1. Focus

**Introduce the Mentor Informational Report**

Read aloud the title of the mentor text. You may wish to display the informational report using the interactive whiteboard resources so that students may follow along as you read.

*Say: The title of this text is “Keeping Your Brain Healthy and Strong.” What do you think might be some ways we can do this? Allow students to share their predictions.*

If your class includes English learners or other students who would benefit from vocabulary and oral language development to comprehend the article, use “Make the Mentor Text Comprehensible for ELs.”

**Read Aloud the Mentor Informational Report**

Read aloud the text, stopping at some or all of the places indicated (or at other points you choose) to highlight key features of an informational report:

1. The author may use graphic features, such as charts and photographs, to support the facts in the report.
2. The author uses accurate information and checks the facts in the report.
3. The author may use primary sources for information in the report.
4. The text contains multiple perspectives so readers may form their own opinions about the topic.

**Using Graphics**

*Before reading page 24. Say: The image at the top of the page is really interesting. The caption below it says that it shows two brain cross sections, one from a normal-functioning brain and one from the brain of a person with Alzheimer’s disease. It is dramatic to see an actual brain affected by Alzheimer’s. The image helps me understand why it is such a devastating disease. The caption and label are both important to this graphic feature, because they help explain it. Graphic features such as this one support the facts in an informational report.*

**Using Accurate Information and Fact-Checking**

*Page 26, after first paragraph. Say: Here the author uses very specific information—for example, that the heart pumps blood and oxygen into the brain, which helps it form more neuron connections. And when she presents a fact, such as that “nearly half of young people ages twelve to twenty-one do not participate in vigorous physical activity” regularly, she shows that she has checked this fact with a leading organization. As a reader of an informational report, accurate facts with reliable sources helps me trust an author.*

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**Objectives**

In this mini-lesson, students will:

- Listen to an interactive informational report read aloud to learn that an informational report often includes graphic features such as charts and photographs that support the facts presented in the report, contains accurate information and facts that the writer has checked to make sure they are correct, often includes primary sources, and presents multiple perspectives so that readers may form their own opinions.
- Share personal responses to the informational report.

**Preparation**

**Materials Needed**

- Mentor text: “Keeping Your Brain Healthy and Strong” from *The Brain*
- Chart paper and markers
- Interactive whiteboard resources
Using Primary Sources
Page 26, after first paragraph. Say: The author quotes a psychology professor to support her information. Quoting an expert is using a first-hand, or primary source. Quoting a primary source is especially powerful because this type of source has a lot of knowledge about report topics.

Presenting Multiple Perspectives
Page 26, after second paragraph. Say: The writer signals to me that she will present some opposing ideas. She writes that video and online game companies believe their products offer stimulation to the brain, but that some researchers disagree. Then she explains why these researchers have a different opinion. By showing me the different perspectives that people have, I can come to my own conclusion about what I believe.

2. Rehearse

Respond Orally to the Mentor Informational Report

After reading, invite students to share their personal reactions to the text by asking questions such as:

• How do you feel about the way the information was presented? Was it easy to understand? Why or why not?
• What did you learn from this report?
• How did the graphic images support the information in the text?
• Did you like this informational report? Why or why not?

If necessary, model the following sentence frames to support ELs and struggling students:

• I learned ______.
• The pictures helped/did not help because ______.
• I liked this informational report because ______.

Make the Mentor Text Comprehensible for ELs

Beginning
To support the section of the report about healthy brain foods, use photographs from the interactive whiteboard resources or bring a variety of the foods to class, such as an apple, carrots, spinach, and so on. Point to each item and say its name. Say: These foods are good. They are good for your body. They are good for your brain.

Beginning and Intermediate
Say: This informational report is about the brain. It tells how to keep your brain healthy.

Intermediate and Advanced
Ask: What do you do to stay healthy? Do you know how to help your brain stay healthy? Do you exercise or play a sport? What kinds of foods are good and healthy for your brain? Encourage a conversation to build vocabulary and background information.

All Levels
Use the images provided on the interactive whiteboard resources to front-load key content vocabulary and concepts for the read-aloud.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We just learned about features of an informational report. To write an informational report, you will research the topic to learn about it. When you write the report, you will check to make sure the facts are correct. You can use graphic images to support the information you present. And you may use primary sources. Also, you will try to present multiple perspectives so that readers can make their own conclusions.

Encourage students to think about the features of informational reports and have them write a paragraph about why these features are important. During student conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to discuss the features of informational reports and why they are important.