Common text features to explicitly teach students

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| **Name of text feature** | **Purpose of text feature** |
| **Title** | **Quickly tells the reader what information they will learn about** |
| **Table of contents** | **Shows students the different chapter or section titles and where they are located** |
| **Index** | **Directs students where to go in the text to find specific information on a topic, word, or person** |
| **Glossary** | **Identifies important vocabulary words for students and gives their definitions** |
| **Headings or subtitles** | **Help the reader identify the main idea for that section of text** |
| **Sidebars** | **Are set apart from the main text, (usually located on the side or bottom of the page) and elaborate on a detail mentioned in the text** |
| **Pictures and captions** | **Show an important object or idea from the text** |
| **Labeled diagrams** | **Allow readers to see detailed depictions of an object from the text with labels that teach the important components** |
| **Charts and graphs** | **Represent and show data related to, or elaborate on, something in the main body of text** |
| **Maps** | **Help a reader locate a place in the world that is related to text** |
| **Cutaways and cross sections** | **Allow readers to see inside something by dissolving part of a wall or to see all the layers of an object by bisecting it for viewing** |
| **Inset photos** | **Can show either a faraway view of something or a close-up shot of minute detail** |

**Source: http://www.readingrockets.org/article/guiding-students-through-expository-text-text-feature-walks**

Student guide for the text feature walk

1. In your small group, choose one person to start by reading the first text feature.
2. That person names the text feature (Is it a heading? Picture and caption? Map?).
3. That same person reads the text feature.
4. As a group, discuss any predictions, questions, and connections you have based on the text feature and discuss how you think it will relate to the main idea. Everyone should contribute.
5. Have a new person share the next text feature and repeat steps 2-4. Repeat until all of the text features have been discussed or the teacher calls time.

**Fast finishers**- If you have discussed all of the text features, think back and reflect on all of the text features you have read and discussed. Now, what do you expect to learn about? What do you think the main idea will be?