



COMUNIDADES LATINAS  
UNIDAS EN SERVICIO

## Week 4



# **What is nonfiction?**

What are some  
characteristics of  
nonfiction?

How is it different than  
fiction?

What might be an  
author's purpose behind  
writing nonfiction?

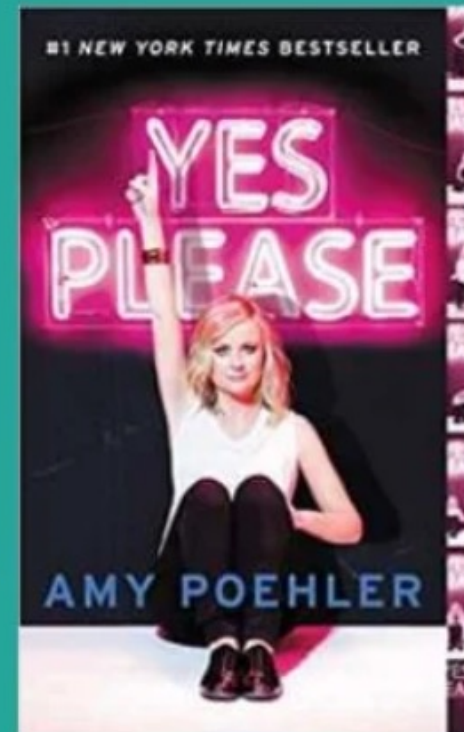
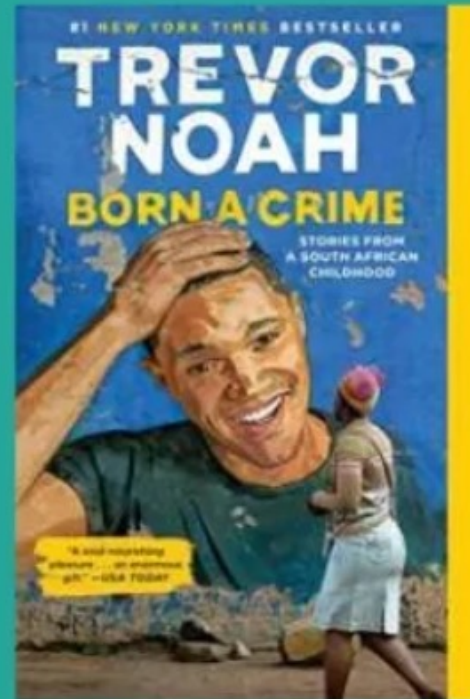
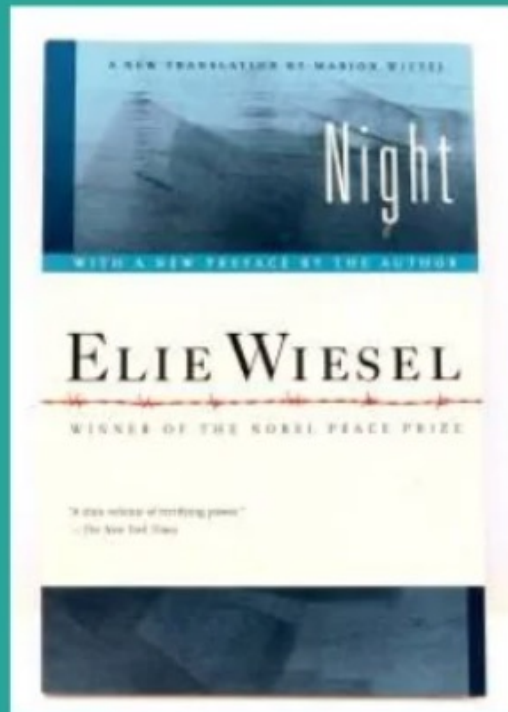
Examples?

# Nonfiction Examples:



WIKIPEDIA  
The Free Encyclopedia

The  
New York  
Times



# Nonfiction vs. Fiction

We tend to think of nonfiction and fiction as two opposite genres that achieve very different ends.

While a writer's purpose for writing a nonfiction article, biography, or memoir may differ from that of an author of fictional stories, both genres make use of similar methods of writing to get their purpose and overall message across.





# **What is an informational text?**

How are nonfiction and informational texts related?

Why would a writer write an informational text?

Where can we find examples of information texts?

# Information Text Examples:

**The New York Times**

## Hey, Look! Nonna and Her Pasta Are on YouTube

A filmmaker is trying to preserve the art of handmade pasta by turning Italy's Pasta Granannies into video stars.



The Pasta Granannies creator, Vicki Benvenuto, and the videographer, Andrea Benvenuto, filming a pasta lesson in their home in Naples, Italy. (Photo: iStockphoto.com for The New York Times)

By Kim Benvenuto

Oct. 14, 2014

Vicki Benvenuto, a 60-year-old British woman with a background in international development, never intended Pasta Granannies to become a [major YouTube hit](#) or to make stars of a handful of Italian women who couldn't care less about their influencer status.

She simply wanted to create a culinary tradition's art to capture a way of life before it disappears.

"I keep thinking, 'Don't die before I get to you,'" she said.

Since Ms. Benvenuto began her project nearly five years ago, she has recorded more than 200 women (and a few men) doing what they do every day: rolling [pappardelle](#) from buckwheat flour to toss with Alpine cheese made only in Valtellina; creating something dough into [cottole ricotte](#) to hold the horse-meat ragù popular in Puglia; marrying hand-rolled [pappardelle](#) with porcini mushrooms from a Tuscan forest.


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**The Washington Post**

## This is 5G built right.

Learn more >

### Russia patrolling between Turkish and Syrian forces after U.S. troops withdraw



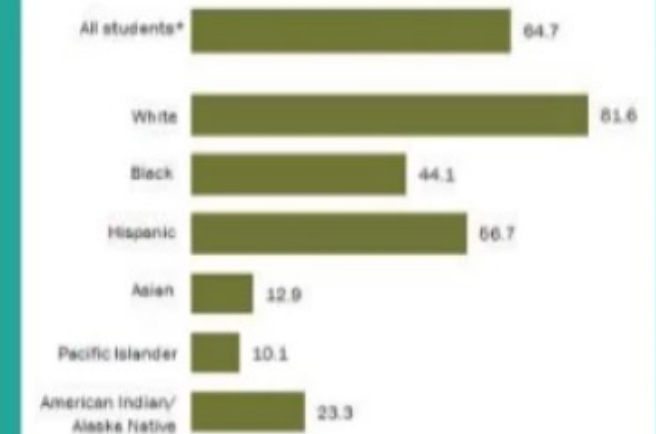
WASHINGTON — Russian soldiers on Tuesday said the units were patrolling between the Turkish and Syrian militaries near the northern border town of Idlib, at a sign that Moscow — a key ally of the Syrian government — was moving to fill a security vacuum after U.S. troops were withdrawn from the area.

A Russian Defense Ministry statement said that military police in northwestern Idlib were patrolling "along the line of contact between the forces with Russia and Turkey." The statement said the Russian military was also "cooperating" with Turkey's government.

A U.S. official said late Monday that U.S. troops had withdrawn from Idlib, Syria, Tuesday, Syrian state television reported that government troops had entered the town, using video footage of what they said were incidents following the arrival of Syrian forces in the center of Idlib.

## Nearly two-thirds of U.S. public school students attend schools where at least half of students are of their race or ethnicity

% in each group who attend public elementary or secondary schools where at least 50% of students are in the same racial/ethnic group as them (2014)



\*Students of two or more races not shown and not included in "all students."  
Note: Race categories include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race.  
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

# Characterics of Informational Writing

An **informational text** gives factual information on a specific topic or event.

- Informational text is “..designed primarily to explain, argue or describe rather than to entertain.” (from Harris, et al. The Literacy Dictionary, IRA, 1995)
- “The main function of expository text is to present the reader information about theories, predictions, persons, facts, dates, specifications, generalizations, limitations, and conclusions.” (Michael F. Graves and Wayne H. Slater. “Research on Expository Text: Implications for Teachers” in Children’s Comprehension of Text, K. Denise Muth, editor, IRA, 1989.)

Purpose:

- To acquire information
  - To satisfy curiosity
  - To understand our world more fully
  - To understand new concepts and expand vocabulary
  - To make connections to our lives and learning
  - To entertain
- (from Stephanie Harvey. Nonfiction Matters, Stenhouse, 1998)

# Characterics of Informational Writing cont.

## Form and Features:

Informational text uses a number of forms of organization including:

- Sequence of events
- Description by categories
- Process description
- Comparison/contrast
- Problem and solution
- Cause and effect

## Informational text...

- gives information,
- gives necessary explanations to understand the information,
- shows what is and is not important, and
- often uses narrative(story) elements to make it interesting.

(from Barbara Reed and Elaine Weber. Expository Text: What Is A Teacher To Do? ABC Publishing, 1990.)



# How do we read nonfiction/informational texts?

1. Look at the cover, title, and/or publisher.
  - What do we think we will learn based on these before we begin reading?
2. Look at the pictures and their captions, if any.
  - What do these tell us about the text? How do these add to the written text?
3. Look for any charts, infographics, maps, and/or graphs.
  - What information do these add to the written text? Why are these included alongside the writing?
4. Read the headings and subheadings, if any.
  - How do these organize the text? What do these tell us about what we are reading about?
5. Read each written section carefully and annotate (take notes in the text or on a separate sheet of paper).
  - What did you learn? What was the main idea of the text?
  - What was the author's purpose for writing this piece?
  - Do you have any further questions after reading? Is there anything left unsaid?



# Topic and Main Idea

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Every informational text has a topic and one or more main ideas.



The topic is the general subject that the text is about. The main idea is the point or points that the author makes about the topic.



A topic can usually be expressed in a word or two. Often, the topic is expressed in the title of a text. A main idea is usually expressed in a sentence or two, often at the end of the text's information.



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**Topic:** the Great Depression

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**Title:** Hard Times During the Great Depression

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**Main Idea:** Many Americans suffered severe hardships during the economic disaster known as the Great Depression.



# Supporting Details and the Topic Sentence

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Main ideas are supported, or explained, by details in the text. Supporting details are specific ideas or pieces of information, such as:

1. reasons
2. examples
3. statistics (facts in number form)
4. definitions
5. quotations
6. descriptions

Each paragraph's main idea supports the overall main idea by describing a different hardship that Americans suffered.

<b>MAIN IDEA</b> Many Americans suffered severe hardships during the economic disaster known as the Great Depression.			
<b>"MINI" MAIN IDEA</b> (supports the main idea) Unemployment reached its peak in 1933, perhaps the worst year of the Great Depression.		<b>"MINI" MAIN IDEA</b> (supports the main idea) Homelessness was a terrible problem during the Great Depression.	
<b>Supporting Detail</b> (supports mini main idea) example	<b>Supporting Detail</b> (supports mini main idea) quotation	<b>Supporting Detail</b> (supports mini main idea) example	<b>Supporting Detail</b> (supports mini main idea) statistic

# Guided Practice: Main Idea

- Read the following passages from beginning to end. Then, read and answer the questions in the strategies column.
- (see PDFs)



# Sequence of Events

## SKILL OVERVIEW

Some questions on the GED test may ask about the organization of a passage. The **organization** is the order in which details are given—what comes first, next, then, and after that. Identifying the order of information can help you figure out which details are the most important. It can also help you remember those details. In this lesson, you will learn about one of the most common organizational patterns—sequence of events.

**Why is it important to  
explain steps of a process  
in a clear, sequential way?**

# What are some examples of texts with sequential orders?

- Owner's manuals (phones, devices)
- Directions
- Science texts (experiments, inventions)
- Math texts (formulas)
- News stories
- History (past events, timelines)

# How do you make a cup of tea?

How to make a cup of tea?



**First** We boil some water.



**Next** Serve the water in a cup.



**Then** Put the teabag in the water.



**After** Add some sugar and milk.



**Finally** Add a biscuit and enjoy it.



When people describe sequential order in narratives like these, they often use the terms *time order* or *chronological order*. Notice all the references to time in the news story below:

### **EXTRA-ALARM FIRE LEAVES EIGHT HOMELESS**

A fire broke out in an apartment on Pastan Boulevard at **approximately 6 p.m. last night** when a stack of newspapers placed near a heater ignited. Tenants called the fire department, which arrived **about five minutes later**. Treaton firefighters found the apartment fully engulfed in flame. Everyone was safely evacuated from the building, and no one was injured. After Fire Chief Mosby upgraded the blaze to an extra-alarm fire, firefighters from Mirisville arrived on the scene **about 6:45 p.m.** to assist. **At 9 p.m.**, Chief Mosby announced that firefighters had successfully extinguished the fire. The fire damaged three apartments and left eight tenants of a multi-unit building without a place to stay.



Certain words  
can be  
sequence  
clues.

In addition to references to specific times, look for sequence signal words like these:

<b>Words that mean "first"</b>	<b>Words that mean "next"</b>	<b>Words that mean "at the same time"</b>	<b>Words that mean "last"</b>
at first	after, afterward	during	finally
in the first place	then	meanwhile	at the end
to begin	later	while	last of all
to start	subsequently	simultaneously	in conclusion

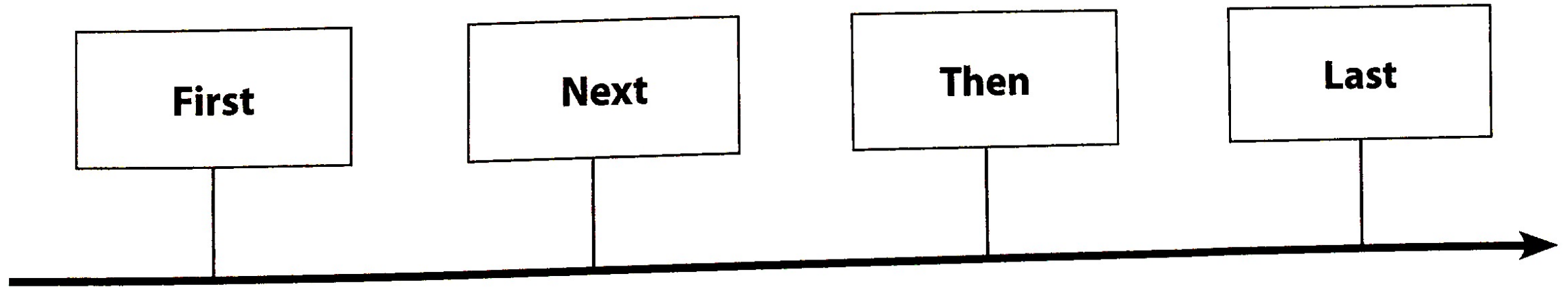
## WATCH OUT!

Sequence signal words are not the only words that can help you figure out the order of events. **Verbs**, or action words, can also indicate sequence. Look at the **tense**, or time, indicated by a verb to tell when an action occurred. Example: The farmers **had** just **finished** planting when the heavy rains **came**.

The verb tense (had + finish + -ed) tells you that the first action—planting—took place before the second action—the coming of the rains.

# A Final Look

You have now looked at sequential order, the kinds of texts in which it is used, and words that signal sequence. Before you move on, study the timeline below. It sums up sequence of events.



# Guided Practice: Sequence of Events

- Read the following passages from beginning to end. Then, read and answer the questions in the strategies column.
- (see PDFs)



# Homework: PLATO

## Active Assignments



Week 4

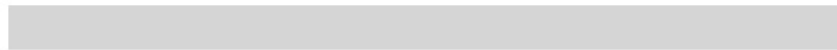
To begin, select an activity from All Activities

[Select New Activity](#) 



**All Activities**

Completion: 0/5 (0%)



No Due Date

# Thank you for coming to class!

Remember:

- GED: Mondays (Writing Lab) and Tuesdays – 10am-12pm
- English – Wednesday, Thursday - 10am and/or 6pm
- Computer class: Friday - 10am