Structure Idea Bank

Text STRUCTURE refers to how the information in a text is ORGANIZED. This is not limited to text format or genre (prose, poetry, essay), but rather requires a reader to look closely and determine the pattern of ideas the author uses to convey his/her message.

Basic patterns of organization

Chronological	The events in the order in which they occur.
Cause/Effect (or vice versa)	This structure presents the causal relationship between an specific event, idea, or concept and the events, ideas, or concept that follow.
Comparison/Contrast	This type of text examines the similarities and differences between two or more people, events, concepts, ideas, etc.
Problem/Solution	Raises an issue that needs to be addressed and then offers possible remedies for that issue.
Topic by topic	Divides a subject into its components and then devotes time to discussing each.
Spatial	Addresses different areas within a given space.
Most important to least (vice versa)	Shares the most important area of concern or issue with the reader and then gradually winds down to areas of minor concern.
Question/Answer	Raises questions and then answers them or discusses possible answers.

SEE BACK

You may also find that those above patterns may be difficult to find in something that is not informational text. If that's the case, consider more subtle patterns. This is not a comprehensive list, but they may inspire you to find more nuanced ways the author organizes a literary text:

Personal to global (or vice versa)	Author may recount his/her own experience and then broaden out to show how it affects others.
Anecdote to reflection (or vice versa)	Author may tell a personal story and then discuss how it impacted him/her.
Facts to feelings (or vice versa)	Author may tell the facts of a situation and then express his/her emotions.
Advantages/Disadvantages (or vice versa)	Author may discuss the benefits of a situation/issue and then the drawbacks.
General to specific (or vice versa)	The author may start with a generalization or a broad look at a concept and then illustrate it with examples.
Description (BE CAREFUL HERE… JUST BECAUSE A WRITER DESCRIBES DOES NOT MEAN THE PATTERN OF ORGANIZATION IS DESCRIPTION.)	Details explain the main idea by providing a mental picture of situations, objects, or surroundings; details focus on sensory or physical data. Answers: "What are its most important attributes or characteristics? "What specific person, place, thing, or event described?"
Definition	An author looks to illustrate an idea by answering the question, "What is it?"
Positive to negative (or vice versa)	An author might begin with looking at the brighter side before addressing the darker side.