



**GRADE - 3rd**

**UNIT - Nonfiction Texts**

**Relevant Essential Question(s)**

*Content-based*

- Why do scientists struggle to determine the gender of dinosaurs?
- What are scientists doing to better understand the gender differences of dinosaurs?

*Skills-based*

- What is the main idea in the text?
- What evidence is presented to help support the main idea?

**Focus Standard(s)**

-R.I.3.2: Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.

**Learning Objective**

SWBAT: Students will be able to understand the main idea of a text and identify relevant evidence by analyzing a nonfiction article.

GENERAL GUIDELINE		DIFFERENTIATION
<b>Materials and Resources</b>	News-O-Matic article " <a href="#">Animals A-Z: Ladybug</a> " News-O-Matic article " <a href="#">Boy or Girl? A Dino Mystery</a> " <a href="#">News-O-Matic Teacher Guide</a>	
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<i>Content-based</i> -dimorphism: gender differences in a species -gharial: member of the crocodile family that resembles a dinosaur -paleontologist: scientist who studies fossils of old animals and plants -species: a group of living organisms that are similar to one another	



	<p>hollow: having a hole or empty space inside          preserved: protected in original state; kept safe          methods: ways of studying something</p> <p><i>Skills-based</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-main idea: the author’s overall message</li> <li>-evidence: proof from the text</li> <li>-analyze: the act of thinking deeply and critically about the topic</li> </ul>	
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GENERAL GUIDELINE		DIFFERENTIATION
<p><b>Do Now</b></p>	<p>Please answer the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the difference between fiction and nonfiction?</li> <li>2. What are some of the strategies we use when we read nonfiction texts?</li> </ol> <p>After students write their responses, they can turn and talk to share with a partner. A minute later, you can call on 3-4 students to share with the entire class.</p> <p><i>Students can share items such as identifying text features (title and subtitle, photos, captions, graphics, sidebars, maps, bolded/italicized/hyperlinked words, etc.), as well as any other techniques already learned in class.</i></p> <p><u>Connection:</u> “Fictional stories are wonderful, and we love them, but nonfiction is what brings us back to reality. Nonfiction texts provide readers with important and interesting information about the world in which we live. Today we will learn how to understand a main idea in a nonfiction text and how to find evidence that proves it by analyzing, or thinking very deeply, about the</p>	



	information step-by-step as we read it.”	
<p><b>Mini-Lesson &amp; Guided Practice</b> (with think aloud and exemplar)</p>	<p><u>Introduction/Accessing Prior Knowledge:</u> “In this mini-lesson, I’m using an article about ladybugs. I’m going to start by identifying the text features, just like we practiced in the Do Now. Then as I continue, I want you to watch and listen for the steps I take to understand the main idea as I read and analyze — and how I identify evidence to prove it.”</p> <p><u>Mini-Lesson/Think Aloud:</u> Using a Smart Board or screen share, show students the sample article, going step-by-step through your process:</p> <p>“I read the whole ladybug article before this, but for this Think Aloud, I’m just going to select a section from the beginning, middle, and end to review with you. I start by identifying the text features ...The subtitle said to ‘take flight’ — like ‘join in’ — with these ‘helpful’ creatures, so I infer so far that this article’s main idea will be the positive qualities of ladybugs. As I begin, I’ll keep my eyes open for the <a href="#">5Ws &amp; the H</a>, as these help me tell which ideas are major (important) or minor (not important). My ‘Who’ is definitely ‘ladybugs,’ so I’m going to fill that box out now ...</p> <p>“In the first paragraph, the author begins negatively with how people don’t always like bugs. Uh-oh, this doesn’t go with my inference. However, as I continue to the next couple of sentences, I now see my inference was probably correct after all. I’ll know for sure as I keep going. If I keep seeing more positive, then the first sentence isn’t a major detail; it’s just a minor detail, not part of the main idea ...</p> <p>“The middle paragraph of the article states ... And the last</p>	<p><i>*Guided Practice: Provide fill-in-the-blank sentence for lower students, if desired:</i></p> <p>The main idea of the article is that ladybugs are _____. I know this because the text says _____.</p>

paragraph says ...

“So, as we can see, each of these paragraphs helped show how great ladybugs are. Those items go in my ‘What’ box. Only a couple of details showed negative traits, so those are minor details, because they are too small to be considered part of the main idea. Therefore, the main idea is ... and the examples I have to prove it are ... OK, now can our class identify the steps I took to find the main idea?”

Not everyone loves bugs. Some people get upset by creepy crawlers or freaky flyers. Yet lots of folks *love* ladybugs! Many believe it's good luck to see them — even if one lands on your hand!

So, why do we like ladybugs so much? Well, first of all, they're harmless — to humans, at least. That means you never have to worry about a bite or a sting. But the real reason is because they're helpful. Eric Day is an [entomologist](#) who studies ladybugs.



“It’s always a good sign to see lady beetles,” said Day. “It means you’ve got a healthy environment supporting a lot of different insects.” That’s not all. It “also means you have a low amount of pesticide usage,” he told *News-O-Matic*.

Steps:

- 1) *Identify the text features, and make an inference*
- 2) *Chunk and read each paragraph*
- 3) *Complete 5Ws & H handout*
- 4) *Identify and weigh major details vs. minor details*
- 5) *Determine key ideas from beginning, middle, and end*
- 6) *Formulate overall main idea*

Guided Practice: “With a partner, take a moment to write the main idea in your own words, and pick a new piece of evidence that proves it.” *\*See differentiation column on the right.*

*Give students 3-5 minutes to turn & talk and come up with a response. Circulate to determine who might need additional support, who might be exemplary for a share-out, and any common misconceptions.*

**Student Practice**

Students will read the [“Boy or Girl? A Dino Mystery”](#) article, using the same steps as above to find the main idea. Students can also complete the 5Ws & H handout:

**Find the Five Ws and How!**

Headline: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Who	
What	
When	
Where	
Why	
How	

-If desired, the class could be split into three homogeneous groups. One adult could work with the lowest-level group, while the other could work with the mid-level group and check in with the highest-level group occasionally.

-Or, if a learning specialist is available, he/she could work with the lowest-level group, the teacher with the mid-level group, and an assistant with the highest-level group.

-Alternatively, students can work in heterogeneous pairings or independently.

**Closure**

Students can complete the multiple-choice and discussion questions provided in the [News-O-Matic Teacher Guide](#):

**1** **Boy or Girl? A Dino Mystery**

1. What is "dimorphism"?

- A. studying animals that lived millions of years ago
- B. having clear differences between males and females\*
- C. all species sharing matching traits
- D. having qualities similar to dinosaurs

2. What trait did scientists use to tell male and female gharials apart?

- A. the skin color of female gharials
- B. a hollow part of males' nose bones
- C. the bone structure of females' legs
- D. a small horn that male gharials have

3. Which statement would Hone most likely agree with about dinosaurs?

- A. We'll never tell males and females apart.
- B. Female triceratops likely didn't have horns.
- C. More research could help tell males and females apart.
- D. Gharials are a lot different from most dinosaurs.

**Discussion:** Do you think it's important to learn more about dinosaurs and other creatures that lived millions of years ago? Why or why not?

**Discussion:** Do you think it's a good idea for states to reopen at this time? Why or why not?

**Assessment**

Exit Ticket: What is the main idea of the "Boy or Girl? A Dino Mystery" article, and what is one piece of evidence that proves this? *\*See differentiation below*

*High-level group* - No fill-in-the-blank sentence

*Medium-level group* - The main idea of the article is that it is difficult to \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.  
I know this because the text says \_\_\_\_\_.

*Low-level group* - The main idea of the article is that it is difficult to know the difference between boy dinosaurs and girl dinosaurs because scientists have struggled to discover any dimorphisms in the fossils. I know this because the text says \_\_\_\_\_

*\*See differentiation notes on the left*



	_____ . (Hint: See paragraph #2)	
<b>Homework</b>	<u>Optional:</u> Students may choose any one of the remaining News-O-Matic articles and question sets to complete.	<i>Student choice of the articles allows for flexibility. Higher-level students may also read multiple remaining articles.</i>