

Nonfiction Text Features

Text Feature	What Is It?	Purpose
Photographs and Illustrations	Visual Images	Help readers understand exactly what something looks like
Captions and Labels	Single words, short phrases, or paragraphs that accompany illustrations, photographs, or diagrams	Help readers better understand a picture or photograph
Maps	A visual image of a geographic feature, often accompanied by a key or distance scale	Help readers understand where things are in the world
Introduction	Information at the beginning of a text or a short explanatory section or page that comes at the beginning of a text	Helps readers get oriented to the text through background information or context; provides information about the purpose and focus of the book; and states the writer's intention
Headings	The title or topic at the beginning of a larger section	Help readers understand what a section is going to be about
Subheadings	A short phrase, sentence, or question that highlights a key point within a section	Help readers by giving a preview of what the subsection will be about
Types of Print	Different ways to make words stand out in the text	Help readers by signaling, "Look at me! I'm important!"
Time Line	Information that expands upon the text and is placed in chronological order	Helps readers understand the chronological relationship among events, people, and discoveries
Bibliography	List of resources used	Helps readers understand where information was gathered and where to go for additional information
Bullets, Asterisks, and Stars	Symbols used to list facts or important information found in the text	Help readers easily identify important information
Inserts and Sidebars	Additional information found in boxes or along the sides of the page	Help readers understand more information about important points
Table of Contents	A list of a book's sections found in the front to let readers know what is contained in the book	Helps readers identify key topics in the book in the order they are presented
Index	An alphabetical list of important subjects in the text that is located at the back of the book	Helps readers easily get to specific information in the text
Diagrams and Cutaways	An illustration of an object or an inside look at what is being discussed that is usually labeled	Help readers understand information more clearly
Charts and Graphics	An organized gathering of information in a clear, visual presentation	Help readers visualize information
Glossary	A list of words and their definitions located toward the end of the book	Helps readers define words contained in the text

