**About This Lesson:**
**Reading Informational Text**

**Common Core State Standards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 6</th>
<th>Grade 7</th>
<th>Grade 8</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RI 2</strong> Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details.</td>
<td><strong>RI 2</strong> Determine central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text.</td>
<td><strong>RI 2</strong> Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RI 5</strong> Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.</td>
<td><strong>RI 5</strong> Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.</td>
<td><strong>RI 5</strong> Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.</td>
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**Lesson Objectives**
Tell students that, in this lesson, they will learn to
- use text features—such as titles, headings, and graphic aids—to locate information in nonfiction texts
- take effective notes on the main ideas in informational text

**Strategies for Teaching**
How you use this interactive lesson will reflect your personal teaching style, your instructional goals, and your available technological tools. For example, *Reading Informational Text* can work well as both a whole-class lesson or as a targeted small-group skill review.

Here are teaching tips for each screen in the lesson.

**SHARE WHAT YOU KNOW**

**Screen 2: Just the Facts**
Have a volunteer fill in the chart based on suggestions from the rest of the class. For example, when students want to find out sports statistics, they might look at specific sports sites or the *Sports* section of an online newspaper. To find the information quickly, they might use these tools: a Web site’s menu options, the search field, headings that list team names, and tables or graphics.
**Screen 3: The Power of Information**
As you reveal each numbered item, ask for a volunteer to give an example of a time when he or she used informational text for that purpose. Be ready to share examples of your own in case students cannot think of appropriate examples.

**LEARN THE SKILL**

**Screen 4: What Do Informational Texts Have in Common?**
Before revealing the answer to the question, ask students to think about magazine and newspaper articles, textbooks, and Web sites they have read recently. Ask: What features or tools does each type of text have to help readers find the information they are looking for?

**Screen 5: Text Features**
As you cover each text feature, ask students to discuss the purpose of each one. Have them think about informational texts they have read outside of class, such as magazines or online news sources. Ask: Is this text feature used in the sources you read? If so, what kind of information does the text feature often convey?

**Screens 6 and 20: Preview the Text**
Have students gather in small groups with printouts of the article. In their groups, they should circle and label as many text features as they can. (Make sure students do not read the text of the article yet.) Have a volunteer from each group circle one or two features on the whiteboard.

Initiate a discussion about what students expect to learn from the article, based on the text features alone.

**Screens 7 and 21: Track the Main Ideas**
Tell students that an article’s main ideas are the most important ideas that the writer wants to communicate. An article often has an overall main idea, as well as more specific main ideas of each section or paragraph. Often, a main idea is directly stated in a topic sentence at the beginning or end of a paragraph or section. Sometimes, a main idea is implied by the title, text features, and details.

**Screens 8 and 22: Track the Main Ideas**
Tell students that a section’s heading can hint at the main idea of that section and make it easier to find the topic sentence. Ask: What does the writer want readers to know about bionic eyes? (that they can help people to see) Invite volunteers to explain how each sentence in the paragraph supports the idea that one bionic device can help people see.

**Screen 9: Take Notes**
Have students mark up the main ideas and supporting details on their printouts of the article. They might highlight the sentence or sentences that state the main idea of each
section and underline the supporting details. For each section, have students write each main idea in their own words.

Ask: What note-taking format could you use to organize this information so that is easy to remember?

**Screens 10 and 23: Take Notes**
A more complete version of this outline is available for print. Model note-taking by guiding students through the “Bionic Eyes” section of the article. Then have students complete sections II, III, and IV on their handouts. Note that section IV corresponds to the sidebar in the article. Remind students that they may need to add or subtract letters or numbers under the specific sections.

To extend the activity, have students transfer their notes to a cluster diagram. Initiate a discussion about when a graphic organizer might be more effective than an outline.

**Screen 11: Tips for Reading Informational Text**
Ask for volunteers to complete each sentence, and then discuss why the answers are correct. For extra practice, have students complete the same sentence frames using the “Bionic Breakthroughs” article, or another informational text of your choice.

To extend the activity, ask students to predict what other headings they expect to find in the rest of the article about the mouse lemur.

**PRACTICE & APPLY**

**Screen 12: Identify Text Features**
Before asking students to answer the question, start a discussion about the article and its text features. Have students scan the text and predict what they think the main idea of the article is and what details it might cover.

The article is available to as a handout for students.

**Screen 13: Identify the Main Idea**
Have students vote on which card they think contains the correct answer. To guide them, ask for a volunteer to summarize what the paragraph is about.

To extend the activity, have students read the rest of the article on their handouts. They can use a note-taking format of their choice to record the main ideas and supporting details.

**Screen 14: Take Notes**
Divide students into small groups to discuss how they want to take notes on the information in the diagram. If they have trouble getting started, suggest they use a bulleted list to take their notes, and simply name and describe each part of the volcano.
Sample Answer:
Parts of a Volcano
- the cone—the part built up like a mountain
- gas and ash—erupt out of the top of the cone
- Earth’s crust—skinny strip on the surface
- magma—the lava at the bottom of the volcano
- mantle—bigger strip of Earth below the surface

Screen 15: Analyze Text Features
Have one student read the passage aloud. Then have the class vote on the answers they think are correct. For each answer choice, have a volunteer explain why it is correct or incorrect. Then click to check answers.

Screens 16 and 24: Track Main Ideas
Ask: What differences do you notice between the style of writing featured in online articles and that found in textbooks? (Many online articles have a more informal style.) Make sure students understand that despite differences in writing style, it’s still important to track the main ideas in any informational text. Doing so will help them understand and remember what they read.

Screen 17: Take Notes
Point out that the people who create Web sites often are not professional writers. When searching for information online, students should be sure to read everything carefully. Ask: What might happen if you didn’t read the last line on this Web page?

Sample Answer:
Soccer Tryouts
- Be there at 3:00 sharp on Wednesday, 8/24.
- Go to South Field.
- Don’t forget cleats and shin guards.
- Ask Mom to pick me up at 5:30!

Screen 18: Match Text Features
Have volunteers take turns moving the items into the correct spots. Invite the class to vote on the results before checking the answers. You might discuss as a class how to know the difference between the title and the subtitle, guiding students to the conclusion that because “Why Texting Isn’t Rotting Brains” is more specific than “Smarter Than Your Smartphone,” it is most likely the subtitle.

Screen 19: Wheel of Information
Have students work in small groups. They should write down any titles, subtitles, headings, graphic aids, etc., they might use. Ask:
- For each topic, what type of information might you put in a bulleted list?
- What key words might you italicize?
- What images would you use?
Note: Printable versions of all public-domain selections in this lesson are available on the following pages of this document.
Once just a dream of science fiction writers, bionics—mechanical devices that function like living organisms or parts of living organisms—are now science fact. They are enabling the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and amputees to move motorized, artificial limbs with thoughts alone.

Bionic Eyes
One bionic device can help previously blind individuals to see. That device serves as a prosthesis (artificial body part) for the retina, the sensory tissue that lines the back of the eye. A group of tiny electrodes is surgically attached to the retina. Then a wireless video camera worn in eyeglasses sends images to the array. As a result, patients can distinguish light from dark, the outlines of objects, and even basic colors.

Bionic Ears
Another bionic device can help some deaf or partially deaf people to hear. A tiny microphone picks up sounds and sends them to electrodes that have been attached to the ear’s cochlea, the part of the inner ear that usually detects sound vibrations and passes them on to nerves. Over the past 30 years, these devices have helped nearly 200,000 people to hear.

Bionic Limbs
Scientists have figured out how to use electricity to allow people to move artificial limbs with their minds. A person thinks about moving an arm or a leg, and that causes muscles to contract. The contractions generate tiny bursts of electricity. Then electrodes placed on those muscles conduct the signals to an artificial, motorized prosthesis. Such signals can direct the movements of the artificial limb. Just what does this mean? Someday soon, individuals who have lost their legs will use this technology to walk again!

What’s Next?
Bioengineers predict that, within the next 20 years, we will see even more bionic breakthroughs.

- **Bionic skin** will be able to provide feedback to the brain on temperature and pressure. With this skin, prosthetics wearers should actually be able to feel the world around them again.

- **Prostheses for the brain** itself will be able to correct a variety of problems, including the inability to retain memories.
Deep in the forests of western Madagascar lives a species of primate that rarely leaves the trees. As you will see, the discovery of this animal has had a big impact on conservation in the island country.

The Tiniest Primate
The mouse lemur is the smallest primate that has been discovered. A primate is a group of mammals that includes lemurs, monkeys, apes, and humans. There are about 16 known species of mouse lemur. The pygmy mouse lemur is the smallest. Its head and body are less than two-and-a half inches long. But its tail is more than double that length!

The Lemurs’ Habitat
They move among the branches, searching for fruit and nuts, or hunting insects. Their feet almost never touch the ground as they scurry from tree to tree. These forests used to cover most of the island. Now they are found mostly on the coasts. This is the lemurs’ only natural habitat—the forests of the islands of Madagascar and Comoros, which lie off the eastern coast of Africa.

Endangered Habitat
Slash-and-Burn Farming  Farming is a major industry in Madagascar. For a long time most farmers used a method called slash-and-burn farming, in which farmers burn down forestland to clear space for crops and to fertilize the soil. Over time, most of the forest of Madagascar was lost to these farming methods.

Saving the Forest
When Mireya Mayor, a primatologist, or scientist who studies primates, discovered a new species of mouse lemur, the tiny animal became very popular. Mayor was able to convince the Madagascar government to turn its habitat into a national park. She now helps run programs teaching the people of Madagascar about conservation and teaching farmers other methods of farming.
“Bionic Breakthroughs”

Overall Main Idea: Today, many bionic devices help people overcome or manage their disabilities.

I. Bionic eyes can help people see.
   A. The device works as an artificial retina.
      1. 
      2. 
      B. 

II. 
   A. 
      1. 
      2. 
      B. 

III. 
   A. 
      1. 
      2. 
      3. 
      B. 

IV. 
   A. 
   B.