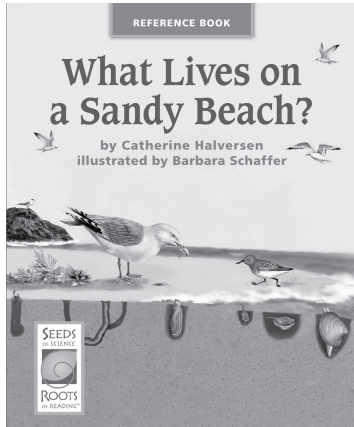


## Using Text Features

with *What Lives on a Sandy Beach?*  
from *Seeds of Science/Roots of Reading™*



### Introduction

This strategy guide introduces an approach for teaching students about text features that authors use to present and organize information. Understanding text features such as headings, indexes, and bold print can enhance reading comprehension, particularly comprehension of expository text. This guide includes an introductory section about the strategy of using text features, a general overview of how to teach this strategy with many science texts, and a plan for introducing text features with the *Seeds of Science / Roots of Reading™* book, *What Lives on a Sandy Beach?*

### Book Summary

*What Lives on a Sandy Beach?* provides a virtual walk along a sandy beach with a focus on the multitude of organisms that live there—most of which are hidden from view. This book is designed to stimulate readers' curiosity about sandy beach organisms and to provide a rare look at these organisms in their natural habitats. Readers are introduced to the idea that a sandy beach is a habitat for many organisms, and they learn about organisms that live in different parts of the sandy beach habitat—the sand, the beach wrack, the sandy beach, and the nearshore water. Readers are challenged to answer questions posed in the text about the organisms—all of which can be answered through inference based on evidence in the illustrations.

### About This Book

#### Reading Level

Guided Reading Level\*: N

#### Text Features

book description, table of contents, index, glossary, headings, about the author, bold print, italic print, diagrams, illustrations

\*Guided Reading Levels based on the text characteristics from Fountas and Pinnell, *Matching Books to Readers*.

### Science Background

Sandy ocean beaches often appear devoid of animals. That's because most of the life on a sandy beach is hidden in the sand. Beach habitats can be difficult places in which to survive for many animals. One reason for this is that the beach is always changing. Sand is kept in constant motion by pounding waves, currents, and wind. A surprising number and diversity of organisms claim the shoreline as part of their habitat. Many more are found flying over or in the nearshore water. A variety of shorebirds can be seen feeding on organisms that live just under the sand, while scavenging gulls soar above the water looking for whatever they can find to eat. Plankton, sand dollars, and some fish may be found in the nearshore water. Seals may be seen hauled out on the beach. Except for the birds and marine mammals, all of these other animals live at least part of the time in the sand. Sand protects them from the pounding waves and strong winds. Some organisms live in relatively permanent burrows, while others are continually burrowing through the sand to find new places to live. The animals that spend part of their lives on the surface of the sand have hard shells, which help to protect them. Soft-bodied creatures, like worms, spend their entire lives buried in the sand.

## Using Text Features

Meaning in books is not communicated by the body of the text alone. Books also include features such as indexes, illustrations and captions, headings and subheadings, bold print, and italic print that provide access points into and information about the text. Text features can help readers:

- identify the most important ideas in a text,
- anticipate what's to come,
- understand challenging ideas, and
- find the information they are looking for.

Understanding text features can enhance reading comprehension, particularly comprehension of expository text. The use of text features is especially useful in science, since science texts use many text features to explain, organize, emphasize, reinforce, and extend important information.

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## Teaching Text Features

The following activities can be used to teach text features with any content-rich book.

- Create a chart where your class can track the text features they find in different texts. (See the Text Features Chart copymaster included with this guide.) Introduce the text features as they appear in books your students read, or have students browse through a variety of books to identify different text features they can use to construct a class chart. Ask students to record the text features they find before, during, or after reading.
- Provide each student with a copy of the Text Features Chart copymaster so they can independently track the features they find in the books they read.
- When introducing a content-rich book, select one or two text features to highlight. Choose features that are helpful for determining the important ideas in the text or understanding its organization. Pose questions that help students recognize the functions of these features such as the following:
  - a. What does our preview of this feature tell us about the kind of information we will encounter?

- b. What does this feature tell us about how the book is organized?
  - c. What does this feature tell us about the author's intentions?
  - d. How does this feature help us find the information we are looking for?
  - e. How does this feature help us understand the information in the book?
- Challenge students to use text features such as illustrations, tables of contents, headings, or indexes to find specific pieces of information to answer questions you pose.
  - After reading a text, reflect as a class on how the feature(s) helped explain or reinforce the text, or how the feature helped you find the information you were seeking.
  - Once students are familiar with several text features, you can provide opportunities for them to practice adding these features to text.
    - a. **Captions.** Provide students with photocopies of pages from content-area books that contain illustrations with the captions removed. Guide students in writing captions that are brief and specific and that help the reader link the illustrations to the text.
    - b. **Headings.** Provide students with photocopies of pages from content-area books that contain sections with the headings removed. Guide students in writing clear, brief headings that help the reader predict the content of the sections.
    - c. **Diagrams and labels.** Provide students with a diagram of a familiar process, cycle, or object and ask them to add labels that provide a short description of the diagram.
  - Point out variation among text features. Have students examine different examples of the same text feature and identify how they can vary.
    - a. **Tables of contents** can have different names (e.g., Table of Contents, Contents, In This Issue) and different levels of specificity—some include just chapter titles and others also include the headings of sections and subsections.
    - b. **Indexes** can have different formats and levels of complexity. They may consist of one

or more pages, contain one or more columns, include some words in bold print, etc.

- c. **Illustrations** can serve a variety of purposes. Some add information that goes beyond the text, while others clarify or provide a visual representation of a concept presented in the text. Students may recognize how some illustrations are more helpful than others.
- Encourage students to include text features in their own expository writing. For example, students can add an index and a glossary of important words to a class book, or they can organize a report with headings and a table of contents.

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## Using Text Features in *What Lives on a Sandy Beach?*

*What Lives on a Sandy Beach?* contains a number of text features: book description, table of contents, index, glossary, headings, about the author, bold print, italic print, diagrams, and illustrations. Use the following procedure to teach students about text features using *What Lives on a Sandy Beach?*

### Getting Ready

1. Make a copy of the Text Features Chart copymaster for each student.
2. On chart paper, make a large version of the Text Features Chart and post it in a visible spot.

### During Class

1. Read *What Lives on a Sandy Beach?* in a way that is consistent with your classroom routines, giving students as much independence as possible.
2. After reading, distribute a copy of the Text Features Chart student sheet to each student. Ask students to look over the chart and point out text features with which they are familiar. Explain that text features can help make information in a book easier to find and understand.
3. Ask students to look back through *What Lives on a Sandy Beach?* and record all of the features they can find on their Text Features Chart.

4. Choose a few text features from the book for further discussion. For example:

- **Table of Contents.** Have students turn to pages 3–4. Point out that these are Contents pages, or a Table of Contents. Explain that tables of contents list the sections within a book along with the page number where each section starts. Point out that tables of contents typically appear at the beginning of a book, that the sections are listed in order from the beginning of the book to the end, and that each section title corresponds with a heading within the text of the book. Tell students that they can use the table of contents to get important clues about the contents and organization of a book. Discuss the following questions based on the table of contents: “What do you think this book is going to be about? How is the information in the book organized?” Prompt students to explain their thinking using what they read in the table of contents.

- **Headings and subheadings.** Have students turn to page 22. Explain that “The Nearshore Water” is a heading. Explain that headings are titles that appear within the text and that they suggest what will come in the paragraphs that follow. “The Nearshore Water” is a heading because it stands out from the rest of the text—it is larger, in bold print, and is not always a complete sentence. Headings are usually hints about the main ideas in the book. Point out how this heading, as well as the smaller subheadings that follow on pages 24–26, appear in the table of contents.

5. Ask students how the text features they have learned about (table of contents, index, etc.) can help them find information in and understand the books they read in the future.

### Independent Extension

Have students examine the main headings on pages 6, 14, 18, and 22 of *What Lives on a Sandy Beach?* Have them examine the subheadings that follow each of these main headings. Ask students to write a response to the question “How do the headings and subheadings help you understand what you will read in each section?”

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Text Features Chart

Write the name of the book in the first column. Look through the book to find the different text features. Write at least one page number in the columns to show where you found that feature in the book.

Title	Book Description	Table of Contents	Index	Glossary	Headings/Subheadings	Bulleted Lists	About the Author	Bold Print	Italic Print	Diagrams	Photographs/Illustrations	Captions	Tables

## About Strategy Guides

A six-page strategy guide is available for each *Seeds of Science / Roots of Reading*™ student book. These strategies support students in becoming better readers and writers; they help students read science texts with greater understanding, learn and use new vocabulary, and discuss important ideas about the natural world and the nature of science. Many of these strategies can be used with multiple titles in the *Seeds / Roots* series. For more information, as well as for additional instructional resources, visit the *Seeds / Roots* website (<http://www.seedsofscience.org/strategyguides.html>).

## Available Student Books for Grades 2–3

Twenty-three engaging student books are now available, each with a corresponding strategy guide. The books are part of the *Seeds of Science / Roots of Reading*™ curriculum program described on page 6. Four *Gravity and Magnetism* student books and strategy guides will be available in 2009.

Soil Habitats	
Strategy	Student Book
Using Discourse Routines with Science Texts	<i>Into the Soil</i>
Using the Cognates Strategy	<i>Walk in the Woods</i>
Connecting Science Words and Everyday Words	<i>What Are Roots?</i>
Teaching About the Nature of Science	<i>Talking with a Habitat Scientist</i>
Teaching Text Structure	<i>Handbook of Forest Floor Animals</i>
Using Text Features	<i>Earthworms Underground</i>
Taking Notes Based on Observations	<i>My Nature Notebook</i>
Making Sense of Data in Science Texts	<i>Snail Investigations</i>
Using Discourse Circles	<i>Without Soil</i>
Shoreline Science	
Strategy	Student Book
Teaching Vocabulary with Science Texts	<i>Beach Postcards</i>
Teaching Concept Mapping	<i>What Belongs on a Beach?</i>
Teaching Scientific Explanations	<i>Gary's Sand Journal</i>
Interpreting Visual Representations	<i>What's Stronger? The Forces That Cause Erosion</i>
Using Text Features	<i>What Lives on a Sandy Beach?</i>
Teaching About Multiple Meaning Words	<i>My Sea Otter Report</i>
Searching for Information in Science Texts	<i>Handbook of Sandy Beach Organisms</i>
Teaching Text Structure	<i>The Black Tide</i>
Teaching About the Nature of Science	<i>Shoreline Scientist</i>
Designing Mixtures	
Strategy	Student Book
Using Discourse Circles	<i>What If Rain Boots Were Made of Paper?</i>
Using Anticipation Guides	<i>Solving Dissolving</i>
Teaching Scientific Explanations	<i>Handbook of Interesting Ingredients</i>
Teaching Text Structure	<i>Jelly Bean Scientist</i>
Teaching About the Nature of Science	<i>Jess Makes Hair Gel</i>

## Extend Learning with *Seeds of Science/Roots of Reading*™

The strategy featured in this guide is drawn from the *Seeds of Science / Roots of Reading*™ curriculum program. *Seeds / Roots* is an innovative, fully integrated science and literacy program.

The program employs a multimodal instructional model called “Do-it, Talk-it, Read-it, Write-it.” This approach provides rich and varied opportunities for students to learn science as they *investigate* through firsthand inquiry, *talk* with others about their investigations, *read* content-rich books, and *write* to record and reflect on their learning.

**Take advantage of the natural synergies between science and literacy instruction.**

- Improve students’ abilities to read and write in the context of science.
- Excite students with active hands-on investigation.
- Optimize instructional time by addressing goals in two subject areas at the same time.

To learn more about *Seeds of Science / Roots of Reading*™ products, pricing, and purchasing information, visit [www.seedsofscience.org](http://www.seedsofscience.org)



**Soil Habitats Science and Literacy Kit**



Developed at Lawrence Hall of Science and the Graduate School of Education at the University of California at Berkeley.

*Seeds of Science/Roots of Reading*™ is a collaboration of a science team led by Jacqueline Barber and a literacy team led by P. David Pearson and Gina Cervetti.

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