

Inquiry Mini-Lessons

Finding Information in Non-fiction Texts

As students research, it is essential that they understand how they can use non-fiction texts to access information. They will need to be introduced to the various features in non-fiction texts.

Time: 10–15 minutes

- Materials:**
- a variety of non-fiction texts related to the inquiry question (Ensure that the texts selected have a wide variety of non-fiction features.)
 - chart paper and marker
 - sticky notes
 - one non-fiction text for each pair of students

Grouping: whole class and partners

Procedure:

1. Show students the covers of a selection of non-fiction texts related to the inquiry question. Have students discuss with a partner the features they would expect to find in non-fiction texts.
2. On chart paper, record the features that students noted for non-fiction texts (e.g., table of contents, index, glossary, appendix, illustrations, photographs, charts, maps, headings and subheadings, captions, labels, etc.).
3. Give each pair of students some sticky notes and an example of a non-fiction text. Explain that they will be going on a hunt through the text, page by page, looking for features that will help them to find information in the text.
4. Give students about five minutes to search through their books with their partner.
5. Have each pair share with the class one of the features they noted with a sticky note. Ask students to explain how the feature works in helping to find information.
6. Add any new features discovered to the Features of Non-fiction chart on chart paper. Display the chart so that students can refer to it during their research.

I want to make sure that this text has the facts that I'm looking for to answer my inquiry question, "How we can help everyone to have clean water?" I can use many of the features of non-fiction texts to help me. I want you to work with a partner to find some of these features. Each time you find a feature, you should mark it with a sticky note.

Teaching Tip: To teach students how to use a particular text feature, see the "Using Non-fiction Text Features to Find Information" mini-lesson.