

Organization or Structure in Literature

All good writing has a system of organization or structure. Syntax is concerned with the sequence of words; organization is concerned with the sequence of paragraphs or stanzas. The following are some of the most commonly used methods of organization employed by writers of prose and poetry. Organization is sometimes called the movement of a passage of prose or poetry.

1. general to specific (deductive)
2. specific to general (inductive)
3. chronological (time sequence)
4. narrative (order of occurrence or order of telling)
5. association/memory (one object to another or by memories)
6. movement to lack of movement (storm to calm or calm to storm)
7. observation
8. sensory (organized by senses: dark to light or light to dark, etc.)
9. spatial (inside to outside; far to near; top to bottom; fall to rise; flight and pursuit)
10. comparison and contrast (opposites)
11. fact and example
12. definition
13. question and answer
14. analogy or imagery ordered
15. cause and effect
16. order of importance (most to least; least to most)
17. function
18. process
19. allusion
20. emotions
21. dominant impression to least dominant impression (or reverse)
22. abstract to concrete (or reverse)
23. past to present or present to past
24. seasons
25. disorder to order or order to disorder
26. gain to loss or loss to gain