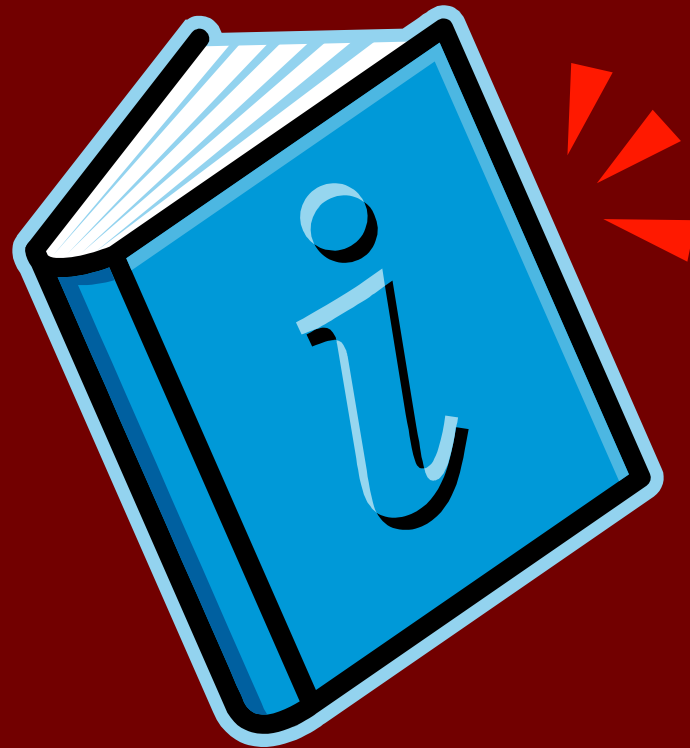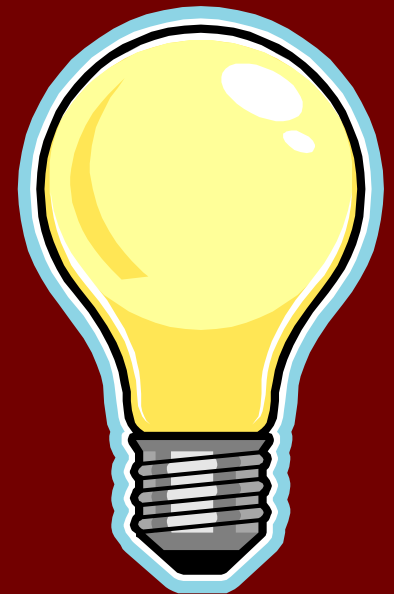# Getting the Most from **Non-Fiction Books**

What is the purpose of non-fiction?

- Provide **factual information**
- **Teach** new **facts**, **ideas**, **procedures** and **concepts**

How Should You Read Non-Fiction?

- **Some** non-fiction books can and should be read **like a fiction book** – in order, start to finish, tells a story

- **Other** non-fiction books (reference books) are alphabetical collections of **unrelated** articles that could be read in **any order**.

- Yet **others** fall **in between** – the chapters or sections might be self-contained, yet loosely related to nearby chapters.

How do Non-Fiction Books look different?

- Often **heavily illustrated** with photos, drawings, maps, graphs, charts, close-ups, and cut-away illustrations – look for **captions**, **legends** and **explanations**

- Use of different sizes and kinds of **fonts** and **headings** to highlight new words, the start of a new section, etc.

- Text may be broken into **boxes** or **sidebars** to provide added information
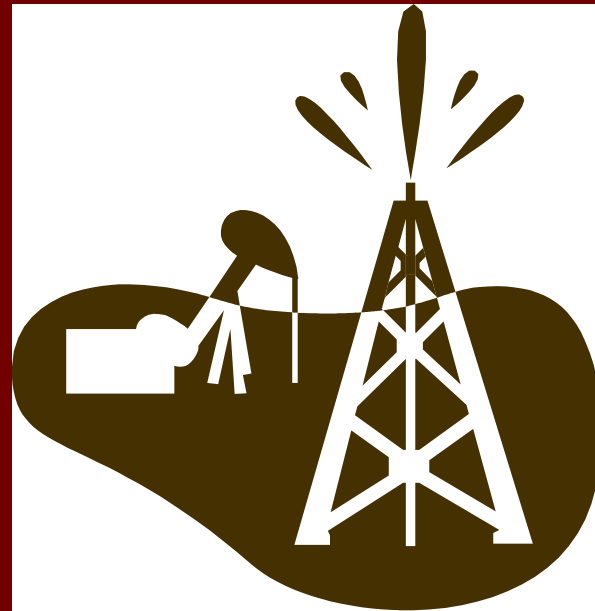
What Tools Help You Navigate Non-Fiction Books?

- *Where is the info?*
  - Check **table of contents** and **index**
- *What does the word mean?*
  - See if there is a **glossary** or list of terms with definitions
- *What's the deal with this picture?*
  - Look for **captions** or **labels**
- *What do the symbols on this map mean?*
  - Look for a **map legend**
- *Where can I get more information?*
  - Look for a **bibliography** or **list of related books & websites**

What are some common information patterns in non-fiction?

- **Problem/solution**
  - *(can we find a way to replace oil as an energy source?)*

What are some common information patterns in non-fiction?
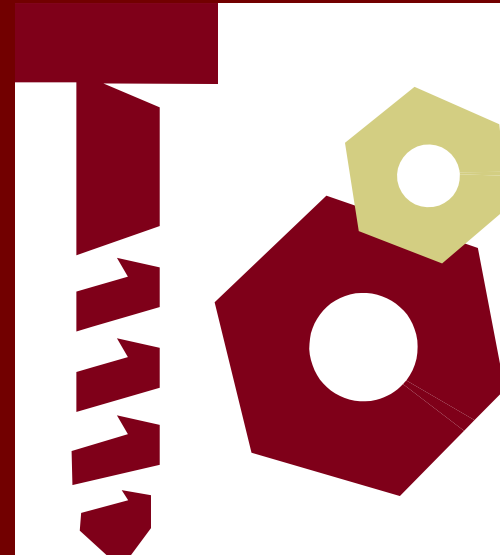
- **Cause/effect**
  - *(how does pollution contribute to global warming?)*

What are some common information patterns in non-fiction?
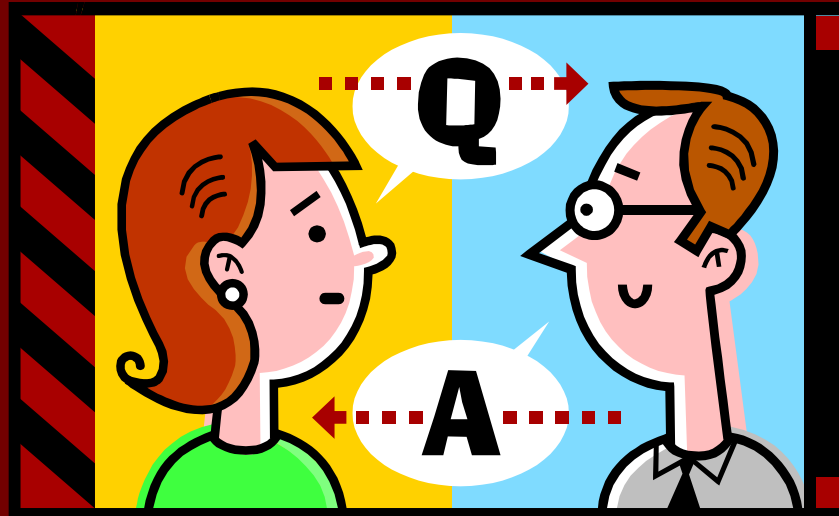
- **Compare/contrast**
  - *(how are an inclined plane and a screw alike and how are they different?)*

What are some common information patterns in non-fiction?

- **Question/answer**
  - *(like a FAQ on a website – tries to predict common questions and gives answers)*

What are some common information patterns in non-fiction?

■ **Sequence of events in time order**
– *(a timeline showing important inventions developed over the years, starting with simple machines and going forward in time)*

What are some common information patterns in non-fiction?

■ **Description, definition, or list**

– *(here are the simple machines…)*

How is the Non-Fiction Section of the LMTC Arranged?

- Non-fiction books are arranged by subject
- Dewey Decimal is a numbering system where different numbers mean different subjects
- Helps you find books with the same subject, which is a common need for research projects

Non-Fiction Call Numbers

- Non-fiction call numbers start with a number that represents the subject

- Next line has letters that usually (but not always!) refer to the author

598

SMI

(a book about birds by an author named Smith)

940.54

JON

(a book about WWII by an author named Jones)

Non-Fiction Call Numbers

- To arrange, start with the numbers, arrange low to high
- Think of them as "dollars & cents"
- If two numbers are exactly the same, then use the letters to arrange

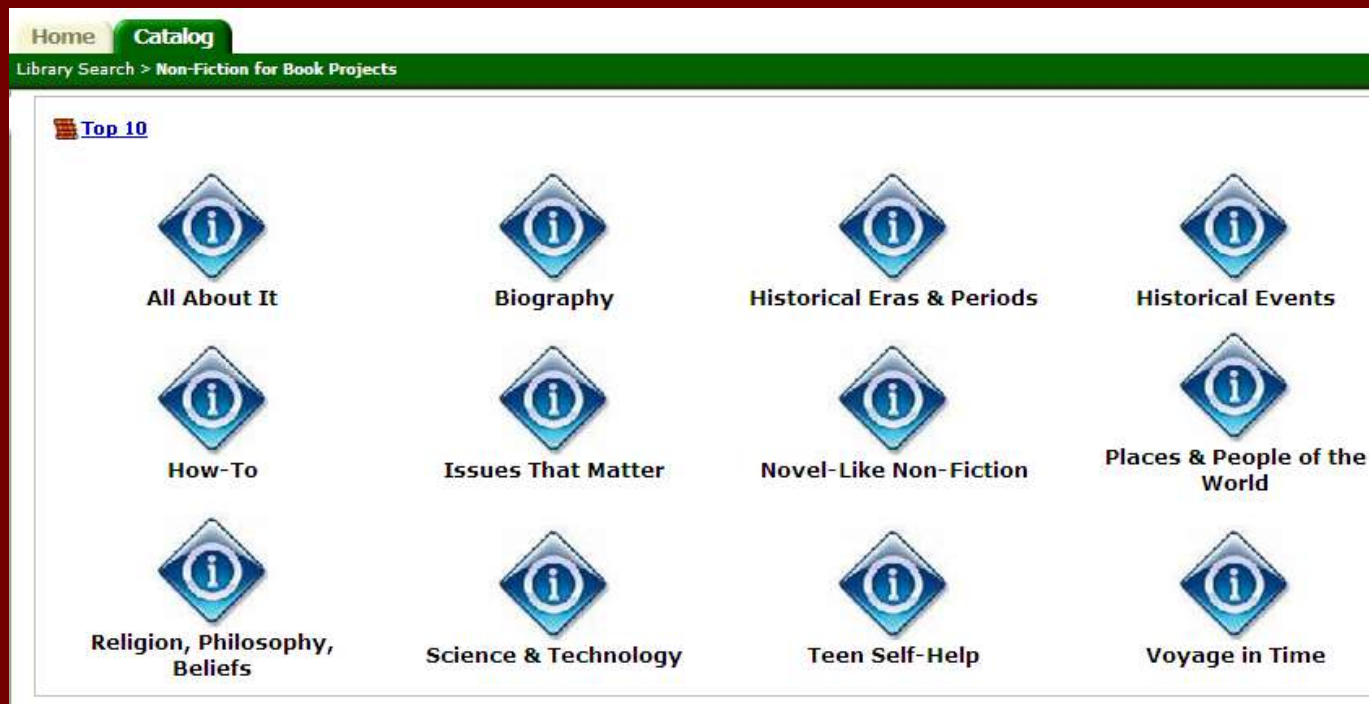**938.2 SAM**

398.2 SAM

389.2 SMI

389.2 SMI

398.2 SAM

938.2 SAM

Non-Fiction Lists on Destiny

■ If you're looking for an interesting non-fiction read for a book report, check out the Non-Fiction for Book Projects visual search category in Destiny

How Can You Improve Your Non-Fiction Reading Skills?

Read more non-fiction!

We have lots of fun and interesting non-fiction on all sorts of topics!

Bibliography Format for Books

Author name if given. Title. Place: Publisher, Year of publication. Medium.

Lemann, Nicholas. The Promised Land, the Great Black Migration and How It Changed America. New York: Knopf, 1991. Print.

Bibliography Format for Encyclopedia Articles

Author if given. "Title of article." Title of Encyclopedia. Year. Medium.

Temperley, Nicholas. "Johann Sebastian Bach." World Book Encyclopedia. 1993. Print.

"Space Exploration." Encyclopedia Britannica. 1998. Print.