

Is the Law Too Soft on Youth Crime?

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; report

Length: 413 words

Stage: Fluent

Synopsis: The article describes changing perspectives and legal approaches to crimes committed by youth. The latter part of the article focusses on the Youth Criminal Justice Act in April 2003. It provides information regarding the shift from an emphasis on punishment to a focus on rehabilitation.

Possible Focus

To understand the complexity of the issues discussed in this article, a reader needs to be able to follow the sequence of changes in societal/legal attitudes towards the responsibility of youth who commit crimes. The reader needs to evaluate his/her own prior opinions in relationship to the new information provided and to revisit the title question and possibly reformulate his/her opinion.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- What happens to young people who break the law (young offenders)? Is it any different from what happens to an adult who breaks the same law?
- Discuss prior knowledge of rehabilitation.
- What does it mean to be "on probation"?
- Discuss the title. Read the first paragraph and discuss the questions.

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- What are the main reasons for the shift in how youth offenders are dealt with by the law?
- Do you think that the changes described are positive? Why or why not?
- What is a "hardened criminal"?

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After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- What are the main reasons for the shift in how youth offenders are dealt with by the law?
- Do you think that the changes described are positive? Why or why not?
- What is a "hardened criminal"?

- Despite media coverage, the youth crime rate in Canada is declining. Discuss the reasons for this ongoing misconception.
- Why is reform—seen as “long term protection of society”—considered more effective than “short-term punishment”?

Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- students expected to gain an understanding of the history of dealing with young offenders in Canada
- opportunities for greater discussion to extend understanding around young offenders
- topic of interest to many students

Vocabulary

- unfamiliar phrases (hardened criminal, juvenile delinquent, held accountable for actions, additional sentencing options)
- legal terminology (reprimand, correctional)
- two forms of word (vandalize, vandalism)

Sentence Complexity

- variety of sentences
- each paragraph provides a great deal of complex information

Print Features

- some technical terms in bold or italics
- photos have captions
- information box (specific case)
- “Fast Facts”
- softened edges to background images (visual reinforcement of title)

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Alcock and Brown Make History

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; report

Length: 381 words

Stage: Fluent

Synopsis: In newspaper format, the article chronicles the experiences of two flyers who completed the first non-stop flight across the Atlantic. The article is told as a story of the flight with details that bring the historical event to life.

Possible Focus

In this article, the reader needs to use visualization to connect with the experiences and the historical period. Drawing on the visual text supports the reader's understanding.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Scanning this article, what information can you discover before reading the printed text?
- What problems do you think first flights across the Atlantic might have had?
- Since this is a newspaper story, what kinds of information do you expect to find?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- Using a map or globe, have the student trace the possible flight path.
- Why was this flight newsworthy?
- How was this flight different from flights across the Atlantic today?
- What types of accomplishments make "the news" today?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- portrays a significant historical event
- provides insights into challenges of early flight
- provides experience with newspaper genre
- topic would be of interest to many students
- demonstrating the newspaper as a primary source of information

Vocabulary

- unfamiliar names (Vimy, Clifden, Alcock)
- aviation terminology (biplane, propellers, radio transmission, off-course)

Sentence Complexity

- use of direct quote
- variety of sentences

Print Features

- multiple colours and sizes of print used
- photographs extend the printed text
- captions explain photographs
- visually recreating newspaper of the period

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BMX Racing

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; report (question and answer)

Length: 318 words

Stage: Early

Synopsis: Using a series of questions and answers, this article provides readers with basic information about the sport of BMX racing including the type of bicycle and necessary equipment. It concludes with a table of some BMX terminology.

Possible Focus

Since most readers will be familiar with biking as a pastime, they can draw on that prior knowledge as they learn about the specifics of BMX racing. The context provides support for the reader in identifying and comprehending unfamiliar words or phrases.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Looking at the visual information provided, ask the student to share his/her prior knowledge or experience of BMX racing.
- Read the questions (bold subheadings) and predict what information might be in each section.
- Look at the pictures—what special equipment are the BMX riders using? Why?
- How is a BMX bike different from a regular bike you might ride to school?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- How is this kind of bike racing different from others you may have seen?
- What special bike equipment do you or your friends have?
- How do the question subheadings help you as a reader?
- As a reader, how did you deal with any unfamiliar words or phrases in this article?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- promotes the wide age appeal of this recreational activity
- clearly encourages the need for safety measures
- presented in a question and answer format
- explains the specific changes or additions a BMX bike must have
- provides specialized terms used by people involved with BMX racing
- use of second person narrative promotes a personal connection between the reader and topic

Vocabulary

- includes sports phrases (shoots ahead, in the lead, off-road, skill level, banked turn, rounded a corner)
- noun forms (motorcycle, motorcyclists)
- technical bicycle terms (handlebars, kickstand, chain guard, spokes)
- some terminology/words may be challenging (imitate, whoop-de-doo, squirrely, berm)
- number of hyphenated words (long-sleeved, non-slip, cross-country, whoop-de-doo, off-road)

Sentence Complexity

- mostly simple sentences
- short paragraphs that succinctly answer the question
- use of questions to organize the information
- variety of sentence lengths

Print Features

- bold used to highlight the subheading questions and terms
- italicized words
- visual information (photos, diagram, and table) provide additional and supportive information
- theme is carried and connected through use of visuals
- more than one colour print used

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Do You Want a SAY?

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; report

Length: 279 words

Stage: Extended Fluent

Synopsis: This article describes origins of a magazine published for Aboriginal youth. It lists the names of several Aboriginal people who have been featured in the magazine.

Possible Focus

In this piece, a reader is expected to interpret information and apply his or her prior knowledge to understanding the role of media in today in representing and providing a voice for diverse perspectives.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Looking at the cover, what do you think this magazine is about and who do you think is the audience? Why?
- What "specialty" magazines do you read?
- What are some magazines targeted especially at a particular group—for example; teenagers, bike racing enthusiasts, astronomers? How are those magazines different from ones developed for wider audiences?
- As a teenager, how can you "get a say" on issues that are important to you?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- Would you be interested in reading SAY magazine? What parts of the magazine might interest you most?
- If you were on a youth team for a magazine developed for teenagers, what kind of advice would you give?
- Where is SAY magazine distributed?
- Who are your role models? How do you find out about them? How do you think this magazine is funded?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- heralds achievements of a number of Aboriginal people in various fields of work
- demonstrates how magazines can provide a specific focus or can address a specific audience
- promotes a positive view of Aboriginal people as contributors to many aspects of Canadian life
- expands knowledge of demographics and Aboriginal people

Vocabulary

- some names may be challenging (Leslie Lounsbury, Jordin Tootoo, Susan Aglukark, Tammy Beauvais)
- unfamiliar words (forum, profiled, motifs, ensures)

Sentence Complexity

- shifting tenses require attention of reader
- a variety of sentences—simple, compound, and complex

Print Features

- photos support text
- chart extends printed information
- many photos, one label
- interesting visual graphic
- prominent title with varying font size

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Don't Be a Copycat

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; persuasive

Length: 360 words

Stage: Transitional

Synopsis: This passage explains how copying music CDs is a form of stealing and shows the negative affects it has on the livelihood of musicians, music store owners, and recording companies. It emphasizes the importance of artists/musicians receiving fair payment for their work.

Possible Focus

In this article, the reader needs to follow the arguments presented by the author and connect them with his or her own knowledge of the topic to form an opinion based upon the evidence provided in printed text and supporting visual text (pie chart and graph).

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Talk about the issues surrounding copyright of the printed word (books, articles, etc.)
- Ask students if they are aware of the controversy around the illegal copying of music CDs. What are the issues and who is involved?
- Read the pie chart. What is the total amount of profit made by the artist, the recording company, and the music store owner? How does that compare to the purchase price of a CD?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- Despite the legal and ethical reasons the author gives for not copying music, why do you think it still continues?
- Why do you think that, during many concerts, audience members are asked not to use tape recorders or video cameras?
- How do you think musicians (and other artists) should be compensated for their work?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- encourages a deeper understanding and provides opportunities for discussion of ownership issues around the work of artists
- topic of interest to most teenagers
- constructs an argument that calls into question a common practice of many young people
- through the use of the 2nd person narrative, speaks directly to the reader

Vocabulary

- most vocabulary is familiar
- some phrases may be unfamiliar (melt away in the crowd, lost revenue)
- analogy (copying CDs and stealing coins)

Sentence Complexity

- mostly simple sentences with some compound and complex
- requires flexible use of punctuation (dashes, commas, exclamation points, question marks)

Print Features

- series of short paragraphs
- charts and graphs extend the information provided by the print text

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First You Dream: The Story of Portia White

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; biography

Length: 398 words

Stage: Fluent

Synopsis: This biography of Portia White, the African Nova Scotian singer, highlights the challenges she overcame to pursue a career as a professional in the early to mid 1900s.

Possible Focus

Students familiar with the features of a biography will be able to use the chronological sequence to construct meaning. Readers who can connect with their own experiences in facing challenges will be able to empathize with Portia White.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- From the photos, can you predict when this story took place?
- What are your dreams for the future?
- What challenges might you have to face or overcome in order to fulfill those dreams?
- Discuss student's prior knowledge of Portia White or other singers wanting a professional career.

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- Do you think Portia White fulfilled all her dreams?
- The article states that she was not allowed to perform in some music halls because of her race. Could that happen today?
- Are there any situations where performers are banned from performing today? What are the reasons?
- How have things changed for young entertainers today?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- topic of local interest
- explains specifics of life and accomplishments of an African Nova Scotian
- provides a deeper understanding of the challenges of being African Canadian in the early 1900s
- demonstrates the value of perseverance in following one's dreams

Vocabulary

- unfamiliar words (miraculous, spirituals, relished)

Sentence Complexity

- variety of sentence types

Print Features

- photos support the text
- photos help students to visualize another period
- wide margins
- smaller print
- spaces between paragraphs

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Frankenstein (1931)

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; review

Length: 397 words

Stage: Extended Fluent

Synopsis: This is a review of the 1931 film, *Frankenstein*. The article makes a case for appreciating movies as a form of art of a particular time. It includes a discussion of how today's viewers may react to the film and some of the timeless issues raised by the story.

Possible Focus

Using his or her prior knowledge of this story, the reader must follow and analyse the author's perspective to be able to respond personally and critically to the argument.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Are you a horror film fan? Why or why not?
- Discuss any prior knowledge and experience with
 - *Frankenstein*
 - horror films
- What is frightening in the story of Frankenstein?
- What kind of text or information do you expect to find in a review?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for extending the Text

- Does this review make you want to see the film? Why or why not?
- In the author's view, why is the *Frankenstein* film "timeless"?
- What are some of the clichés is this film?
- When Mary Shelley wrote this novel in 1818, it was considered very unusual for that time period. Why do you think it was "unusual"?
- How might a modern remake of *Frankenstein* be different? What would be the same?
- Why do you think this reviewer gave this 1931 film a four-star rating?
- What is the relationship between the Human Genome Project, genetically-altered foods, and Frankenstein?

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- Today's scientists can clone animals and in some ways "create" a new life. Is that like "playing God"?

Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- familiar topic
- topic of interest to many
- encourages appreciation of vintage films as an art form
- introduces present-day issues around creation of life and responsibility for further discussion
- a familiarization with the story of Frankenstein is helpful
- enhances familiarity with reviews

Vocabulary

- several forms of a word (creates, creator, creation)
- unfamiliar words (terrorizes, randomly, memorable, rampage, vintage, credits, tuxedoed, cloning, genome)
- unfamiliar phrases ("judged by the standards it sets for itself," "genetically-modified foods," "clichés that have grown up around it")
- names (Boris Karloff, Mary Shelley, Frankenstein, Colin Clive, Mae Clark, Edward Van Sloan)

Sentence Complexity

- many complex sentences
- variations in sentence length

Print Features

- use of quotation marks
- photos support printed text
- italics
- filmstrip graphic used to connect visuals with theme
- reproduction of early film poster

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Fun Facts about Potatoes

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; report (Questions and Answers)

Length: 387 words

Stage: Transitional

Synopsis: This report provides some history and interesting information about potatoes, including numerous references to both local and international places and people associated with the development of the potato.

Possible Focus

In this piece, the reader needs to be able to connect new information in the text with his/her prior knowledge of a food eaten by many Canadians. While this may present readers with a number of unfamiliar words, they should be able to use contextual clues to construct meaning.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Using a map of the world, ask students or show them the locations of Spain, Peru, and New York.
- Discuss the importance of the potato growing industry in the Maritimes.
- Brainstorm a list of ways potatoes are eaten. What is your favourite way?
- Many people in Canada frequently eat potatoes. Why do you think it is such a popular food?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- How were potato chips invented?
- Why did people think potatoes were poisonous?
- What new information did you learn about potatoes? What was the most interesting fact that you learned?
- Let's look at two of the words—tuber and solanin. Is there a smaller part in these words that might help you with the meaning? (example: tube and sol [from solar or sun])

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- topic familiar and of local interest
- provides students with insights into the history and science of a common product
- encourages students to extend their knowledge of a familiar topic
- introduces students to several famous Canadians (Dr. Edward Asselbegs, Stompin' Tom Connors)
- organized in question and answer format

Vocabulary

- some unfamiliar terms in bold print are explained in the text (tubers, solanin)
- some words may be unfamiliar (toxic, potassium, fibre, fad, terraced, spud)
- some names may be unfamiliar or challenging (King Frederick, Dr. Frederick Asselbegs, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Saratoga Springs, Andes, Stompin' Tom Connors, conquistadors)

Sentence Complexity

- a variety of sentences—simple, compound, and complex
- some responses to questions are not complete sentences

Print Features

- short paragraphs introduced by questions
- photographs provide some additional information
- captions explain photos
- "Facts" box included
- coloured print used for questions (headings)

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How Roller Coasters Work

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; explanation

Length: 425 words

Stage: Transitional

Synopsis: This passage explains the science behind the movement of roller coasters. It provides some details regarding potential energy, kinetic energy, and gravity. It also describes how the composition of the tracks affects the movement of the roller coaster.

Possible Focus

In the first section of this text, the reader needs to draw upon his or her prior knowledge of the concepts of energy and gravity to construct an understanding of how the scientific terminology and concepts are being applied in relation to the movement of roller coasters. In the second section, the reader needs to compare and contrast two different compositions of tracks.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Have you ever ridden or seen a roller coaster? How does it make you feel and why?
- How do you think roller coasters work?
- What do you know about the forms of energy?
- Where are roller coasters found?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- How do potential energy, kinetic energy, and gravity affect the movement of a roller coaster? How might they affect bike riding or skateboarding?
- What other factors affect a roller coaster ride?
- Using the print text and the diagram, what are the positive features of both wooden tracks and steel tracks?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- a familiar and popular topic
- expects reader to bring a prior knowledge of energy and gravity to the text
- promotes student understanding of the connection between science and technology
- encourages students to understand the science principles behind a common and familiar activity

Vocabulary

- prior knowledge of some terms expected (gravity, energy)
- some terminology is explained in the text (potential energy, kinetic energy,)
- some words and phrases may be challenging ("converted into movement," "anchor the cars," "stores energy," teeters, plunges, welded, soar, maximum)

Sentence Complexity

- many complex sentences
- variation in sentence length
- each paragraph presents a great deal of information and requires attention to details

Print Features

- uses subheadings
- photos and diagrams provide additional information to support printed text
- use of more than one colour print

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How to Make Fog

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; procedural

Length: 202 words

Stage: Early

Synopsis: This passage outlines the steps for making fog in a pop bottle. It tells what will happen and provides a scientific explanation. Visual information (photo and bar graph) connect this experiment to a local context.

Possible Focus

To demonstrate comprehension of this text, the reader needs to be able to follow the directions given, drawing upon both print and visual information to construct an understanding of the scientific explanation. The reader also needs to use his/her prior knowledge of the scientific concept of evaporation.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- What is fog?
- Brainstorm your knowledge and experiences with fog.
- Read the bolded subheadings. Discuss the experiment format. Using the headings, ask students to talk about any experiment they might have done.
- Discuss terms included in article—evaporate, particles, vapour.

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- On a map, locate the four places in Nova Scotia mentioned on the bar graph. Why do you think they are the foggiest locations?
- Look at the graph—what information do you get from this graph?
- How do you think fog affects the lives of some people who live in Nova Scotia?
- What are the easiest and most difficult things about doing experiments?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- provides step-by-step instructions for a simple experiment
- local interest
- familiar topic
- students expected to gain scientific knowledge of a common weather phenomenon

Vocabulary

- multiple forms of a word (fog, foggy, foggiest)
- assumes knowledge of certain terms (evaporate, particles, vapour, droplets)

Sentence Complexity

- written as numbered procedural steps
- implied subject –“you”
- provides bulleted list of materials
- mostly simple sentences with several complex in opening paragraph

Print Features

- subheadings are bolded
- procedure is guided by headings
- diagrams and graph provide additional and supportive information
- more than one colour print used
- photos support text

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Life on an Oil Rig

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; report

Length: 327 words

Stage: Transitional

Synopsis: This report provides an overview of the daily life of people who work on oil rigs and includes information on both the work and recreational activities that are available. It stresses the importance of job safety.

Possible Focus

The author of this article invites the reader to consider various aspects of working on an oil rig, analysing the positive and negative features of the work in order to form a personal opinion. The reader's analysis is further informed by his/her ability to interpret information from the visual text.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- What do you know about oil rigs?
- What kind of jobs do you think people do on an oil rig?
- What do you think would be the positive and negative aspects of working on an oil rig?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- What are some of the jobs on an oil rig? Which one would you choose?
- Why do you think many young people want to get a job on the oil rigs?
- Look back at the list you made of positive and negative aspects of working on an oil rig. What would you add to that list after reading the text? From this list, discuss why you would or would not want to work there yourself.
- Why is the oil industry important to Nova Scotia?
- Which jobs do you think women could do on an oil rig?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- local interest
- explains specifics of life far from students' direct experiences
- encourages appreciation for the challenges faced by those who work on the rigs
- stresses the importance of safety precautions when working in isolated or dangerous situations

Vocabulary

- work-related terminology (rig, seabed, round-the-clock shifts, work week)
- some vocabulary may be challenging (recreation, satellite, sanctuary)

Sentence Complexity

- most sentences are simple, a few complex
- article begins and ends with a question

Print Features

- photos support the text
- labelled diagram extends the text
- title in bold coloured print
- some photos have captions

Text Features

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Marconi and Signal Hill

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; explanation

Length: 322 words

Stage: Fluent

Synopsis: This article demonstrates the historical importance of Signal Hill in St. John's, Newfoundland, in particular as the site of Marconi's successful experiment with the first transmission of trans-Atlantic radio signals in 1901.

Possible Focus

To make sense of this piece, the reader must determine which information is most important in understanding the significance of Marconi's achievement. Further, in the latter part of the text, the reader is presented with scientific information through both print and visual text.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Using a globe, locate St. John's Newfoundland and England.
- Discuss how people communicate between these two places today.
- How do you think Signal Hill got its name?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- Why was Marconi's work significant?
- Why is Marconi called "Father of Radio"?
- What future developments do you think were possible as a result of his work?
- Today, signals are bounced off satellites that travel far beyond the ionosphere. How does that change communication?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- specifics of Marconi's accomplishments described
- historical significance of a local event
- scientific explanation provided
- prior knowledge of atmosphere helpful

Vocabulary

- technical words/phrases (radio receiver, wireless signal, ionosphere, atmosphere, antenna, Morse Code, communications technology)
- some names may be challenging (Guglieiamo Marconi, Poldhu)
- unfamiliar phrases (gone down in history, tested his theory)

Sentence Complexity

- some complex sentences

Print Features

- headings
- photographs and diagrams support print text
- captions explain visuals
- more than one colour of print used
- photos enhance the historical context of the article

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Maxine Tynes

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; biography

Length: 384 words

Stage: Extended Fluent

Synopsis: This biography chronicles the life, passions, and achievements of African Nova Scotian writer and educator, Maxine Tynes. It highlights her work and the recognition she has received. It also includes a list of her books.

Possible Focus

In order to appreciate this article, the reader must use his or her knowledge of a sequentially written biography. Using the example of Maxine Tynes, the reader can generalize insights about the power of writing.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Read the opening lines of a poem by Maxine Tynes—in quotation marks. Discuss what the author is saying. How is poetry different from prose?
- Share information with the student about the Black Loyalists.

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for extending the Text

- How has Maxine Tynes affected the lives of other people?
- What might it mean to empower African Canadians?
- Maxine Tynes writes about her own experiences—of being an African Canadian, of surviving a serious childhood disease, of being a woman, and many other topics. If you were to write poetry, what experiences of your own would you use to write about?
- What do you think are Maxine Tynes' main accomplishments?
- What are some of the hardships Maxine Tynes might have suffered because of her illness?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- encourages an appreciation of a prominent African Canadian woman
- familiarizes students with the relevancy of poetry in today's literature
- provides details of the accomplishments and the rewards accorded to a local person
- of local cultural interest

Vocabulary

- phrases to discuss (survivor of polio, literary magazines, passion for her culture, betterment of society and humanity, advancement of women, black Loyalists)
- unfamiliar words (permeates, paralyse, honorary)

Sentence Complexity

- mostly simple sentences
- varying sentence length

Print Features

- photos
- italics used for book titles
- quotations used for poem titles
- list of books provided
- variation in photo sizes and shape
- variation in print size

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Meet Mattie Mitchell

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; biography

Length: 311 words

Stage: Early

Synopsis: This is the life story of Mattie Mitchell, a Mi'kmaw chief from Newfoundland who lived in the late 19th century and worked as a trapper, guide, and mapmaker. The story is sequentially organized and follows a time line through Mattie Mitchell's life.

Possible Focus

To appreciate this story, a reader needs to make connections between this text, other previously read or viewed sources of information, and his or her prior knowledge of biographies. Readers could be assessed on how well they use the dates and transition words provided to follow the sequence of the story.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Discuss why maps were so important to people in the past.
- Discuss what trappers and guides do.
- What skills would a trapper, guide, and/or a mapmaker need to have?
- Why do you think many Mi'kmaw people were hired as trappers and guides?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- Look at the map of Newfoundland showing Mattie's route for the reindeer trek. Given the geography, what problems can you predict?
- What were Mattie's main accomplishments?
- How might a reindeer trek be different today? How would a guide today handle the same problems Mattie encountered over one hundred years ago on the trek?
- Why do you think that guides are still important in some areas of Newfoundland today?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- encourages appreciation of the life and contributions of an Aboriginal person
- develops an appreciation of the hardships of living in Newfoundland in the 1900s
- local hero in a biography format

Vocabulary

- some unfamiliar words (trek, herders, honours, Buchans, mineral ores, shortage, lumberjack, valuable)

Sentence Complexity

- simple, compound, and complex sentences

Print Features

- includes modern map
- map supports and extends understanding
- photos with captions

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Save the Amazon Rainforest!

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; persuasive

Length: 305 words

Stage: Fluent

Synopsis: The article provides evidence of the environmental importance of the Amazon Rainforest. Information regarding the relationship of the Rainforest to the Greenhouse Effect and its consequences is detailed. The piece concludes with actions the readers can take to save the Rainforest.

Possible Focus

To follow the author's argument, the reader must identify the central proposition and analyse the supporting evidence. Building on these sources, the reader constructs new understanding and is able to form an opinion.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Discuss the student's prior knowledge of the Amazon Rainforest and why it is important.
- Using the title and the headings, ask student to make predictions about the information that might be provided.
- Discuss what the student knows about endangered species.

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- How does Amazonia help to control the world climate?
- Using evidence from the example of Amazonia, how does an ecosystem work?
- What other species are you aware of that are at risk?
- How do developers and conservationists see the Amazon Rainforest differently?
- Do you think people from outside Amazonia have good reasons to get involved in saving the Rainforest? Why or why not?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- promotes understanding of ecosystems
- encourages student environmental activism
- a familiarization with environmental issues is helpful
- extends understanding of interdependence of the planet
- encourages further research/learning through technology

Vocabulary

- scientific terms (ecosystem, carbon dioxide, oxygen, Greenhouse Effect, soil erosion, endangered species, tropical rainforest, habitat)
- proper names (Amazonia, Greenpeace)
- unfamiliar words/phrases (aerial view, hectares, jaguar)

Sentence Complexity

- simple, compound, and complex
- each paragraph presents a great deal of information
- some questions used
- second person narrative

Print Features

- photos support text
- no captions with photos
- large map of South America
- graph extends text
- numbered list of suggestions
- coloured print used for title and headings

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Simple Technology, Super Potential

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; explanation

Length: 404 words

Stage: Extended Fluent

Synopsis: After establishing the need for alternatives to fossil fuels, the article explains how hydrogen fuel can be produced cheaply through the invention by a man from New Brunswick. Printed text and visuals provide description of the chemistry that underlies the invention.

Possible Focus

To understand this text, the reader needs to synthesize information from the printed text and the visuals. Using context clues, the reader can construct meaning for technical terms and other unfamiliar words. Strong supports are available for the reader to use—varying print sizes, print colours, the use of bold print, and clear subheadings.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Look at the cover. What do you know about cars that are powered by energy sources other than gas?
- Read the red print in the picture and in the title. What do you think this means?
- Read the first paragraph (blue print). What are the implications of this information? What needs to be done?
- Read the blue print. What are the facts? What is opinion?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for extending the Text

- Besides finding alternative fuels, what might be another solution to this problem?
- Why is hydrogen gas considered a "renewable source of energy"?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of hydrogen gas as an energy source?
- What is so important about Jim Andersen's technological invention?

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After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for extending the Text

- Besides finding alternative fuels, what might be another solution to this problem?
- Why is hydrogen gas considered a "renewable source of energy"?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of hydrogen gas as an energy source?
- What is so important about Jim Andersen's technological invention?

- “This process not only creates clean fuel; it might also create a market for some of our undesirable garbage.” Discuss this statement.

Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- demonstrates the importance of creative problem solving
- a familiarization with chemical reactions is helpful
- opportunity for greater discussion on energy issues
- promotes understanding of environmental issues that will affect students’ future lives
- encourages awareness of recycling and reusing

Vocabulary

- scientific terminology (fossil fuels, hydrogen gas, elements, caustic soda, aluminum, alumina, catalyst, chemical reactions, contaminated)
- technical terms in bold (hydrogen, caustic soda, alumina, catalyst)
- some technical terms defined; some not

Sentence Complexity

- each paragraph contains a great deal of information and requires attention to details
- complex sentences

Print Features

- three colours of print used
- varying sizes of print
- print colour and sizes support the text structure
- headings and technical terms in bold print
- captions support photos
- bulleted list
- photos support and extend text

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Snack On!

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; persuasive

Length: 355 words

Stage: Transitional

Synopsis: This passage dispels the myth that snacking necessarily is a bad thing and provides information regarding the importance of eating nutritional foods as snacks. It gives specific information on healthy choices in both printed and visual text.

Possible Focus

To construct meaning from this text, the reader must synthesize information from both print and visual text to follow the author's argument in favour of nutritional snacking.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- What are your favourite snacks? What are the favourite snack foods of your best friends, your parents, or people from other places in the world?
- Look at the pictures. Which of these "good snack choices" do you like?
- Why do you think fast-food restaurants are starting to offer healthy food choices?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- According to the author, what makes a snack food healthy?
- Why do nutritionists encourage snacking?
- If someone really likes chips and cookies, do you think reading this article would change his or her choices? Why or why not?
- What would you list as your three favourite "healthy snack" choices?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- topic familiar
- encourages students to develop healthy eating habits and make healthy snack choices
- provides specific information on healthy snacks

Vocabulary

- multiple forms of word (nutrition, nutritionists, nutritional, nutrients)
- some unfamiliar phrases (essential nutrients, "pour out of school," especially challenging, snack attack)
- some specialized terminology (rotis, protein, calcium, fibre, vitamins)
- technical word "Nutritionist" is in bold and explained

Sentence Complexity

- mostly simple but some compound and complex
- shifts from third person narrative to second person in latter half of article

Print Features

- photos support text
- caption explains photo
- use of whimsical food photos—appealing

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Taming the Tiger: What You Can Do about Stress

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; report

Length: 408 words

Stage: Extended Fluent

Synopsis: This article provides information related to the physiological and psychological processes involved in stress and a discussion of its evolutionary origins. It concludes with suggestions for how teens can manage stress as well as the most common symptoms.

Possible Focus

To make personal connections with the text, the reader must understand the cause and effect explanations provided, construct meaning for technical terms included, and use their prior knowledge of stress.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- What kinds of stress do you think most teens are facing?
- What happens when people are "stressed"?
- What do you do to handle stress?
- What do you think the title means?
- Look at the people in the photos. How do you think they are feeling?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for extending Discussions of the Text

- What new information did you learn about stress?
- How was killing a sabre-toothed tiger for primitive man like doing a math test today?
- What are some of the positive aspects of stress?
- What might cause chronic stress?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- provides explanation of stress
- topic of interest to students
- provides list of symptoms for medical condition
- promotes healthy living
- suggests actions that student can take to deal with medical condition
- familiarization with human physiology (role of hormones) is helpful

Vocabulary

- health-related technical terms (chronic stress, endorphins, immunity, nutritious)
- unfamiliar words (mechanism, slaving, devour, persist, prone, diminish, perspective, circumstances)
- phrases to discuss (state of high alert, tame the sabre-toothed tiger of stress, heightening their senses, worst-case scenario)

Sentence Complexity

- variety of sentences
- many complex sentences
- flexible use of punctuation—dash, colon, question mark, exclamation point

Print Features

- bold print used for headings
- bulleted suggestions
- information box with numerical list of symptoms
- headings
- photos support the printed text
- use of the dash
- no captions with photos
- more than one colour of print used
- diagram of effects of stress included

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The Origin of Blue Jeans

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; narrative

Length: 443 words

Stage: Transitional

Synopsis: This passage describes the invention of blue jeans in the mid 19th century by Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis in order to produce strong work pants. It relates events that led to the increasing popularity of jeans up to present day.

Possible Focus

In this article, the reader must follow both the sequence of events and determine the importance of information given. Some readers will access the provided time line to assist them in constructing the chronology of events, demonstrating their awareness of text features.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- There are many different jeans on the market. In what ways are they different from each other?
- What kinds of jeans are in fashion now?
- Why do you think jeans are so popular?
- How are "jeans" different from other pants?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- Usually people invent new things to solve a problem. What problems did the invention of blue jeans help to solve?
- What is a patent? Why do inventors take out patents?
- People often form partnerships to help each other. How did Strauss and Davis help each other?
- Where do you think jean fashion will go next?
- In 1954, Marlon Brando, the movie star, wore jeans in a movie. That made jeans immediately popular with many people. Can you think of movies or movie stars today that affect fashion trends?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- problem solving
- ideas have value
- working together (partnership)

Vocabulary

- some names may be challenging (Strauss, Buttenheim, Genoa)
- unfamiliar words/phrases (durable, rivets, settle in California, patent, rebellion, canvas, embroidered)
- two forms of word (rivets, riveted)

Sentence Complexity

- mostly simple sentences
- some paragraphs present a lot of information

Print Features

- use of a "Did you know" box
- time line along bottom of page
- little white space
- overlapping visuals
- photos support text

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The Sinking of the *S. S. Florizal*

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; narrative

Length: 278 words

Stage: Transitional

Synopsis: Written in the style of a newspaper story, this article recounts the (historical) events surrounding the sinking of an ocean liner on its voyage from St. John's to New York via Halifax in the early 1900s. It chronicles the rescue of two of the 44 survivors.

Possible Focus

Like many newspaper articles, information is presented as a sequence of events the reader must follow. Comprehension of the article would be enhanced for reader who can visualize the events described. Readers may also extend their understanding through interpreting the map provided.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Scan the pages and predict what this article is about.
- What kind of information is presented in newspaper articles?
- Are you familiar with other ship disasters? Discuss.

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- Newspaper articles are written around the 5 W's—who, what, where, when, and why. Discuss each of those in relation to this story.
- How is this story of an ocean liner the same as or different from the sinking of the Titanic?
- How and from whom do you think the newspaper reporter gathered the facts to write this story?
- If you were interviewing the survivors, what would you ask them and what do you think they would say?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- historical event
- provides details of a Maritime history event (local interest)
- students expected to understand the newspaper genre

Vocabulary

- some words may be unfamiliar (pitiless, wretches, huddles)
- some names may be challenging (Denief, Florizel)
- personification ("The North Atlantic in winter is cold and pitiless.")
- noun and verb form of word (survivor, survived)
- information presented numerically

Sentence Complexity

- variety of sentences—simple, compound, complex
- each paragraph presents significant details

Print Features

- newspaper headline
- subheadings
- visual information supports and extends printed text
- map included
- use of bold and italicized print

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The Story of Snowshoes

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; explanation

Length: 265 words

Stage: Transitional

Synopsis: This passage discusses the history, uses, and types of snowshoes with references to their aboriginal origins. It describes the traditional making of snowshoes by Aboriginal Peoples. It mentions snowshoeing as a popular sport at the Winter Games.

Possible Focus

Since the visual information in this piece supports the information provided in the text, an assessment focus could be determining how well the reader integrates information from both sources. Readers also need to be able to use visual and print information to compare and contrast various types of snowshoes and draw conclusions about those differences.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Looking at the visual information, the captions, and the "Did You Know?" box, what can you learn about snowshoes?
- Why do you think Aboriginal people developed snowshoes?
- What do you expect to learn in this article?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- How has the use of snowshoes changed over time?
- Looking at the photographs of the various types of snowshoes, describe the differences and explain the reasons for the differences.
- Why were snowshoes so important in early Canadian history?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- encourages an appreciation of the inventiveness of the aboriginal culture
- encourages an appreciation of the historical significance of snowshoes
- provides insights into the origins of a modern-day recreational activity
- demonstrates early form of problem solving (getting around during the winter) through the use of technology

Vocabulary

- introduces noun, adjective, and verb forms of the word "snowshoe"
- some names may be unfamiliar—Mi'kmaq, Innu, Maliseet
- some challenging words/phrases—aboriginal, caribou, hide, adopted snowshoes, traplines

Sentence Complexity

- mostly simple sentences
- final paragraph has a complex sentence
- short paragraphs

Print Features

- smaller paragraphs
- visual information dominates the page
- photographs support text
- captions explain each photograph
- "Did you know?" information box where information is presented in bullets

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Tsunami!

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; explanation

Length: 340 words

Stage: Transitional

Synopsis: This passage explains how and where tsunamis (powerful waves) occur, providing details of the damage they can do. It introduces the seismographic device and explains its use in predicting this natural disaster. It ends with a table showing tsunami activity in Canada.

Possible Focus

This text is formatted to provide support to the reader through headings and visual text. An assessment focus could be how well the reader synthesizes information from various sources. Readers need to be able to visualize in order to understand the cause and effect relationships described. Some knowledge of technical and nautical language is assumed.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Discuss any prior knowledge of tsunamis.
- What are other natural disasters (hurricane, tornado, blizzard, ice storm, and earthquake)? How do they affect individuals and communities?
- Read the headings and predict what information you think will be provided.
- Have you ever been through a natural disaster? What was it like?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- What new information did you learn about tsunamis?
- Why are tsunamis dangerous? How do they occur?
- Why are seismographs important? What other natural events can be detected but not prevented?
- How would you compare the danger of a tsunami to a hurricane? How are they the same and how are they different? Which do you think is more serious and why?

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- Using evidence in the text, decide how dangerous tsunamis are in Canada.
- Why do more tsunamis hit the west coast of Canada?

Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- provides information of a natural disaster
- provides historical information on the effects of tsunamis in different locations
- students expected to have prior knowledge of earthquakes, landslides, and volcanoes
- topic may be familiar to some

Vocabulary

- scientific and nautical terms/phrases (seismograph, circular waves, tide gauges, buoys, monitors disturbances)
- some names may be unfamiliar (Krakotoa, Java, Sumatra)
- some words may be challenging (massive, collapsing, erupted)
- noun and adjective forms of word (volcano, volcanic)

Sentence Complexity

- headings provided
- variety of sentence types

Print Features

- use of bold print
- variety of visual text (map, diagram, photo, table)
- map and diagram extend the print text
- captions explain visuals
- includes "Fast Facts" section
- multiple colours of print used
- has the appearance of a textbook

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What a Stunt!

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; report

Length: 311 words

Stage: Early

Synopsis: This report recounts the stories of three people who performed spectacular stunts over Niagara Falls from the mid-19th century to the early 20th century.

Possible Focus

Since many readers will be familiar with the stories of stunts over Niagara Falls, this article gives the reader an opportunity to enhance his/her understanding of the topic with specific details. With the aid of both visual and printed text, the reader needs to create vivid images of the events.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Discuss prior knowledge and experience related to Niagara Falls.
- What kinds of stunts do people do today? When and where do they do them?
- Read the "Fast Facts" on the barrel—discuss.
- What special skills do you think tightrope walkers need to have?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- Which stunt do you think was most dangerous and why?
- Which stunt do you think was most spectacular and why?
- Why don't people go over the Falls today?
- Even without such stunts, Niagara Falls is the biggest tourist attraction in Canada. Why do you think it is?
- What do you think is the biggest tourist attraction in the Maritimes and why is it so popular?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- topic of interest
- provides specific details of a popular topic
- portrays a time in history and a Canadian location

Vocabulary

- some words may be unfamiliar or challenging (gorge, somersault, omelet, contraptions, tightrope, amazingly)
- unfamiliar name (Blondin)

Sentence Complexity

- mostly simple sentences
- a paragraph dedicated to each person in the story
- one quotation

Print Features

- photos with captions support the text
- "Fast Facts" section extends information in the text
- photos provide information on the historical context
- cover photo may be cause for discussion

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What's the Forecast?

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; explanation

Length: 246 words

Stage: Early

Synopsis: This passage discusses the importance of weather forecasting in the past and today. It provides a comparison of changes in how forecasting is done.

Possible Focus

A reader needs to draw upon the comparison and contrast of the past and present methods of forecasting weather in order to understand the central point of the article.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Why are people so interested in knowing what the weather will be?
- How is weather predicted today?
- What information is usually included in a weather report?
- Do you know any "sayings" that predict the weather?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- Why is it important for farmers and fishers to know what the weather is?
- Look at the visuals provided. How does each one relate to the title?
- Discuss how weather forecasting has changed.
- Do you think weather forecasting is more accurate today? Why or why not?

What's the Forecast?

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; explanation

Length: 246 words

Stage: Early

Synopsis: This passage discusses the importance of weather forecasting in the past and today. It provides a comparison of changes in how forecasting is done.

Possible Focus

A reader needs to draw upon the comparison and contrast of the past and present methods of forecasting weather in order to understand the central point of the article.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Why are people so interested in knowing what the weather will be?
- How is weather predicted today?
- What information is usually included in a weather report?
- Do you know any "sayings" that predict the weather?

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- topic is of local interest
- topic is familiar to many students
- encourages an awareness of and an appreciation for peoples' attempts in the past to predict and understand weather patterns
- promotes technological advances in weather forecasting

Vocabulary

- some unfamiliar words (experts, fishers, descends, chimney)

Sentence Complexity

- variety of sentence lengths

Print Features

- series of short paragraphs
- photos extend the scope of the information
- aerial map included
- captions
- reader must synthesize the montage of visuals

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William Hall: A Canadian Hero

Genre/Form: Non-fiction; biography

Length: 291 words

Stage: Transitional

Synopsis: This biography chronicles the story of William Hall, an African-Nova Scotian sailor who was the first Canadian to win the Victoria Cross medal for his military actions during the 1857 uprising of Indian soldiers in India.

Possible Focus

Students familiar with the features of a biography will be able to use the chronological sequence to construct meaning. The battle scene requires the reader to be able to visualize in order to understand what happened.

Suggestions for Introducing Text

- Look at the cover and the title. What do you think this award might be for?
- Explain about the British Empire of Queen Victoria's time.
- What makes a hero? Who is a hero to you and why?
- Who are other Canadian heroes?
- How are heroes recognized—in wartime and in peaceful times?

After Retell: Possible Questions and Suggestions for Extending the Text

- Using the dates in the text, retell the story briefly in order. Scan the text and explain the importance of these dates in this article (1827, 1837, 1857, 1876, and 1902).
- Why do we consider William Hall a Canadian hero?
- If you could go back and talk to Hall, what would you ask him? What might Hall and his group say about their experience? What might one of the Indian soldiers say?
- Trace the route Hall took to get to Lucknow, dragging the cannons with him. Discuss what problems they probably encountered on the way.

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Text Features

Content, Themes, and Ideas

- recognizes the life and accomplishments of an African Nova Scotian
- heralds achievement of a local hero in a biography format
- provides historical information and a perspective on the British Empire (during Queen Victoria's time) and its connection to Nova Scotian history

Vocabulary

- some words may be challenging (fierce, rebellion, Memorial, resented)
- names (Lucknow, Queen Victoria, Victoria Cross)

Sentence Complexity

- some complex sentences

Print Features

- many historical dates
- visual information mainly supports printed text
- map prominent on page
- map extends ability to comprehend printed text

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