



# YOUR BAFFLING BRAIN

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**TEXT TYPE:** Non-fiction: Description—Explanation  
**GUIDED READING LEVEL:** U/V

**SUMMARY:** This text presents information and interesting insight on the human brain in the format of a Website. The selection contains basic biological brain facts, explains how to keep the brain healthy, and includes other fun and unusual brain basics!

## TEXT FEATURES

- website format
- headings/subheadings
- chart
- graph
- bullets
- text boxes

## VISUAL LITERACY

- photographs
- illustrations
- speech balloons
- puzzle

## TEXT SUPPORTS

- website format familiar to students
- compartmentalized information
- definitions provided in the text

## POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- amount of information
- scientific explanations
- pronunciation of brain-related terms, e.g., ‘Occipital,’ ‘synaesthesia’

## FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- predicting

## FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

- making connections: text to self, text to text
- synthesizing

## ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Group Anticipation Guide strategy
- discussing with a group
- sharing ideas
- Internet video (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

## WORKING WITH WORDS

- word solving and building: using chunking and syllabication
- language predictability: using dictionaries to solve word meanings
- language predictability: idiomatic expressions

## ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student’s ability to:

- make connections to what they know about Websites
- use background knowledge to help make predictions
- follow up on predictions
- connect facts and ideas into a cohesive whole
- consider order and sequence when reading

## ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Predicting Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

## BEFORE READING

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### Making Connections: Text to Self and Text to Text

#### **Activate and build prior knowledge**

- Ask students how often they use the Internet. What do they use the Internet for? Where do they use the Internet? Ask, *What are some of your favourite Websites?*

#### **TEACHING TIP:**

Use this part of this session to review the importance of being careful when visiting unknown Websites, providing personal information while on-line, cyberbullying, and other issues that relate to safe Internet use.

### Text Features and Sequencing

#### **Introduce supports and challenges**

- Ask, *How do you read information on a Website?* Allow students the opportunity to discuss how they interact with information presented on a given Website. Ask them to compare reading information on-line with reading information in a book or a magazine.

### Word Solving and Building

- Direct students to the word ‘com-pli-cat-ed’ in the top left corner of the ‘Brain Basics’ page. Ask, *If you did not know this word, what are some strategies you could use to figure it out?* Students should mention that the word has been broken into different parts; it begins with com-, a familiar word part, and it ends with the suffix -ed. Direct students to the word ‘Occipital’ on the same page. Ask them to apply the chunking strategy discussed—or any other appropriate strategies—to help pronounce the word.

### Language Predictability

- Point out the word ‘dominant’ at the top of the next page. Ask students, *What do you notice about the word? If the word was presented in this manner on a Website what would its highlighted and underlined appearance mean?* Students should recognize that a word presented in a different colour and underlined on a Website, when clicked, would link to additional information on that word. Ask, *Where would the link lead us?* Explain that the link might lead to a definition of the word or to more examples of Web pages containing that word. The links help provide more information and a better understanding of the word. Emphasize to students that when they come across words in the text presented in this manner they can use a dictionary to help them by providing a definition and a better understanding of the word.
- As a group, turn to the ‘Brain Technology’ page and read the heading ‘Scientists “Pick” Your Brain.’ Ask, *What do we call this type of phrase?* If not mentioned by students, tell them it is called an idiom. Explain that idioms are expressions and phrases in which the meaning doesn’t literally reflect what is being stated. These expressions have been used over and over and people generally understand what they mean. Ask students for examples of other idioms they may know, e.g., ‘Butterflies in my stomach.’

## Predicting

### **Set a purpose for reading**

- Use the Group Anticipation Guide strategy (see Oral Language Strategies in the *Grade 6 Literacy Support Guide*). Direct students to the multi-colour tabs at the top of the ‘Web pages:’ ‘Home,’ ‘Brain Basics,’ ‘Brain Bafflers,’ ‘Brain Health,’ ‘Brain Technology,’ and ‘Brain Mysteries.’ Have students work in small groups and discuss each of the tabs, predicting the kind of information they will find in each section. Students should use their background knowledge of this topic to help inform their predictions. Explain that they will read the text independently and should follow up on their predictions.

**ESL NOTE:** Before assigning the small groups, go over the meanings of the different tabs so students gain an understanding of what’s involved in the various sections. Choose a few examples from the text and ask the group what tab that information would fall under.

### **Provide for early finishers**

- If students finish early they can discuss with other early finishers if their predictions were correct, as well as how their background knowledge of the topic assisted them in forming their predictions.

## **DURING READING**

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### **Monitor reading**

- Provide prompts such as the following to support students as they confirm their predictions: *What did you already know about the brain that helped you make your prediction? What prediction did you make about this section?* Help students to understand that sometimes predictions, although appropriate, don’t work out as thought.

### **Observe**

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the Predicting Strategy Checklist and the Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record in the *Grade 6 Literacy Support Guide*.)

## **AFTER READING**

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### **Revisit the purpose for reading**

## Predicting

- After reading the text, review each of the tab names. Ask students to share with the group whether or not their predictions worked out. Ask them to share how they used their background knowledge of the brain to help them make predictions. Reiterate that, even though not all students’ predictions might have worked out, it does not mean that their thoughts were poorly conceived—the author simply decided to cover other areas related to the topic for this particular text.

### **Check on outstanding challenges**

- Ask students to share some examples of interesting new expressions (idioms) or difficult words they encountered and what strategies they used to help make sense of them.

### **Note successful strategy use**

- Acknowledge students who made appropriate predictions, only to discover that the author decided to do something different. Commend students for their predicting efforts and reinforce the notion that although predictions might not always work out they are a great way of involving yourself in a text and becoming a stronger reader.

## **FOCUSED REREADING**

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Three options are provided for focused rereading in the next Guided Reading lesson. Choose an activity that meets the needs of your students, or you might select a Reader Response activity from the *Grade 6 Literacy Support Guide*.

### **Written**

- Direct students' attention to the article excerpt on the homepage, 'Man Survives Iron Rod Through Brain!' Ask students to select information from a section of the text (e.g., 'Brain Health') and write a Web article based on an aspect of that section's content which interests them. Students can conduct further research on their article's topic if needed.

### **Artistic**

- Ask students to think about the design of other Websites they have visited. What makes a Website appealing to look at and use? Discuss colour, fonts, and visuals. Ask them to redesign the homepage for 'Your Baffling Brain.' Remind students that they must keep the same content, but need to change the look of the page, making it better suited to future Web surfers as their needs for homepage functionality and design change over time.

### **Oral/dramatic**

- Some Websites have a video feature where an explanation of the information presented in the text is presented. Ask students to work in groups and choose a selection of the text and present the information as a three-minute video. Present the video version of the information to the class.

**Synthesizing**

**Making Connections: Text to Text and Inferring**

**Synthesizing**