

# THINKING ON MY OWN

## Video: Bird Buffet

*Sequence Nonfiction Text Structure  
(life cycle)*

Miako saw a television program on Australia's animals and their habitats. She has always had an interest in kangaroos and the Australian Outback, but during this program the koalas sparked an interest for her. Eager to learn more about these cute marsupials, Miako found a book on them. As she read through the text, she found the chapter on their life cycle to be quite interesting and a super example of life cycle Sequence Nonfiction Text Structure.

Now it's **Your Turn!** Read *Life Cycle of the Koala* and create your own *Think Aloud* and Graphic Organizer.

Then compare your thinking with [Miako's Think Aloud and her Graphic Organizer](#).



#### Before You Read:

Think about what you may already know about koalas.  
Think about what you've learned about life cycles and sequencing.  
Then, jot your ideas.

#### While You Read:

Notice signal words that can help you determine the order of the events. You may want to highlight signal words in blue and the events in green. (You may use any colors available to you – just remember your color scheme!)

#### After You Read:

- Now it's time to try Thinking Aloud on your own. Ask yourself this question, "What are the sequence of events in the life cycle of a koala?"
- Use the information you've learned from this passage and Sequence Nonfiction Text Structure to determine the sequence of the koala's life cycle.

#### Life Cycle of the Koala

With round ears, a black nose and furry body, the koala looks like a leaf-eating teddy bear. Because of the resemblance, people have referred to the koala as a "koala bear." But the koala is actually a marsupial, and is related to the kangaroo.

The life cycle of the koala is unusual. First, the mother koala gives birth to one joey, about the size of a jellybean. Then, before it can even hear or see, the joey instinctively climbs its way into the mother's pouch. The joey has three jobs during the next six to seven months in the mother's pouch—nurse, grow and enjoy the ride! To prepare the joey for eating the eucalyptus leaves that are coming up on the menu, the



koala mother produces a substance in her intestines called "pap." The joey feeds on this, just prior to coming out of the pouch. Soon, the joey's intestines have the bacteria needed for digesting the tough

eucalyptus leaves. At about seven months of age, the joey ventures out of the pouch to eat leaves, while clinging to his mother's back or belly. The pouch will become a place for the koala to return to for nursing pit-stops, or to hide from predators. By the time the joey is one year old, he can live independently in the trees. He will soon find his own area, or "home range" of the Australian forest, apart from his mother. Koalas are fully mature by three to four years of age.



### Create a Graphic Organizer:

After you have determined the life cycle sequence of the koala, create a graphic organizer below to represent your thinking and to help you remember the author's main points.



### Compare your Think Aloud with Miako's Think Aloud:

**Miako's Think Aloud:** The title is helpful. It tells me right that I am going to read about the Koala's *life cycle*. This helps me understand that the text will be written in *sequence text structure* because life cycles occur in order. I will use a *life cycle graphic organizer* to help organize the different steps on the koala's life. I didn't realize that koala's were marsupials too! The first paragraph really helps me visualize what a koala looks like, however it doesn't tell me anything about its life cycle.

In the next paragraph, I notice the word "First." This signal word helps me to know the beginning step of their life cycle. The baby koala is called a joey, just like kangaroos. They are really small when they are born! "Then" helps me know that the author is telling the next event and that the events happen in a specific order. The words "during the next six to seven months" help me to know that for an extended period of time the joey will be eating and growing. I didn't realize that eucalyptus leaves would be so hard for the joey to digest. The words "just prior" tell me that right before the six to seven months are up is when the "pap" is made and eaten. "At about seven months" helps me know that the joey is ready for the next phase of life. Wow, at one year old they can live on their own in the trees! That is a very young age, but this helps me to know the stage in their lives when they become independent. The word "soon" also tells me that once they are moving on their own in the trees that they will be moving away from their mother shortly after. Finally at three to four years old they are mature and can start the process again. It is so strange how the koala is an adult by age three or four and I have to wait until I'm 18!

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koala **mother produces a substance in her intestines called "pap."** **The joey feeds on this, just prior to coming out of the pouch.** Soon, the joey's intestines have the bacteria needed for digesting the tough

eucalyptus leaves. **At about seven months** of age, **the joey ventures out of the pouch to eat leaves, while clinging to his mother's back or belly.** The **pouch will become a place for the koala to return to for nursing pit-stops, or to hide from predators.** **By the time** the joey is one year old, he can live independently in the trees. He will soon find his own area, or "home range" of the Australian forest, apart from his mother. Koalas are fully mature by three to four years of age.





### Compare your Graphic Organizer with Miako's Graphic Organizer:

**Miako's Graphic Organizer:** "Because the author telling the sequence of events in the life cycle of the koala, I am going to create a life cycle map graphic organizer to record the events in sequence."

### Questions to Think About:

- How do *signal words* help Miako make sense of the text?
- How does the *Life Cycle Graphic Organizer* help Miako sequence the important events?
- Why might this process help you make sense of text?
- When might this process be useful?

