

Grade 7 Playlists for Reading: Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details

This resource bundle aligns with the Key Ideas and Details standards of the Common Core State Standards for Grade 7 Reading: Informational Text. We have included four of our playlists—content-rich tools that use trusted textual, audio, visual, and multimedia resources to supplement high-quality instruction in specific elements of the Common Core—to guide students through each of the relevant standards for the informational text reading strands of English Language Arts.

Each playlist is designed for 30–45 minutes of instructional time and is followed by a rigorous self-check for students. Alternatively you could assign individual student playlists as homework or remedial/extension activities.

The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts are not intended to be taught in sequential order, and neither are these playlists. Instead, you should feel free to dip in and out of these resources as your instructional needs dictate.

Standard Coverage Notes:

- Standard RI.7.2 is covered across two playlists, both focused on determining the central idea of informational texts.

The accompanying Student Editions include additional passages on which students can practice their reading skills, including the ability to identify key ideas and details. Stepped-out examples and hyperlinks to videos, graphic organizers, and other activities further support instruction.

Thank you for trusting Wisewire to help your students become better readers and lifelong learners! Visit us online for even more resources and to access our free to use computer-based assessment platform.



Grade 7 Playlist: Finding the Central Idea

Aligns with CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.2:

- Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

Welcome

Nonfiction writing can be very dense—full of facts, statistics, and expert opinions to use as evidence to support the claims made in the text and to give the author credibility. With all of this information, it can sometimes be difficult to determine what the text is about! That’s why it is so important to determine the central idea of the text and how the author develops it.

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn how to:

- determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text.

Review

Key Terms

- A nonfiction text’s **central idea** is the overall message that the author wants to send to the reader. In other words, it describes what the author wants the reader to know about the subject they are writing about.
 - Some central ideas are **stated**. This means that the author simply tells the reader what the text is about in one or two sentences of the text. Other times, the main idea is **implied**. An implied main idea is more difficult for the reader to determine because it is not spelled out in the text.

Exploring the Standard

Often, in an informational text with multiple paragraphs, each paragraph has its own central idea. They are tied together and support the central idea of the entire text. However, informational texts can contain two or even more central ideas. The way to determine these central ideas is to analyze key details in the text.

Watch!

Watch this video to learn more about central ideas in nonfiction:

- <https://www.opened.com/video/central-idea-in-nonfiction/1551454>

A Closer Look: Stated and Implied Central Ideas

If an informational text has an implied central idea, the best way to determine what it is is by asking questions and finding answers within the text. Start with the following: “Who?” “What?” “Where?” “When?” “Why?” and “How?”



But if the text’s central idea is stated, it is much easier to find. Stated central ideas are often given to the reader in the first sentence or elsewhere in the introductory paragraph. An author might state the text’s central idea right in the title!

Practice!

Complete this activity to practice reading and analyzing informational text:

- <https://www.opened.com/homework/7-ri-1-cite-several-pieces-of-textual-evidence-to-support/3712069>

Example

This informational text from the National Park Service is titled “*Alamosaurus*.” Read the text and try to determine the central idea. First, look for a stated central idea (don’t forget the title!). Then, examine the details and ask questions about the text to determine what message each paragraph gives.

¹*Alamosaurus* belongs to the group of dinosaurs named Sauropods—large herbivores with extremely long necks and tails. *Alamosaurus* is the only known sauropod in North America from this time period (Upper Cretaceous).

²*Alamosaurus* was named after Ojo Alamo (Cottonwood Spring) in New Mexico, where the first specimens were found early in 1922. Other *Alamosaurus* fossils have been found in Utah, Wyoming, and the Big Bend region of Texas. Adults were probably about 70 feet long.

³All North American sauropods died out about 105 million years ago. Then, after a 35–40 million year gap, *Alamosaurus* appeared in North America about 70 million years ago. (All dinosaurs became extinct about 65 million years ago.) Some scientists believe that *Alamosaurus* migrated into North America from South America after the two continents were joined together by the Isthmus of Panama. This view is supported by the fact that *Alamosaurus* belongs to the titanosaurid family of sauropods, and titanosaurids were common in South America during the Cretaceous time period.

Big Bend’s *Alamosaurus*

⁴In 1999, Dana Biasetti, a graduate student from the University of Texas at Dallas, discovered giant dinosaur bones protruding from a dry hillside in the Javelina Formation of Big Bend National Park. Upon careful excavation, this hillside yielded partial pelvic bones and ten articulated cervical vertebrae of an adult *Alamosaurus*. The Big Bend *alamosaurus* appears to have been a massive individual, measuring in at 100 feet in length and probably weighing over 50 tons.

⁵Due to their extreme size and the remote location of the fossil site, excavation and removal of these giant bones by hand was nearly impossible. As a result, Big Bend National Park issued a special permit to the excavation team to remove the fossil by helicopter. In 2001, UT Dallas, now teamed with the Dallas Museum of Natural History, made history with Big Bend’s first ever “dinosaur airlift.”

⁶The *alamosaurus* fossil was transported on a flatbed truck to the Dallas Museum of Natural History. The specimen remains the property of the National Park Service, but is loaned to the researchers so that it can be properly prepared and studied at the spacious museum. When the study is complete, the fossil or a replica will be returned to Big Bend National Park for display.



Grade 7 Playlist: Analyzing the Interaction Between People, Events, and Ideas

Aligns with CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.3:

- Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

Welcome

In a literary text, the people, events, and ideas all influence one another. The same is true for an informational text. All the elements work together to support and clarify the central idea of the text. Readers can improve their understanding of what they read by analyzing the different relationships and interactions between people, events, and ideas. This allows readers to form important conclusions about a text, like how a specific event affects an individual or how one person's idea can influence others.

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn how to:

- recognize how interactions between people, events, and ideas influence one another in a text.
- identify transition words and phrases that signal interactions in a text.

Review

Key Terms

- An **interaction** is the action or influence of things on one another.
- A **transition** is a word or phrase that connects ideas in a sentence or paragraph.

Exploring the Standard

What was Abraham Lincoln's influence on the Civil War? How does deforestation lead to more endangered species? These are the kinds of questions that can be answered by examining the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text. Informational texts often contain dense or difficult concepts that can be tough to understand. Being able to identify relationships in a text makes complex information easier to digest. Authors can show these relationships in multiple ways. They might describe how one event causes another, or they might explain how a person influenced the way a series of events happened. By analyzing these interactions, readers will gain a better understanding of how ideas and events play a role in shaping people's thoughts and actions.

Watch!

Watch this video to learn more about textual interactions:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RqjiLyh139s>



A Closer Look: Determining How People, Events, and Ideas in a Text Are Related

Every text contains relationships and interactions. The relationships show how multiple people, events, or ideas are alike or different and how they work together. Readers can look for these connections because they provide insight into the author's message.

To support their message, authors occasionally provide clues about how information is connected. Other times, readers must figure out the relationships between people, events, and ideas on their own. This means that readers must make logical interpretations of evidence to establish connections between elements in the text.

The first step when looking for connections is to determine what information matters most in the text. This information often includes notable actions or events, key explanations, or detailed descriptions. Once these are established, readers can analyze the relationships between these elements to discover how each one is related to those around it.

When making connections in a text, look for the following ways in which pieces of information are commonly related:

- Things are similar to or different from one another.
- One event or action causes or affects another.
- A solution is used to solve a stated problem.
- A process is composed of multiple steps that happen in a specific order.

Practice!

Practice analyzing how events and ideas influence individuals in an informational text:

- <https://www.opened.com/assessment/interactions-between-individuals-events-and-ideas/1070396>

A Closer Look: Finding Transition Words and Phrases

Another way to find connections is to look for transition words and phrases. Transitions connect ideas in a text by linking together key sentences or paragraphs. Whether the author intends it or not, transition words clue the reader to different kinds of connections between individuals, events, and ideas.

Read the following chart, which shows connections that can be signaled by common transition words and phrases.

Connections	Transition Words
How people, events, or ideas are similar or in agreement	like, similarly, as/same as, in addition, coupled with, by the same token, for example, most, mostly, comparable, equally, identically, by comparison, comparatively, of course, likewise, correspondingly, furthermore
How people, events, or ideas are different or contradictory	in contrast, on the contrary, unlike, different from, while, in spite of, albeit, after all, in reality, but, however, opposite, although, on the other hand, otherwise, conversely, nonetheless, despite, besides, even though, rather, instead

