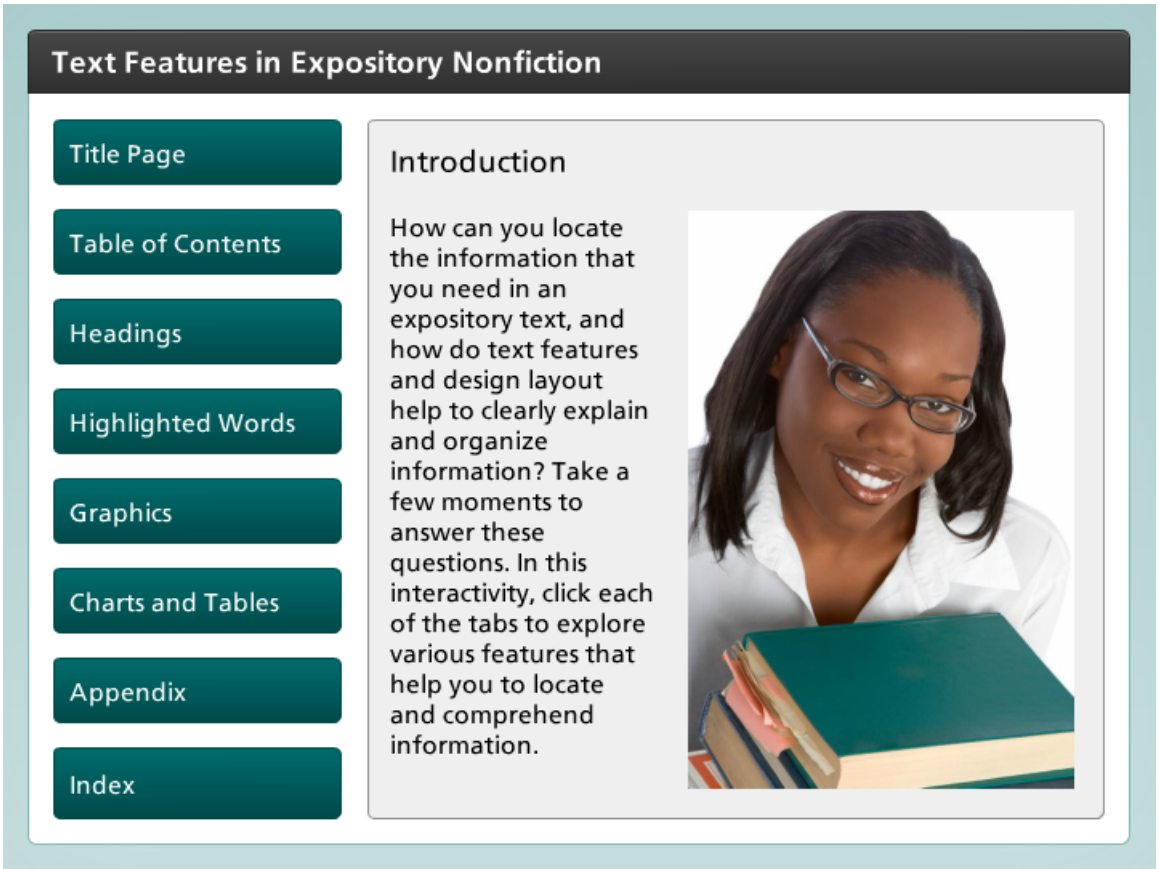
Module 9: Nonfiction
Topic 3 Content: Text Features in Expository Nonfiction

Introduction



How can you locate the information that you need in an expository text, and how do text features and design layout help to clearly explain and organize information? Take a few moments to answer these questions. In this interactivity, click each of the tabs to explore various features that help you to locate and comprehend information.

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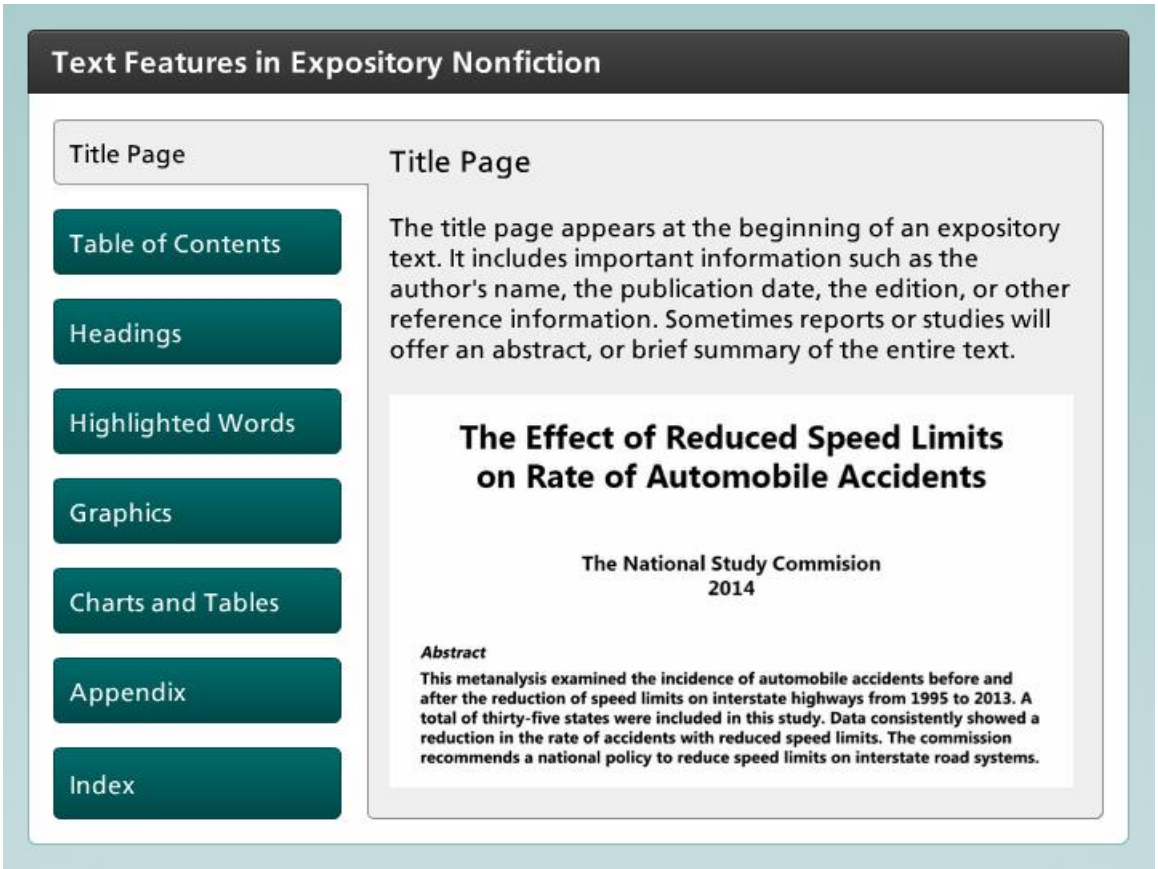
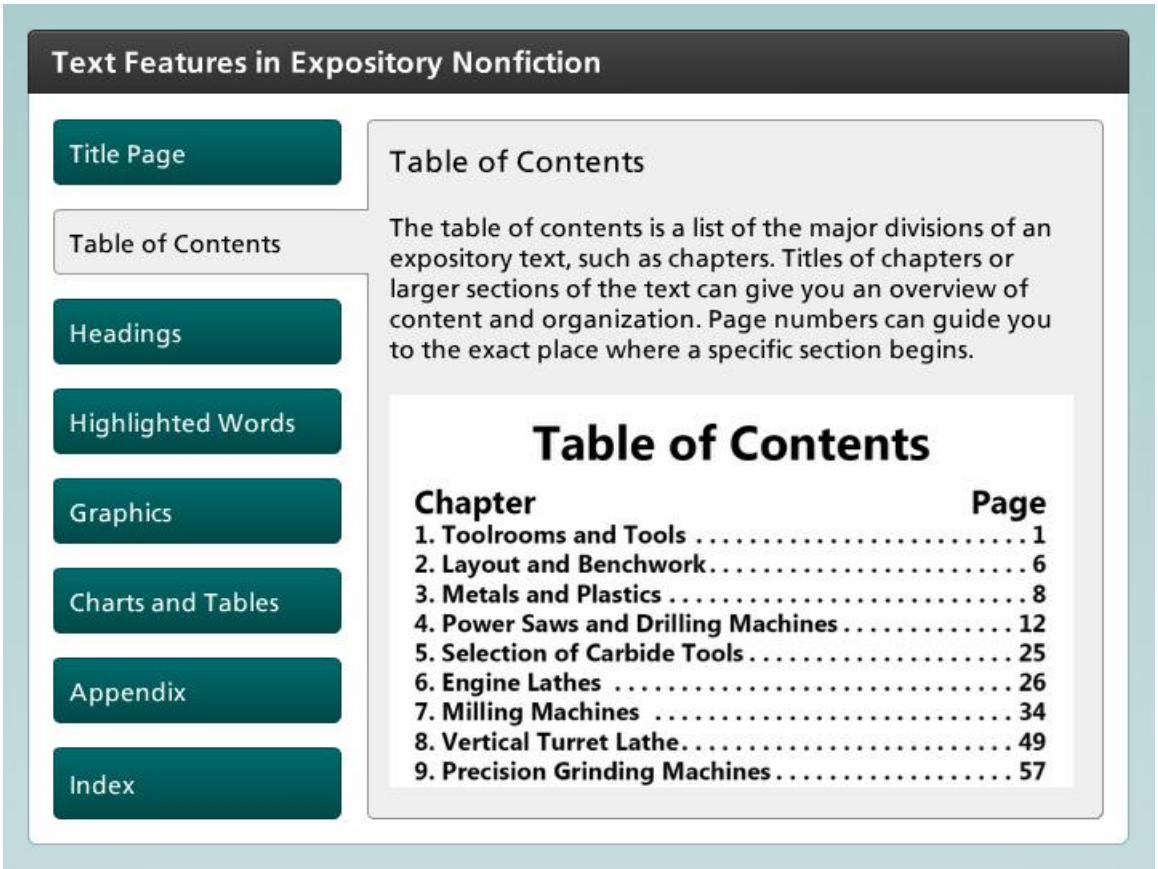
Title Page



The title page appears at the beginning of an expository text. It includes important information such as the author's name, the publication date, the edition, or other reference information. Sometimes reports or studies will offer an abstract, or brief summary of the entire text.

Table of Contents



The table of contents is a list of the major divisions of an expository text, such as chapters. Titles of chapters or larger sections of the text can give you an overview of content and organization. Page numbers can guide you to the exact place where a specific section begins.

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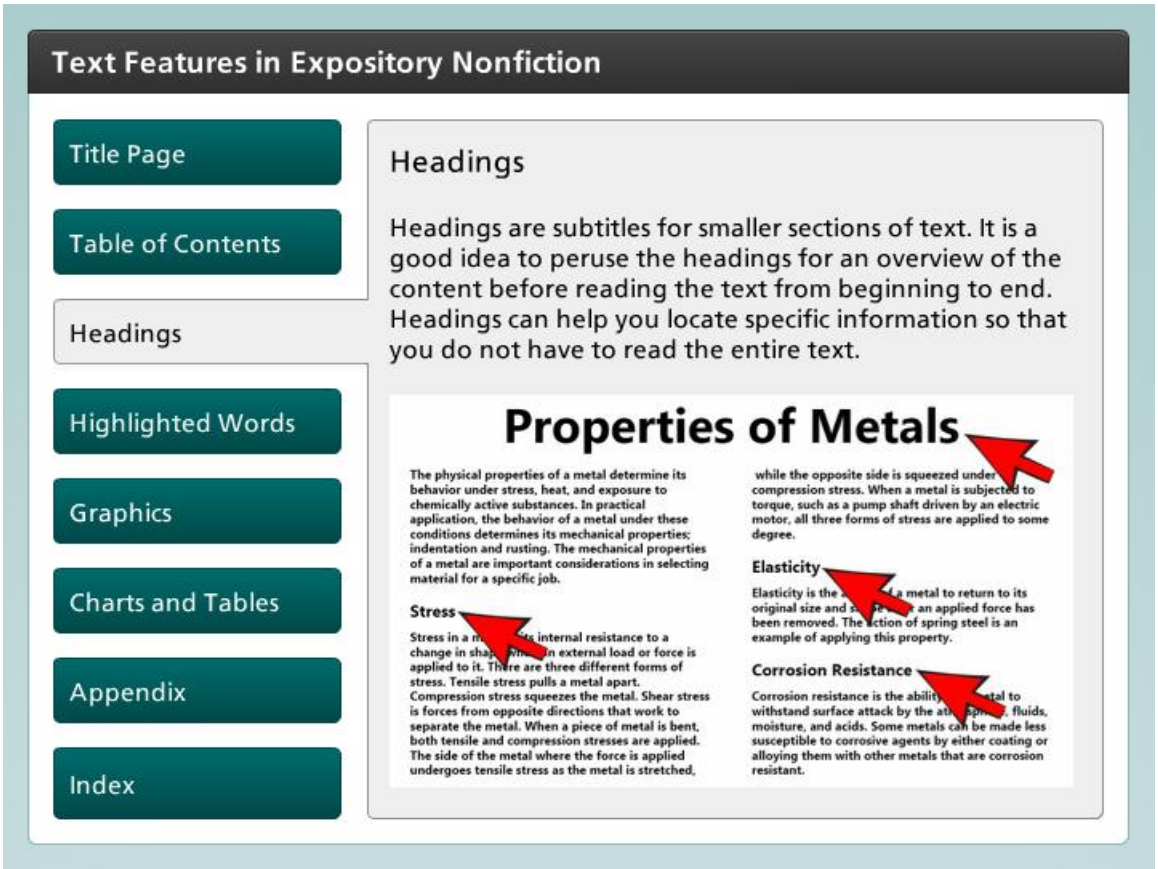
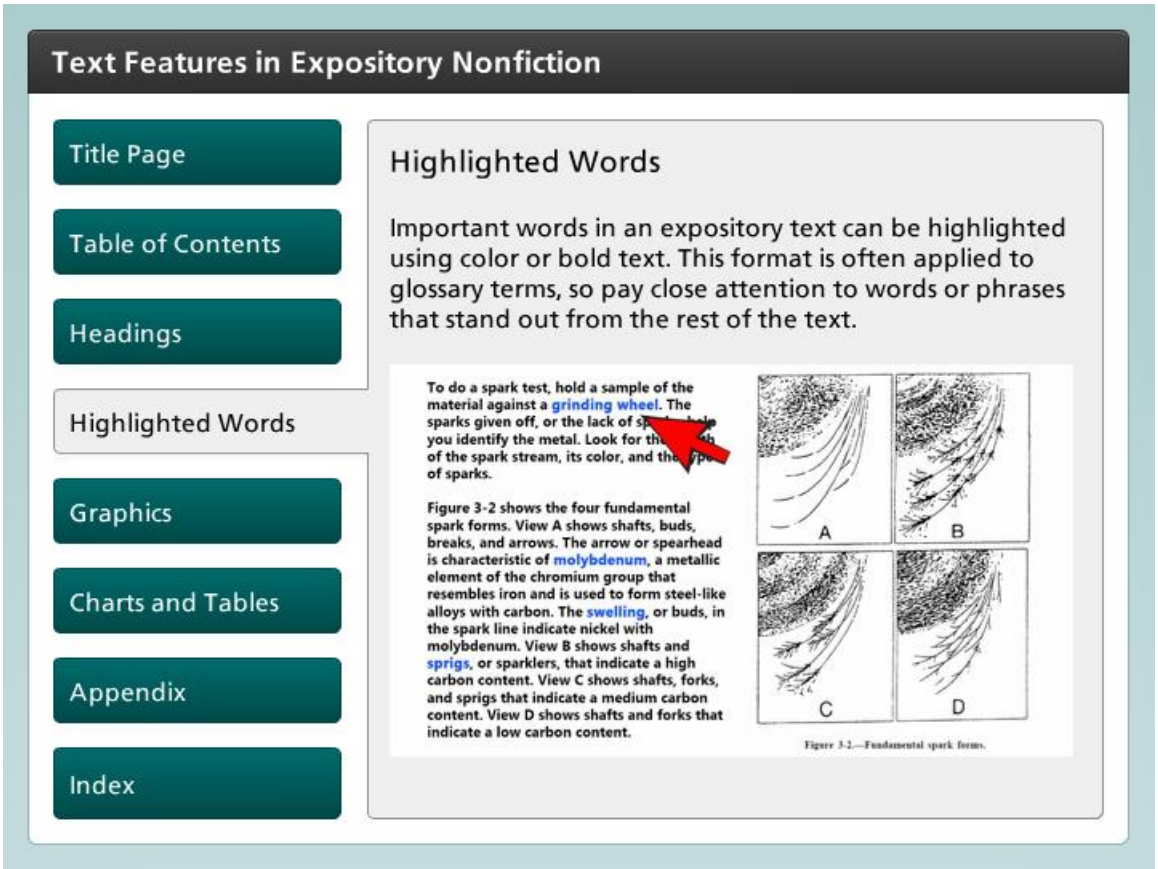
Headings



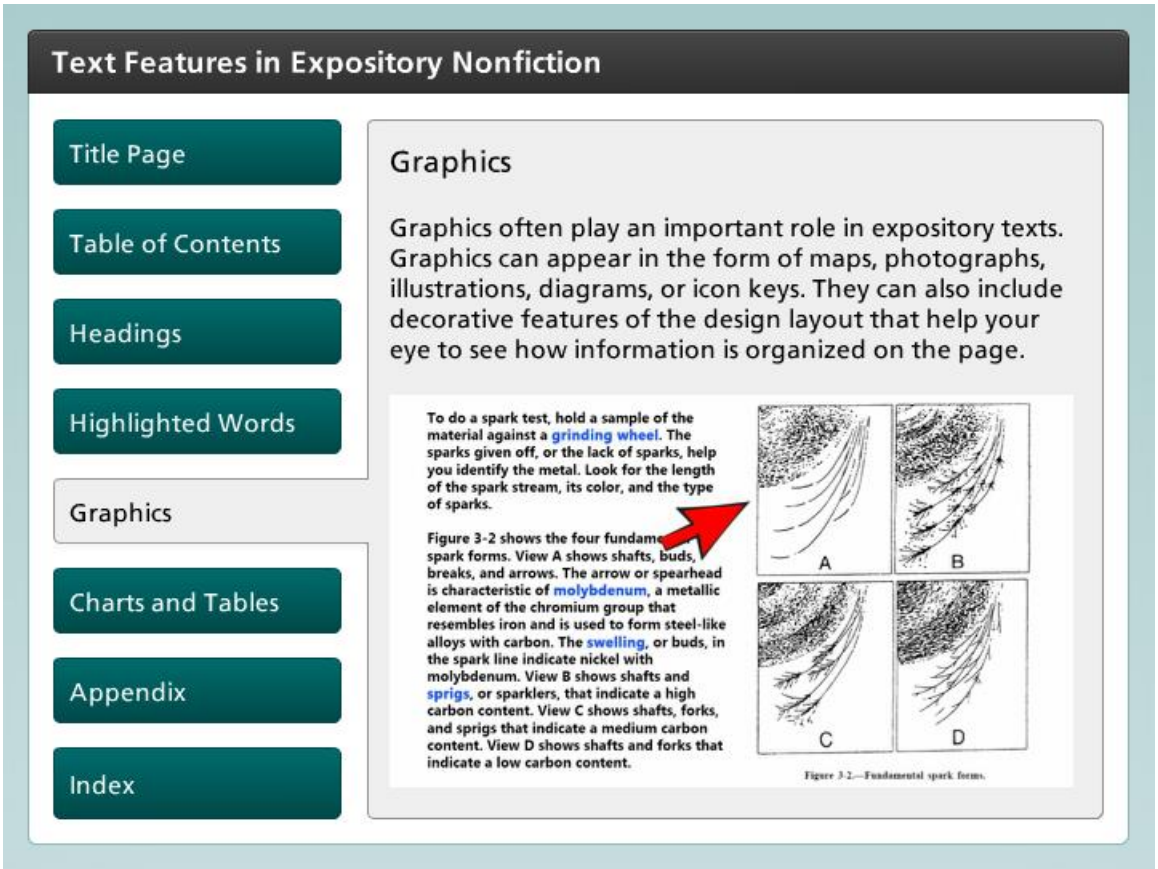
Headings are subtitles for smaller sections of text. It is a good idea to peruse the headings for an overview of the content before reading the text from beginning to end. Headings can help you locate specific information so that you do not have to read the entire text.

Highlighted Words



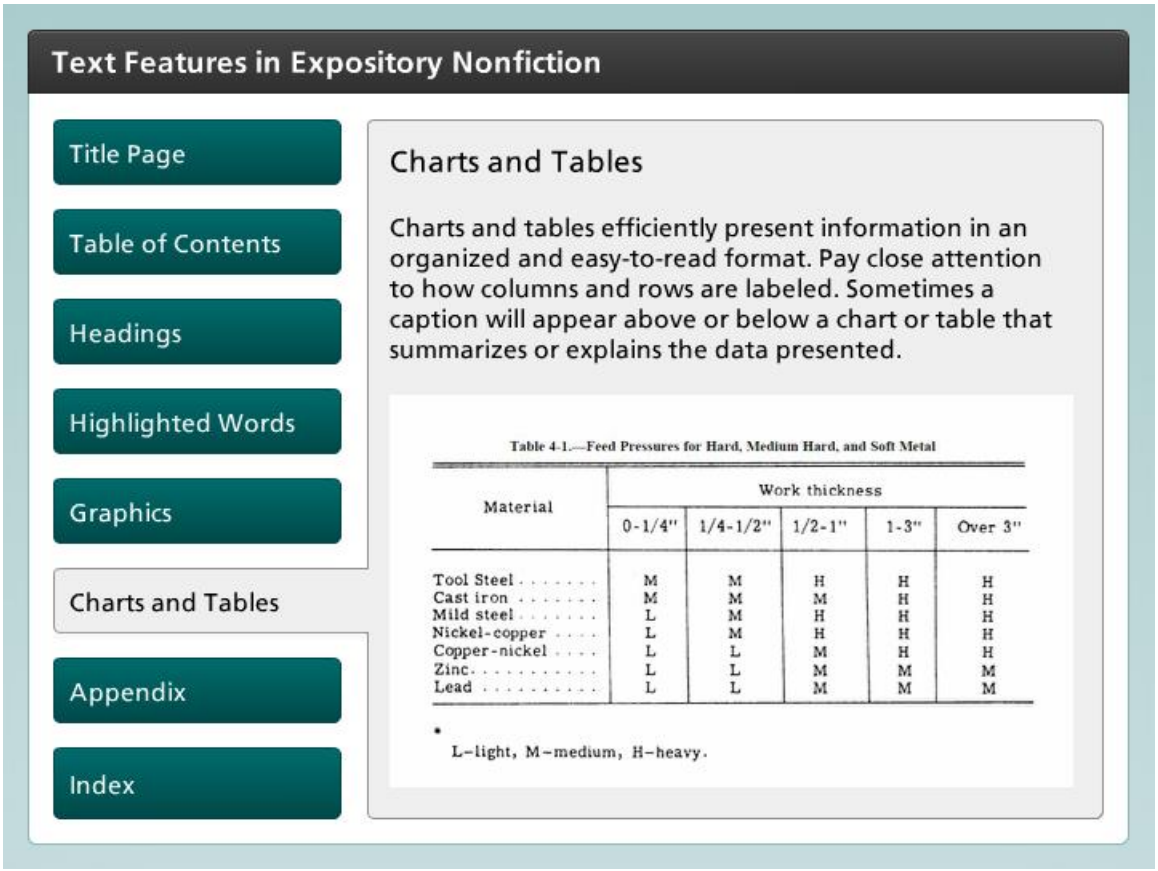
Important words in an expository text can be highlighted using color or bold text. This format is often applied to glossary terms, so pay close attention to words or phrases that stand out from the rest of the text.

Graphics



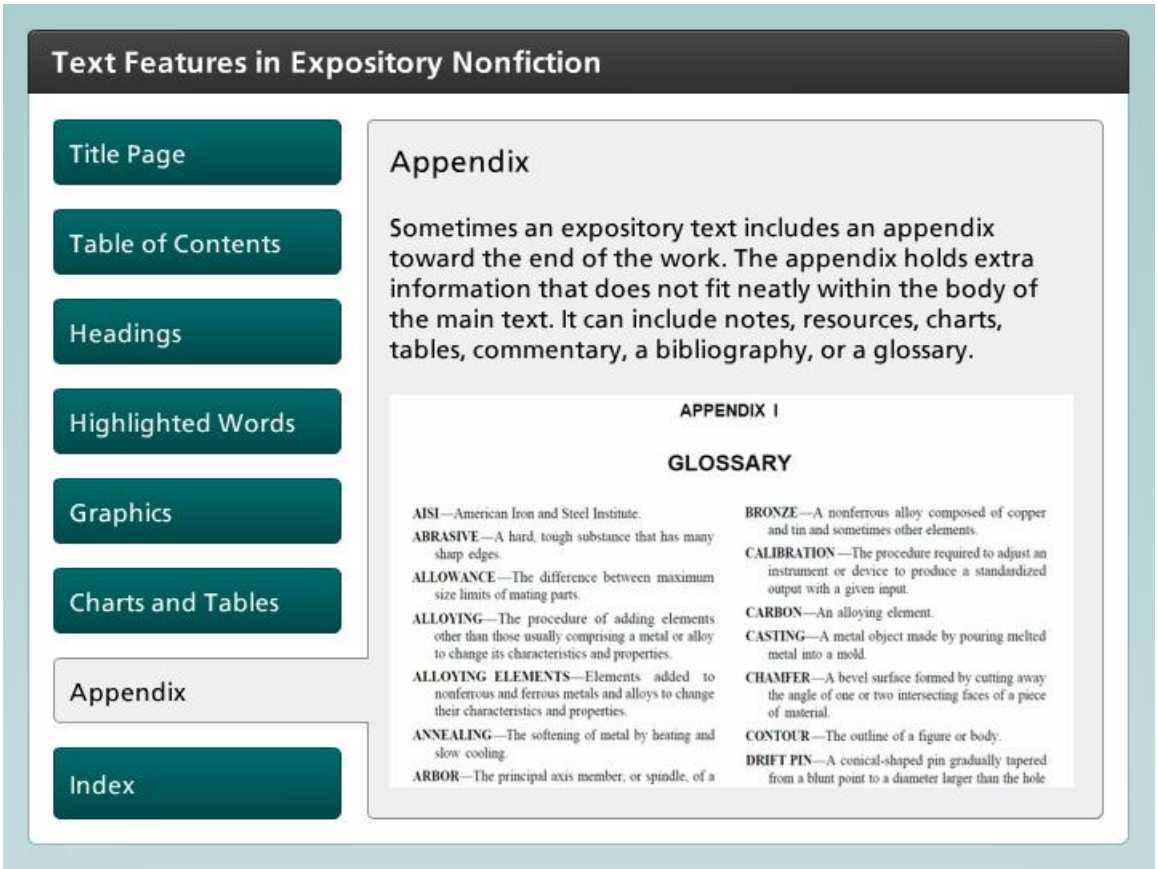
Graphics often play an important role in expository texts. Graphics can appear in the form of maps, photographs, illustrations, diagrams, or icon keys. They can also include decorative features of the design layout that help your eye to see how information is organized on the page.

Charts and Tables



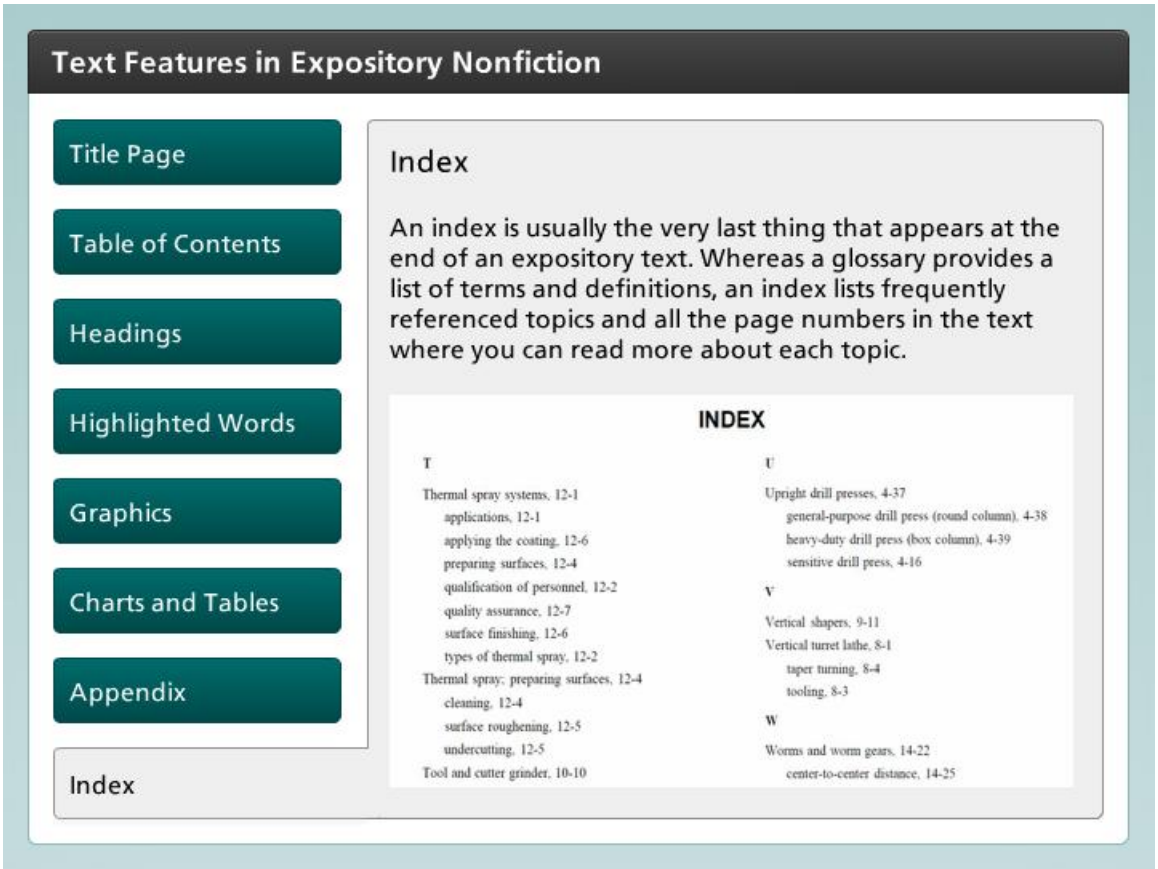
Charts and tables efficiently present information in an organized and easy-to-read format. Pay close attention to how columns and rows are labeled. Sometimes a caption will appear above or below a chart or table that summarizes or explains the data presented.

Appendix



Sometimes an expository text includes an appendix toward the end of the work. The appendix holds extra information that does not fit neatly within the body of the main text. It can include notes, resources, charts, tables, commentary, a bibliography, or a glossary.

Index



An index is usually the very last thing that appears at the end of an expository text. Whereas a glossary provides a list of terms and definitions, an index lists frequently referenced topics and all the page numbers in the text where you can read more about each topic.