Learn About Informational Reports

1. Focus (15 MINUTES)

Display the cover of Discover Informational Reports using the big book or interactive whiteboard resources. Invite students to tell you what they learned yesterday about reports. Use the following questions as needed to generate conversation:

• What is a report?
• Why do people write reports?

Say: Today we’re going to read “A Whale Is Not a Fish!” together. After we’re finished, we will read two reports that students wrote using the facts from this text.

Read aloud the headings and text on pages 4–7 in an expressive voice as you point to each word. Follow students’ lead in discussing the information or photographs as you pause after each spread or page.

Read the instructional text at the top of pages 8 and 9. Ask: Who remembers what the word topic means? (Allow responses.) Yes! A topic is what a report is about. We can show our topic by drawing a picture and thinking of a good title. Then we tell an important idea about the topic. The sentence that tells our main idea is called the topic sentence. After that we write one or two facts. Who knows what the word fact means? (Allow responses.) Yes! A fact is a piece of information that we learn from reading a nonfiction text. We write the fact in our own words and share it in our report.

Point out the child’s report on page 8. Say: A child wrote this report. Look at the picture. Look at the title. Do the picture and title help you figure out what the topic is? (Allow responses.) Yes! We can tell from the picture and title that this report is about whales.

Read aloud each section of the child’s report on page 8 with students and discuss each section. Ask: What is the main idea of this report? (Allow responses.) That’s right! The topic sentence tells us that there are many kinds of whales. What facts does the child share? (Allow responses.) Yes! Some whales have teeth, and some whales do not have teeth. This writer included two important parts of a report—the topic sentence and facts about the topic sentence.

Read aloud the report on page 9. Say: A child wrote this report, too. Look at the picture. Look at the title. Do the picture and title help you figure out what the topic is? (Allow responses.) We can tell from the picture and title that this report is about whales, too. Now what is the main idea of this report? (Allow responses.) That’s right! The topic sentence tells us that whales breathe air. What facts does the child share? (Allow responses.) The child writes that whales swim to the top of the water, and they breathe through a blowhole. This writer also included the important parts of a report!
Put the big book aside. **Say:** We’ll learn more about reports tomorrow. Because we’re still learning about reports, we’ll keep working on our book reviews today.

### 2. Rehearse (5 minutes)

Display copies of books that students have previously read. Invite partners to choose a book and reread it together. **Say:** Tell your partner what part of the book you’re going to write about. Remember that you can write about a character, a story event, or an illustration or other feature of the book. Tell what you like or don’t like. Then tell why.

If your class includes English learners, you may wish to model using the following oral sentence frames to support their partner talk:

- I like ______ because ______.
- I don’t like ______ because ______.

### 3. Independent Writing and Conferring (20 minutes)

Distribute students’ writing folders. Invite students to write their book reviews. Ask questions as needed to help students develop their sentences, and remind them to reread after each word. Continue to ask students to say words slowly, write the sounds they hear, and write the high-frequency words they know. Reinforce the editing and revising strategies they have learned, such as adding adjectives, using an uppercase letter for the word I, and checking for the correct beginning and end on each sentence. Encourage students to get ideas from one another as well.

Use the Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to help you provide differentiated support to individual students based on your observations.

### 4. Share (5 minutes)

Invite two or three students to share their book reviews. Point out and celebrate examples of opinions supported by information from the text. You may also wish to provide additional modeling based on your observations during Independent Writing and Conferring.

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**Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to Support and Scaffold Writers**

**Goal Oriented**
- When I write what I like about a book, I support my opinion with a reason.
- I ask myself questions to choose what to write about.
- I will describe _____ with the word _____.

**Directive and Corrective Feedback**
- Which feature of the book will you write about?
- Try writing the sentence again using uppercase letters at the start and for the word I.
- Show me a picture you like from the story. Now write about it and explain why you like it.

**Self-Monitoring and Reflection**
- Tell me what part of the story you decided to write about and why.
- How did you know where to use an exclamation point?
- How could you fix that?

**Validating and Confirming**
- You wrote the letter that stands for the ______ sound.
- You wrote the word ______! You worked that out!
- You asked yourself questions. That’s something strong writers do to help them think about reasons for their opinions.

**Teacher Tip**

Reinforce the concept of a topic by reading short informational newspaper articles aloud and asking students to help you figure out the topic of each one. Point out that writers often reveal the topic in the title and/or first sentence of the article. If the article includes photographs, explain that these often support the topic as well.