



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Comprehension Strategy: Summarize Text; Include Sequence of Main Events	
Definition	Summarizing is taking selections of text and reducing them to their bare essentials: the gist, the key ideas, and the main points that are worth noting and remembering.
Why Children Need This Strategy	<p>The reader captures the most important parts of text but expresses them in a shorter version so the text is more easily remembered.</p> <p>As readers we need to absorb the meaning of the passage and then capture in our own words the most important elements from the original so we can remember, organize, and understand the importance of what we have read.</p>
Secret to Success	Readers are able to articulate the main point of a selection. At times finding key words or phrases may be helpful to support their ideas.
How We Teach It	<p>During our chapter book read-aloud, we begin modeling how to summarize. Before we begin the second chapter, we summarize what happened in the previous chapter, stating the main ideas and using story elements to organize the summary. We model discerning important or nonimportant information that we would include in our summary. After we make a few attempts alone, we work together with students to identify the main ideas in the previous chapters.</p> <p>In primary classes, we institute an artist of the day, who draws or paints a picture of the most important information from the chapter just read. We meet with the child to write the main ideas they drew or painted, finally compiling a class book summarizing the read-aloud. This book becomes the anchor we refer to when speaking about summaries.</p> <p>With older students we model writing summaries of the chapters from our class read-aloud, modeling our thinking as we decide what is important and worth noting and what details we will leave out because of their relative insignificance to the story. Once we think students understand how to write a summary, this becomes a weekly expectation and part of their response journal that is graded.</p> <p>Language we use: “What is this selection about?” “What are the main ideas of this selection? What is your evidence?” “What is not important to remember in this selection? Why?”</p>
Troubleshooting	<p>Summarizing is often used but is challenging for many of our students. If it does pose a challenge, many times it is because students are trying to retell the whole story with great detail and don’t know how to cut it down to the most critical elements. This is when we step in with more modeling either with the whole group, in small groups, or one on one, depending on the number of students who need the strategy.</p> <p>For an example of an individual conferring lesson using this strategy, see pages 78 and 101.</p>