

Lesson 2: Understanding key points of non-fiction texts

Goal 2.01d: Student will demonstrate the ability to read, listen to and view a variety of increasingly complex print and non-print informational texts by demonstrating comprehension of main idea and supporting details.

Non-fiction Text: “Media Violence Spurs Aggression, Fear in Kids

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,147986,00.html>

Guided Practice:

Before you read, take some time to answer the following questions:

1. What effect does word choice have on your interpretation of what you read? For example, what’s the difference between, “Diane, stung by her husband’s insult, flew from the house,” and “Diane, hurt by her husband’s insult, left the house.”
2. How does an author gain credibility in his/her writing?
3. In what way do quotations, statistics, and other forms of data affect your acceptance of an author’s writing?
4. How does the author establish his/her tone in writing and what effect does that tone have on the reader?

NOTE: Many times we can heighten our reading experience and gain some insight into the author’s bias or intent in writing by paying attention to the words the author chooses, to the evidence that they author incorporates, and by recognizing the tone the author establishes in her writing.

Independent Practice:

Follow the link to the FOX News article on Media Violence. Read it and then answer the questions.

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,147986,00.html>

1. What effect does the word “Spurs” have in the title of the article?
 - A. It emphasizes the violence that will be discussed in the article.
 - B. It reminds readers about television westerns where cowboys wore spurs on their boots.
 - C. It has a calming effect on the reader to help him/her deal with the difficult material
 - D. It demonstrates the author’s excitement about the topic
2. In the following quotation, which verb creates the strongest response?
“When violence appears on TV, in a movie, or on computer screens, it can color the thoughts, emotions, and behavior of the kids who see it.”
 - A. “appears”- because it describes how images just magically “appear” on the screen
 - B. “color”- because it describes how violence adds a darkness to the emotions of those who see it.
 - C. “see”- because it describes the sense that people must use in order to view television
 - D. “kids”- because it describes the main audience of media violence.
3. The author includes the statistic **“42 percent of the violent scenes studied were played for laughs”** to imply what about media violence?
 - A. Media violence is actually a positive phenomenon that shouldn’t be worried about.
 - B. Concern that violence and its real consequences are often understated by the media
 - C. The author has no purpose in including this quote
 - D. Media violence has a negative impact on a child’s ability to learn.

4. Which factor DOES NOT influence the correlation between exposure to media violence and a person's potential for violent behavior?
 - A. Age of the viewer
 - B. Gender of the viewer
 - C. Family environment of the viewer
 - D. Frequency of the viewer's exposure to media violence

5. Which of the following best describes the TONE of the article? (Note: tone is the author's attitude toward the subject he/she is writing about.)
 - A. Informative
 - B. Fearful
 - C. Concerned
 - D. Joyful

6. Which BEST describes the article's main purpose?
 - A. To demonstrate the profound and devastating effect that media violence has on kids
 - B. To warn media producers to keep violence to a minimum
 - C. To encourage parents, guardians, and caregivers to be aware of what their kids are exposed to.
 - D. To frighten the public into refusing to support violent movies, TV shows, and video games.

7. What would strengthen this author's argument?
 - A. Specific statistics that show that kids who view violent media are more violent in their daily lives.
 - B. Quotes from kids stating how violence has frightened them.
 - C. Quotes from parents asking media producers to limit the violence in media.
 - D. Specific statistics showing to what extent images and content of modern media can be defined as violent.

Closure:

Check your answers:

1. A
2. B
3. B
4. D
5. A
6. C
7. A

How did you do?

For each question that you missed, look at the correct response and think about why that response was the correct one. What element of the question did you miss when you answered incorrectly? How might you avoid making that same mistake in the future? If you did not miss any, congratulations! If you did miss a few, use the following tips when answering questions like these in the future:

1. **Read the question completely and all answers completely.** Sometimes you can answer incorrectly just because you didn't pay close attention to what the question was asking you for, or because you missed a detail in one of the responses. Take your time.

2. **Pay very close attention to questions that ask for the BEST or the MOST LIKELY answer.** In these questions, the test will often trick you because more than one answer could be correct. What you have to do in these circumstances is think which one is the best.