

Reading nonfiction text is important for student success in primary grades all through high school and beyond. Here are some great tips to help your child learn how to read information-rich books.

How to Read Nonfiction Text

By: Reading Rockets (2011)

Children love to read about real people, places, and events. Nonfiction books present real information in engaging and interesting ways. However, most children read a lot more fiction than nonfiction, so spend some extra time helping your child learn how to navigate a nonfiction book.

Talk about nonfiction

Begin by explaining that the book you're about to share is nonfiction. That means that the book will give information that is true. The book will be organized around a specific topic or idea, and may present new facts that you may learn through reading. Some children even enjoy sorting their home libraries into fiction and nonfiction books. This simple categorization task may help your child understand the difference between fiction and nonfiction.

Look at the parts

Most good nonfiction books will have helpful features that are not a part of most fiction books. These parts include a table of contents, an index, a glossary, photographs, charts with captions, and a list of sources. Share the purpose of the features with your child.

Table of Contents

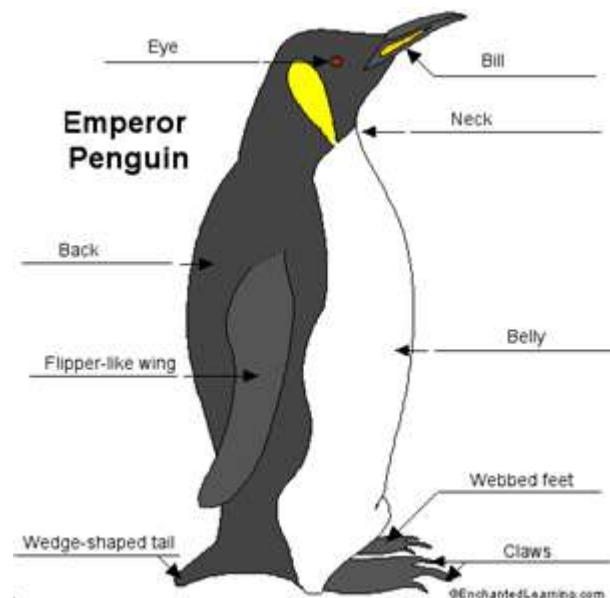
Located at the front of a book, the table of contents displays a list of the big ideas within the book and where to find them.

Captions

Captions are usually right under photographs, figures, maps, and charts. Captions give a quick summary of what information is presented in the graphic.

Photos/Charts

A great deal of information can be found by "reading" the charts and photos found within nonfiction text. Readers will first need to figure out what information is presented. Then they'll need to discover how to navigate the information. Some charts use clear labels, while others require more careful examination. Help your child learn more about the different ways information can be displayed.



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Index

An index is an alphabetical list of almost everything covered within the book, with page numbers. Readers can use the index to look up specific terms or concepts and go right to the specific page where the information is located..

Glossary

Located at the back of the book, is a glossary which contains key words that are related to the topic and their definitions. These definitions provide more information about new vocabulary words.

Be the Reading Boss

Nonfiction books do not have to be read from cover to cover. Readers can use the table of contents and index to go right to the information they are most interested in. This makes them the “reading boss” of that book!

Passages from the book can be reread as often as necessary until your child understands what is written. You can refer to pictures, charts and tables over and over again as well.

As natural learners, readers are drawn to books that give information about something or explain something they've always wondered about. You can feel good about introducing your child to a new world of information.

Adapted from

<http://www.idonline.org/article/47164>



Possible Nonfiction Books

Children

- **First Human Body Encyclopedia**
By DK Publishing (ages 6 & up)
- **Frogs**
By Nic Bishop (ages 4 & up)
- **Nat Geo Wild Animal Atlas: Earth's Astonishing Animals and Where They Live**
By National Geographic Kids (ages 5 & up)
- **Our Solar System**
By Seymour Simon (ages 6-9)
- **Teeth**
By Sneed Collard (ages 6-8)

Teens

- **The Notorious Benedict Arnold: A True Story of Adventure, Heroism, and Treachery**
By Steve Sheinken
- **Wheels of Change: How Women Rode the Bicycle to Freedom...**
By Sue Macy
- **Bootleg: Murder, Moonshine, and the Lawless Years of Prohibition**
By Karen Blumenthal
- **Changed the World : A Story of Magic, Spice, Slavery, Freedom, and Science**
By Marc Aronson and Marina Budhos