

How the Author Uses Words to Tell about Ruby-Throated Hummingbirds

An author writes an informational text to inform, explain or describe. Use the text to decide what the author is doing to help you understand.

Write what you think the author is doing. Ask each time, “Is the author trying to inform, explain or describe. The first few sections are done as examples for you.

Inform—the author wants to give you information

Explain—the author wants to tell you how to do something or how something works

Describe—the author wants you to visualize or experience a person, place, or thing

| Parts of the Text | Inform, Explain, or Describe |
|--|---|
| This is a ruby-throated hummingbird. It is a <u>small bird that drinks nectar</u> . | the author <u>describes</u> the hummingbird as small and <u>explains</u> that it drinks nectar |
| These birds are very small. In fact, they are <u>no heavier than a penny</u> . | the author <u>describes</u> how much a hummingbird weighs_ |
| The <u>males have ruby-red throats</u> . The <u>females do not</u> . | the author <u>informs</u> to tell the color of the male’s throat and the color of the female’s throat (she does not have a ruby-red throat) |
| The <u>female makes a nest in spring</u> . She <u>makes it from spider webs</u> . It is the <u>size of a walnut</u> . | the author <u>informs</u> that the female makes a nest from spider webs; then <u>describes</u> its size |
| The <u>female finds spider webs</u> . She <u>takes the silk and adds it to her nest</u> . She <u>needs a lot of silk</u> . | the author <u>informs</u> that the female finds spider webs and needs a lot of silk; then <u>explains</u> how she takes the silk and adds it to her nest_ |
| The <u>nest is soft and stretchy</u> . She <u>puts leaves on the outside</u> . This hides the nest. | the author <u>describes</u> the nest as soft and stretchy with leaves on the outside |
| You Try It... | |
| The <u>female lays her eggs</u> when the nest is done. | |

| Parts of the Text | Inform, Explain, or Describe |
|--|------------------------------|
| <u>Each egg is the size of a pea.</u> | |
| The <u>nest is small</u> , but it can grow. <u>As the chicks grow, so does the nest.</u> | |
| <u>Hummingbirds make their nests in trees.</u> | |
| You have to <u>look hard to find them.</u> | |
| They are <u>very small.</u> | |
| They <u>look like part of the tree.</u> | |