

How to Read Graphic Texts

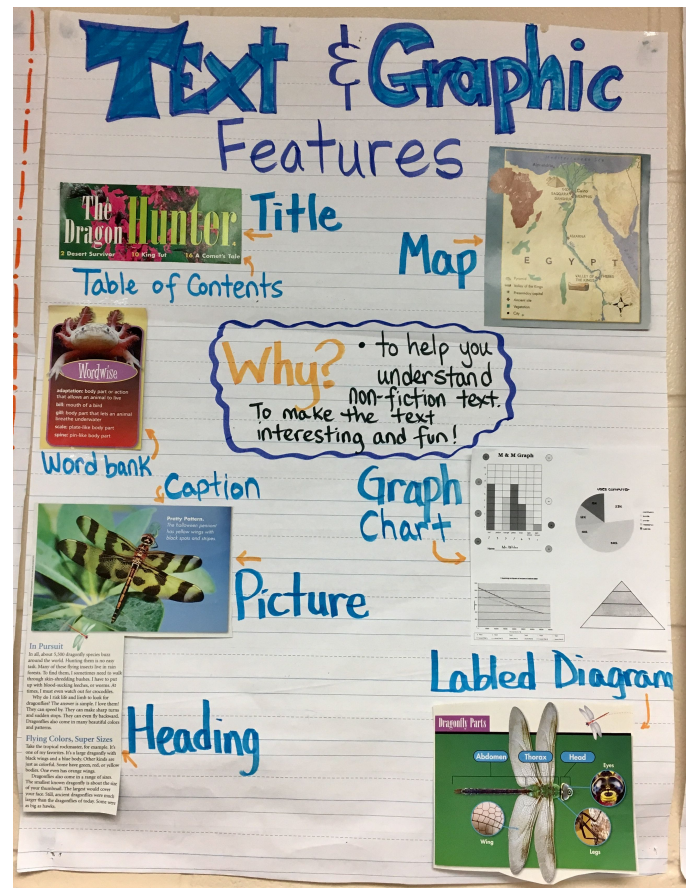
Graphic texts combine words with graphics, or visuals, such as pictures, tables, maps, schedules and graphs. Often, a writer will show information with graphics because it requires less space and provides the reader with a lot of information at a glance. Pamphlets, posters and even booklets are common examples of graphical selections.

Steps for Reading Graphic Texts

Read the title and the headings quickly, but thoughtfully.

They are clues to what the selection is about.

- Look for **any pictures, tables, maps, schedules or graphs**. Read them before you read the text. Graphics are rich with details and are used to communicate important information quickly and clearly.
- Remember to read any **captions or descriptive phrases** that go with each graphic.
- Read the text from beginning to end. Each time you get a heading, turn it into a question beginning with “Who”, “What”, “Where”, “When”, “Why” or “How”. Then, read for the answer.
- Sometimes the text will refer to a graphic. **Pay attention to what the text “says” about the graphic** – it may offer additional information to help you better understand it. Sometimes the text will not



refer to the graphic at all. In those instances, the graphic is probably providing essential information that you cannot get anywhere else.

- Go back and read the title, headings and graphics to remind you what the selection is about. Do you have a general sense of what each section is about? Reread any text or graphics if you need to. Once you have finished reading the whole text, you should understand the main idea of text, and know how the graphics provide information about the topic.