

## COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES: DETERMINING IMPORTANCE

This is the Nonfiction connection. Pick out the most important information, highlight essential ideas, isolate supporting details, read for specific information, make decisions about what they need to remember.

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**MATERIALS:** texts, Post-It notes

### PROCEDURES:

- **Overviewing** - (a form of skimming and scanning) - activate prior knowledge; note characteristics of text length and structures; note important headings and subheadings; determine what to read and in what order; determine what needs close attention; determine what to ignore; decide to quit because text contains no relevant information; decide if text is worth careful reading or just skimming.
- **Highlighting** - look at first and last line in each paragraph; highlight only necessary words and phrases, never sentences; make notes in margin to emphasize highlighted words; note cue words.
- **Important Features in Nonfiction:**
  - *font and effects - bold, italics, colour, bullets, captions*
  - *cue words - for example, for instance, in fact, in conclusion, most important, but, therefore, on the other hand*
  - *illustrations and photographs enhance text and take reader deeper into meaning*
  - *graphics - diagrams, cut-a ways, cross-sections, overlays, maps, word bubbles, tables, graphs, charts*
  - *text organizers - index, preface, table of contents, glossary, appendix*
  - *text structures - cause and effect, problem and solution, question and answer, comparison and contrast, description and sequence.*

### EXTENSIONS:

- Build background knowledge about nonfiction conventions by creating a book of these conventions: captions, illustrations, index, table of contents, comparison, etc. On each page include name and purpose of the convention along with an illustration.
- Give students each three Post-Its to find three important ideas in a piece of writing.
- Model the method you would use to write a nonfiction book (choose a subject that you know a lot about). Place different information on each of a number of pages. Include illustrations (Harvey, Stephanie. *Strategies that Work*, Pages 126 -130.)

### RESOURCES:

Harvey, Stephanie. *Strategies that Work* <http://www.readinglady.com>