

Grades 4–5

Toolkit Texts

Selected by **Stephanie Harvey & Anne Goudvis**

Short Nonfiction for Guided and Independent Practice

Correlated to

The **Comprehension
Toolkit**



From our perspective, we can never have enough short text.

It is accessible, to the point, and in a word—short! *Toolkit Texts* is designed to capture kids' interest, engage them in real-world reading, and give them time to just plain read! The real world is rich, fascinating, and compelling and kids love to explore it through reading. We hope these short nonfiction articles will bring a bit of that outside world into your classrooms. Enjoy!

Stephanie Harvey

Anne Goudvis

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Paleontology

1 Dozens of Dinos

Mother dinosaurs caring for their babies? That's right. It's just one of the surprises in this compilation of fabulous dino facts.

4 The Scoop on Dino Poop

Petrified dinosaur scat is as big as a loaf of bread, and if that doesn't gross out students, wait until they read about the fossilized dinosaur vomit!

Antarctica and Ecology

6 Amazing Antarctica

Students can practice their map-reading skills as they learn about the coldest, windiest place on Earth.

8 Living at the Bottom of the World

Living at Palmer Station is in turns fascinating, frightening, and downright exhausting!

10 Dear Mother Earth: An Earthly Advice Column

Antarctica has problems, and Mother Earth can only solve them with help from each of us.

12 Icebergs: Floating Snow Cones

What is 185 miles long and 25 miles wide? Icebergs—floating blocks of ice—are both beautiful and dangerous.



Society and Environment

13 Kids Who Make a Difference: Rain Forest Hero

Janine Licare is helping save the rain forest. And she has a web site where readers can learn more and maybe even make a difference themselves.

14 Kids Who Make a Difference: Craig Kielburger: Kids to the Rescue!

Some children may be shocked to learn that child slavery exists in the world today, but they'll all be inspired to see how one young person is fighting to eradicate it.

15 Kids Who Make a Difference: Ryan's Well: Clean Water for Kids

One boy reaches across the world to help people he doesn't know gain clean, safe drinking water.

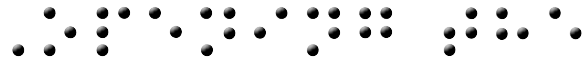
Overcoming Disabilities

16 Seeing the Needs of Others: Guide-Dog Puppy Raisers

They grow from fuzzy, roly-poly balls of fur to calm, self-confident guide dogs. This article tells one chapter of their story.

17 The Braille System: The Language of Touch

Learn how people write books, compose music, and do difficult math problems using a system of dots—and why.



Conflict Resolution

18 You Have a Choice!

Some people are avoiders and some are kickers and screamers. This piece introduces readers to a win-win approach to conflict.

19 The Struggle for Equal Rights

Young readers may be surprised to learn that many black children played an important role in ending segregation in this country.

20 Words of Peace

These inspiring quotations about peace from around the world will make every reader stop and think.

22 War: What Happens When Nations Don't Work It Out?

The photos are as eloquent as the words in this examination of war, the ultimate conflict.

Sports

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It's rougher than football and faster than basketball. It's jai alai.

Native Americans

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This Native American leader was known not for her strength, but for her wisdom.

Chocolate

27 The Three Shades of Chocolate

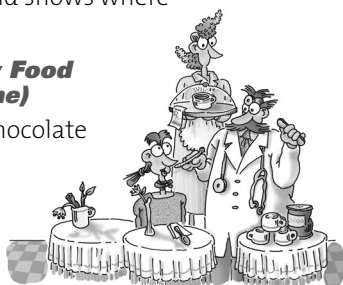
Try it; you'll like it! This short article explains how chocolate is made.

28 The Chocolate Belt

No, it doesn't go around your waist. This belt goes around the globe and shows where chocolate is grown.

30 Chocolate: The Happy Food (or, Take Your Medicine)

Believe it or not, eating chocolate can make you feel happy, and (if you don't get carried away) it can help keep you healthy, too.



31 A Strange Tree

The fruit of the cacao tree is used to make chocolate. Yum!

Ancient Mexico

32 Ancient Mexico—Where and When

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34 Aztec School Days

Step into a different world, where children cook and clean—and learn to predict comets and eclipses—in school.

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36 Fighting Fire from Head to Toe

Why do many firefighters lift weights in their spare time? Because the gear they wear weighs about 60 pounds!

38 Firefighting Through the Ages

Follow a timeline that goes all the way back to 2000 B.C., when the Romans invented water pumps for putting out fires.

40 The Great Chicago Fire

Don't blame Mrs. O'Leary's cow! No one knows how the fire started that turned 18,000 buildings to ashes.

42 For Men Only? Not!

Female firefighters are strong and fit and can get the job done—but it took many years to convince people of that!

43 An Interview with a Fire Investigator

A fire investigator can read more than books. In question and answer format, John Green explains how he "reads" the clues to determine the cause of a fire.

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The Great American Pastime now includes players of all colors, but it wasn't always that way.

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In a time of segregation, the all-women league was also all-white. Still, a few African American women were so outstanding, they became sluggers on the men's teams.

47 Jack Roosevelt Robinson: Baseball's First Black Superstar

Here's the story of how a "great player and great human being" broke the race barrier in baseball.

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It's strange to think of just choosing a new name for yourself, but that's exactly what many immigrants did when they arrived at Ellis Island.

52 Where in the World Did We Come From?

This article takes a look at the history of the Melting Pot and compares immigration in the early 1900s and today.

American History

54 Inalienable Rights

Thanks to Thomas Jefferson (and his distrust of governments), the Bill of Rights safeguards our rights as citizens today.

56 Riding for Freedom

Paul Revere wasn't the only one who rode through the night warning that the British were coming. Sybil Ludington was only 16 years old when she went on a similar patriotic ride!

58 We Were Here, Too

The haunting voices of two women tell stories of hardship from an earlier America in this glimpse into the African American experience.

60 A Magical Pen

This play whisks us to Monticello, where an elderly Thomas Jefferson is telling the story of the Declaration of Independence to his grandchildren.

Ocean

63 Swim School

Wiggle, flap, and jet through water 1,000 times denser than our air, in this examination of locomotion among the creatures of the sea.

66 The Long Swim

Come on an almost unimaginable trip—6,000-plus miles with a humpback whale, from the cold waters of Alaska to Hawaii and back.

68 Shark!

Learn the anatomy of a killing machine—the great white shark.