



LANGUAGE ARTS

STUDENT BOOK

▶ **9th Grade** | Unit 6

Language Arts 906

Structure and Meaning in Prose and Poetry

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Author:

R. Clay Conner, M.A.

Revision Editor:

Alan Christopherson, M.S.

Westover Studios Design Team:

Phillip Pettet, Creative Lead

Teresa Davis, DTP Lead

Nick Castro

Andi Graham

Jerry Wingo

Lauren Faulk



804 N. 2nd Ave. E.

Rock Rapids, IA 51246-1759

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Structure and Meaning in Prose and Poetry

Introduction

Reading is to writing what listening is to speaking. A good listener doesn't just hear the speaker's words, he works hard to understand what the speaker means. If he doesn't, communication fails. In the same way, the reader's job is to figure out what the author means in writing. If he doesn't, communication fails. It's not all on the listener/reader's shoulders, though. The speaker/author has to provide the right form, a clear organizational structure, and other clues to help the listener/reader understand the intended meaning. In turn, the reader must perceive and use those clues to arrive at that same meaning.

Think of it this way. Let's say a package arrives at your house one day. You have no idea what's inside, but certain clues help you to figure it out. First off, the package is addressed to your mother from your grandmother. You're a little disappointed but still curious. In large letters on the side you read: *FRAGILE! HANDLE WITH CARE!* and *THIS WAY UP*. When you pick the box up (carefully!) to take it to your mother, you find that it's very heavy.

Now it's your mom's turn. She slits the top open and peers inside to find a snow scene of packing material. Digging through, she finds a bulky package wound in bubble wrap (something to play with later), and another, and still another. Soon, she has eight packages on the table in

front of her, all alike. She turns to you, smiles, and asks, "Do you know what these are?"

You don't, but you know that whatever they are, they're fragile—probably glass—and they come in a set. A few minutes later, you both know—a full set of crystal goblets, the ones your grandmother always used on Thanksgiving and Christmas. Now, it's your Mom's turn to put them to use. She smiles again and wipes a tear from her eye.

Touching story, right? Now, what if your grandmother hadn't used bubble wrap? What if she hadn't marked the side of the box to show which end was up and that the contents were fragile? Or, what if you or your mother or the postman had ignored the warnings? Your mother would be wiping tears away for an entirely different reason.

Here's the point. Important ideas, like crystal, are fragile. They must be handled with care if they are to successfully make the journey from the author's mind to the reader's.

This unit provides an overview of some of the forms and organizational tools writers use to "box up" and deliver those ideas. You'll learn about the clues writers provide and that readers must use in order to "handle the box" safely without shattering the author's intended meaning. In so doing, you'll also learn to decide just how valuable those ideas are after all.

Objectives

Read these objectives. The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAAC. When you have finished this LIFEPAAC, you should be able to:

1. Understand and identify the rhetorical purpose of a passage (to entertain, inform, or persuade).
2. Understand and identify characteristics of narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive nonfiction prose.
3. Determine the main idea of a passage based on the type of passage, its purpose, and its logical structure.
4. Determine the implied meaning of a passage.
5. Detect logical fallacies in persuasive writing.
6. Interpret the information within graphs, charts, tables, and other visual aids and connect them to the overall purpose of a passage.
7. Determine the most appropriate visual aid to use in displaying particular types of data for particular purposes.
8. Identify the basic structural features of a poem including stanza, rhyme scheme, meter, and other sound devices.
9. Identify use of figurative language in poetry, including metaphor, simile, symbolism, irony, and imagery.
10. Determine the literal and figurative levels of a poem's meaning, taking into consideration the poem's structural features.

1. READING FOR PURPOSE AND MEANING

Do you remember learning how to read? You should, because you're still learning. The part you might not remember is how you got started. You were probably introduced to isolated sounds like *a* as in *apple*, *b* as in *ball*, *o* as in *ostrich*, and so on. Once you mastered individual sounds, you began working on patterns like *tap*, *sap*, *cap*, *rap*. If you were like most kids, your first experience with sounding out a real word went something like this:

■ *ssss ---- aaaaa ---- p ... sssaaaap SAP! "Hey, like tree sap! I know what that is!"*

You had experienced the joy of connecting a sequence of sounds—*decoding*—with something meaningful—*comprehension*. It was like unwrapping a present—it wasn't just an empty box, there was meaning inside. The tough job of untying the ribbon had finally paid off.

You moved past that tough *decoding* stage long ago. Now, you instantly recognize those

hundreds of sound patterns you learned one by one. You don't think about sounding words out unless you're wrestling with a new one.

Reading, however, is far more than decoding the meanings of individual words. As you know, words mean something quite different in sentences than they do in isolation. In turn, sentences mean something quite different in paragraphs than they do by themselves. Paragraphs join together to form discourses, essays, reports, stories, poems, and many other forms.

This section will help you “decode” larger units of meaning. You'll learn about the major parts of a text by reviewing the relationship between the author's purpose and the forms and organizational structures he uses. These will serve you well later in the unit, when you have to unpack the meaning found in persuasive writing and poetry.

SECTION OBJECTIVES

Review these objectives. When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Understand and identify the rhetorical purpose of a passage (to entertain, inform, or persuade).
2. Understand and identify characteristics of narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive nonfiction prose.
3. Determine the main idea of a passage based on the type of passage, its purpose, and its logical structure.
6. Interpret the information within graphs, charts, tables, and other visual aids and connect them to the overall purpose of a passage.
7. Determine the most appropriate visual aid to use in displaying particular types of data for particular purposes.

VOCABULARY

Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.

anecdote. A short, entertaining story.

author purpose. One of four reasons for which authors write—to inform, persuade, entertain, or express strong feelings.

bar graph. A graph used to show change in relationship at set points in time.

chronological organization. A method of ordering ideas by time sequence.

exposition. Writing intended to describe, explain, or inform.

legend. A set of definitions for symbols, listed at the bottom of a chart or graph.

line graph. A graph showing continuous change across a span of time.

pictograph. A graph using symbols or pictures to add more information about data.

pie graph. A circle graph showing parts of a whole.

sequence. Coming one after another, in series, or in order.

spatial organization. A method of ordering ideas when describing a physical object or space.

table. A graph which organizes data in rows and columns.

topic sentence. The major idea of a paragraph explicitly stated.

Note: All vocabulary words in this LIFEPAAC appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used. If you are not sure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.

UNDERSTANDING AUTHOR PURPOSE AND MEANING

This lesson will briefly discuss purposes for which readers read and then explain the major purposes for which writers write. Examples will illustrate each of the aims/purposes.

Why readers read. What do you read? If you stop and think about it, you'll probably list a few things like:

- the Bible
- school text books
- stories (novels, short stories, etc.)
- newspaper and magazine articles
- advertisements
- instructions and recipes (how-to's)

Why do you read these things? Read the list of reasons below. You'll probably agree with most of them.

- **the Bible**—to learn about God, His plan and work in the world, and your responsibility to Him and others while on earth

- **school text books**—to learn how to do things; to learn about the world around you and your responsibility in it
- **stories (novels, short stories, etc.)**—to entertain yourself; to learn more about the world around you
- **newspaper/magazine articles and essays**—to learn about the world around you
- **advertisements**—to decide whether or not to buy something
- **instructions and recipes (how-to's)**—to learn how to do something

These aren't the only reasons for reading from these sources, but they are probably the biggest reasons. If we boil all of them down, we can say that most people, including you, read for the following reasons:

- to understand
- to believe or act
- to enjoy or be entertained

Many times, readers can fulfill all three of these purposes in reading a single source. The story of Daniel in the Bible, for example, includes many stories that not only are entertaining to read, but also help us to understand that trusting God sometimes requires sacrifice and that God blesses obedience. These truths, modeled in an entertaining story, inspire us to do like Daniel did—do what’s right no matter what.

Why writers write. Just like you have reasons for reading, writers have reasons for writing. Understanding why a writer writes, that is, the **author purpose**, is an important step towards understanding what the author is trying to say.

1. Writers write to inform readers, that is, to give them information about something. Consider nineteenth-century explorer Désiré Charney’s description of a palace he discovered in Mexico:

One of these chambers measured forty-nine feet on one side, that is seven hundred and thirty-two feet in circumference. The walls, nearly six feet seven inches thick, are built of stone and mortar, incrustated with deep cement, sloping up about three feet and terminating perpendicularly. The centre of the room is occupied by six pillars, on which rose stone, brick, or wood columns bearing the roof...we observed small stone rings fixed to the wall, and on each side of the entrance, also fixed to the wall, two small painted slabs.

—From *Ancient Cities of the New World*, by Désiré Charney

What is Mr. Charney’s purpose in describing his discovery? To inform you of what he saw. In Charney’s time, photographs in books were rare and few could travel to see the things he saw. The description helps Charney’s readers picture his discovery and allows them to understand what the ancient palace was like.

2. Writers write to inspire or persuade readers to believe or act. That’s just what J.C. Ryle, a nineteenth-century pastor does in the following passage:

I charge you to make a habit of reading the Bible, and not to let the habit be broken. Do not let the laughter of friends, do not let the bad customs of the family you live in, don’t let any of these things prevent your doing it. Determine that you will not only have a Bible, but also make time to read it too. Allow no man to persuade you that it is only a book for Sunday school children and old women. It is the book from which King David got wisdom and understanding. It is the book which young Timothy knew from his childhood. Never be ashamed of reading it. Do not “scorn instruction” (Proverbs 13:13).

Ryle isn’t just informing his readers of the importance of reading the Bible. He is ordering, pleading, and exhorting his readers to take Bible reading seriously. Ryle seeks to persuade his readers to believe in the importance of Bible reading and to show it by their actions.

3. Writers write to express emotion and strong feelings. No stronger feelings have ever been expressed than those by King David, later echoed and fulfilled by Jesus at his crucifixion.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you far from helping me and from my roars of anguish? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but you do not hear me. I cry during the night and am never silent.

Our fathers trusted in you and you delivered them. They cried out to you and were rescued. But I am nothing but a worm. People despise me. They laugh at me saying, “He trusted that God would deliver him. Let’s see Him do it, since He delights in him.”

But you, God, are the one who brought me safely from the womb and taught me to hope in you even as a nursing infant. Please be near me, for I am in great trouble and no one is around to help.

—(Paraphrase of Psalm 22: 1-11 KJV)

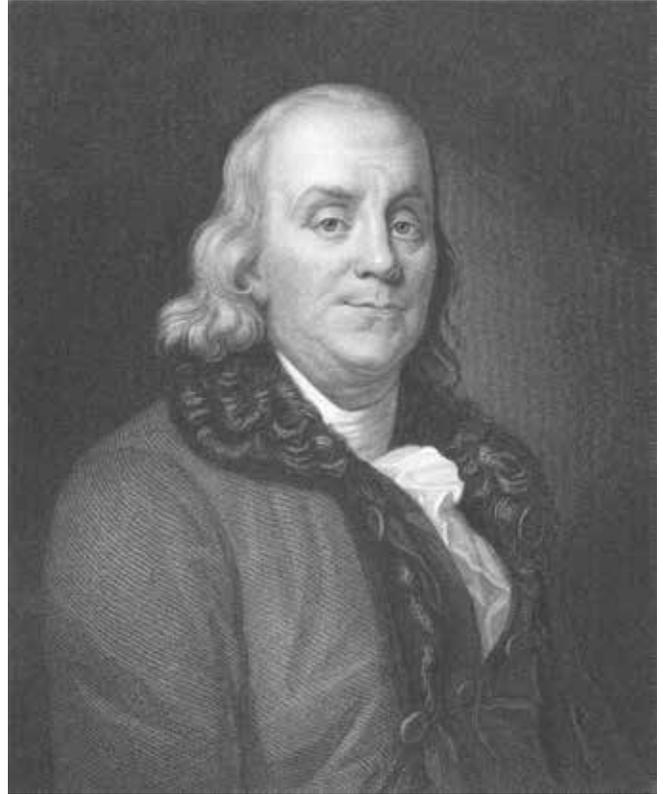
David is writing to express his feelings of loneliness and frustration at his seeming abandonment by God. His honest expression of his feelings, directed towards the only one who could help him also inspires us to bring our troubles to God in prayer.

4. Writers write to delight or entertain their readers. Benjamin Franklin writes an entertaining description of his first arrival in Boston as a young man:

I was in my working dress,...I was dirty, from my being so long in the boat. My pockets were stuffed out with shirts and stockings,...I was very hungry; and my whole stock of cash consisted in a single dollar...

I met a boy with bread...and inquiring where he had bought it, I went immediately to the baker's he directed me to.... Not knowing the different prices nor the names of the different sorts of bread, I told [the baker] to give me threepenny worth of any sort. He gave me accordingly three great puffy rolls. I was surprised at the quantity, but took it, and having no room in my pockets, walked off with a roll under each arm and eating the other. Thus I went up Market Street...passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future wife's father; when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance.

Franklin wants his readers to enjoy and be entertained by the hilarious picture of a boy, pockets bulging with shirts and socks, walking down the street carrying two huge loaves of bread under his arms while gnawing on a third,



all under the scornful gaze of his future wife (whom he has not yet met). Note that the picture is especially funny given that it's *Benjamin Franklin*, an American hero.

The last example illustrates that the purposes of a writer are not neatly separated. Often, a single passage can include one, two, or all of the purposes discussed above. For example, in describing his appearance, Franklin informs his readers of what he was like as a boy, entertains them in doing so, but also inspires them by showing that someone as accomplished and famous as he had humble beginnings.



Fill in the blanks with either A writer writes or A reader reads.

- 1.1 _____ to enjoy or be entertained.
 1.2 _____ to persuade.
 1.3 _____ to inform.

- 1.4 _____ to express strong feeling or emotion.
- 1.5 _____ to believe or act.
- 1.6 _____ to entertain.
- 1.7 _____ to understand.

USING PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE TO FIND MEANING

One of the most important ways in which authors achieve their purpose is through the structure of their writings. In other words, how a piece of writing is organized is directly related to its purpose.

Authors whose purpose it is to explain, inform, or describe something are writing what is called **exposition**. This type of writing includes most of the everyday nonfiction you're used to seeing, including textbooks, magazine or newspaper articles, or informational Internet sites.

Expositional writing comes in a variety of forms or modes which authors can choose from to achieve their purpose. Each of these modes has a special organizational structure of its own. Understanding this structure aids in getting at the author's meaning.

Description. Authors use description as a tool to communicate a picture through words. They use precise words that appeal to the senses of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. As important as carefully chosen words, however, is the ordering of ideas so that readers can successfully picture what the author sees.

Since the reader cannot take in everything at once like they would if they were looking at something, writers must use spatial organization to allow readers to put the scene together piece by piece. Look again at Charney's description of the ancient palace chamber:

One of these chambers measured forty-nine feet on one side, that is seven hundred and thirty-two feet in circumference. The walls,

nearly six feet seven inches thick, are built of stone and mortar, incrustated with deep cement, sloping up about three feet and terminating perpendicularly. The centre of the room is occupied by six pillars, on which rose stone, brick, or wood columns bearing the roof.... Small stone rings [are] fixed to the wall, and on each side of the entrance, also fixed to the wall, two small painted slabs.

—From *Ancient Cities of the New World*, by Désiré Charney

Charney uses side-to-side and bottom-to-top spatial description. He first has the reader “turn” around to view the overall size or perimeter of the chamber based on the width and length of its walls. In this sense, the description is like a camera “panning” the scene. Charney next focuses on the wall details and then moves up the central columns to the ceiling. Then, he moves back to the walls and to the entrance.

Description can be used for other purposes than just information. The following example is not uncommon.

Some call it a rocket on wheels. Others call it pure exhilaration. Whatever you call it, the X-JT7 is no ordinary sports car. From its e-z-glide convertible top to its low profile prowlers, molded bumpers, streamlined candy-apple finish, chrome dual exhaust, and fine-grain wood cockpit controls, X-JT7 is emotion on wheels. Test-drive one at your dealer today.



Answer these questions.

1.8 What is the goal of this description? _____

1.9 How does the writer use spatial description? _____

Narration. In its most basic form, narration is story telling. A story is the combination of a series of events leading up to a conclusion. The excerpt from Benjamin Franklin’s autobiography has these elements of a story. Read a following portion of it again.

I met a boy with bread...and inquiring where he had bought it, I went immediately to the baker's he directed me to.... Not knowing the different prices nor the names of the different sorts of bread, I told [the baker] to give me threepenny worth of any sort. He gave me accordingly three great puffy rolls. I was surprised at the quantity, but took it, and having

no room in my pockets, walked off with a roll under each arm and eating the other. Thus I went up Market Street...passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future wife's father; when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance.

This passage is an example of an **anecdote**, a brief episode in a much larger story, in this case, the story of Franklin’s life. This paragraph, like all narrative paragraphs, uses **chronological organization**. That is, it describes a series of happenings or events in the order in which they occurred.



Complete these activities.

1.10 Create a brief outline of the events from Franklin’s anecdote.

Event 1: _____

Event 2: _____

Event 3: _____

Event 4: _____

1.11 What is the point of Franklin’s narrative?

Sequence. Authors use narrative structure to do more than just tell entertaining stories. The same structure is used to describe processes or provide step-by-step instructions. This type of exposition is known as sequence. Read the following paragraph:

Follow these guidelines for transferring a plant from a plastic pot to ground soil:

Water your plant the day before planting so that the moist soil clings together, protecting the roots during the transplant. Select a planting location that matches the sun/shade requirements of the plant. Water the soil to make digging easier.

On planting day, dig the hole twice the width of the pot and of equal depth to give the roots ample room to spread. Remove the plant from the pot, first pressing the sides of the pot gently to free the soil and roots. Grasp the plant gently at its base and pull to remove it from the pot. If this step proves difficult, turn the pot upside down to free the roots and soil.

Place the plant in the center of the hole. Sprinkle the proper amount of plant food around the base, and refill the hole using the soil you just removed. Gently tamp the soil down, making sure the root base is covered and that the plant has enough support to stand on its own. Water the plant thoroughly.



Complete these activities.

1.12 The paragraph orders the planting steps chronologically. List them below:

Day before:

Step 1: _____

Step 2: _____

Step 3: _____

Step 4: _____

Step 5: _____

Step 6: _____

Step 7: _____

Step 8: _____

SELF TEST 1

Match the vocabulary terms to their definitions (each answer, 3 points).

- | | | | | |
|-------|-------|----------------------------|----|--|
| 1.01 | _____ | exposition | a. | writing intended to describe, explain, or inform |
| 1.02 | _____ | pictograph | b. | a short, entertaining story |
| 1.03 | _____ | spatial organization | c. | a graph showing continuous change across a span of time |
| 1.04 | _____ | line graph | d. | a method of ordering ideas by time sequence |
| 1.05 | _____ | table | e. | a method of ordering ideas when describing a physical object or space |
| 1.06 | _____ | pie chart | f. | the major idea of a paragraph explicitly stated |
| 1.07 | _____ | chronological organization | g. | a graph used to show change in relationship at set points in time |
| 1.08 | _____ | author purpose | h. | a set of definitions for symbols, listed at the bottom of a chart or graph |
| 1.09 | _____ | topic sentence | i. | a graph using symbols or pictures to add more information about data |
| 1.010 | _____ | bar graph | j. | a circle graph showing parts of a whole |
| 1.011 | _____ | legend | k. | one of four reasons for which authors write—to inform, persuade, entertain, or express strong feelings |
| 1.012 | _____ | anecdote | l. | a visual aid which organizes data in rows and column |

Match the type of paragraph with the purpose it is intended to serve and a suitable topic (each answer, 3 points).

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|----|---|
| 1.013 | _____ narration | a. | proving a point or explaining a concept with examples |
| 1.014 | _____ topic for narration | b. | showing why something happened or the consequences of something happening |
| 1.015 | _____ description | c. | using story or sequence to describe an event or explain a process |
| 1.016 | _____ topic for description | d. | arranging something into its parts or types |
| 1.017 | _____ cause and effect | e. | using words to describe physical objects or space |
| 1.018 | _____ topic for cause and effect | f. | showing similarities or differences |
| 1.019 | _____ exemplification | g. | types of personalities in the classroom |
| 1.020 | _____ topic for exemplification | h. | your new house |
| 1.021 | _____ comparison and contrast | i. | a lesson you learned one time |
| 1.022 | _____ topic for comparison/contrast | j. | the results of 9/11 |
| 1.023 | _____ classification | k. | ways to become a better student |
| 1.024 | _____ topic for classification | l. | ways that dogs and wolves are alike |

Fill in the blanks with either A writer writes or A reader reads (each answer, 3 points).

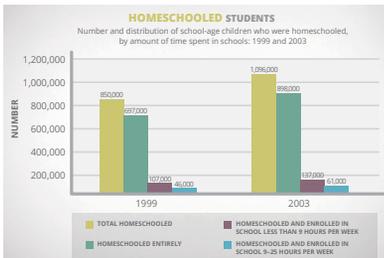
- | | | |
|--------------|-------|---------------------------------------|
| 1.025 | _____ | to enjoy or be entertained. |
| 1.026 | _____ | to persuade. |
| 1.027 | _____ | to inform. |
| 1.028 | _____ | to express strong feeling or emotion. |
| 1.029 | _____ | to believe or act. |
| 1.030 | _____ | to entertain. |
| 1.031 | _____ | to understand. |

Circle the letter of the correct answer (each answer, 2 points).

- 1.032** A ____ works well if you need special symbols or objects to represent data.
- | | | |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| a. line graph | b. bar graph | c. pie chart |
| d. pictograph | e. table | |

- 1.033** A ____ is helpful for showing steady or continuous change across a span of time.
 a. line graph b. bar graph c. pie chart
 d. pictograph e. table
- 1.034** A ____ works well to show a comparison of things at two or more separate points in time.
 a. line graph b. bar graph c. pie chart
 d. pictograph e. table
- 1.035** A ____ serves to show the parts of a whole.
 a. line graph b. bar graph c. pie chart
 d. pictograph e. table
- 1.036** A ____ organizes lots of information into tidy categories, but does not necessarily show a clear relationship among them.
 a. line graph b. bar graph c. pie chart
 d. pictograph e. table

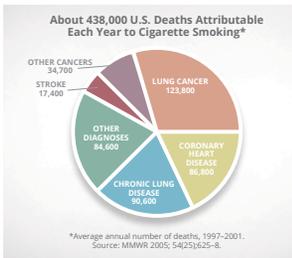
1.037 Identify the graph. _____



Use the following choices to answer questions 1.037 - 1.041.

- a. line graph
 b. bar graph
 c. pie chart
 d. pictograph
 e. table

1.038 Identify the graph. _____



1.039 Identify the graph. _____



1.040 Identify the graph. _____

Appendix 1: Supplemental Tables Indicator 3

HOMESCHOOLED STUDENTS
Number and percentage of school-age children who were homeschooled, by parents' reasons given as important and most important for homeschooling: 2003

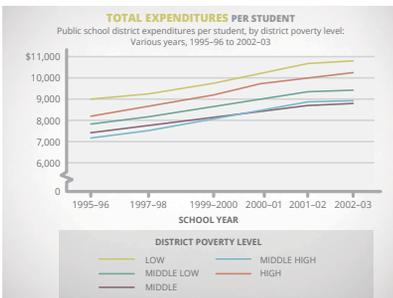
	Important		Most important	
	Number	Percent*	Number	Percentage distribution
A concern about environment of other schools ^b	935,000	85.4	941,000	31.2
A dissatisfaction with academic instruction at other schools	748,000	68.2	180,000	16.5
A desire to provide religious or moral instruction	793,000	72.3	327,000	29.8
Child has a physical or mental health problem	174,000	15.9	71,000	6.5
Child has other special needs	815,000	28.9	78,000	7.2
Other reasons ^c	221,000	20.1	97,000	8.8

*Percentages do not sum to 100 percent because respondents could choose more than one reason.
^aSuch as safety, drugs, or negative peer pressure.
^bParents homeschool their children for many reasons that are often unique to their family situation. "Other reasons" parents give for homeschooling include the following: favor the child's choice, to allow parents more control over what child sees, learning, and to provide more flexibility.
^cNOTE: Homeschooled children are those ages 5-17 educated by their parents full or part time who are in a grade equivalent to kindergarten through 12th grade. Excludes students who were enrolled in public or private school more than 20 hours per week, and students who were homeschooled only because of temporary illness. Data may not sum to totals because of rounding. See supplemental notes for more information about the National Household Education Survey Program (NHES).
 SOURCE: Proctor, S., Jentl, S., Van Brunt, A., and Neppert, C. (Eds.) Homeschooling: Homeschooling in the United States - 2003 (NHES:2003-101) Table 4. Data from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Parent and Family Involvement in Education Survey of the National Household Education Survey Program (NHES), 2003.

Use the following choices to answer questions 1.037 - 1.041.

- a. line graph
- b. bar graph
- c. pie chart
- d. pictograph
- e. table

1.041 Identify the graph. _____



90

113

SCORE _____

TEACHER _____

initials date



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