Text structure: Description

Grade 5 Reading Worksheet

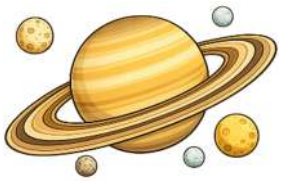
Text structure *is how an author organizes information in a nonfiction text.*

Description *is a type of text structure in which an author talks about one subject in great detail.*

Signal words *are clue words that help you identify the text structure. Signal words for description texts include* ***for instance***, ***for example***, ***such as***, ***to illustrate***, ***another***, ***to begin with***, ***first***, ***second***, ***third and also***.

Circle the signal words, underline the main idea and use a squiggly line to mark the most important details.

Saturn



Did you know that Saturn is one of the five brightest planets in our solar system? Though it is extremely far away, it is possible to see Saturn in the night sky with your naked eye!

Saturn is the sixth planet from the Sun and the second-largest planet in our solar system. It's so big that Earth could fit inside it 700 times! It is made mostly of hydrogen and helium gas. This means that it does not have a solid surface like Earth. Even though Saturn is very far away, scientists have been able to learn a lot about it by studying it with both telescopes and spacecraft.

What most people usually notice first about Saturn is its enormous rings. These rings are made of billions of pieces of ice and rock that range in size from tiny grains to chunks as large as houses. Scientists believe these rings formed when pieces from comets, asteroids and moons were pulled apart by Saturn's strong gravity. While the rings may look thin and smooth from far away, they are actually made of many separate bands that circle the planet at different speeds. Some of the rings are thousands of miles wide, but they are usually only a few hundred feet thick.

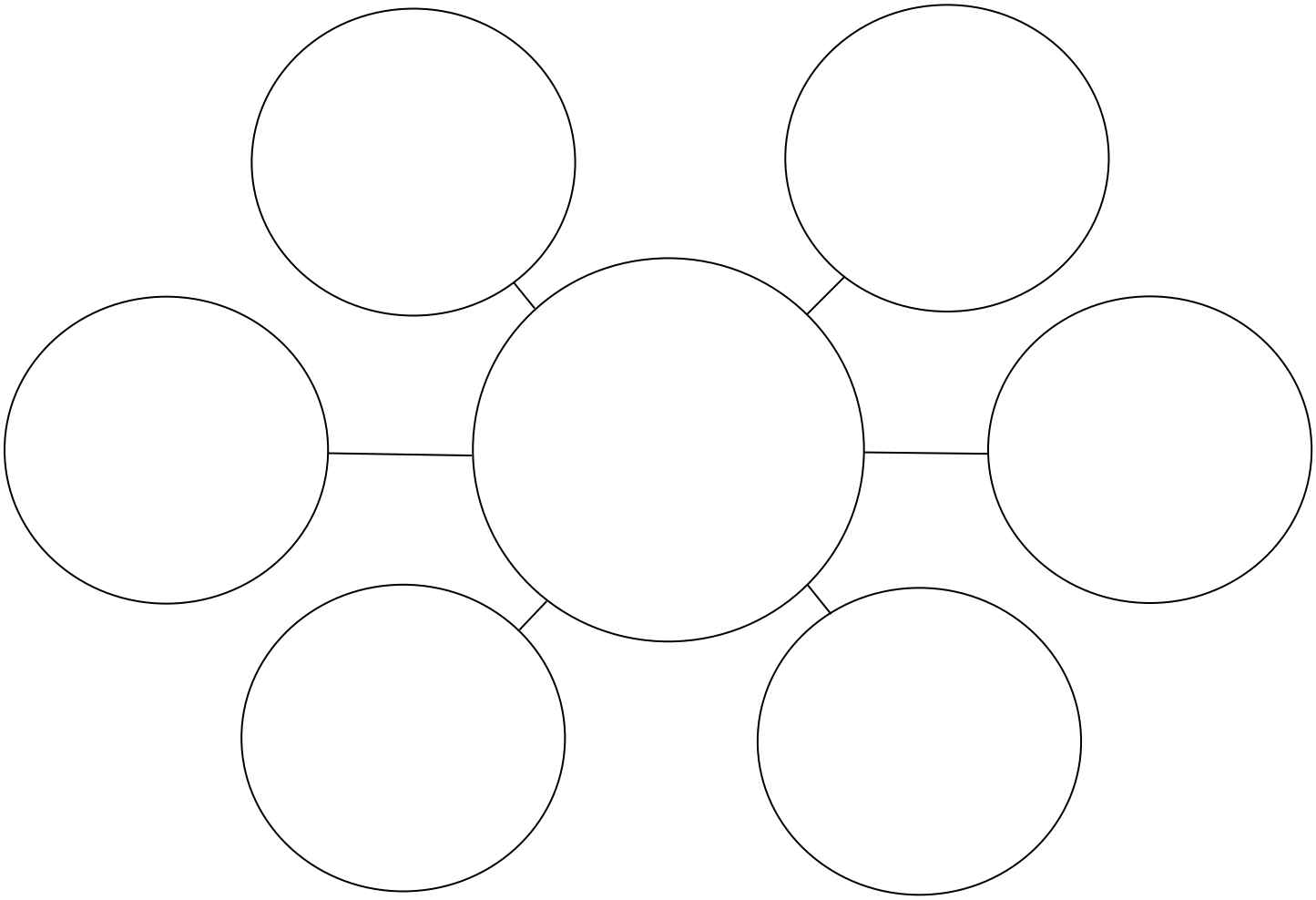
While Saturn is famous for its rings, it also has many moons. So far, scientists have discovered more than 270 moons orbiting the planet, but there may be even more! These moons come in all shapes and sizes. Some are small and irregularly shaped, while others are round and look like small planets. Titan is one of its most interesting moons. It's even larger than the planet Mercury! Titan is unique because it has a thick atmosphere, as well as lakes and rivers on its surface. The lakes are not like lakes on Earth, though. Rather than water, they are filled with liquid methane. This is an icy-cold liquid that forms when methane gas gets so cold that it turns into liquid.

Another interesting fact about Saturn is that one day on Saturn only lasts ten and a half hours. A day is measured by the amount of time it takes a planet to spin around one time, and Saturn moves very quickly! Despite how quickly it spins, Saturn takes a long time to journey around the Sun. It takes about 29 Earth years for Saturn to complete one orbit! A

year is measured by the amount of time it takes a planet to orbit around the Sun. This means that the days are short but the years are long on Saturn.

The development of spacecraft is one of the reasons that scientists have been able to learn so much about Saturn. The Cassini spacecraft traveled around Saturn from 2004 to 2017. It was the first spacecraft to enter Saturn's orbit! As it traveled around Saturn, it captured detailed images of the planet. Today, scientists continue to study Saturn using powerful space telescopes, such as the Hubble Space Telescope, which takes clear pictures of Saturn and its rings as it orbits around Earth. Scientists hope that future missions to space will help reveal even more about this special planet.

1. Fill out the graphic organizer below. Write what the text was mostly about in the center and some of the most important details in the surrounding circles.



2. What detail did you find most interesting and why?

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Answers

1. Fill out the graphic organizer below. Write what the text was mostly about in the center and some of the most important details in the surrounding circles.

Center Circle:
Answers can vary slightly but should say that the passage describes Saturn, including its rings, moons, movement and how scientists study it.

Outer Circles:
Details that students pick will vary.

2. What detail did you find most interesting and why?

The detail students select will vary but should be supported with an explanation.