

## Mini-Lesson: Fiction vs. Nonfiction

**Intention (Skill):** Distinguishing Between Fiction and Nonfiction

**Teaching Point (Strategy):** Readers use certain text features (like table of contents, topic, and pictures) to be sure whether a book is fiction or nonfiction. (Students need to come to the carpet with a book.)

**Connection:** I know that you guys have been talking about ways that you might choose books. That got me thinking about how I choose books. One thing that I look for is whether a book is fiction or nonfiction, and I think that you're the kind of readers who are ready to think about that too. Today, I want to teach you that readers use certain text features like the table of contents, topic, and pictures to be sure whether a book is fiction or nonfiction.

**Teach:** Let me show you what I mean. This book is called *Crocodiles*, and it is nonfiction. You might be thinking, "I knew that already!", but we're going to use certain text features to be sure. First, I'll ask myself "Is there a table of contents?" (Write on chart.) If so, that's my first clue that it's a nonfiction book. This book has a big table of contents. Next, I'll ask myself, "What is the topic?" (Write on chart.) How does the author tell about the topic? This book is ALL about crocodiles, and it gives LOTS of facts, rather than telling a story. That's my next clue that it's nonfiction. Fiction books usually tell a story. Finally, I'll ask myself, "What do the pictures look like?" (Write on chart.) These pictures are photographs, which is my third clue that it's nonfiction. Fiction books usually have drawings. Do you see how I used the table of contents, the topic, and the pictures to tell that this book is nonfiction?

**Active Engagement:** Now it's your turn to try. Take a look at your book and use the table of contents, the topic, and the pictures to decide if it's fiction or nonfiction. Ask yourself these three questions, and give me a thumbs-up when you think you know the answer. (Listen for evidence of understanding.) Great! I could really tell that you guys were using the table of contents, the topic, and the pictures to tell if your book was fiction or nonfiction!

**Link:** So today, or any time you are ready to choose a new book, you might want to think about whether it is fiction or nonfiction. I hope that you'll remember to use the table of contents, the topic, and the pictures to help you decide. Off you go!

**Share:** Students come back to the carpet with their books. Choose several students to share the title of their book and whether it is fiction or nonfiction. Write the name on a sticky and place it on the Venn Diagram. If there is a debate, it can go in the middle.