question For The Author	Example From The Text About My Question	What I Think The Text Means

How Do I Teach Readers About The Important Elements Of A Biography Or An Autobiography?

Active readers read biographies and autobiographies with interest because the texts provide us with a window into the world of important people who have thoughtful perspectives on social and cultural issues

Active readers realize that biographies and autobiographies feature themes and message about their subjects and use details about time, place, key events, and personality to convey their message.

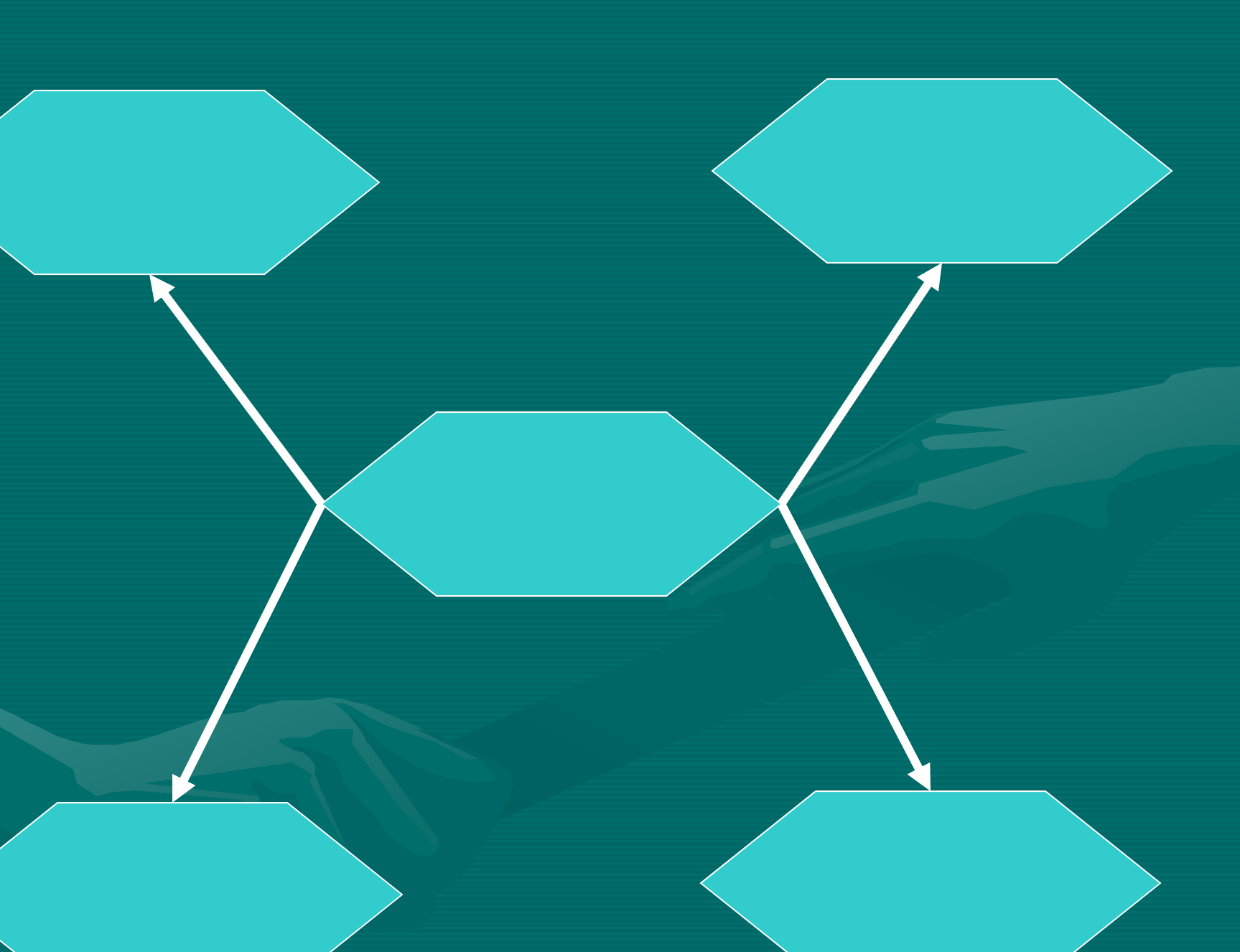
How She Acts/Feels

How Others Feel About Her

Subject of Bio/Auto

How I Feel About Her

What She Says and How She Looks



How Do I Teach Readers To Write A Summary Of A Biography?

Active readers synthesize the major elements presented in a biography/autobiography.

They use theme to shape and determine the parameters of their summaries and select details, examples, and events from the text that illustrate and support the theme.

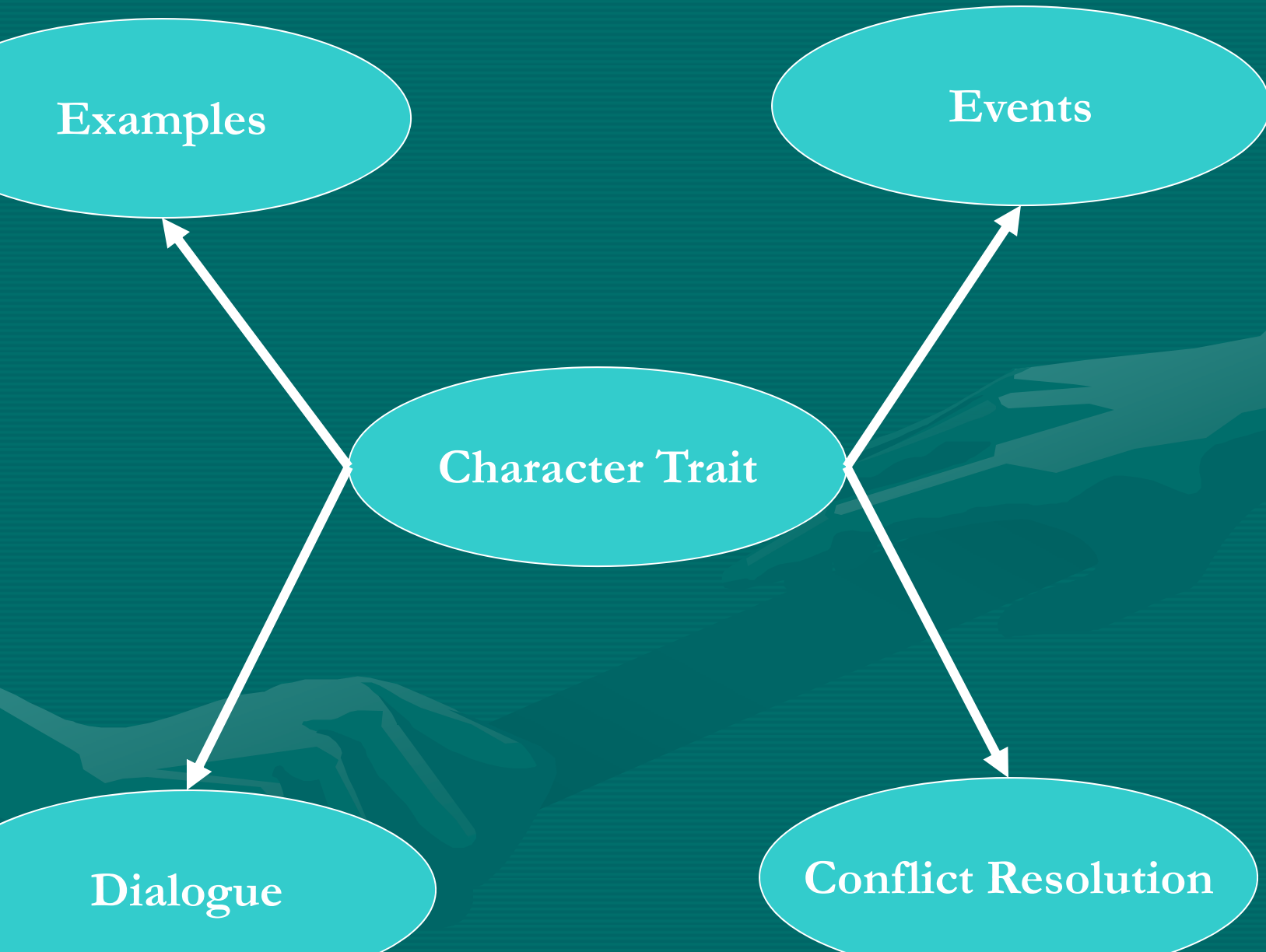
Theme

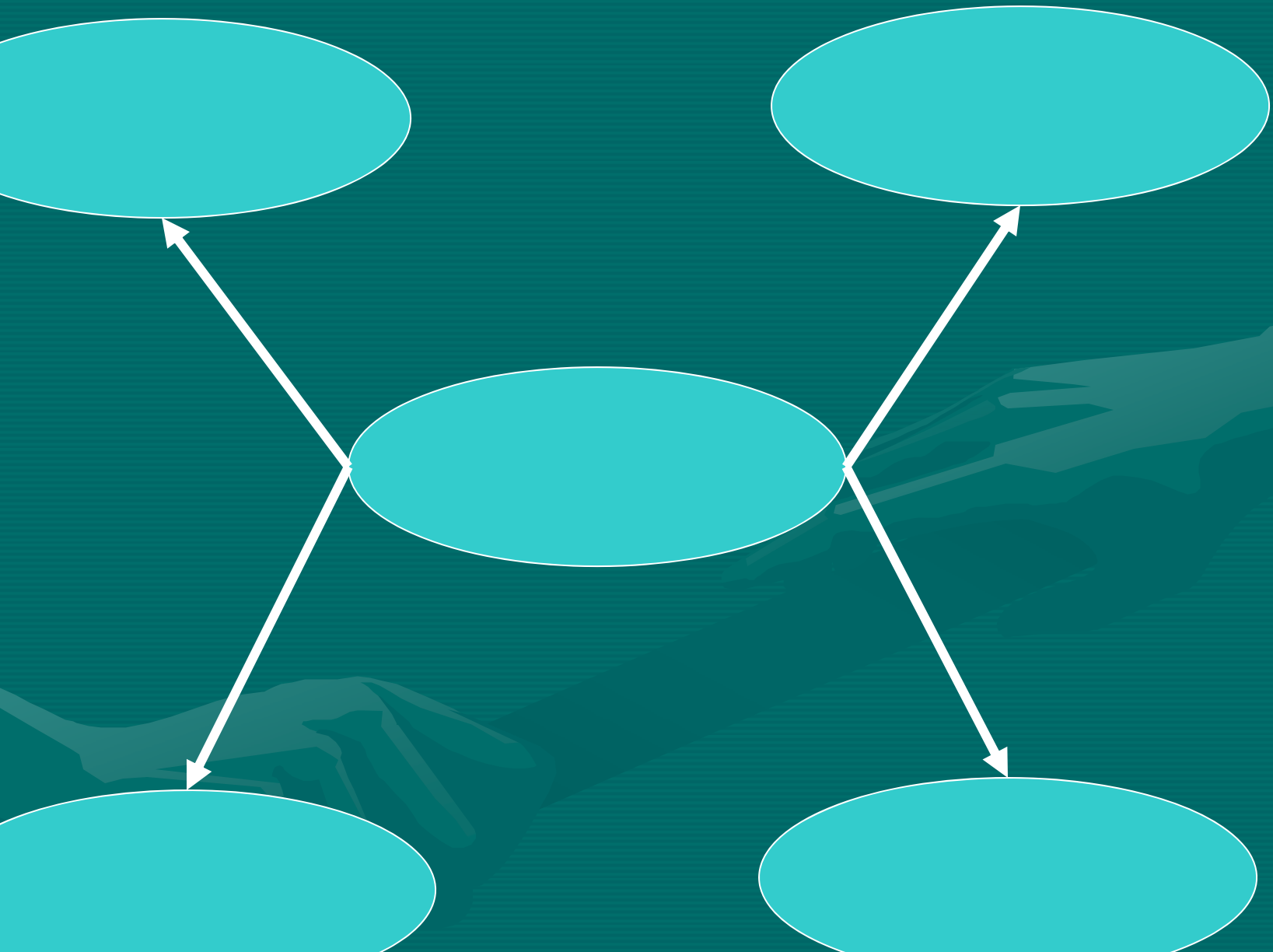
Major Elements Of A Biography/ Autobiography	Text Example, Detail, Quote, Or Event That Illustrates Theme	Importance Of Text Example, Detail, Quote, Or Event In My Own Words
Childhood		
Family		
School		
Work		
Major Achievements		
Major Problems		
Character Traits		

How Do I Teach Readers To Infer Character Traits Based On Information In Literary Texts?

Active readers synthesize details, examples, events, dialogue, conflict, and resolution in order to develop an understanding of a character and the character traits reflected by that character.

They draw good conclusions by backing up their judgments with evidence from the text.





How Do I Teach Readers To Evaluate The Author's Message And The Effectiveness Of The Author's Message?

Active readers understand that each text is comprised of a few essential elements that can be evaluated independently and as parts of a whole text.

They examine the text carefully, pulling out evidence to support their evaluations and demonstrate their understanding of the effectiveness of an author's style and/or message.

Critical Questions Chart

Aspects Of A Text That Can Be Evaluated By Readers	Tasks For The Reader To Gather Information For Evaluation Purposes	State The Information From The Text To Support Your Evaluation
Is the theme/message clear, concise, and multi-layered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Locate the theme/message in the selection. Look at the end of the first paragraph or in the conclusion if you cannot immediately identify it.	
Does the evidence presented seem credible, well-researched, and convincing? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Locate the evidence. Look for facts, statistics, quotes from expert authorities, and statements from eyewitnesses	
Are the sources authoritative and credible? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Locate background evidence (in the text) that describes the qualifications of an expert authority or eyewitnesses. Look for evidence of research information that supports the facts and statistics.	
Is the “other side of the story” presented? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Look for transitions in the text between the main argument and the opposing argument. Look for supporting evidence such as facts, statistics, expert authority, and eyewitness statements that support the “other side of the story.”	
Does the author’s appeal to your emotions affect your evaluation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Look for anecdotes, examples, or persuasive language that appeals to your emotions in an attempt to sway your opinion.	

How Do I Teach Readers To Identify The Author's View Point Or Message?

Active readers synthesize:

- Facts.
- Statistics.
- Appeals to emotion.
- Author's personal experience.
- Expert quotes.
- Research.
- Eyewitness accounts to develop an understanding of the author's point of view or message.

Title

Statistics

Appeals to Emotion

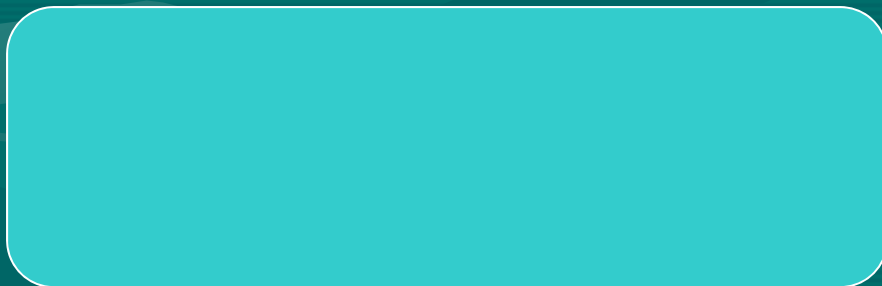
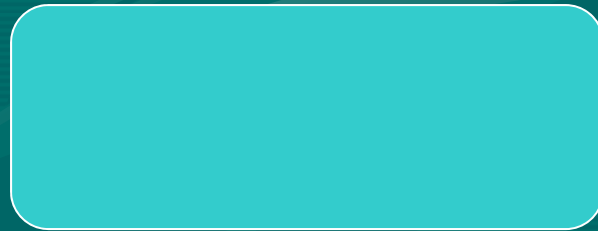
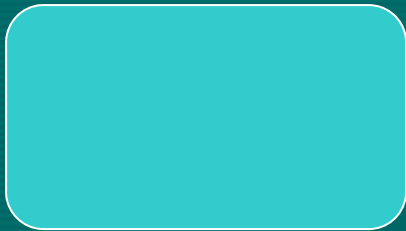
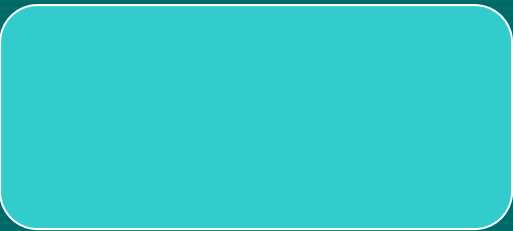
Personal Experience Of The Author

Expert quotes

Research

Eyewitness Accounts

Author's Viewpoint or Message



How Do I Teach Readers To Understand Sequence Of Conflict/Crisis/Resolution In Narrative Texts?

All stories, literary essays, biographies, and plays have a beginning, a middle, and an end.

- Typically, the beginning is used to describe the conflict/problem faced by the character/subject.
- The middle is used to describe the climax or crisis reached by the character/subject.
- The end is used to resolve the conflict/problem and establish a theme.

<p>Are The Major Events In The First Part Of The Narrative That Describe The Problem/Conflict?</p>	<p>What Are The Major Events In The Middle Part Of The Narrative That Describe The Crisis/Climax?</p>	<p>What Are The Major Events In The Last Part Of The Narrative That Describe The Resolution/Solution To The Problem/Conflict?</p>

How Can I Teach Readers To Understand The Organization Of Stories?

All stories contain the same elements:

- Character.
- Setting.
- Plot.
- Conflict.
- Resolution.
- Theme.

This is a “narrative pattern,” and readers come to expect and anticipate it in their reading.

A basic understanding of the interaction and relationship between the six elements of a narrative pattern is crucial to forming more in-depth analysis and critical evaluations of narrative texts.

Point of View

Characters

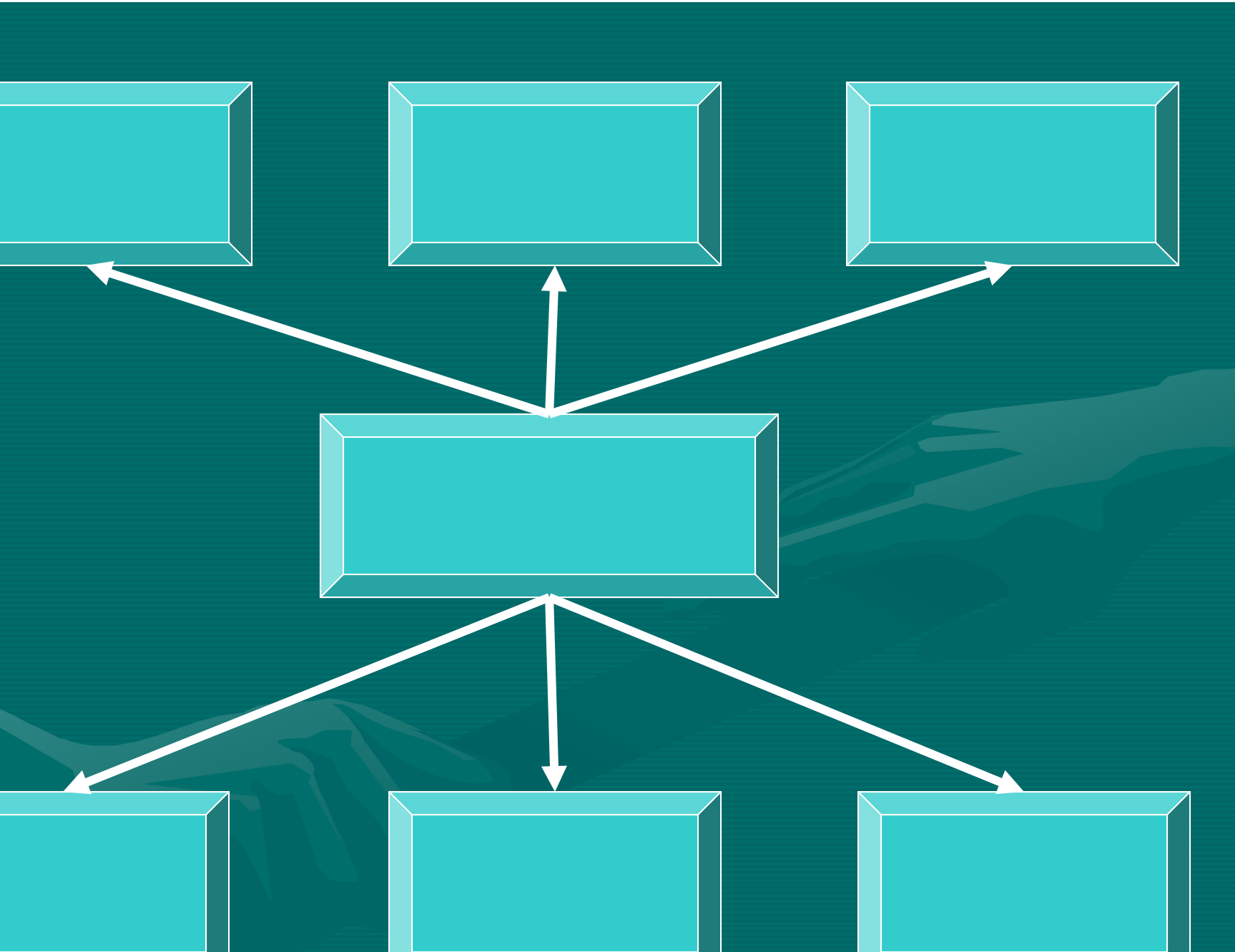
Setting

Title and Author

Plot

Theme

Style



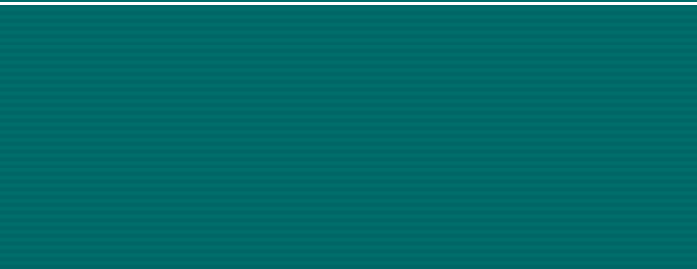
How Do I Help Readers Reach Inferential Conclusions About Characters?

Active readers reach inferential conclusions about characters by synthesizing:

- What they say
- What happens in the story
- How other characters react to them
- How they themselves feel about characters

The Character Says Or Does,
Quote From The Character, A
Detail About The Character, An
Event From The Story, Or A
Comment About The Character By
Someone Else

What I Conclude About The Character
Based On This Information (Focus On
BIG, Abstract Ideas, Not Concrete,
Factual Information)



How do I teach readers to identify the cause and effect relationship of plot structure?

Active readers can identify not only the plot elements, but the relationship the elements have with one another.

- For example, active readers recognize that all initial description of character, setting and conflict is intentional by the author.
- All of the details then resurface later to reinforce the conflict of suggest ways to reach a conclusion.
- It is important to not only teach the vocabulary of plot elements, but to teach readers to name the events in the story that represent those elements.

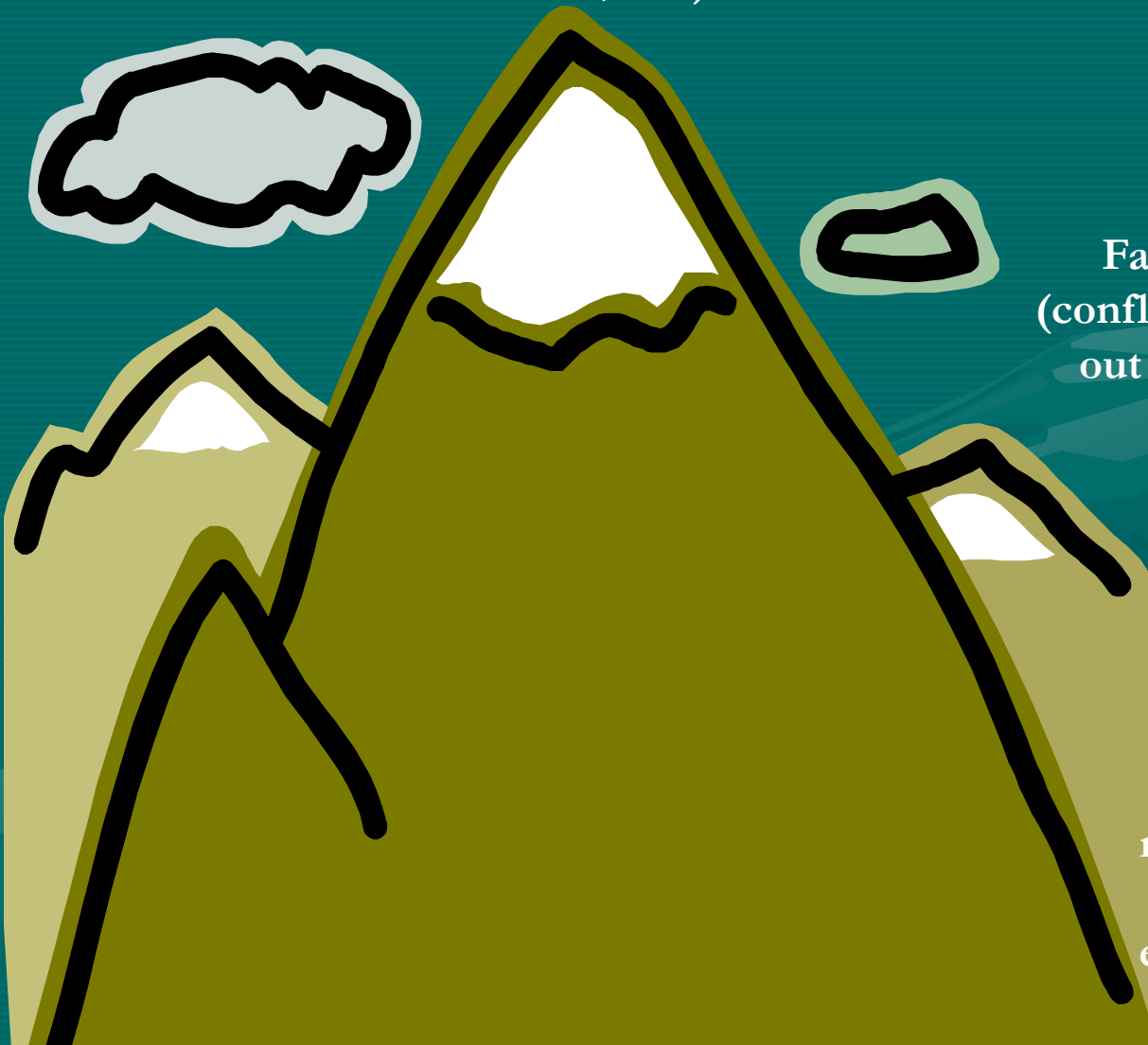
Climax (conflict and tension reach a peak, and characters realize their mistake, etc.)

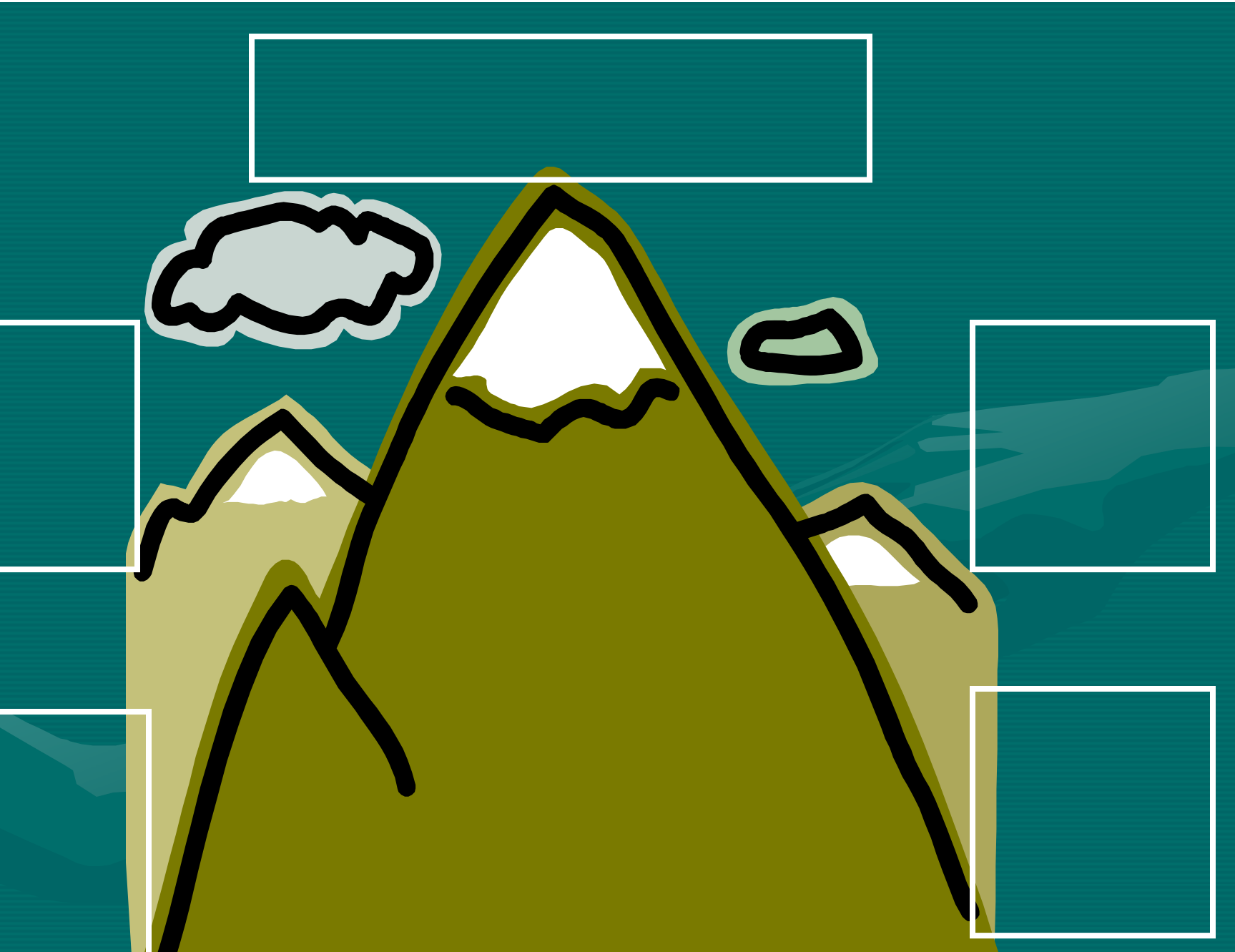
g Action
lict and
pense
through
ries of
ents).

Falling Action
(conflict gets worked
out and tensions
lessen.)

ition
cters,
, and
ct are
ced.)

Resolution
(conflict is
resolved and
themes are
established.)





How do I help readers compare and contrast story elements between two stories?

Active readers constantly keep in mind other stories they have read with similar themes or they remember more than one story written by the same author.

Readers graphically organize their understanding of the story elements by comparing common components.

All stories have characters, setting, plot, events, themes, or conflicts and resolutions, but often times a comparison of more than one story reveals surprising conclusions.

Two Story Map

Common Story Elements	Story #1	Story #2
Main Characters		
Setting		
Plot		
Events		
Conflict/Resolution		
Theme		

How do I help readers understand the types of conflict present in literary texts?

There are five basic types of conflict present in literary texts. Once readers understand these types of conflict, they can categorize and identify the elements that are characteristic to the type.

- In a person to person conflict, events typically focus on differences in values, experiences, and attitudes.
- In a person vs. society conflict, the person is fighting an event, an issue, a philosophy, or a cultural reality that is unfair,
- In a person vs. nature conflict, the character is often alone dealing with nature in extreme circumstances.
- In a person vs. self conflict the person is conflicted with childhood memories, unpleasant experiences, or issues with stress and decision-making.
- In a person vs. fate conflict, the text is characterized by a person contending with an omnipresent issue or idea.

Five Types of Conflict in Literary Texts

1) Person vs. Person

2) Person vs. Society

3) Person vs. Nature

4) Person vs. Self

5) Person vs. Fate

How do I teach readers to paraphrase poetry?

Active readers engage with poetry on many levels during the reading process.

- They examine language, images, symbols, rhyme, repetition, phrasing, alliteration and tone.
- Developing readers need the experience of examining poetry line by line or connecting images with past understandings to fully comprehend, interpret and evaluate poetry.

Paraphrase Chart for Poetry

Line From Poem	My Paraphrase of its Meaning

Inference Chart for Poetry

Key Words From Each Line of Poetry	What the Images Mean to Me