What is a feature?

The word **feature** is used in many different contexts, or situations.

A **feature** is an important part of something.
What is a feature?

What are some features of this coral reef?

Anemone
Rocks
Coral
Water
Sand
...and so on
What is a feature?

What are your facial features?

eyes, nose, mouth, chin, cheeks...
What is a feature?

What are the *features* of your playground?
Text features are parts of text that draw your attention to important information.
Looking at text features

You will need an assortment of nonfiction books or magazines for the rest of this presentation
Titles

The title of a piece of writing tells what it is mostly about
Look at the books you have. Notice:

- How are the titles written? What kind of font do they use?
- Are the titles long or short?
- Are there subtitles?
A Garden Under Glass:
The Conservatory at Longwood Gardens

In February, Pennsylvania is cold and chilly. Snow often blankets the ground. Trees are bare and brown. Everything looks cold and lifeless.
But there is a place in Pennsylvania where flowers bloom all year long. There is a place where bananas grow and cactuses thrive, even when it is snowing outside. This place is the Conservatory at Longwood Gardens.
The Conservatory is like a huge greenhouse. Thanks to a huge heating system, the Conservatory stays warm all year long. This means that many different kinds of plants can grow here.
The Conservatory was built in 1919. Over the years, the staff of Longwood Gardens have changed and added to it. There are now 195,668 square feet of display gardens and workspaces in the building.
When you step into the Conservatory, you leave cold weather behind. You will be greeted with a grassy lawn that stretches out in front of a beautiful waterfall.
There are many different gardens inside the Conservatory. Come along for a short tour!
Drooling dragons and spitting salamanders: The Indoor Children’s Garden

Have you ever heard of a drooling dragon? You can see one at the Indoor Children's Garden! The Indoor Children’s Garden was created as a place for children to explore. You can walk through the Grotto Cove to see a fog-covered pond. As you climb the twisting staircase, you can view the other parts of the garden.
When you reach the Secret Room, you will see the Drooling Dragon up close. Don’t be afraid! The Drooling Dragon is a large statue of a dragon with a waterfall in its mouth.

Children are welcome to play and splash in the fountains. See if you can beat the jet of water that splashes from fountain to fountain. Wave at a friend through the water window. Play in a fountain decorated with beautiful mosaics.

Step into the desert
Once you are done playing the Children’s Garden, you can take a trip to the desert. But you won’t have to travel far. The Silver Garden, just a short distance from the Children’s Garden, features the plants of the desert.
When you walk into the Silver Garden, the air will feel hot and dry, just like the desert. Surviving in the desert can be hard for plants. In the Silver Garden, you can see how some plants have adapted to arid desert life. Many of the plants have a silvery green color, which helps them to reflect light. Some plants also have thick stems to store water. Cactuses have sharp spines to keep animals from eating them.
If the Silver Garden feels hot, just wait until you get to the next stop—the Palm Garden!

A lush forest of palms
As you enter the Palm Garden, you will notice the air becoming more moist and humid. The temperature climbs a few degrees. Gardeners work to make the Palm Garden feel like a real tropical rainforest. This helps to keep the plants healthy.
Most people come here to see the beautiful palm trees, which can grow as tall as 30 feet! There are wild date palms, fishtail palms, and three-cornered palms. A rushing waterfall helps to make the place feel even more wild and remote.
Can you find the title of this article?

A Garden Under Glass: The Conservatory at Longwood Gardens

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Step into the desert

Once you are done playing the Children’s Garden, you can take a trip to the desert. But you won’t have to travel far. The Silver Garden, just a short distance from the Children’s Garden, features the plants of the desert.

When you walk into the Silver Garden, the air will feel hot and dry, just like the desert. Surviving in the desert can be hard for plants. In the Silver Garden, you can see how some plants have adapted to arid desert life. Many of the plants have a silvery green color, which helps them to reflect light. Some plants also have thick stems to store water. Cacti have sharp spines to keep animals from eating them.

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Headings

Headings introduce topics in text. They are often written in bold print, large print, or colorful text.
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The Drooling Dragon is a special part of the Children’s Garden.

Children are well aware of their name because they associate them with the fountain to their right. The fountain is a unique feature of the Children’s Garden, and the children can see the drooling dragon through a water window. Play on the fountain decorated with beautiful mosaics.

Step into the desert

Once you are done playing, you can take a trip to the desert. But you won’t have to travel far. The Silver Garden, just a short distance from the Children’s Garden, features the plants of the desert. When you walk into the desert, you can see how some plants have a silver green color, which helps them to reflect light. Some plants also have thick stems to store water. Cacti have sharp spines to keep animals from eating them. The desert Garden feels hot, just wait until you get to the next stop—the Palm Garden!

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Headings

Look through the books that you have. Can you find headings that are:

- In bold print?
- Only one word?
- Questions?
- Phrases?
Bold and Italic print

Bold print is print that is **darker** or **brighter** than the rest of the sentence. Authors use bold print to signal important information or new words.

Italic print looks *like this*. Authors use italics to signal important words, new ideas, or foreign words.
Surviving the Winter:  
The Painted Turtle

An amazing survivor

For most animals, winter is a difficult time. Winter brings cold days. The temperature drops below freezing. Food can be scarce.

Baby painted turtles don’t migrate to a warmer place. They can survive through cold, cold weather. They can survive in temperatures that are below freezing. They can even survive being frozen!

How can an animal freeze, and still be alive? Painted turtles have special adaptations that help them survive.

Turtle hatchlings

Painted turtles are common reptiles. They live in ponds and streams all over the United States. Painted turtles spend a great deal of time in the water. They can only swallow while they are underwater, so they mostly eat water creatures and plants.

Female painted turtles come out of the water to lay their eggs in the summer time. If the summer temperatures are warm, baby female turtles will hatch. If the summer temperatures are cold, baby male turtles will hatch.

Something surprising happens when the baby turtles come out of their eggs in late summer. Instead of swimming away into streams and ponds, the hatchlings stay in their nests. Even as the weather grows colder and the days grow shorter, the baby painted turtles stay in their nests, about 5 inches underground.
Can you find the italicized words?
Can you find the italicized words?
Can you find the **bold print** words?

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**Migrating Mole Salamanders**

It's a chilly night in spring. The temperature is above freezing, and a steady rain is falling. Suddenly the road ahead is filled with—salamanders?

Not many people think of salamanders as animals that migrate. But mole salamanders make a yearly trip. In early spring, on rainy nights, these salamanders **migrate** from their forest homes to small, shallow ponds. In these ponds, they will lay their eggs.

Mole salamanders are a kind of **amphibian**. Like frogs and toads, many mole salamanders spend part of their lives in the water, and part of their lives on land.

Most kinds of mole salamanders are fairly small, and do not grow larger than 5 inches. They are carnivores that dine on worms, insects, and other small creatures. Mole salamanders don't have teeth, so they swallow prey whole!
Can you find the **bold print** words?

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Mole salamanders are a kind of amphibian. Like frogs and toads, many mole salamanders spend part of their lives in the water, and part of their lives on land.

Most kinds of mole salamanders are relatively small and do not grow larger than 5 inches. They are carnivorous, feeding on insects, and other small creatures. Mole salamanders don't have teeth, so they swallow prey whole!
Bold and italic print

Look for bold and italicized print in your books.

- How often are words marked with this kind of print?
- Is there a glossary that defines these words?
- Why would it be important to pay attention to these words?
Illustrations are drawings. They are created by an artist. Illustrations can be very basic, or they can be very detailed.

Photographs are taken by a photographer. They show real objects in real settings.
Photographs

How does the photograph help the reader understand this text?

The old schoolhouse was falling apart. It had been abandoned for so long that nature started to take over. Vines grew on the outside. Snow and rain caused wood to rot and beams to break. After the roof collapsed, trees and weeds grew where students once learned.
Photographs

Look for photographs in your books. Think about:

-Why did the writer include this photo?
-How does this help the reader to understand key ideas?
-What can you learn from looking at the photo?
-Does the text make sense without the picture?
Illustrations

Pictures help readers to understand ideas. Why do you think the author chose to illustrate this text instead of using a photograph?
Illustrations can do what photographs cannot. Often, artists will use illustrations to show things from the past or simplify ideas.

What a Schoolhouse Looked Like

Schoolhouses were small buildings. Most had only one room. In some places, schoolhouses were made out of bricks. In other places, they were made out of wood or stone. On the prairie, schoolhouses were even made out of sod.

Most schoolhouses had a bell tower on the top.

One-room schoolhouses had no electricity. This meant no electric lights.
How does the illustration help a reader to understand this text?
Illustrations

Look for illustrations in your books. Think about:

- Why did the author use an illustration instead of a photograph?
- Is the style of the illustration appealing?
- What can you learn from the illustration?
Captions

Captions are found underneath illustrations or photographs. They explain what’s in the picture.
How can I find a vernal pool?

Vernal pools are all around! Look for a big puddle that lasts through the whole spring. Vernal pools can be in forests. Vernal pools can also be in fields.

If you find a vernal pool, you are seeing a very special habitat. Maybe you can take care of the vernal pool and tell people why it is important.

A vernal pool in Pennsylvania
How can I find a vernal pool?

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A vernal pool in Pennsylvania
Captions

Look over the books that you have.

-What captions can you find?
-How do the captions help you to understand the pictures?
-How are the captions written in different ways?
Other text features

What other text features can you think of?
Text Features

• Graphic aids
• Maps
• Timelines
• Bulleted lists

Can you find these other text features in the books?

• Glossary
• Table of Contents
• Index
• Sidebars
• Captions
Text Features

What have you learned about text features?

What do you still wonder about text features?