

# On My Own

## Video: Caution Flash Flood Alert

*Cause-Effect Relationships Nonfiction Text Structure  
(cause-effect chain)*

Amir and his family are on vacation in San Antonio, Texas. One night as they were returning to the hotel, he saw swarms of bats flying in the sky. He quickly recalled learning about bats years ago in second grade. His teacher had shared that the largest community of Mexican free-tail bats reside in a cave near San Antonio during the summer. He hoped this cave would be a place they could visit! After checking with the hotel desk he learned that the cave is not open for public viewing, but the hotel had a brochure on Bracken Cave. Amir checked out the brochure and found lots of interesting information. He also discovered that it was a great example of Cause-Effect Nonfiction Text Structure!

Now it's **Your Turn!** Read *Bats of Bracken Cave* and create your own *Think Aloud* and Graphic Organizer.

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



#### Before You Read:

Think about what you may already know about bats.  
Think about what you've learned about cause-effect relationships.  
Then, jot your ideas.

#### While You Read:

As you read this passage, ask yourself, "Am I making sense?" Look for signal words that can help you determine the chain of causes and effects. You may want to highlight signal words in blue. Highlight the causes in orange and the effect 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, "Why are the bats of Bracken Cave so special?"
- Use the information you've learned from this passage and Cause-Effect Nonfiction Text Structure to explain how you determined why the bats of Bracken Cave are worth protecting.

#### The Bats of Bracken Cave

Bracken Cave, located in Texas, is the gathering place for the single largest community of mammals in the world. Every spring, Mexican Free-tailed bats migrate up to 1,000 miles to Bracken Cave, where they give birth, raise their pups, and hang in compact clusters. This results in a vast number of hungry bats living in the cave. On summer evenings, up to 20 million bats dart from the cave in a river of flapping wings. The massive bat exodus can last up to three hours. Once outside, the bats are voracious and speedy eaters, snapping up flying insects. As a result of their efficient hunting, the Mexican Free-tailed bats are a farmer's best friends, eating insects that could have otherwise damaged corn and cotton crops. The migration of Mexican Free-tailed bats to Bracken Cave is an exciting phenomenon that has endured for over 10,000 years. Therefore, many people are working hard to protect what is thought to be the most social of all bats, and the unique community they have established.





#### Create a Graphic Organizer:

After you have determined the cause-effect chain for the "The Bats of Bracken Cave," create a graphic organizer below to represent your thinking and to help you remember the author's main points.



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

**Amir's Think Aloud:** "From the title, I'm thinking that the author is going to tell me about a specific group of bats that are found in Bracken Cave. I wonder why this group of bats is so special? I read that these birds migrate to the cave to give birth, raise their babies, and hang out, so they must not live there all year long. I notice in the very next sentence the author uses the words "this results in." These words signal *cause-effect text structure*. So, the migration of the bats to the cave is the *cause* and the 20 million hungry bats darting from the cave to eat insects is the *effect*. That wouldn't happen if the bats didn't migrate there. As I continued to read, I see the signal words "as a result" which tells me I'll read about another *effect*. I'm thinking that this is a *cause-effect chain*. It says that eating insects is helpful because they could damage the corn and cotton crops. In the last sentence I notice one more signal word, "therefore." This signals another *relationship*. I'm thinking that because the bats are helping the farmers, the *effect* is that many people want to protect the bats. How interesting! I cannot imagine seeing that many bats flying through the sky! These bats are helpful!"

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

**Amir's Graphic Organizer:** "Because there are a chain of events, I'm going to use a cause-effect chain graphic organizer."

#### Questions to Think and Talk About:

- How do *signal words* help Amir make sense of the text?
- How does the *Cause-Effect Chain Graphic Organizer* help Amir determine important ideas?
- Why might this process help you make sense of text?
- When might this process be useful?

