

## Reading to Learn design Swimming in Summarization

Rationale: Summarization is essential to reading comprehension. A helpful method for summarization is the about-point method, which asks two important questions about the text: 1) What is the text about? This question is typically easy and will identify the topic that becomes the subject of the topic sentence. 2) What is the main point the writer is trying to make about the topic? This question is harder since authors typically make multiple points. Students must “superordinate” the points or find an umbrella term or phrase in order to cover all of the main points the author is making. The main point will become the predicate of the topic sentence.

### Materials:

1. Article for each student
2. Pencils for each student
3. Paper for each student
4. Summarization checklist
5. Quiz

### Procedures:

1. Say: When we read we are trying to figure out what the words on the pages say, but we also should be trying to figure out what they mean and what is most important about them. [explain to children why summarization is important]. Say: When we read we don't try and remember every word we read, we would have to spend all day trying to remember all of the words and details. That is why we summarize, because good readers don't try to remember everything. Good readers use summarization strategies to remember the important points an author is making. Doing this reduces a text from hundreds to thousands of words to a small list of things to remember.
2. Say: The best way to summarize is using something called about-point. Does anyone know what this might be? (wait for response) About-point is asking yourself an easy question and a hard question in order to make a topic sentence. The easy question is asking yourself “What is this text about?” The hard question is “What is the main point the author is making about the topic?” To answer this question we must think of an umbrella term for all the important points a writer is making.
3. I am about to show you how to do an about-point summary with a story containing information about Narwhals. What is a Narwhal? Where does it live? And what is that funny thing on top of its head? Do any of you know anything about Narwhals? (wait for responses and write what students answer on the board in order to revisit and fact check them later)
4. Let's talk about some vocabulary words we will encounter while reading today: the word is mysterious. Mysterious means difficult or impossible to understand, explain or identify. For example “the way that summarizing works may be mysterious at first but then once you practice it is easy.” What is something you think is mysterious? (wait for responses) Yes that's right!
5. Here is a paragraph about Narwhals that we are going to read and then summarize together:

This species of whale is best known for its tusk—a long, spiraled tooth that usually only the males develop. (Females occasionally do.) The tusk can grow to 9 feet (3 meters) long and weigh more than 22 pounds (10 kilograms).

Scientists don't know exactly why narwhals have tusks—though they might be used to impress females or fight other males. But tusks are more than battle swords—they're packed with nerves and covered in tiny holes that allow seawater to enter. This gives tusks a sensitivity that could help narwhals detect changes in their environment such as temperature or even the water's saltiness. Clues like these might help narwhals find prey or survive in other ways.

This paragraph is about Narwhals, but what important points is the author making? (Write on board) The author is talking about the size of Narwhals and the purposes that their tusks serve, as well as what tusks are made of. Using this information I can make a topic sentence summarizing what I just read: Narwhals are most recognized by tusks which might serve a variety of purposes for Narwhals survival.

6. Now I want you to use about-point on a paragraph:

Narwhals' Arctic habitat makes them difficult to study, and scientists still have plenty to learn about them. These unicorns of the sea might be mysterious, but they're certainly no myth.

What is this paragraph about? Yes, Narwhals! What is the main point the author is trying to make? The nature of the Narwhals is mysterious and so it is hard to know information about them. Putting these together with what we have learned earlier we can summarize the article with topic sentences, lets try together (wait for responses and correct what is wrong).

7. Now I want you all to practice! Read the article again, silently to yourselves and practice distinguishing important things from unimportant things. Underline what is unimportant and highlight details that are important.

8. Now I'd like you to finish reading the article and use about-point to make a topic sentence for each paragraph. When you are finished, you will have made a good summary of the article, which will help you remember important facts about narwhals. You are writing a short version of the article in your own words, including only the important ideas to remember. And to make sure you remember, we will have a quiz after everyone finishes writing.

Assessment: Collect each student's summary of the article, and evaluate the summarization using the following checklist:

- Collected important information
- Ignored trivia and examples in summary.
- Significantly reduced the text from the original
- Sentences brought ideas together from each paragraph
- Sentences organized coherently into essay form.

Reference:

Maps, N. (2019, July 29). Narwhal. Retrieved November 10, 2020, from <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/narwhal/>

Reading to Learn. (n.d.). Retrieved November 10, 2020, from <https://murraba.wixsite.com/reading-lessons/rl>