

Fun with Non-Fiction

Why read non-fiction?

Non-fiction books have many parts that are not included in fiction books. They are organized around a specific topic or idea with the goal of teaching the reader something new.

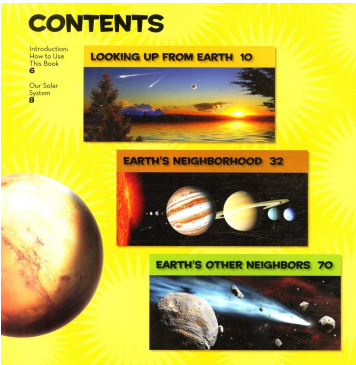
Kids love to read about real people, animals, places and events. Children’s non-fiction books present information in engaging and interesting ways. 4 reasons why we love them:

1. Introduce new concepts
2. Have new vocabulary
3. Are written differently than picture books
4. Broaden your child’s view of the world: learn about other cultures, customs, places around the world



Parts of a non-fiction book

- **Table of contents:** a list at the front of the book showing the main topics with page numbers.
- **Photos and charts (graphics):** much information can be found by looking at the graphics. Help your reader examine the graphics to learn more about the topic.
- **Captions:** usually under a photo, figure, chart or map. Captions give a quick summary of the information presented by the graphic.
- **Labels:** often located on or around graphics to help describe the information.
- **Glossary:** the glossary contains key words that are related to the topic and their definitions—very helpful with new vocabulary!
- **Index:** an alphabetical list of everything covered in the book.



Label

Graphic



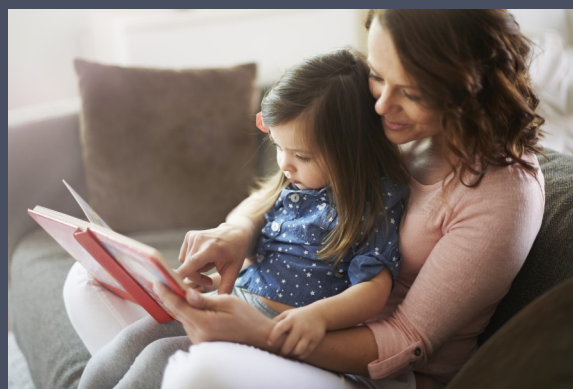
Graphic

Caption



Make the Most of Reading Non-Fiction

- **Make it interactive:** Make predictions and share reactions—make reading nonfiction a joint effort.
- **Take a “book walk”:** Look closely at the front cover, index, table of contents, graphics and labels to get a better understanding of the topic.
- **Spend time looking at the pictures:** Photos and illustrations can help kids make sense of ideas and spark additional conversation.
- **Explore different types of nonfiction:** Just as some readers love fantasy and others love realistic fiction, nonfiction isn’t one-type-fits-all (see more about this under “Types of Non-Fiction”). Help your child look for books that excite them.
- **Make connections:** Connect what you have read to the real world, like how the bats in a book are nocturnal just like the raccoon that got into your garbage the other night. Search out multiple books about the same topic. Repeated conversations help new vocabulary and information stick!



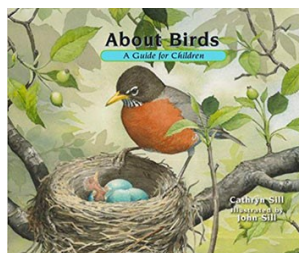
You don't have to read from cover to cover!

Readers can use the table of contents and index to choose where they would like to start reading.

However, if your child wants you to read from cover to cover, encourage them to use the table of contents to understand how the book is organized. You can also spend time on the pictures, charts and tables.

Types of non-fiction

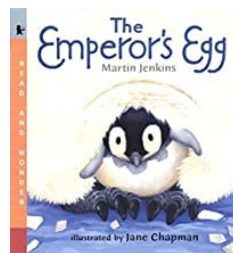
- **Traditional:** These are the books that come to mind for many of us - expository writing, or “all about books”. These texts tend to offer a general overview of a topic.
- **Browse-able:** These books are filled with interesting facts, pages packed full of trivia, detailed pictures, and surprising information. The most familiar examples of this kind of nonfiction text include “Eyewitness” books and Guinness World Records. Also check out National Geographic Kids “Little Kids First Big Book of…” series.
- **Narrative Nonfiction:** These are books that do two jobs - they tell a story with characters, setting, and a narrative plot AND they also teach information. For example, “The Emperor’s Egg” by Martin Jenkins or biographical books for children , such as “Manfish: A Story of Jacques Cousteau” by Jennifer Berne.
- **Expository Literature:** These informational texts are expository in nature, but are carefully designed to be engaging, interesting, and even beautiful--not just informative. Try National Geographic Kids.
- **Active Titles:** These books might include how-to books geared toward young readers, recipe books, or crafts and are designed to get readers involved in a project or an activity.



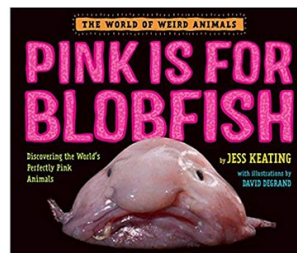
Traditional



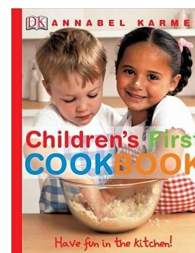
Browse-able



Narrative



Expository



Active