

Appendix

General Reader's Rules of Notice for Nonfiction

Please note that this is an exploratory list of specific examples of rules of notice that represents the work that came out of one particular teacher research study. As such, it is not meant to be comprehensive or conclusive; it was conceived of and classified in a way that worked for the specific teacher research group.

This list exhibits cues and codes specific to noticing conversations/topics, noticing key details, noticing genre, and noticing text structures.

Please note that a textual cue can involve more than one rule, or work to do more than one kind of noticing—toward cuing both a conversational topic and a key detail, for instance. These specific cues that constitute rules of notice often work across the kinds of labels we've named here. For example, titles are always a call to attention, but they can also make a direct statement and might make use of a rupture (e.g., *Bomb: The Race to Build—and Steal—the World's Most Dangerous Weapon* by Steve Sheinkin makes a direct statement and uses a rupture in the title, set off by dashes). Or, a title can give the reader a personal emotional charge or intense connection, making it a cue for the rule of the reader's response (e.g., *Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow* by Susan Campbell Bartoletti gives Jeff a personal charge and personal connections as his German host mother was part of this program).

Note well that many of the cues or codes that instantiate reader's rules of notice are repeated because they work to help readers notice conversations/topics, key details, genres, and/or text structures.

Above all, what's important is to use the cues that follow to notice a detail or authorial move as important—and to then interpret it and fit it into the overall meaning that is being made with a text.

Source: Created to support Wilhelm and Smith, *Diving Deep Into Nonfiction, Grades 6–12*, Corwin, 2016. From a teacher research study into teaching students to read complex nonfiction texts, Boise State Writing Project Teacher Inquiry Group.

1. Noticing the Conversation

(Note: Many textual cues make use of more than one rule of notice.)

Direct Statements

- Explicit statements of meaning
- Explicit statements of principle
- Explicit generalizations
- Explicit judgments or evaluations
- Direct statements of theme
- Direct statements of application or of takeaway
- Direct statements of command; imperatives
- Explicit questions—especially bringing the status quo into question
- A definite article and an intensifier or judgment/evaluation (e.g., *The Great Fire*)

Ruptures

Rules of General Surprises/Shifts

- Surprises and shifts in topic
- Events that change relationships—between people, ideas, events, and so on
- Events or ideas that offer different perspectives on a topic
- Changes in perspective or point of view
- Ruptures of trajectory, continuity, expectations
- Instances when one detail is chosen but the reader expected another
- Silences—when the reader expects to hear or find out something but doesn't, or when what the reader does hear is surprising or tips off the topic or part of the topic
- Discoveries, insights, and revelations
- Deviations from any norm—cultural, social, individual, textual

Rules of Problems

- Tensions
- Contact zones—points of disagreement; where multiple perspectives meet
- Problems/trouble
- Moral choices

Rules of Tropes That Surprise or Shock

- Undue attention—what seems like undue attention is given to something, markedly long descriptions
- Shifts in point of view
- Significant changes in perspective of narrator or character
- Irony (especially with narrative nonfiction): what is it that the irony is about; what is not being said about that topic

Rules of Wordplay/Sound Devices

- Wordplay/double entendre—words or phrases with double or multiple meanings typically highlight an idea related to the topic

Rules of Shifts in Length or Focus

- A short paragraph or sentence among longer ones, or vice versa
- Movement from a close-up to a wide-angle lens, or vice versa, giving a new view or angle on the topic
- Exploded moments (long descriptions that may give a sense of undue attention) that are typically about the topic
- Close-ups or wide-angle descriptions that shift focus and pacing

Calls to Attention

Rules of Positioning

- Introductions, conclusions, section heads, and climaxes are almost always indicative of the topic
- Titles
- Subtitles
- Headings
- Epigraphs
- Callouts
- Book covers—commentary on back, book flaps

Rules of Print Features

- Photos and graphics
- Bolding, highlights, or italics

Rules of Questions

- Explicit questions—and implicit ones—especially bringing status quo into question
- Positioning of reader, reader's stance and purpose (e.g., through specific address, questions, problems, and inquiries)
- Quotes, especially authoritative quotes
- Implicit and explicit comparisons to other perspectives/ideas

Rules of Implicit Meaning—Filling the Gaps

- References to pretext—what has happened before, signals of what knowledge readers are expected to bring to the text
- Implied causes and causality typically refer to the topic
- Any implied connection

Rules of Intertextual Cues

- Allusions to other texts of any kind tell the reader what is being conversed about across texts
- Citations—of other works in the conversation
- Connections to intertextual positions—sequels, trilogies, series
- Comparisons to other perspectives, ideas
- Implicit connection: What other texts are like this? Could they be put into a conversation with this text? Do they offer similar or different perspectives and positions to this text?
- Explicit connections, references, and allusions: What other texts are mentioned?
- References to formulas, ideas, and perspectives from other texts
- Connections to intratextual positions/inside the text—connections between beginning, middle, end, *in media res*

Rules of Throughlines

- Repetitions
- Repetitions with a twist, tweak, or some kind of development: What do all the key details and events comment on? What do they all connect to?
- Details that reflect or refer to the title: What is the connection?
- Parallelisms
- Relationship of introductions and conclusions
- Relationship between headings and other text features

Rules of Resonance

- Anything evoking intensity—emotional, visual, physical
- Climactic moments/dramatic events
- Details at climactic moments
- Threats/warnings/promises
- Details that follow up on threats/warnings/promises
- Causes and causality—explicit and implicit
- Recognitions—statements highlighting a detail as new, important, or an insight

Reader's Response

- A direct address to readers that refers to the topic
- Activation of prior knowledge and interests—probably related to the topic
- Intense questions that come up and make the reader stop and pause—usually related to the topic
- Intense intellectual responses to anything in the text—usually related to the central topic
- Any connections the reader can make between the text, the reader's personal lived experience, the world, or current events and the newspaper—probably related to the conversational topic
- *Super ruptures* in the reader's understanding or way of looking at the world (passing through a threshold) will usually relate to the topic
- Intense meanings and takeaways the reader gleans, savors, talks about, and applies from the reading typically refer to a topic

2. Noticing Key Details

(*Note:* Noticing conversations and their topics is related to/symbiotic with noticing key details: A conversational topic is what the key details have in common, what they establish as a through-line, what they all pertain to and contribute to commenting on in some way.)

Direct Statements

- Explicit statements of meaning
- Explicit statements of principle
- Explicit generalizations
- Explicit judgments or evaluations
- Direct statements of theme
- Direct statements of application or of takeaway
- Direct statements of command; imperatives

- Explicit questions—and implicit ones—especially bringing the status quo into question, which also connects to noticing the conversation/conversational topic
- A definite article and an intensifier or judgment/evaluation (e.g., *The Great Fire*)

Ruptures

Rules of General Surprises/Shifts

- Events or ideas that change relationships
- Events/ideas that offer different perspectives on a topic
- Ruptures of trajectory, continuity, expectations
- Instances when the author uses a specific detail when the reader expected another
- Discoveries and revelations
- Deviations from any norm—cultural, social, individual, textual
- Events that change relationships—between people, ideas, events, and so on
- Emotional charges, outliers, coincidences
- Inappropriate behaviors and responses on the part of characters (especially narrative nonfiction) will reveal something crucial

Rules of Problems

- Tensions reveal key information
- Contact zones—points of disagreement; where multiple perspectives meet
- Problems/trouble
- Moral choices

Rules of Stylistic Choices That Surprise or Shock

- Silences—when the reader expects to hear or find out something but doesn't, or expects to hear from a character or perspective but doesn't (especially with narrative nonfiction)
- Exaggeration and understatement
- Blatantly irrelevant/that which is mentioned seems irrelevant or off-point
- Undue attention—what seems like undue attention is given to something, with markedly long descriptions
- Plot direction changes (especially with narrative nonfiction)
- Shifts in point of view
- Significant changes in perspective of narrator or character
- Ruptures in time—flashbacks, fastforwards, collapsed or exploded moments, reflections and memories

- Shifts in tone
- Shifts in style
- Shifts in pacing
- Unexpected authorial choices and moves
- Unreliable narrator is usually hiding, obscuring, or misrepresenting key details
- Irony typically hides and implies something crucial and key

Rules of Wordplay/Sound Devices

- Use of rhyme
- Neologisms
- Wordplay/double entendre—words or phrases with double or multiple meanings
- Sound devices
- Shifts from standard English—foreign words, dialect

Rules of Shifts in Length or Focus

- A short paragraph or sentence among longer ones, or vice versa
- Movement from a close-up to a wide-angle lens, or vice versa, giving a new view or angle on the topic
- Exploded moments (long descriptions that may give a sense of undue attention) that are typically about the topic
- Close-ups or wide-angle descriptions that shift focus and pacing

Calls to Attention (Announcements of Importance)

Rules of Positioning

- Introductions will introduce and cue key details
- Introductions of new characters (especially when extended, using comparison/contrast, etc.), of new situations, of ideas, of new withheld details, and so on
- Conclusions—of sections, of chapters, of the whole
- Endings as especially important—the difference between the beginning and end is a powerful indicator of theme, of the ultimate conclusion the details add up to
- Titles
- Subtitles
- Headings
- Epigraphs

- Callouts
- Book covers—commentary on back, book flaps

Rules of Print Features

- Illustrations, photos, and graphics
- Bolding, highlights, or italics

Rules of Questions

- Questions in a title, near the beginning or the end of a text or section
- All explicit questions
- Details that implicitly or explicitly address these questions

Rules of Implicit Meaning—Filling the Gaps

- References to pretext—what has happened before, signals of what knowledge readers are expected to bring to the text
- References to the narrator’s presence: Who is speaking, and how should we think about him or her? (especially with narrative nonfiction)
- Implied causes and causality
- Any implied connection

Rules of Resonance

- Anything evoking intensity—emotional, visual, physical
- Semantic gestures—*immediately, suddenly, swear words, realize*
- Syntax for emphasis such as inversions, or for singling out—“*It was the single most spectacular soirée of the season . . .*”
- Immediacy/directness
- Climactic moments/dramatic events
- Details at climactic moments
- Threats/warnings/promises
- Details that follow up on threats/warnings/promises
- Causes and causality—explicit and implicit
- Figurative language
- Neologisms
- Double entendre—words or phrases with double or multiple meanings
- Special case of symbols or archetypes

- Extended metaphors—connection of very unlike things
- Direct address to readers
- Positioning of reader, reader’s stance and purpose (e.g., through specific address, questions, problems, and inquiries)
- Quotes, especially authoritative quotes
- Recognitions—statements highlighting a detail as new, important, or an insight
- A character notices or pays special attention to something (“He read through it again”)

Rules of Orderings

- Lists
- Numbering
- Rankings
- Process descriptions

Rules of Intertextual Cues

- Allusions to other texts of any kind
- Citations—of other works in the conversation
- Connections to intertextual positions—sequels, trilogies, series
- Comparisons to other perspectives, ideas
- Implicit connection: What other texts are like this? Could they be put into a conversation with this text? Do they offer similar or different perspectives and positions to this text?
- Explicit connections, references, and allusions: What other texts are mentioned?
- References to formulas, ideas, and perspectives from other texts
- Connections to intratextual positions/inside the text—connections between beginning, middle, end, *in media res*

Rules of Throughlines

- Repetitions and connections
- Repetitions with a twist, tweak, or some kind of development: What do all the key details and events comment on? What do they all connect to?
- Details that reflect or refer to the title: What is the connection?
- Parallelisms
- Relationship of introductions and conclusions
- Relationship between headings and other text features

- Allusions to specific events, texts, and people
- Details that reflect or refer to the title—what is the connection?

Rules of Explicitness

- A question, particularly near the beginning or the end
- References to pretext—what has happened before, or extratextual signals of something that happened outside the text or what knowledge readers are expected to bring to the text
- Promises
- Explicit causality
- Direct address to readers
- Quotes, especially authoritative quotes
- Explicit comparisons of any kind (e.g., to other perspectives/ideas)
- Names, particularly in a title or at the beginning of a text/section/chapter
- Nicknames
- Characteristics that help us understand important characters, settings, or ideas
- Explicit threats, warnings, promises, or questions
- Evidence introduced with a definite article and a number
- A definite article and an intensifier or judgment/evaluation (e.g., *The Great Fire*)
- Recognitions—statements highlighting a detail as new, important, or an insight
- A character notices or pays special attention to something (“read through it again”)

Reader’s Response

- Activation of prior knowledge and interests—probably related to the topic
- Intense questions that come up and make the reader stop and pause—usually related to the topic
- Intense intellectual responses to anything in the text—usually related to the central topic
- Any connections the reader makes between the text, the reader’s personal lived experience, the world, or current events and the newspaper—probably related to the conversational topic
- Anything that strikes the reader as *totally true*, or that the reader recognizes as a personal idea never quite articulated
- *Super ruptures* in the reader’s understanding or way of looking at the world (passing through a threshold)

- Direct address to the reader; or a feeling that one is being directly addressed
- Activation of prior knowledge and interests
- Intense emotional charges to anything in the text—reflect on why
- Intense visualization—scenes that the reader can really see
- Intense response to events, actions, or character decisions—actions that stay with the reader, that the reader thinks about over time, that are disturbing, that the reader might even use as psychic material in daydreaming or dreaming
- Intense satisfactions or dissatisfactions that come from certain character actions, decisions, events, or resolutions
- Intense meanings and takeaways the reader gleans, savors, talks about, and applies from the reading
- Intense reflection upon one's response and attempts to explain it: *Why did I react that way?*
- Positioning of reader, reader's stance and purpose (e.g., through specific address, questions, problems, and inquiries)
- Direct address to the reader; or a feeling that one is being directly addressed
- Activation of prior knowledge and interests
- Intense questions that come up and make the reader stop and pause

3. Noticing Varied Nonfiction Genres

Direct Statements

- Specific mentions regarding genre
- Headings/table of contents that mention the genre (e.g., Letters to the Editor)

Ruptures

- Notable and sustained changes in style
- Notable and sustained changes in point of view
- Differences between text and other texts that are part of a compendium (e.g., a magazine, website, anthology)

Calls to Attention

- Allusions to other texts of any kind—same or different genre?
- Citations—of other works in the conversation—same or different genre?
- Connections to intertextual positions—sequels, trilogies

Reader's Response

- Activation of prior knowledge and interests—could include genre knowledge
- Direct address to the reader may indicate what is expected of the reader by this genre
- Emotional charges—may be related to how genres work, what the reader expects and how this is fulfilled or left unfulfilled

4. Noticing the Text Structures in Nonfiction Texts

Direct Statements

- Explicit statements regarding overall text structure
- Explicit statements of text structure moves: “In comparison . . .,” “Now we’ll compare this to . . .” (Of course, other structures have their specific cues—e.g., classification would use references to classes or to grouping, subgroups, differentiation, coordination and subordination, etc.; defining would refer not only to defining but to examples, nonexamples, gray-area cases, terms, identifying characteristics, etc.)
- Transition words that indicate a text structure (e.g., describing, defining, comparing, classifying/grouping, problem/solution, cause/effect, general argument: thesis, claim, evidence, reasoning) at superstructural/global levels *or* as a shift to a new substructural level

Some Introductions and Transitions for Comparison/Contrast

- In the same way, by the same token, similarly, in like manner, likewise, in similar fashion, coupled with, identically, same, alike, both, but yet, and yet, nevertheless, nonetheless, after all, but, however, though, otherwise, on the contrary, on the other hand, in contrast, notwithstanding, conversely, instead, rather, still, differ

For Cause/Effect

- Because, since, on account of, for that reason, therefore, consequently, accordingly, thus, hence, as a result

For Describing

- Specifically, characteristically, for example, next, another kind, in addition; spatial words like near, beyond, over

For Defining

- Exemplifying: chiefly, especially, for instance, in particular, markedly, namely, particularly, including, specifically, such as, for example, for instance, for one thing, as an illustration, illustrated with, as an example, in this case
- Exception: aside from, barring, beside, except, excepting, excluding, exclusive of, other than, outside of, save

For Sequence/How-to/Chronology

- *First, next, then, after, before*, sequential dates or events, *order*

For Cause/Effect

- If . . . then, reasons, why, because, as a result, this led/leads to, consequently, due to, was proved, proven by

For Problem/Solution

- Problem is, dilemma is, if . . . then, because, so that, question . . . answer, problem is solved, reason why
- For argument, evidentiary reasoning in arguments of judgment, policy, definition, cause . . . effect, problem . . . solution
- Because, since, for the same reason, obviously, evidently, furthermore, besides, indeed, in fact, in any case, for example, for instance, in this case, on this occasion, in this situation, to demonstrate, take the case of, as an illustration, to illustrate this point

For Summary (Can Be Part of a Summary, at End of an Argument of Any Kind, for Instance)

- After all, all in all, all things considered, briefly, by and large, in any case, in any event, in brief, in conclusion, on the whole, in short, in summary, in the final analysis, in the long run, on balance, to sum up, to summarize, finally, in sum

(*Note:* Of course, still pay attention to direct statements that don't mention text structure but might indicate a structural move—which can, for example, be claims and indications of argument structure [Bryson's "Troposphere"] or indications of a comparison ["The major difference between the sixth extinction and previous ones . . ."] or definition ["The most significant features of megafauna are . . ."] and to indications of importance.)

Ruptures

- Movement or a shift from one text structure to another
- Surprises/shifts in text structure
- Instances when the author uses a specific text structure move when the reader expected another

Calls to Attention

Rules of Privileged Elements/Positions

- Titles, subtitles, and headings will express text structure relationships/thought patterns
- Lists (significant lists can be organized in any text structure/thought pattern, so the reader must study the structure and organizing principles of the list)
- Numbering and orderings of any kind (can be organized in any text structure/thought pattern, so the reader has to take a look at it)

- Question–answer relationships can be organized in different text structures/thought patterns
- Relationship of introductions and conclusions can reflect different text structures/ thought patterns
- Headings and relationships between headings
- Boxes, callouts, illustrations, photos, exhibits, graphs, bolding, and italics (look for structures inside and among these features)

Rules of Throughlines/Patterns

- Repetitions may express a text structure/thought pattern
- Patterns of repeated ideas, images, and motifs, especially for connections across a throughline may express a text structure/thought pattern

Rules of Configuration—Where Things Seem to Be Leading So the Reader Can Prefigure

- Text structure development: What should come next given what I notice?
- Signal words—transitions (related to vocab)
- A move that makes the reader expect another move—what is being brought to attention?

Rules of Coherence/Connection—Reflect on How Things Fit Together in Retrospect

- Repetitions— words, phrases may express a thought pattern/text structure
- Cohesions—repetition of schema markers, motifs
- Throughlines/connections/patterns
- Points of contact—explicit or implied comparisons across sections of text, databases, and so on (maybe this pertains to noticing the conversation and conversational turns)