

How Thinking Readers Read Nonfiction:

Before reading nonfiction text, thinking readers:

- Determine their purposes and goals to guide their selection of nonfiction books.
- Preview by:
 - Checking key words
 - Examining headings, subheadings and visuals
 - Activating prior knowledge to access/connect to new information
 - Assessing the scope and depth of the content
 - Noting organizational structures (e.g., cause-effect, compare-contrast) and access features versus those to skim or ignore
 - Make connections to other books, to themselves and to the world

During the reading of nonfiction text, thinking readers:

- May only read a section of the book, skim sections from front to back, view visuals only, or skip irrelevant information depending upon what was read during the selection process.
- Reread important information or content that is difficult to understand.
- Reflect on ideas by underlining and writing notes in the margins; adding post it notes, or creating graphic organizers to assist with synthesizing, integrating, or summarizing information (e.g., comparison chart on different kinds of whales).
- Use knowledge of organizational structures and how nonfiction books work to make predictions about content.
- Carefully read topic sentences, topic paragraphs, summary sections in paragraph form, bulleted/numbered lists, and sidebars.
- Notice words or phrases that signal explanation or definition, persuasive writing, compare and contrast and author's perspective/biases.
- Alter predictions or assumptions of the content based on reading.
- Reevaluate or reaffirm prior knowledge based on reading.
- Visualize or make images in the mind while reading text.
- Compare information from one source to other sources, such as other nonfiction books, fiction books, web pages, or interviews with experts.
- Continue to make connections to other books, to themselves and to the world.
- Analyze the text for main ideas.
- Question what they read.
- Modify or shift reading rate, attention to details, and decisions to reread depending on whether the content is challenging, difficult to understand or confusing.
- Monitor their own comprehension, keeping in mind their reading goals, which lead to decisions about whether to continue to read or move on to another book.
- Decide on the quality of the information and whether the presentation of the topic is interesting, the visuals clarify or add information, the arguments or interpretations of the author are credible, the organization assists the reader in understanding the topic, and the style of writing is appealing.
- Analyze visual features and their captions in relationship to the text to determine similarities in information, and text explanations of visuals such as diagrams, flow charts, tables, maps, graphs...

After reading a nonfiction text, thinking readers:

- May reread select pieces to clarify or confirm information.
- Summarize by retelling verbally, in writing or visually.
- Determine accuracy and credibility of the content compared to other sources. Determine if further information is needed because all questions were not answered or new questions arose as a result of a reading.
- Consider how to use the information depending upon the original purpose for reading.
- Critique what is read to see if the book presents information consistent with what is known about the topic.