



Types + Purposes of Nonfiction in Social Studies

Nonfiction Text (Type)	What is it?	Intended Purpose	5 (or more) Social Studies Objectives it Meets
Textbook	Textbook writing is highly structured, informational nonfiction that systematically presents academic content using discipline-specific vocabulary, visual elements, and pedagogical features like headings and review questions.	To teach and to educate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn foundational facts, dates, events, and key figures in history • Understand chronological sequences and historical timelines • Master vocabulary and concepts specific to historical periods and themes • Practice reading and interpreting charts, graphs, maps, and primary source excerpts • Learn to identify main ideas and supporting details in complex academic text
Biography/ Autobiography /Memoir	Narrative nonfiction that tells the story of a real person's life experiences. These texts combine factual information with storytelling techniques, making them more narrative-driven than other forms of nonfiction.	To share and to preserve life experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide personal perspectives on historical events and time periods • Offer primary source insights into historical contexts and social conditions • Analyze bias, perspective, and reliability of personal accounts • Evaluate how personal experiences shape historical narratives • Develop understanding of diverse experiences and backgrounds



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Letter	A personal or formal nonfiction communication written from one person to another for a specific purpose, whether to inform, persuade, request, or maintain relationships.	To communicate specific information, requests, or feelings between individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze firsthand accounts and perspectives from historical periods • Practice evaluating the reliability, bias, and context of personal documents • Understand how ordinary people experienced major historical events • Learn about daily life, social conditions, and cultural norms of different eras • Distinguish between factual information and personal opinion in historical documents
Journal / Diary Entry	A personal, chronological nonfiction writing where an individual records their daily experiences, thoughts, and reflections.	To personally reflect or keep private records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access unfiltered, private thoughts and experiences from historical periods • Understand how individuals processed and interpreted major historical events in real time • Learn about daily life, customs, values, and social norms of different time periods • Analyze how personal biases, emotions, and limited perspectives influence historical accounts
Report	A factual, objective nonfiction writing that systematically presents information, findings, or analysis on a specific topic for a particular audience, often following a formal structure.	To systematically present findings, information, or analysis on a specific topic to inform decision-making or understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how historians and social scientists gather, organize, and present evidence • See how historians construct arguments and interpret evidence • Learn about different types of historical research (archaeological, archival, oral history) • Understand the process of historical inquiry. • Analyze government reports on current social, economic, or political issues • Practice reading charts, graphs, statistics, and other data presentations



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<p>Manual or Guide</p>	<p>An instructional nonfiction writing that provides step-by-step directions, procedures, or information to help readers accomplish a specific task or understand how something works.</p>	<p>To provide clear, step-by-step instructions and information to help users successfully complete specific tasks or understand how to operate, use, or navigate something</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how people in different time periods accomplished daily tasks or civic duties • Understand the complexity of historical processes (like voting procedures, immigration processes, or trade regulations) • Examine historical manuals as evidence of social norms, values, and priorities of different eras • Understand what skills and knowledge were considered important in various time periods • Connect historical learning to real-world applications and civic participation • Understand how written instructions shape behavior and social organization
<p>Argumentative Essay</p>	<p>A persuasive nonfiction writing that presents a clear position on an issue and uses evidence, reasoning, and examples to convince readers to accept the author's viewpoint.</p>	<p>To persuade readers to accept a specific position or viewpoint on a debatable issue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and evaluate the strength of arguments, evidence, and reasoning • Practice distinguishing between fact and opinion in persuasive writing • Explore different interpretations of historical events and their significance • Understand ongoing scholarly debates about historical causes, consequences, and meanings • Understand how evidence can be selected, interpreted, or presented to support different positions



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<p>Expository Article</p>	<p>Informational nonfiction writing that explains, describes, or analyzes a topic using facts, examples, and evidence to inform readers rather than persuade them.</p>	<p>To inform and explain a topic by presenting factual information, analysis, or insights in a clear, organized manner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learn about historical events, figures, processes, or concepts in accessible formats ● Build background knowledge on specific historical periods, cultures, or themes ● Practice identifying main ideas and supporting details in informational text ● Learn to follow cause-and-effect relationships and chronological sequences ● Develop skills in synthesizing information from multiple paragraphs or sections
<p>Journalism / News Articles</p>	<p>An informational nonfiction writing that reports on current events, presenting facts in an objective manner typically organized with the most important information first (inverted pyramid structure).</p>	<p>To inform the public about current events, issues, or developments by reporting factual information in a timely, accurate, and objective manner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Practice identifying fact vs. opinion in news reporting ● Connect historical patterns and lessons to contemporary issues and events ● Understand how past events influence present-day situations and policies ● Develop awareness of ongoing social, political, and economic developments ● Recognize recurring patterns, themes, and issues across time periods ● Understand how historical context shapes contemporary reporting and interpretation