Analyze the Features of an Informational Report

1. Focus

Explain Genre Features

Say: Genres are different types of writing, such as fictional texts, nonfiction reports, and biographies. Each genre has some key features. A cookbook has recipes that tell you the ingredients and how to make different foods. You know that a cookbook will always have those features. Informational reports have common features, too, and today we’re going to name and explore these features.

Build a Class Informational Report Features Anchor Chart

Say: Think about the informational reports that you have read. Let’s create an anchor chart to summarize the features that we can expect to find in an informational report.

Display a blank chart like the one shown here on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Distribute BLM 1 to students. Work with them to record features of informational reports. You may use the following prompts:

• How should an informational report begin?
• Where does an author get facts on the topic? What kind of facts does an author include?
• How does a writer give readers information from people and groups directly involved with a topic?
• How does the writer of an informational report organize and present information?
• What viewpoints are represented in an informational report?
• What features other than text do you expect in an informational report?
• How should an informational report end?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informational Report Features</th>
<th>Examples from the Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Includes a strong lead</td>
<td>page 16: tells impressive fact (“Americans spend more than six billion dollars a year on potato chips”); asks question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author researches topic and uses accurate facts</td>
<td>page 16: includes facts about Thomas Jefferson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>page 16: records facts about Moon Lake Lodge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>page 18: records facts about first person to make and distribute chips and includes a quote from the Snack Food Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author uses primary sources</td>
<td>page 17: shares quote from George Crum, “potato crunches”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author presents information in an order that makes sense</td>
<td>pages 17–20: tells about key events in history of potato chips in order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different views on topic represented</td>
<td>page 18: “Although George gets credit for inventing the potato chip, some people believe his sister should get credit, too.”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: As you research and then write your own informational reports, remember that informational reports have certain parts that readers expect to see, such as a beginning that hooks the reader and graphic features. Refer to our anchor chart to help you remember the key parts of an informational text.

As students brainstorm their report topics, encourage them to think about the features of a report that they will need to include in their writing.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to share report ideas they have generated and how they plan to incorporate features of the genre as they organize and draft their reports.

Strategies to Support ELs

**Beginning**
Pair beginning ELs with fluent English speakers during the small-group activity. Keep in mind that they will not be able to contribute many ideas orally. You will also want to work with them individually to reinforce concepts while other students write independently.

**Intermediate**
Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the small-group activity. Display the following sentence frames on chart paper and model how students can use them to contribute ideas in the group:

- Reports have ______.
- The author uses ______.
- In “Potato Chips” I see ______.

**Advanced**
Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the small-group activity.