

Teacher Notes

on Response to Text Summary Writing

Summarizing involves the complex task of condensing a larger text into a smaller overview of the same text. The process involves critical reading of a text (or listening to a lecture, video, etc.), annotating or taking notes on the key points, and paraphrasing key concepts. A well-written summary captures the author's original meaning; it does not include opinions, critiques or evaluations. Quotes are used sparingly in summaries, but if they are integrated into the synopsis, proper citation is needed.

A critical thinking and reading skill, summary writing is essential to writing in all genres, particularly informative/explanatory, argumentative and research genres. Not only is this type of writing used in academic situations, but it is also used extensively in business and scientific settings. Learning the practice of summarizing, and eventually synthesizing a large amount of information into key points, has lifelong academic and workplace applications. Why should we focus on summary skills as part of response to text writing? Summary writing is an essential academic skill!

Summary writing strengthens test-taking skills.

CAHSEE, ACT/SAT, AP Exams, and college entrance exams

Summary writing cultivates genre writing.

Summary writing, a foundational genre, is a component of most other writing genres. Summary writing is a critical element in each of the Common Core State Standards Text Types: Informative/Expository, Argumentative, and Narrative.

Summary writing improves comprehension.

Graham & Perin's Meta-analysis on Adolescent Writers

(Recommendation # 2 of 11)

"Summarization is one of the most underused teaching techniques we have today, yet research has shown that it yields some of the greatest leaps in comprehension and long-term retention of comprehension." (Graham & Perin, 2006)

Marzano's Nine

(Recommendation #2 of 9)

"Summarizing is restating the essence of text or an experience in as few words as possible in a new yet concise form. Summarizing and note taking require the ability to synthesize information. Students must be able to analyze information and organize it in a way that captures the main ideas and supporting details that are stated in their own words. Students can summarize information in different ways, including deleting information that isn't important to the overall meaning of the text, substituting some information, and keeping some information. As students practice these strategies, it enhances their ability to understand specific content for learning." (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001)

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Summary writing supports 21st Century Learning.

Promotes Higher-order Thinking Skills (Bloom's Taxonomy)

- Analyze key information
- Evaluate information (pertinent vs. extraneous)
- Synthesize key concepts

Develops Wagner's Seven Survival Skills (*The Global Education Gap*)

1. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
2. Collaboration across Networks and Leading by Influence
3. Agility and Adaptability
4. Initiative and Entrepreneurialism
5. Effective Oral and Written Communication
6. Accessing and Analyzing Information
7. Curiosity and Imagination

Summary Pre-writing Process:

1. Understand the key differences between CCSS text types: Informative/Explanatory vs. Argumentative.
2. Analyze text structure in order to understand where to look for key facts and details.
 - a. Enumeration texts focus on facts. [Linguistic clues include: to begin with, first, second, then, next, finally, several, numerous, for example, for instance, in fact, in addition...]
 - b. Chronological texts focus on time. [Linguistic clues include: since, when, before, after, while...]
 - c. Compare/Contrast text focus on similarities and differences. [Linguistic clues include: however, like, unlike, but, as well as, not only, but also...]
 - d. Cause/Effect texts focus on how something impacts something else. [Linguistic clues include: consequently, therefore, thus...]
 - e. Problem/Solution texts focus on a conflict and possible solutions. [Linguistic clues include: consequently, therefore, thus...]