

NON-FICTION NAVIGATOR

Make newspapers & info texts less scary



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For children preparing for:

OC • Selective • Scholarship Exams

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PAGE 1: How to Use This (Parent Cheat-Sheet)

Problem:

Your child sees a news article, fact sheet or "information report" and goes:

- "Too many words."
- "I don't get it."
- "Where do I even start?"

Solution:

A simple 3-step template that trains them to:

- Grab the heading
- Grab the subheading / first paragraph
- Pull out the main idea in one sentence

Perfect for OC / Selective / Scholarship style non-fiction reading.

Use this template with:

- Short newspaper articles
- Kids' news sites

- Info texts (animals, space, history, science)
- School comprehension sheets

Rules of the Game:

- Child spends 1–2 minutes just on the heading + subheading / first paragraph
- Then they fill in the Non-Fiction Navigator Template:
 - "This text is mainly about..."
 - "The author wants me to know that..."
- Do this once or twice a week.
- **After 4–6 weeks, non-fiction stops feeling like a wall of words.**

PAGE 2: The 3-Step Navigator

STEP 1 - Heading = Topic

1A. Copy the Heading

Heading: _____

1B. Underline the "topic words"

These are the words that tell you what the text is about overall.

Circle / underline up to 3 key words:

Topic words I found: _____

Sentence stem:

"This text is about _____."

Example:

Heading: "Plastic Pollution in Our Oceans"

Topic words: Plastic, Pollution, Oceans

"This text is about plastic pollution in the oceans."

STEP 2 - Subheading / First Paragraph = Focus

2A. Find what the text is focusing on

Ask: Is it about:

- A problem?
- A solution?
- A discovery?
- A change over time?
- A description of something?

Subheading / first paragraph tells me:

A problem A solution A change A discovery A description
(tick one or two)

2B. Highlight 3 "important words or phrases"

Important words/phrases:

Sentence stem:

"The text focuses on [problem/solution/etc] about _____."

Example:

Subheading: "Scientists warn that sea animals are dying after eating plastic rubbish."

Important words: scientists warn, sea animals, dying after eating plastic

"The text focuses on a problem about sea animals dying after eating plastic."

STEP 3 – Main Idea = One Clear Sentence

Now combine Step 1 and Step 2.

Use one of these frames:

- "This text is mainly about _____ and explains _____."
- "The author wants me to understand that _____."
- "In this text, we learn that _____ because _____."

My Main Idea Sentence:

Tell your child:

"If you can say the main idea in one clear sentence, the text is not scary anymore. You're in control."

PAGE 3: Worked Example

Example Text (Short)

Heading: "Plastic Pollution in Our Oceans"

Subheading / First line: "Scientists warn that thousands of sea animals are dying each year after accidentally eating plastic rubbish or getting trapped in it."

Using the Navigator

STEP 1 – Heading

Heading: Plastic Pollution in Our Oceans

Topic words: Plastic, Pollution, Oceans

"This text is about plastic pollution in the oceans."

STEP 2 – Subheading / First line

Type: A problem (tick "problem")

Important words/phrases:

- scientists warn
- sea animals
- dying after eating plastic / getting trapped

"The text focuses on a problem about sea animals dying because of plastic rubbish in the ocean."

STEP 3 – Main Idea Sentence

Using frame:

"This text is mainly about plastic pollution in the oceans and explains how sea animals are dying because they eat plastic or get trapped in it."

That's it. Once they can do this, they can tackle most OC/Selective style non-fiction passages.

PAGE 4: Printable "Non-Fiction Navigator" Template

NON-FICTION NAVIGATOR

Text title / article: _____

STEP 1 - HEADING

Copy the heading: _____

Topic words (max 3): _____

This text is about _____. .

STEP 2 - SUBHEADING / FIRST PARAGRAPH

Is the text mostly about (tick):

- A problem
- A solution
- A change
- A discovery
- A description

Important words / phrases:

The text focuses on (problem/solution/etc) about _____.

STEP 3 - MAIN IDEA

Choose a frame:

- This text is mainly about _____ and explains _____.
- The author wants me to understand that _____.
- In this text, we learn that _____ because _____.

My Main Idea Sentence: