RI 5: Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of ideas.

Analyzing Text Structures

Suppose you were putting together a jigsaw puzzle. You would fit the pieces together to form a complete picture. But what if one of the pieces was missing? You would not be able to see the image as a whole.

Authors have to fit ideas together just as carefully. The way they organize information is called **text structure**. Depending on their purpose, authors might choose to organize their ideas in different ways. They may present a **problem and solution**, order events using **chronology**, **compare and contrast** people or ideas, or explain causes and effects. Whichever method they choose, the sentences, paragraphs, and sections must all work together to present information in a logical way.

**Look at the image on the next page. Circle each reference to Greece. Underline each reference to Rome. Think about how the parts fit together to form a whole.**



Greece has no central authority, but Rome was the capital of its empire.

Ancient Rome and Greece both began as city-states.

The Romans, on the other hand, were known for their military might and civil engineering

The Greeks were known for science, philosophy, and art.

**Read the chart below to see how the sentences in the puzzle work together. Notice how each part develops the main idea. Fill in the function of sentence four on your own.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Part | Function |
| Sentence 1 | Introduces the topic of the paragraph, ancient Rome and Greece |
| Sentence 2 | Contrasts the way the two city-states were organized |
| Sentence 3 | Adds information about what the Greeks were known for |
| Sentence 4 |  |

Like the pieces in a puzzle, the parts of a text work together to make something bigger. As a reader, think about the purpose of each sentence, paragraph, and section to help yourself understand how the author develops the ideas of a text. Remember that the parts are in order for a reason—just as a puzzle piece fits only where it belongs.

**Read the first part of an article about an important discovery. Think about how this section is organized and how the ideas are developed. Then read and answer the question that follows.**

**from “Terra-Cotta Army Protects First Emperor’s Tomb”**

*by John Roach, National Geographic*

Workers digging in a well outside the city of Xi’an, China, in 1974 struck upon one of the greatest archaeological discoveries in the world: a life-size clay soldier poised for battle.

The diggers notified authorities, who dispatched government archaeologists to the site.

They found not one, but thousands of clay soldiers, each with unique facial expressions and positioned according to rank. And though largely gray today, patches of paint hint at once brightly colored clothes. Further excavations have revealed swords, arrow tips, and other weapons, many in pristine condition.

**This part of the article tells how the clay soldiers were discovered. It followed a chronological structure. Each paragraph adds important events or details to the story of the discovery.**

Read the paragraphs again. What was the first event in the discovery? Put a number 1 beside it. Continue to number the other events in the text. One of the sentences should not be numbered.

**Fill in the chart below to tell what each paragraph adds to your understanding of the terra-cotta army and its discovery.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Paragraph 1** |  |
| **Paragraph 2** | Continues the account of the discovery process by explaining how archaeologists got involved |

**Explain how the sentences in paragraph 3 contribute to the overall structure.**

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**Continue reading about the terra-cotta army. Use the Close Reading and the Hint to help you answer the question.**

*Continued…*

 The soldiers are in trenchlike, underground corridors. In some of the corridors, clay horses are aligned four abreast; behind them are wooden chariots.

 The terra-cotta army, as it is known, is part of an elaborate [tomb] created to accompany the first emperor of China into the afterlife, according to archaeologists.

 …Archaeologists estimate the pits may contain as many as 8,000 figures, but the total may never be known.

**Close Reading**

You just read about how an important discovery was made. Now you will read more about what the archaeologists found. How does each sentence and paragraph develop key ideas of the text?

**Circle the correct answer.**

How does the final sentence build on a key idea mentioned in the first paragraph?

1. It suggests there is no point in trying to learn more about the terra-cotta army because it is too big.
2. It explains how extensive the site is and suggests that the story of the discovery is not yet complete.
3. It reveals how little the government’s archaeologists actually know about the terra-cotta army.
4. It implies that archaeologists

**Hint**

**Reread the first paragraph on the previous page. What phrase is used to describe the discovery?**