**Text Features**

Below is a list of text features that might be found in an atlas. A description of each text feature and an explanation of how to use it can be found below the list.

* table of contents
* headings and subheadings
* captions
* photos and illustrations
* diagrams
* charts and graphs
* bold and italicized text
* glossary
* index
* information boxes

**Table of Contents:** This is like a map of the atlas. The table of contents tells what is in the atlas and how to find it. Often a table of contents is a bit like a summary of what the atlas is about. It provides page numbers to help readers find information in a book.

**Headings and Subheadings:** Headings and subheadings are useful tools for identifying the main idea of a text. These are often bypassed, but they help prepare readers for what they are going to read. Headings and subheadings are also useful for getting to the information quickly.

**Captions:** Captions are words that accompany a picture, photo, or graph. These words help connect the visual to the rest of the information on the page.

**Photos and Illustrations:** Photos and illustrations are more than just a break in the text for enjoyment. These visuals are included to emphasize an important point. They work with other text features to help readers understand information.

**Diagrams, Charts, and Graphs:** Similar to photos and illustrations, diagrams, charts, and graphs are often included in a text to add further meaning. It is important to learn how to navigate these features.

**Bold and *Italicized* Print:** Words that are printed in bold or italicized print areimportant. It is as if the writer put a flashing yellow light on a word and wants readers to stop, take note, and make sure that they understand it!

**Glossary and Index:** These two tools are probably the most used by students. A glossary is designed to help readers understand words that are difficult and usually specific to the content. An index helps readers locate information they may be looking for.

**Information Boxes:** Information boxes are similar to pictures, illustrations, charts, diagrams, and graphs. They are an author’s way of drawing the reader’s attention to some important information and simplifying it to ensure understanding.