CHAPTER 10

SPACES AND JOURNEYS FOR READERS: ORGANIZATION AND MOVEMENT

Texts are not just collections of information, though many texts indeed are primarily fact collections such as phone books and almanacs. But even these must be well-organized and make sense to the users. In phone books, organization is important for readers to access and make sense of the information they want readily. Almanacs with more kinds of information have varying organizing principles by topics, each of which has locally organized tables, lists, and similar information display devices, and there are chapters, tables of contents and indexes to help the reader find the appropriate display. The internet, digital searches, and hypermedia are changing display formats along with the principles of organization and access of informational reference documents, but still an intelligibly ordered structure is needed.

Encyclopedia entries have complex internal organizations beginning with the name of the topic, overviews, and a list of major topics (if there is an historical aspect that usually comes first), defined by headings, beneath which is a narrative paragraph or paragraphs presenting the information in a way that establishes the connection of the facts and making them easy to comprehend in the clearest language appropriate to the topic. There are also cross-references to other articles or related topics in the encyclopedia. The article usually ends with further resources. This organization is so useful for access and clarity that electronic media and hypertext have changed it little except turning the cross-references and other resources into links. The bigger changes have to do with multiple community authorship, which has led to the back pages in the wiki format, containing the history of changes, participants, discussion of issues and like material—all important for the management and evaluation of the collaborative contributions.

Texts that are primarily for the storage, quick access and retrieval of information have a predominantly spatial organization, so a reader can rapidly locate the spot with needed information. In writing such a text, one should keep in mind the readers' ease of location and rapid making sense of the desired information. But other texts, meant to be read sequentially (even if sometimes selectively) have more of a temporal organization, as reading occurs over

time with readers introduced to one thing and the next. New forms of digital texts have both substantial spatial and temporal elements, as readers navigate spatially conceived hypertexts in temporally structured sequences, while also processing elements within each multimedia station or page. These digital texts present challenges for creating hybrid ways of thinking about how such texts can provide ordered, interpretable, meaningful experiences for readers. Here, however, I do not deal in detail with the rapidly changing developments in digital media, but rather present organizational and stylistic principles derived from traditional texts, even as they may now be produced and delivered digitally. Perhaps the comments provided here may be of use to consider the new hybrid spatio-temporal texts, but only time will tell what guidance will be useful in this moment of textual change. While I have some confidence that the more fundamental issues in the earlier chapters will be applicable in the digital world (though of course translated and freshly applied), I am less confident about how actual textual form will evolve under what principles, as these are so tied to the form and conditions of delivery.

Most traditional texts provide sequences of information, arranging them so they are meaningful as readers move down an information or reasoning path. The most obviously sequential text is a set of instructions which provides just the information the readers need to know at each point in accomplishing a task, and then gives the readers specific options based on individual needs or desires. The coherence in instructions comes from the sequential organization of attention to the objects and sets of actions. The meaningfulness and persuasiveness depends on the right things being presented at the right moments. If the reader-users cannot locate the dial to be adjusted at the right moment, or they do not understand the relation of two parts to be aligned, they may discard the instructions as not useful. At the very least they must solve some puzzles to be able to know how to move to the next step. Enough such difficulties may lead to a breakdown in meaning and distrust of the instructions. Further, if the results are not as anticipated or promised, if the recipe does not produce an appetizing dish, the reader is likely not to trust the source for future directions.

Directions must lead the reader down a clear path of action and produce acceptable consequences. The need is no less great when mental actions are at stake, whether intellectual or emotional. The readers must always know where they are and where they are headed. Even if uncertainty, puzzlement, or mystery are in fact an expected part of the journey, as in a mystery story or presentation of a philosophic quandary, the uncertainty must be specific and contained, limited to precisely those uncertainties that are expected and tolerated (if not in fact to be enjoyed) by the readers. Leading readers to cliffs and then pushing them off, loses readers—except for thrill-seekers, who are expecting such things

from the kind of texts they choose. So an important part of the text is to create a tolerable, intelligible, and rewarding path, so the readers will understand where each step is taking them and will want to take the next step. Often this also means that readers need to be able to locate the relevant information in their memories to make sense of and understand what is presented, so that the text helps draw greater parts of their mind into alignment with the text, building richer and more forceful meanings as the text progresses. Reading is an effortful activity, where the readers have to work positively to give their minds over to imagining the writer's meaning. They can easily give up if the time and effort becomes too great, too unpleasurable, or too confusing—or if the text leads in directions readers do not care to go, that conflict with or are distant from what their minds already contain or think about. If because of external constraint, such as legal and financial consequences or school grades, a reader continues despite confusion, unpleasantness, or seemingly purposeless burdensome effort, the reader is likely to give only minimal and resentful cooperation. The readers are then like people on a forced march, hardly in the mood to appreciate the scenery or to give full attention to collaboratively solving the difficulties of the journey.

Organization of a text is about creating meaningful, rewarding, purposeful trips for readers through the information, narrative, argument, reasoning, calculation, and other material you want to present. The text needs to be presented coherently, so readers will be able to follow you in every step of the way with some engagement and enthusiasm, without feeling they are asked to take undue leaps of faith, to make excuses for you, to fill in gaps that you neglect, or to jump from one place to another with little guidance. And when the readers reach the endpoint you want to bring them to, they should feel the endpoint was worth the journey.

Thinking about organization as a coherent sequential journey through an information landscape provides a temporal perspective about reasoning, which is usually seen spatially as a consistent and supportable structure. Of course, readers, after they have read, may go back to examine the structure and overall meaning of the text, as we will consider later in this chapter. Even as they proceed temporally through a first reading they may be building a spatial model of the text's coherence, particularly if the text's conclusions are important for some work they need to carry out. Yet first, as they initially read it, they also need the experience of being carried along moment by moment, building meaning, maintaining comprehension and trust in the text, knowing where they are and not doubting any step they are being led down.

The following are some strategies for making the textual journey intelligible and trustworthy for the readers, but since genres vary so greatly in structure and

activity, the following comments are framed very generally to be appropriate to a broad range of texts. Nor will these comments explain the many genre-specific details of language which are well covered in many textbooks, guidebooks, and other sources of advice, although it may point at well-known topics covered in these books, from which I have learned much and to which I have little fresh to add. Here I am just offering a fresh perspective for thinking about and using well known features of text and language. Similarly, I will not provide detailed examples, which are well covered in the many textbooks and guidebooks, in ways that are selective and focused for the kind of writing concerned. My examples here are only to show how wide-ranging the contexts might be where general principles could be applied. For any specific kind of writing, it is useful to consult an advice or stylebook appropriate to your task, genre, and audience. Further, in the long run, it is useful for any writer to develop practical familiarity with a wide repertoire of organizational and stylistic options, working with many kinds of texts. The wider the repertoire of style and organization, the greater choices the writer will have at hand at any moment and the better able the writer will be able to discriminate among options and choose the most appropriate to the immediate situation.

STARTING THE JOURNEY

Depending on the trust, authority and purposes of a text, readers may need more or less orientation to where they are heading, but in all cases the writer needs to engage readers' attention and motive to continue on the textual path. Even if you are relying on the importance of the subject to the reader, you still have to offer the promise of something new, interesting, or immediately relevant and valuable, even if only confirmation of beliefs at the moment when confirmation is needed. Beginning writers when given such advice about gaining attention may invent bizarre and barely relevant attention-getting devices. Even more mature writers may resort to well-worn devices like starting off with an evocative story to make personal an abstract or technical issue for a more general audience. However, one does not need to act like the barker at a carnival, saying anything to get the customer into the tent. A more sober approach is to identify what needs, interests, or concerns might have brought the readers to the text and then somehow speak to those motivating concerns. In some cases this might mean providing statistics about the magnitude of a problem and its consequences, while in other cases it might mean identifying a point at issue between two philosophers. Elsewhere it may be presenting the overview of the recommendations in a report that then directs people to the internal sections if

they want to follow up on an issue. It all depends on the kind of document, the needs it serves, and the particular context it appears in. The strategies used in documents similar to those you will write can give you a sense of the collective wisdom of previous authors engaged in similar tasks. Recognizably evoking the motivations associated with a genre has the further advantage of helping the readers rapidly orient to the kind of text it is and the directions it will take. Thus the standard formats of scientific articles help readers locate the news or contribution of the articles, allowing them to decide which articles to follow up on and in what depth. Equally, business correspondence that is part of an ongoing negotiation or transaction often begins by identifying the specific case and previous relevant documents, with perhaps a brief refresher narrative of where the transaction stands.

TYING THE PIECES TOGETHER: COHESIVE DEVICES

Once you have the reader in the door you have to be careful about maintaining attention and good faith even if you must disagree, challenge, or otherwise irritate readers. It is easy for readers to be alienated and close the book and walk away. Or if they stay, they can become resistant critics, mentally constructing countertexts of alternative interpretations and evaluations. An important element in allowing readers to know where they are and how that relates to where they have been and where there are going is cohesive devices, that include

- Text markers, section identifiers, predictors of the reasoning or steps coming up, or summative passages tying together where one has been in previous sections, so as to launch the next stage.
- Transitional words and phrases that explain the connective logic between sentences or paragraphs, such as “therefore,” “afterwards,” or “as a consequence of.”
- Compound and complex sentences that put several topics in relation. Even simple sentences can tie together multiple prior topics of discussion and launch new topics from previous ones.
- Pronouns that refer back to prior subjects, keep them alive, and provide continuity, but the reference must be clear. Texts soon wander into confusion if the reader no longer is sure which of many things an “it” can refer to.
- Precise use of verb tense to identify the time locations of specific actions and their relation to each other. The tense system is delicate and precise in most languages, but if used inaccurately can lead to as much

confusion as pronoun uncertainty. The common advice that one needs to stay in the same tense is oversimplified and inexact, but it does at least raise the issue of time confusion. However, even in the same sentences, some actions may be completed before others begin, and other actions continue while being punctuated by others, while still other actions may be in the future or be hypothetical possibilities. The delicacy of tenses in indicating complex time relations is shown by examples such as this: "After Samantha had completed her application form, she was waiting in the front office when an enraged young man ran out of the interview room muttering 'Never, never will this happen.' Samantha became apprehensive that her own interview would not go well and she would be leaving with a heavy heart."

- Repetition of exact words or core roots—what is known as lexical cohesion. Repetition of key terms allows the reader to keep track of main elements and plant them firmly in the imagination, following their progress through the changes of the text and arraying other elements around these key anchor terms.
- Using synonymous or related terms, to establish a limited domain of meanings and familiar relationships (or semantic domain), helping the reader make sense of the text. As one moves through a text, the semantic domains may shift following the logic of the organization and argument. Accordingly, the opening of an article on the economy might start in the daily business world of customers and shopkeepers with groceries, products, and prices, but as the discussion turns to underlying analyses the semantic domain might shift to that of economic theory, with supply and demand curves and equilibrium points. Nonetheless, for readers to understand how the argument fits together you will clearly need to connect one semantic domain to the next by some transitional move, such as "These daily actions are readily explained in theoretical terms . . ."

All these cohesive devices are related to and provide guidance for the reader about the underlying coherence of a text, but do not in themselves guarantee a sense of coherence for the reader. Ultimately coherence depends on the reader being able to build a picture of the text's meaning that fits together in a unified picture (even if that is intended as a fragmented picture of a fragmented reality, as in the portrayal of the chaos of a battlefield). We will examine this underlying issue of text coherence from the perspective of logical or reasoned arguments, from the perspective of emotions and stance, and from the perspective of the total picture being constructed. All of these have a temporal element, as the reader moves through the text, but all also have an after-the-reading residue, which can be viewed in a more spatial way.

COHERENCE IN THE REASONING AND REPRESENTATION

If the text is presenting a reasoned argument or examination of an issue or topic, the logical and evidentiary connection from one part to the next directs the readers down each step and gives them confidence that they move forward on solid ground, led by a trustworthy, reliable guide. Thus the reasoning that warrants each step of the journey should be made explicitly enough to reassure the audience that they are not taking faulty steps.

Of course at the end of the reading, readers always have the freedom to disagree and find fault, but in the course of reading they are granting their imagination to the author, even if they are holding some mental reservations because of disagreements or other questions. Each reservation they add distracts from the totality of mind they are giving over to the imaginative construction of your ideas and the personal commitment they are giving over to the meaning you are asking them to create. As these reservations or mental alarms add up, readers may begin feeling they are giving their minds over to an unreasonable person who makes unwarranted, unsupported, or bizarre claims, who is asking them to make unacceptable leaps. The natural reaction in that case is to say "I am not going to go there and I am not going to waste any more of my mental energy in this journey." If readers continue reading beyond this point, their interpretation of the text will be filtered through a negative characterization of the author or text, such as the writer being unreasonably partisan, just wrong, or comically foolish. Rather than constructing your meaning, the readers will be constructing a story about what is wrong with you and your text.

This also means there needs to be precision in what is said, so the reader knows what they are assenting to in their imaginative reconstruction of the meaning, and exactly how that provides a next step in the reasoning. Otherwise readers are likely to insert their own meanings, desires, or perhaps aversions into the underspecified story, leading them in a different direction than the path being set out in the text, with a consequence that the readers at some point may be confused, caught up short, or lost. Being sufficiently explicit in the text markers, transitional phrases, and other ligaments that tie the parts of the text together can help the readers to be precisely aware of how one step leads to another and to make the desired connections rather than following their own associations.

Although the above advice points in the direction of confident, directive statements, this needs to be qualified in a couple of ways. First, you should not be more confident, certain, or directive than you actually have the evidence and certitude for. This means you must be careful to qualify your remarks through modal verbs and hedging statements where appropriate, as well to recognize

and address contrary points of view, especially if they are likely to come to your readers minds unprompted. Recognizing questions and alternative views may even increase the trust of readers, as they perceive you as an honest and reasonable evaluator of the evidence and logic. But this fairness then puts further responsibilities on the remainder of the text, to living within the limits that you have recognized, claiming no more than your argument has allowed, and keeping contained the questions raised by the concessions so that the readers can still continue down a path of reason, while carrying the uncertainties with them. If the counterclaims or evidence or uncertainties stop your argument dead in the tracks, readers may not travel much further with you. But carefully framing and limiting the concessions will allow you to carry forward, even though with lessened ambitions.

At the same time as recognizing and addressing legitimate difficulties, there is no reason to proliferate difficulties, doubts, or questions where these are not directly relevant to the direction of your argument. Nor is it usually necessary to include information and concerns not essential to the forward direction of your discussion issues if you are aware that they are likely to upset, confuse, or arouse opposition. That is, given the great variety of human perspectives and the delicacy of reading which can lead to readers' misunderstandings, multiple interpretations, loss of good will, and disruption of co-orientation, it is worthwhile considering what is necessary or useful to say, and what might serve to distract, divide, or lead astray.

Finally you also need to be aware of the sophistication of your audience. If you can be sure that many arguments, reasoned consequences, or information are familiar to the readers, you need not tell them at length what would be obvious to them. Tediously repeating the familiar will not respect their expertise, and perhaps even indicate that you do not understand what expertise in the field consists of—marking you as an outsider or novice with little authority to speak to the insiders.

THE SYNCHRONOUS SPATIAL PICTURE

While it is important to consider the steps in front of the readers and how you can carry readers forward on their journey, it is also useful to consider the accumulation of steps they have taken and how these fit together in laying out a picture up to any particular point they may have reached in the text. Your text gradually reveals a world of meanings to the readers. Although readers experience a journey through time, they also develop a more synchronic spatial or structural view of the meaning that at each moment has a certain shape

and contents. This spatial construction of the meaning of the text may occur even if the reader does not read it sequentially, but probes it in different places, gaining pieces of information that add up to a picture of your text as a whole. For example, research scientists may skim the abstract at the front of the article then jump to the data charts to see the results and then jump to the end to see what the author is claiming on the basis of the data. If then the article is important to them or raises questions, they might jump back to the methods to see how the results were produced and then dig further into the results. Then some questions of interpretation might lead back to the theoretical section, and to the review of literature to see whether the authors were aware of related studies with other findings. But all this jumping around is not incoherent—it brings the readers into a deeper and more complete understanding of the text as a structured argument.

This synchronic spatial meaning is the kind that can be looked at all at once, perhaps represented in a summary, an outline, a flow chart, or a map. Such representations make simultaneously visible all the parts, relations, and sequences. This is the kind of representation a reader builds if he or she writes a summary or set of ordered notes on a reading, but a skilled reader can also build it mentally. A small child first learning to read may only be able to hold in mind a single letter or cluster being phonetically sounded out, or a phrase or sentence being made sense of, but as readers develop they are able to grasp larger units and see the smaller ones in relation to them to form a mental construct of the total text meaning. When readers have an adequate mental construction, encompassing the whole text, they say they understand it. Of course there are some texts that attempt to disrupt our constructing such a meaning or want to keep emphasis on the experience of a journey that constantly challenges our senses, but even such texts are open to post facto accounts. Even the disruption or destabilizing of meaning relies on certain senses built in each smaller sequence with disruption points of particular kinds at specific junctures; further, the cumulative experiences, moods, emotions, or transient states of mind are aggregated across the total textual experience.

This spatial sense is ultimately what we refer to as coherence, how the text as a whole holds together in our mind to form a lasting impression we take away as we move further from the text. After the fact of reading, we typically hold the text in our mind as a single event, having been completed, except for texts that provide extraordinary experiences of passage or where we read the text under remarkable conditions that lead us to recall the experience in transit. If a reader finds a text especially difficult, the reader my need to reread it, look over the abstract, review section headings, create an outline or other summative representation. Such activities rely on the meaning already built, but bring them

to a further level of clarity and coherence, giving the sense of understanding the whole text with all the parts and relations.

Later in this chapter we will consider how texts end, punctuating the journey of reading, usually gathering it together, closing it off, and occasionally holding certain threads in suspensions or pointing forward to future developments—thereby further cementing the overall meaning of the text.

THE GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPATIAL MODEL OF MEANING

This spatial model of meaning does not usually dawn unexpected on the reader in a single moment. Rather it is built as the reader goes through the text, adding piece to piece and finding patterns of sense. Each further step can fill out this picture, make it larger, create a shift in perspective, overlay it with new colors or filters, or even establish counter images. But at each moment of reading the reader relies both on former knowledge and ideas he or she brought to the reading and all you have presented previously in the text out of which the readers construct what they believe your meaning or intent to be. The reading journey has led the reader into a world you have stage-managed, orchestrated, and articulated, particularly if the reader has trusted your representations at each step. The world you have constructed has inhabited the reader's mind, at least to the extent of giving some of his or her mind over to it, contingently. Each step into that world builds a bigger picture, and provides more reasons, more facts, more connections, more richness to believe it, to trust it, to see it as a viable world. Further, in coming to see the world you are presenting, each reader has used what he or she knows, thinks, and assumes as part of sensemaking, linking your vision to what the reader already has in mind, potentially reorganized around the representations and connections of your text. That is, the reader has thought the way you have asked the reader to think, at least contingently and temporarily. Mentally the reader will have walked at least once down the pathway you suggest, making it imaginable and leaving at least a mental trace. Even more, the world you have represented becomes context for interpreting each further sentence, paragraph, or chapter of your work to be read—that is, the reader has to continuingly exercise and strengthen the world you represent in order to understand the further parts of the text. Additionally, in imagining your thinking, the reader has imagined you as someone who makes sense, speaks to his or her mind, and sees things in ways that he or she can also see.

The implications for these processes of co-orientation, co-knowing, co-imagining, and co-thinking, are significant for how you construct your texts so as to maximize alignment, deep persuasiveness, and mental influence.

First, you must keep track of what you have shown the reader to each point: what elements, facts, objects, other texts you have brought into the text that evoke reader meanings, so that you can be aware of what exists in the world you are coming to share with the reader at each point in the reader's journey. Further, you need to keep track of the connections you make among these meaning elements and how they sit in relation to each other. This is exactly like the way a novelist must keep track of the characters she has placed in a novel, what she has said about each, what motives and actions drive each, what their interactions and relations are, how much they know and care about each other as to what issues there are between them as well as ongoing activities. The novelist must also be aware of the state of mind of each character so events and actions will make sense to the reader. What has been already presented must be factored into the ongoing momentum of each page of the novel, as new events and relations unfold based on all that is in place and in motion.

If your aim is expository or explanatory you need to make sure the reader sees and understands all the concepts and facts necessary at each point to understand what is going on and to be ready for the new element you will introduce. If your purpose is to set out a logical or evidential case, the reader needs to see what evidence is presented, what the reasoning steps are, what principles and arguments are established and how one builds on another. If you are presenting an inquiry process, the reader needs to see the concept and motives behind the inquiry and what knowledge and tools you (and the reader) have on embarking on the inquiry, then the plan for engaging the inquiry. When all the necessary information is on the table then readers may be able to follow your discussions and what you may conclude.

You may notice that each of these examples seems to follow the logics built into a number of well-known genres of exposition, argument, or research. Indeed, the historically evolved genres usually contain a kind of situational, task-based wisdom on steps that will not only lead a reader down a path, as well as for what readers need to know at each point to make sense of all that has been presented and to set the stage for the next part of the text.

Second, these elements must add up and make sense to the readers, so at each moment readers are engaged in a plausible imaginative universe. If the readers need to suspend judgment or accept confusion, or adopt some unconventional or odd assumptions that contradict common sense, you must give them warning, ready them for it, and have created enough trust so that

they will temporarily suspend common sense to allow their imaginations to go to the place you direct. You must then keep this world of suspended judgment contained, so that having passed over the chasm of suspended judgment, the readers again find themselves on recognizably solid ground.

Third, you need to be aware of where and in what way you are evoking the readers' own experiences and perspectives. It is often useful to mobilize readers' own thinking and associations—after all as a writer you have only the imaginable meanings in readers' minds to work with, evoke, and shape through the prompts of your texts. But, unless your text is meant to be only open-endedly evocative, projective and associative—that is, you are happy to let the reader take the meaning anywhere they will following the only dynamics of mind and meaning released by the text—you need to keep those personal thoughts coordinated with where you are taking the reader, to keep them in the universe of meanings you want them to understand, connect with, and perhaps act on.

Fourth, every reader's journey is swathed in dispositions, orientations, and emotions that create a wholistic state of receptivity. Even rational arguments depend on evoking an appropriate state of mind in the reader so that they can absorb the reasoning—uninterrupted by outrage, comic distance, or melancholic longing for some preferable state of affairs. It is likely that underneath the argument there is a highly affective motive, whether a quest for truth, a desire to uncover manipulations by powerful figures, or the drive to find a vaccine for disease. Emotions and dispositions concentrate the mind and motivate readers and writers in their rational quests. Further, within the frame of such quests, particular findings or developments can be felt as exciting, disappointing, puzzling, frustrating, activating. So just because a text does not seek arguments based on emotions or attempt to evoke emotional states, nonetheless, states of mind and emotion are a necessary concomitant of all texts and tied to the writers' and readers' motivations. The more meaningful texts are for readers, the more deeply the texts mobilize the entire dynamic of their minds.

Some texts more directly engage the emotions—whether the evocation of certain emotions or states of minds are the ends in themselves, as in some aesthetic works, or they are a means of creating affiliation, opposition, agreement, approval, or other persuasive ends. These texts may represent emotionally evocative material in isolated moments, but the emotional trajectory of a text can be dynamic as events transform hope into disappointment, optimism into fear, fear into relief. In sequences of emotions, each state of being prepares or impedes the next, as well as provides the grounds for transformation. Some texts in fact are aimed at creating specific sequences of emotional transformation, such as an elegy that brings a reader from a devastating sense of loss through various

emotions of grief to a final consolation and acceptance, or an advertisement that converts desires for excitement into desires for automobiles or anxieties about social acceptance into purchase decisions for hygiene products. In these one can follow the sequences of information, action and representation—of meanings—in relation to the emotional path being laid out for readers.

Rational or information-based arguments can also gain from attention to the sequential mental dynamics set in motion—as an identification of a problem may lead to an underlying analysis of the causes, an examination of the resources available for solution, a proposal, and an accounting of the costs and benefits leading to a recommendation. Each of these stages is associated with an orientation and state of mind of the reader along with specific contents. Discussion of a current political disagreement, for example, may lead to an examination of the underlying ideological issues and then a philosophic consideration of the vision of the world presupposed by each, followed by a consideration of the distinctive visions of the future of society. Each step in the text brings to bear different informational contents, forms of reasoning, and reader dispositions or states of mind, but each must persuasively grow out of the previous ones, translating the important motives from the earlier landscape into the new terrain, and the reader must be brought to the new step in thinking or state of mind. The new state of mind then reconfigures the interpretation, evaluation of, and stance toward the earlier synchronic space of meaning, perhaps even bringing out elements previously not attended to or changing the interpretation so radically as to transform the meaning of the earlier part.

LOOKING BACK

This dual consideration of spatial and temporal meaning of a text provides a more dynamic way of thinking about the conclusions of texts. Of course, some texts are just expositions of information and end abruptly, as when you reach the z's in a phonebook or fill out the last item in a form. Such texts do not ask readers to construct any challenging meanings or change their minds, other than to add a few informational items. But most texts require constructing a meaning or evoking sentiments, calling on existing information, mental relationships, and ways of perception and then integrating the new with the existent.

So if one thinks of the text as a taking readers on a journey into a set of meanings and through a set of experiences, at the end the readers should be able to view the material of that journey in a different or more complete way then at the beginning, and they also may be able to apply that new perspective

to the world or thoughts outside the text. The end of a text is the last moment you as a writer have to help the reader integrate the meaning of the journey, understand the consequences and implications, reframe prior knowledge on the basis of the journey, translate contemplation into action, understand the text's value, and apply the text's meaning to some context beyond the text. Just as the opening engages readers from a world outside the text and organizes attention in a new direction, setting in motion the revelations of the text, the ending brings that journey to an end, adding it up and reintroducing the readers to the world, transformed by the meaning of the text which now resides in the readers' minds. The opening and closing sit at the borders of larger intellectual and practical worlds, and the textual journey has moved or transformed the reader into a new kind of agent, with new resources, perceptions, positions, thoughts, and information. Just as the introduction catches the reader into a world of meanings, the closing releases them outward.

One can think of the text as a time out from the rest of the world, when readers turn their minds to the contents and sequences the author displays for them to contemplate. This contemplation is a mental pageant holographically projected by the interaction of the text with the contents and pathways of the readers' minds. The closing can pull together that experience and provide some enduring impression that holds even when the experience of the complex journey fades and the time out is over.