

# Fundamentals - Reading NonFiction

Content Area: **English Language Arts**  
Course(s): **Generic Course**  
Time Period: **6 weeks**  
Length: **6-8 Weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Unit Overview

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Nonfiction is a rich, engaging genre offering a variety of topics that will entice any reader! Students will spend a great deal of time in school (and their lives outside of school) reading nonfiction, from newspaper articles to textbooks, from recipes to biographies, from travel brochures to informational web sites. Reading nonfiction is empowering. So often students feel like “experts” on the topics or subjects they have read about. Nonfiction reading sparks students’ curiosity and opens their eyes to new worlds and different points of view. Nonfiction has so much to offer readers and is an essential genre to study.

Part of the magic in any unit of study is exposing students to possibilities within a genre. By reading and studying three types of nonfiction (reference, literary, and biography), students will develop an understanding of various forms, features, and purposes of nonfiction. Their reading of nonfiction texts will be enhanced by an understanding of the structure, layout, and text features associated with each particular type of nonfiction writing. Common conventions and features enable authors to make their ideas and information clear and accessible to readers. Nonfiction writers stir the imagination and write in vivid, engaging styles. Students will enjoy the aesthetic features of nonfiction texts, while appreciating the clear and accurate information and the presentation of facts.

Nonfiction reading often leads to inquiry. Students have a natural curiosity and wonder about many things. Nonfiction texts encourage students to closely observe and learn about all that is around them. Students will develop passions for locating information, finding answers, and deepening their understanding about the nonfiction topics they are reading and learning about. This unit will help students learn and apply specific reading skills and strategies that will enable them to discover facts, identify big ideas, and learn new information about the topics they are reading about. It will also address the challenges of reading nonfiction, as well as ways to work through difficult text—essential skills for any reader.

## Transfer

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Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

-What kinds of long term, independent accomplishments are desired?

- Read a variety of types of nonfiction, including reference, literary nonfiction, and biography;
- Use knowledge of genre, text structure, and text features to support understanding;
- Use comprehension strategies before, during, and after reading to monitor and deepen comprehension;
- Employ a repertoire of strategies and self-monitoring skills to figure out unfamiliar vocabulary while reading;
- Use textual evidence to support thinking about nonfiction reading in both conversation and writing;

- Infer an author's purpose or viewpoint;
- Summarize and synthesize information to determine important ideas;
- Analyze the impact of the author's language choices on the meaning and tone of the text;
- Analyze and evaluate arguments presented in nonfiction texts;
- Synthesize and compare information across texts and in various formats (e.g., print, visual); and
- Determine and pursue meaningful goals for enhancing the reading of nonfiction

For more information, read the following article by Grant Wiggins.

[http://www.authenticeducation.org/ae\\_bigideas/article.lasso?artid=60](http://www.authenticeducation.org/ae_bigideas/article.lasso?artid=60)

## **Meaning**

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### **Understandings**

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Students will understand that...

- What specifically do you want students to understand?
- What inferences should they make/grasp/realize?

Nonfiction has three distinct types of text (reference, literary and biography).

The various forms of nonfiction text include different forms, features and purposes.

Nonfiction text should include clear and accurate information and presentation of facts.

### **Essential Questions**

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Students will keep considering...

- What thought provoking questions will foster inquiry, meaning making and transfer?

- What is the topic?
- What connections can I make to this topic or across books?
- What do I know about the topic or about the person?
- What text features will help me learn more information?

## **Application of Knowledge and Skill**

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### **Students will know...**

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Students will know...

What facts and basic concepts should students know and be able to recall?

- Synthesizing of text
- Text features/structure of nonfiction text
- Identify work meaning using context clues
- Make inferences
- Determine the importance of information in the text

### **Students will be skilled at...**

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Students will be skilled at...

What discrete skills and processes should students be able to use?

- Synthesize and compare information across texts and in various formats (print, visual)
- Use textual evidence to support thinking about nonfiction reading in both conversation and writing
- Employ strategies and self-monitoring skills to figure out unfamiliar vocabulary while reading
- Inferring the author's purpose and viewpoint
- Analyze and evaluate arguments presented in nonfiction texts

## Academic Vocabulary

**Instructional Vocabulary:** The Instructional Vocabulary are words derived from the discussions and instructions outlined in each lesson.

	identify	
	infer	
cause	integrate	sequence
chapter	message	signal
chronological	navigate	similarities
compare	opinion	skim
components	organize	solution
connections	paragraph	sorting
context	perspective	strategies
contrast	prefixes	structures
description	preview	suffixes
descriptive	purpose	summarize
determine importance	root words	supporting
discover	scan	topic
effect	schema	
explore	sensory	
features		
genre		

### Tier 2 and 3 Vocabulary - Mentor Texts

Mentor Text	Can You Fly High, Wright Brothers?	Climate Change and Air Quality	A Drop Around the World	Just a Second	Oceanography	Young Pelé: Soccer's First Star
Tier 2	escape globe history human inventing personality strict	abundant combat efficient exposure factor generate hovers launched livestock particles patterns penetrate shields survive	cycle disguises journey mission tragedy value	average created cycle equivalent events human nature population rotation survived	continents environment features filter microscopic pollution survival theory vehicle	advantage afford image injury memorized

thrive

Tier 3	aluminum cords dune elevator engine glider jet pilot powered propellers steel	Air Quality Index carbon dioxide carbon sink drought exhaust fossil fuels geothermal power greenhouse gas industrial revolution internal combustion engine methane ozone pollen pollutants renewable energy smog	bazaar camouflaged condense conserve cumulus evaporate filtered fluid gutter hibernates hoisted monsoon nestled prisms purified reservoir shallow spigot vandalizes vaporize	atmosphere axis culture inches interval kilograms kilometers liters mated meteor meters millimeters minute pounds second units universe	bioluminescence camouflage evaporate expedition landforms molten oceanographers organisms photosynthesis plankton plate tectonics predators pressure reefs salinity samples trenches tsunamis voyage	announcers center defender defense dribbled drills forward goal goalie goalposts nickname opposing pass tournament uniforms
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**Tier 2 and 3 Vocabulary - Shared Texts**

Shared Text	“Being Squirrelly”	“E-Trash: What Happens to Our Old Electronics?”	“Getting Back Up With Lindsey Vonn”	“Jamestown”	“Recycling”	“Why Pluto Is No Longer a Planet”	Zoobooks®: Zoot Butterflies	Zoot Snak
Tier 2	message population purposes temporary weighs	atmosphere avoided consumer estimates graph	bruise motivation successful triumph unavoidable	enemies event hardships survive threatened	eliminated international shrinks symbol waste	argument discovered opinion rank survey	benefit future harmony preserve	conti creat reduc
Tier 3	captivity communicate den hollow	awareness contaminated electronics environmental	athlete champion goals Olympic	colonists crop domestic drought	aluminum collecting consumption disposable	astronomers dwarf gravity orbit planet plutoid	commercial conserve deplete erodes exporters habitat	adap agile back const

solitary species	impact landfills polluted recycle toxic	setbacks slopes titles	fertilized fort founding kidnappers pollinate scarce shipmaster slaves species tobacco	emissions energy environment incinerators landfills manufacturing pollutes purchasing recyclables	solar system telescope	nutrients species sustainable resource tropical	lung musc orga prey prim shed speci symr veno verte
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## **Learning Goal 1**

Students will build schema, identify key nonfiction features and identify reading strategies.

## **IRA 1 Target: Why and How Do We Read Nonfiction?**

Readers understand why we read nonfiction and how reading nonfiction is different from reading fiction.

- Students will learn to recognize the three different types of nonfiction and how to use this information and their own background knowledge about a topic to make sense of new information.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **Formative Assessment Opportunities**

## **IRA 2 Target: Nonfiction Text Features**

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Readers of nonfiction understand how text features can help them navigate informational texts.

- Students will learn how to identify common nonfiction text features and use them to sort and deepen their understanding of the content.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.7	Make connections between specific descriptions and directions in a text and a visual or oral representation of the text.
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **IRA 3 Target: Take Your Time**

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Readers of nonfiction understand how to interact with a text in order to deepen their understanding of a topic.

- Students will learn that reading nonfiction is often a slower, more deliberate, and recursive process than reading fiction.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the

text.

LA.RL.4.7	Make connections between specific descriptions and directions in a text and a visual or oral representation of the text.
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **Formative Assessment Opportunities**

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Have the partners who worked together during Partnership or Small Group work share their chosen text and their completed "K-W-L" handouts. Then ask them questions such as the following (and/or others):

- Which strategy did you use to determine the topic?
- How did this strategy help you figure out what would be presented in the text?
- Did this strategy help you think about what you already knew and the topic?
- Were there nonfiction text features that helped you find the answers to your questions? Which ones?
- What additional information did you learn about the topic?

## **IRA 4 Target: Organization Is the Key!**

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Readers of nonfiction understand how to use text structures to identify important information.

- Students will learn how writers organize information to help readers navigate fact-filled texts.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in literature.
LA.RL.4.5	Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and



poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.

LA.SL.4.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **Formative Assessment Opportunities**

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- Use students' selected text(s) and sticky notes from the independent reading activity for one-on-one conferences. Ask them how the key words and phrases they noted helped them determine the structure of the text.
- Select a text that students have not yet read that uses the description structure. During one-on-one conferences, have each student read all or part of the same text aloud. Then ask the student to describe the main idea and point out descriptive details in the text.

## **IRA 5 Target: What's the Problem?**

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Readers of nonfiction understand how writers choose different text structures to help readers deepen their understanding.

- Students will continue their study of nonfiction text structures and learn how to use these structures to deepen their understanding of a topic.

LA.L.4.1

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

LA.L.4.3

Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

LA.L.4.6

Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).

LA.W.4.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

LA.RL.4.1

Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

LA.RL.4.3

Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).

LA.RL.4.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in literature.

LA.RL.4.5

Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.

LA.RL.4.10

By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and

poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.

LA.SL.4.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **Formative Assessment Opportunities**

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Collect students' text structure graphic organizers completed during independent reading to assess that they have selected the correct graphic organizer for their particular nonfiction texts and included notations about key ideas. Confer with students as needed.

## **Accommodations/Modifications**

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### ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

Assign small groups of students a nonfiction text that represents one of the text structures studied without telling them the structure of the text. Have the groups read the texts to determine the structure and then identify key signal words and/or phrases that support their thinking and write them down. As a class, play a game of "What's the Structure?" by having a member of each group read one page from the text that includes one or more of the key words and phrases. After each page is read, have the class guess the structure. Have the group members continue reading (if necessary) until the class guesses the correct structure.

## **IRA 6 Target: Be a Word Detective!**

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Readers monitor their reading of a text at the sentence and word levels to notice when meaning is breaking down.

- Students will learn to stop and use "fix-up" strategies when what they are reading does not make sense or includes unfamiliar words or phrases.

LA.L.4.1

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

LA.L.4.3

Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

LA.L.4.4

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

LA.L.4.6

Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).

LA.W.4.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in literature.
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **Formative Assessment Opportunities**

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During one-on-one conferences, have students share the word parts and definitions they listed in the "Word Work" section of their Reading Notebooks. Select one or more of the word parts the students listed and ask them to think of a word that includes the word part and what they think the word means.

## **IRA 7 Target: Determining the Author's Purpose**

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Readers understand that reading nonfiction helps them appreciate different perspectives and points of view about various subjects and topics.

- Students will learn how to identify the author's purpose for writing a text in order to better analyze the content and make inferences.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.4.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
LA.RL.4.8	(Not applicable to literature)
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and

teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **IRA 8 Target: Summarizing Like a Reporter**

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Readers of nonfiction know how to summarize important information from the text.

- Students will learn how to demonstrate their understanding of a text by summarizing key ideas like an investigative reporter.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
LA.RL.4.3	Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **Learning Goal 2**

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Students will independently apply reading strategies and skills demonstrating an understanding of the nonfiction genre and its key features.

## **Mini-Lesson 1 Target: Reading Like a Nonfiction Expert!**

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Readers use their schema about the types of nonfiction, as well as the text's subject, to enhance their understanding of nonfiction texts.

- Students will learn how to follow a step-by-step process to activate their prior knowledge, generate questions, and locate answers to build content understandings.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when
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writing or speaking.

LA.L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.7	Make connections between specific descriptions and directions in a text and a visual or oral representation of the text.
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **Formative Assessment Opportunities**

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Conference Questions:

- What is schema? How do we activate it
- Why is it important to generate questions before we read? While we read?
- How can previewing, skimming and scanning help enhance our reading experience:
- How do text features help us find answers to our questions and learn new information about a subject

Listen and take notes (optional) as students present their articles and "K-W-L Chart" handout completed during independent reading. Provide guidance as needed.

## **Mini-Lesson 2 Target: Follow the Text Map to Understanding**

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Readers of nonfiction use the components of the genre to enhance their understanding of a subject and learn new information.

- Students will learn how to combine information from text features and key sentences in descriptive paragraphs to enhance understanding of a text's big ideas.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a

	day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
LA.RL.4.7	Make connections between specific descriptions and directions in a text and a visual or oral representation of the text.
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **Formative Assessment Opportunities**

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Conference Questions:

- How are text features like a roadmap of the text?
- How do key sentences in paragraphs lead us to the big ideas of a text?

Have one-on-one conferences with students using the text they read during independent reading. Ask students to share their selected text and pages where they placed sticky notes to assess their comprehension of using text features and key sentences to locate important details and determine the big idea of the text.

## **Accommodations/Modifications**

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ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

Ask students to draw a map or write directions for a "new reader" of Can You Fly High, Wright Brothers?, detailing how to navigate pp. 22 and 23. Students should detail each text feature, how to locate the feature and how the features will assist the new reader in interpreting the information on the pages.

## **Mini-Lesson 3 Target: Hey, Look at Me!**

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Readers use the components of nonfiction texts to enhance their understanding and learn new information.

- Students will learn how to use text features, or graphic aids, to help them determine the meaning of key vocabulary and locate facts or supporting details.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.4.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
LA.RL.4.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in literature.
LA.RL.4.7	Make connections between specific descriptions and directions in a text and a visual or oral representation of the text.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **Formative Assessment Opportunities**

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Conference Questions:

- What text features can we use to help us find important details and the meaning of important vocabulary?
- How do text features help us determine what the author really wants us to know?

During independent reading, confer with students regarding how to read around the page using text features to determine important details.

## **Accommodations/Modifications**

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### ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

Ask students to select a topic that they know a lot about (e.g., taking care of a pet, playing a sport) and to write a short informational article to share with the class. Remind students to include clarifying text features (e.g., illustrations with captions, time lines, bold print to identify important, content-specific vocabulary)

## Mini-Lesson 4 Target: Sorting It Out!

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Readers use their knowledge of nonfiction text structures to help sort and chunk information.

- Students will learn how to use various nonfiction text structures to determine what is important to pay attention to when reading nonfiction texts filled with many real-world facts.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
LA.RL.4.5	Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.
LA.RL.4.8	(Not applicable to literature)
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## Formative Assessment Opportunities

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Conference Questions:

- Why is it important that we identify the text structure or structures the writer used?
- How can identifying text structures help us sort through new information?

Take notes during students' presentations of their news reports during the Partnership or Small Group work. Confer with the partners or small groups to assess their comprehension of the description text structure.



## Accommodations/Modifications

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### ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

Ask students to select one of the main ideas in the "Jamestown" article and create a comic strip representing the main idea and supporting details. Suggest that students create a four-frame comic strip. The first tile can be the title page (main idea) and the subsequent three tiles can each represent one of the supporting details.

## Mini-Lesson 5 Target: When Did That Happen?

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Readers use their knowledge of nonfiction text structures to sort through information to determine important details.

- Students will learn how to read a biographical nonfiction text and utilize the chronological text structure to comprehend the sequence of important events in the subject's life.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
LA.RL.4.3	Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).
LA.RL.4.5	Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## Formative Assessment Opportunities

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Conference Questions:

- What are some examples of chronological text structure signal words?
- How does identifying the chronological text structure help us better understand the information presented in a biography?

Use students' "Buddy Biographies" completed during Partnership or Small Group work to assess their understanding of the use of key signal words that reflect a chronological order.

Select a short biography and make a note of pages that include key signal words. During one-on-one conferences, have each student scan the same text, looking for and pointing out the key words they notice. Ask them to explain how the words reflect the chronological text structure.

## **Accommodations/Modifications**

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### ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

Ask students to write a one-page biography of an important person in their lives. Have them use key signal words based on the chronological structure and make sure they tell the events in chronological order. Have students share their biographies with a partner or with the class.

## **Mini-Lesson 6 Target: How Do These Compare?**

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Readers use their knowledge of nonfiction text structures to help sort and chunk information.

- Students will learn about key signal words and phrases that will help them identify the compare and contrast text structure in order to determine what is important.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
LA.W.4.1	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.5	Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **Formative Assessment Opportunities**

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Conference Questions:

- What are some examples of compare and contrast signal words?
- How does our knowledge of nonfiction text structures help us sort information?

Confer with students during independent reading time, asking them to recount the important details in a compare/contrast nonfiction text. Assess their ability to identify the text's organizational structure using key signal words and phrases.

## **Accommodations/Modifications**

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ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

Ask students to write a letter to astronomers explaining their own side of the debate about whether Pluto is a planet. Ask students to use at least two specific reasons from the article "Why Pluto Is No Longer a Planet" to support their position. Ask students to share their letters or display them on a bulletin board.

## **Mini-Lesson 7 Target: Putting the Parts Together**

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Readers monitor for meaning and use “fix-up” strategies when what they are reading does not make sense or seems unfamiliar.

- Students will learn how to notice when meaning is breaking down and figure out the meaning of words by using context clues and morphological cues (meaningful word parts).

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

LA.L.4.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in literature.
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **Formative Assessment Opportunities**

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Conference Questions:

- What are prefixes, suffixes and root words?
- How does knowing the definitions of these word parts help readers make sense of new vocabulary words?
- How does the use of rich language help readers visualize the text?

Have one-on-one conferences with students using the words and definitions they listed in their Reading Notebooks during independent reading. Ask students to point out the word parts of the words they listed and explain how these helped them determine the meaning of the words.

## **Mini-Lesson 8 Target: What's the Author's Message?**

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Readers understand that nonfiction writers use evidence to support their message or particular points in a text.

- Students will learn how to determine why a writer wrote a text and to identify the important points that he or she wants readers to remember about the subject or topic.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific

words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).

LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
LA.RL.4.8	(Not applicable to literature)
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **Formative Assessment Opportunities**

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Conference Questions:

- Why is it important to determine why an author wrote a particular text?
- What is the author's point of view? What evidence can you find in the text to support your inferences?

Confer with individual students during independent reading time to assess their ability to infer the author's message and provide specific supporting evidence from the text. ASK: What does the author want us to feel and/or remember about this topic/subject?

## **Mini-Lesson 9 Target: Sum It Up!**

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Readers read nonfiction texts and summarize or state the key ideas concisely in their own words.

- Students will learn how to use text features and paragraph structure cues to sort, prioritize, and summarize key details in an informational text.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
LA.W.4.8	Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print

	and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.
LA.W.4.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
LA.RL.4.8	(Not applicable to literature)
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **Formative Assessment Opportunities**

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Confernece Questons:

- What clues does the author provide in the text to draw readers' attention to the important ideas?
- Why is it important for readers to summarize what they have read?

## **Mini-Lesson 10 Target: Integrating Ideas Across Texts**

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Readers integrate information from multiple texts on the same topic or subject to deepen their content understandings.

- Students will learn how to note important details from two texts about a common subject and to integrate key ideas to deepen their learning and prepare them to speak knowledgeably about the subject.

LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
LA.W.4.8	Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.
LA.W.4.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
LA.RL.4.9	Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics.
LA.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## **Formative Assessment Opportunities**

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Conference Questions:

- Why is it important to integrate ideas when reading multiple texts on the same topic?
- How can reading two or more texts about the same topic help you in your studies, such as science or social studies?

## **Accommodations/Modifications**

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### ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

Select a topic with which all students are familiar or know something about (e.g., Halloween, the environment, the city in which they live, ect.) Have students work in partnerships to write a brief summary of what they know about the topic. Then have the partnerships share their summaries with the class. Post summaries on a bulletin board with the topic as the heading.

## **Summative Assessment**

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“All Animals Are Star Quality” and “Each Animal’s Physical Structure”

## **21st Century Life and Careers**

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Select all applicable standards from the applicable standards

## **Formative Assessment and Performance Opportunities**

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*Approximately 2 weeks into the unit, administer*

*As you approach the completion of the unit*

## **Accommodations/Modifications**

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*Please see lesson-specific accommodations listed within each target above.*

## **Unit Resources**

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BrainPop:

<https://jr.brainpop.com/readingandwriting/readingskills/readingnonfiction/>

[Schoolwide Running List of Independent Titles - Skill/Strategy Based](#)

## **Interdisciplinary Connections**

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[Can You Fly High, Wright Brothers?](#)



Climate Change and Air Quality

A Drop Around the World

Just a Second: A Different Way to Look at Time

Oceanography: The Study of Oceans

Young Pele: Soccer's First Star

"Being Squirrely"

"E-Trash: What Happens to Our Old Electronics?"

"Getting Back Up with Lindsey Vonn"

"Jamestown"

"Recycling"

"Why Pluto is No Longer a Planet"

Zoobooks: Butterflies

Zoobooks: Snakes

SOC.6.1.5.GeoSV.5

Use geographic data to examine how the search for natural resources resulted in conflict and cooperation among European colonists and Native American resulting in changes to conditions.