

Recognizing Sequence and Chronological Order

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

chronological order: the organization of events according to when they occur; often used to tell a story that advances over time

sequence order: the order in which events should, may, or usually occur; often used to give directions or to show steps or events in a process

HERE'S HOW

Step 1: Keep track of time. Chronologies are often built around points on the calendar, the clock, or other specific time references.

- Look for phrases such as *in 2008*, *at 8:30*, or *in early summer*.
- Words signaling the passage of time include *first*, *then*, and *finally*.

Step 2: Trace events or steps on a time line or flow chart. Take note of text clues that tell when events or steps take place. You have a grasp of chronology or sequence if you can sum up the passage based on your chart.

- Make a time line that covers events in a chronological order text
- Use a flow-chart or numbered list to track events in a sequence order text.

Step 3: Note the pace and sequence.

Some stories or accounts cover long processes over long passages of time. Others may describe lots of action in a limited period. Note how rapidly actions occur and how long they last.

EXAMPLE: CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

That Thursday, my shoulders were aching and my nose was stuffed. I knew what that meant. On Friday, I dragged around all afternoon, but I managed to hang in there. On Saturday morning, it hit: I woke up with a flushed face, sneezing and sniffing. I spent the next day in bed with a fever of 100.5°. Monday was Halloween. My fever was up to 102°. Of course, I stayed home from school that day. There would be no tricks or treats for me.

Note signal "time" words and phrases. The writer locates each sentence in time in relation to the previous sentences. Verb tense changes as the writer reflects.

