

*Response and
Responsibility in
Reading
Nonfiction*



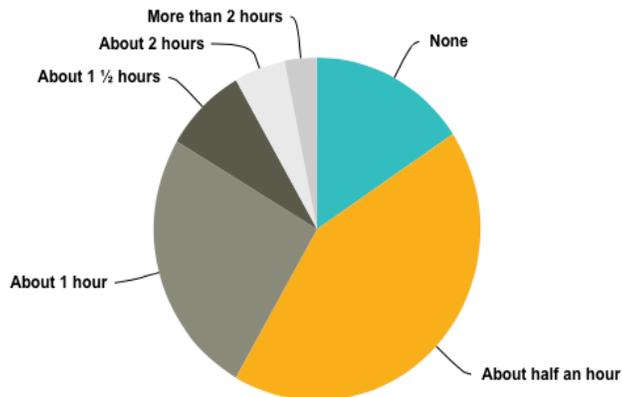
Dr. Bob Probst

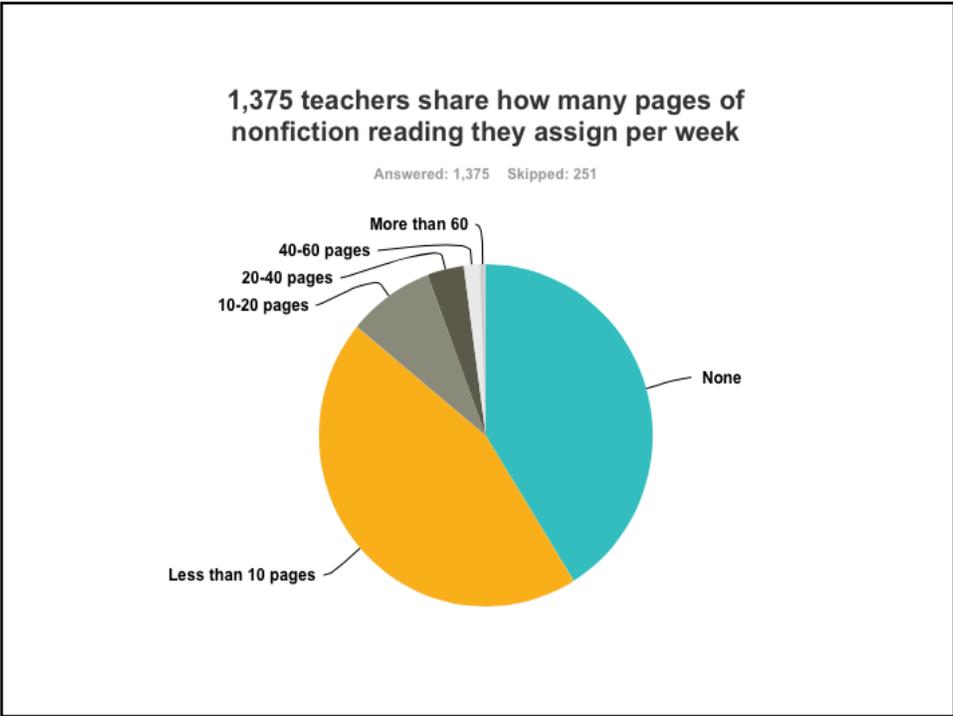
ARCTalks
ideas worth sharing



1,379 teachers share how many minutes per week their students read nonfiction in class

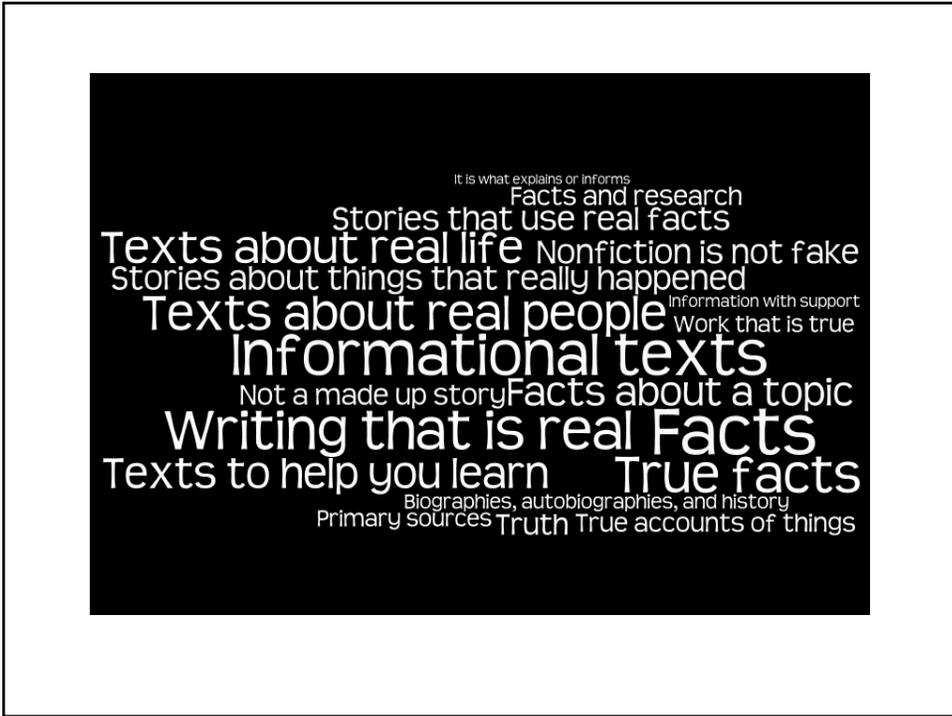
Answered: 1,379 Skipped: 247





There Ain't Going to be a Teacher
around when You Really Need One

We need readers who are both responsive,
and responsible



The definition of nonfiction as “factual and true” invites the kids to accept this syllogistic reasoning:

This text is nonfiction.

Nonfiction is true.

Therefore this text is true.

- Fiction invites us into an imagined world the writer has created; nonfiction enters our world and purports to tell us something about it.
- Nonfiction is an opportunity to change your mind.
- The reader has to learn to seek surprise.
- We go to nonfiction when we have questions we need to answer. . . .
 . . . but we should also go to nonfiction when we have answers we need to question.
- Nonfiction often demands going beyond the one text to others.
- In teaching nonfiction we need at some point to reverse course. At first we teach kids to trust and learn from. . . .
 . . . but we then need to teach them to resist and occasionally to reject.

We read nonfiction to learn something.

Learning is more than memorizing – it involves changing the way we think about an issue or an idea.

We can change in several ways –
 we can confirm what we already thought;
 or we can modify our thinking;
 we can change our minds completely.

- “I think I understood the chapter better this way, I could focus on reading not hunting for the right answers.”
- “I felt I just got better information from the chapter.”
- “When I took bulleted notes or answered questions, I felt like I was just copying stuff, not thinking about stuff.”
- “I felt like I extended my thinking – like it was more than trying to find the answers, before it was like in one ear and out the other.”
- “This kind of makes you look for interesting stuff and then figure out more about it.”
- “I think we need to practice in class more to get a feel for it – that last column was kinda confusing.”

- Tara Smith
- <https://ateachinglifedotcom.wordpress.com/>