

PASS - Patterns to Address Study Skills (PASS) Strategy



Many students are not prepared with requisite knowledge of text organization when they entered college. Students were found to be consistently unknowledgeable in following patterns (Welker, 1996):

- Chronological order
- Cause and effect
- Compare and contrast.

In **PASS**, the teacher reads a text to the students or plays them an audio. After listening to a selection, the students are given an activity to complete which is similar to what they might get in response to reading. Examples include:

- Reading a biography and naming the organizational pattern such as cause and effect, and listing the signal words that led to the conclusion.
- Reading a science passage, naming cause and effect and related signal words.

Other suggestions:

- Introduce students to multiple organizational patterns, and explain how they tie into author's purpose.
- Show students where authors combine organizational patterns and why they do so.

PASS Steps:

1. Explain to students that chronological order is a pattern, unlike cause and effect, where places events or situations fall into a sequence in which they happened. Signal words include begin, until, first, second, finally, not long after, now, before, after, then, and when.

Example: In Jack London's *Call of the Wild*, before Buck could be placed in the lead dog position of the sled team, he had to defeat Spitz in battle. (literature)

2. Students are taught the three patterns of text organization, beginning with chronological order.

3. Lecture or read to students an excerpt of text. Collaboratively identify the organizational pattern and the signal words.

4. Instruct students to read about or listen to content area topics through audio, video, magazine articles, newspaper, text excerpts either digital or print, and then identify the organizational patterns and signal words of each.

Welker, W. A. (1996). The PASS strategy: a student tactic for learning. *Journal Of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 40128-129.