Reading Non-Fiction: Notice and note

Question 1: What Surprised Me?
What is Non-Fiction?

Turn and talk to your group about what you believe the definition of non-fiction is. Try to come up with examples of non-fiction texts.
The True Definition of Non-Fiction

Nonfiction is a body of work in which the author purports to tell us about the real world, a real experience, a real person, an idea, or a belief.

Purport – claim to be, profess to be, pretend to be, appear to be, seem to be
Surprises are meaningful to you!

When you notice surprising information, that’s what you want to discuss with others.

- Interesting conversations include surprises
- Interesting car rides include surprises
- Interesting field trips include surprises

...the list could go on and on!
Surprises are meaningful to you!

If you found nothing surprising in these scenarios, you’d probably consider the conversation/drive/field trip boring.

An entire baseball game with nothing surprising would probably leave you complaining about how dull it had been.
Surprises are meaningful to you!

The same is true of the nonfiction we read. If we finish the text and nothing has caught our attention, then we probably think what we’ve just read was dull. If, though, as we read we notice some fact that surprises us - maybe just a little or perhaps a great deal - what we’re reading will be more meaningful.
Surprises are meaningful to you!

When you read nonfiction, you should read with that expectation for surprise. A stance that says, “I will be surprised” will help you see information as more than facts; you will see it as information that is new to you.

Remember – if you want to find a surprise, you actually must look for one.
Example passage:

Pilgrims brought the first honeybees to America. By the 1850s, honeybees had flown to California.
Example surprised reactions:

- Does this mean the Native Americans who were already here didn’t have any honey?
- How did the Pilgrims get the bees here? Did the Pilgrims purposefully bring them, or did some bees just end up on the ship?
- How did the honey bees manage to travel thousands of miles to California?
Your Turn:

- Read the article about vampire bats.
- As you read, ask yourself the “Big Questions:”
- Mark at least three or four parts that surprised you.
- Once the person next to you is finished, turn and talk with that person. The two of you should share what you found surprising and discuss why those passages were surprising to you.
Big Question: What surprised Me?

- I was shocked about...
- I was surprised when...
- I never thought...
- I could not believe...
- Really?
As you read this text...

- Put an exclamation point (!) in the margin of the sections that surprised you.
- Jot a few notes in the margin that explain why you were surprised.