



THINK CRITICALLY ABOUT INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

What is informational text?

Factual information designed to teach the reader something.

Different types include...

- **Biographies and autobiographies**
- **Expository texts** - books about history, social studies, science, and the arts
- **Technical texts** - including directions, forms, and information displayed in graphs, charts, diagrams, and maps
- **Digital sources displaying a range of topics**

Each source has its own, special features/characteristics.

Determine the Author's Purpose:

What is the author's stance on the topic? Is he/she trying to explain or convince you of something? What facts can you pull from the text to support your thoughts?

Read Between the Lines:

Separate fact from opinion and keep in mind that the author has chosen to present certain facts and information based on his/her purpose.

Text Features to Help the Reader Make Meaning:

Reading informational text is different from reading literature. Many types of informational texts have specific features, such as:

- **Content characteristics** - qualities specific to the subject.
- **Text features** - tools that help the reader find information (i.e. table of contents & index, headings, sub-headings, labels, graphics, pronunciations in parentheses, captions, bolded words, etc.).
- **Text structure** - the way the author has set-up the book. Features include cause & effect, compare & contrast, problem & solution, sequence or time order, listing or description, or any combination of the above.
- **Language characteristics** - vocabulary specific to the topic.
- **Graphical characteristics** - items like photos/captions, illustrations, and diagrams to help the reader understand fully.

Understanding these features, and how they work, helps the reader follow along and make better meaning.

