Ready Reference Form

Goal: Comprehension	Strategy: Use Text Features (Titles, Headings, Captions, Graphic Features)
Definition	Nonfiction text contains common features such as titles, headings and subheadings, captions, maps, diagrams, charts and graphs, legends, bold and italicized text, glossaries, indexes, and cutaways. Readers recognize and use these features to help them understand what they are reading.
Why Children Need This Strategy	When students read nonfiction material, they will encounter text features that are not evident when reading fiction. Students who have had experience and know the components and functions of text features improve their comprehension of the text.
Secret to Success	Understand that most nonfiction will have text features. Tune in to these features, and use your background knowledge about them and how they aid in comprehension.
How We Teach It	Our favorite way to teach this strategy involves using clear acetate sheets and markers. Laying the acetate sheet over the text allows for writing, circling, and marking text features with a water-soluble marker, without writing on the text itself. This highly visual approach allows us to point out to children the features and write our thinking rather than just explaining what the features are. Once we show kids how to use these tools, we send them off with partners or by themselves to work with text features in a similar manner. This activity helps train a student's eyes to look at the features of text before, during, and after they read a passage or article.
Troubleshooting	Many students think they need to delve right into a piece of text. It takes modeling, time, and encouragement to teach children that using text features is an appropriate strategy as well as a perfectly acceptable way to gain more information as they comprehend what they read.
	For an example of this strategy, see page 119.