

A Clear Summary

Adapted from Lori Oczkus, Reciprocal Teaching At Work: Strategies for Improving Reading Comprehension. 2003. International Reading Association.

About the Lesson

The purpose of this lesson is for students to become metacognitive with the comprehension reading strategy summarizing used by good readers. Students work in teams to create summaries on overhead transparencies to make clear summaries.

Introducing Clear Summaries

Ask students to review with partners or at their tables what makes a good summary.

List steps they remember on the board.

Examples

-Rereading and studying material helps before trying to summarize.

-A summary is told in a logical order.

-A summary is in your own words.

-A summary tells only most important points not every detail.

You may also write a model summary on the overhead projector. To be brief you might read a short newspaper article and summarize that. You could underline the main points and circle the key words in the article. Show how you use those to write your own summary. Provide a copy of the article to students so they can also follow along and underline and circle as you read and write your summary. Ask students to review what you did. As a class come up with a rubric or check list for a good summary.

Guided Practice

-Select some reading material that students are already familiar with.

-Groups or tables of students work together to construct summaries on overhead transparencies. Tell students to follow the rubric the class has created to construct their summary.

-Groups share their summaries and the class scores checks to see if the summaries follow the checklist.

-The class votes on the “best” clear summary.

-Pairs or even individuals can make their own clear summaries. Be sure to share with the class.

Fiction

-Summarize chapters in a chapter book

-Use story elements to guide the summary- setting, characters, problem, main event, resolution, lesson or moral.

Nonfiction

-Write clear summaries of lessons or sections of text from the social studies or science book.

Reflecting

Ask students to discuss how writing clear summaries in groups helps them understand what they read. How is summarizing different in fiction and nonfiction?