

## Summarization – Grade Four

### Ohio Standards Connection

**Reading Process:  
Concepts of Print,  
Comprehension  
Strategies and Self-  
Monitoring Strategies**

#### Benchmark B

Apply effective reading comprehension strategies, including summarizing and making predictions, and comparisons using information in text, between text and across subject areas.

#### Indicator 4

Summarize important information in texts to demonstrate comprehension.

### **Writing Applications**

#### Benchmark B

Write responses to literature that summarize main ideas and significant details and support interpretations with references to the text.

#### Indicator 2

Write responses to novels, stories and poems that include a simple interpretation of a literary work and support judgment with specific references to the original text and to prior knowledge.

### Lesson Summary:

*This lesson focuses on the task of summarizing. Through cooperative and kinesthetic activities, students practice trimming down a piece of fiction to its “bare bones.” Additionally, students use the main events to write a summary paragraph.*

**Estimated Duration:** *Three 60-minute lessons or 180 minutes.*

### Commentary:

One Ohio teacher noted students “were involved and excited about choosing the main events of the story and matching them to the ones I already had. They loved setting up the main idea and resolution and using the middle events to connect them.”

Another noticed, “. . .the involvement of the students in the freeze-frame activity was unique. I liked that they worked in groups to list the important events of the stories we had read in class. . .the writing of the summary was very appropriate.”

### Pre-Assessment:

The answer key for the pre-test is as follows: 1. Freddie, the bat, was afraid to fly. 2. He tried everything to get out of flying. 3. Freddie decided to run away. 4. His mom found him and was carrying him home. 5. As Freddie fell from his mother’s back, he realized that he could fly.

- Read the story *The Fall of Freddie the Bat*, Attachment A, to the children.
- Distribute the worksheet *The Fall of Freddie the Bat*, Attachment B, to the students. Instruct students to read all 10 events and to choose the five main events and to place them, in correct sequential order, on a separate piece of paper.

### **Instructional Tip:**

Print out the story in a larger font for students who are visual learners or for students who may have difficulty with the recall of main events and details.

### Scoring Guidelines:

**Advanced:** Puts the correct five main events in order.

**Proficient:** Selects the correct five main events but misplaces one in the order.

**Beginning:** Selects some of the correct main events and has more than one mistake in the correct sequential order.

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#### **Writing Process**

##### Benchmark E

Use revision strategies to improve the coherence of ideas, clarity of sentence structure and effectiveness of word choices.

##### Indicator 7

Create paragraphs with topic sentences and supporting sentences that are marked by indentation) and are linked by transitional words and phrases.

### **Post-Assessment:**

The answer key for the post-test is as follows: 1. A boy grew up thinking his real name was Ben. 2. A wagon wreck caused the baby to be born early. 3. The whole family took care of the tiny baby and he grew strong. 4. Without telling anyone, Ben’s granny decided to send in the birth certificate with the name Jimmy Douglas instead of Benjamin Eugene. 5. At eighteen years of age, Ben sent for his birth certificate and found that his real name was Jimmy Douglas.

- Read the story *What’s in a Name?* Attachment C, to the children.
- Distribute the worksheet *What’s in a Name?* Attachment D, to the students. Instruct students to read all 10 events and to choose the five **main** events and to place them, in correct sequential order, on a separate piece of paper.

### **Scoring Guidelines:**

**Advanced:** Puts the correct five main events in order.

**Proficient:** Selects the correct five main events but misplaces one in the order.

**Beginning:** Selects some of the correct main events and has more than one mistake in the correct sequential order.

### **Instructional Procedures:**

#### **Day One**

1. To introduce summarizing as a reading comprehension strategy, start with a whole class discussion. Point out that good readers think about what they read before, during and after reading. Ask students to brainstorm a list of questions that they can ask of themselves before, during and after reading that they think will improve reading comprehension.

#### **Instructional Tip:**

Post these reading strategies in a prominent location in the classroom. Refer to the list regularly to review and update reading strategies.

2. Explain that today’s lesson will focus on summarizing as a reading comprehension strategy. Discuss familiar stories and their main events. Explain to students that “main events” refer to events that are critical to the development of the story. To illustrate this, provide the following example of a fairy tale reduced to three main events and presented in *freeze frame*.

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- Tell the students that you are going to act out a mystery nursery rhyme. When you say “curtain down,” the students shut their eyes. When you say “curtain up,” the students open their eyes. To make this demonstration, use a chair. When the students look, make no movement or sound. In effect, create a still life of one scene.
  - Say “curtain down.” As the children wait with their eyes shut, sit in the chair. Pretend to eat something out of a bowl. Use one hand as the bowl and have one hand hold a spoon. Hold hand pointed toward your open mouth, as if about to take a bite. When in position, say “curtain up.”
  - After students have taken in the scene, say “curtain down.” Still seated, look upward with a fearful look. (Splayed hands around the face can add to the look of fear.) Say “curtain up.”
  - Say “curtain down.” In this frame, stand up and hold a running pose **away** from the original direction in step two. Continue to look afraid. Say “curtain up.”
  - At this point, direct the students to identify the nursery rhyme *Little Miss Muffet*.
3. With the class, brainstorm a list of fairy tales. Assign each group of four children one of the fairy tales. Explain to the class that each group will model the five or six main events for the rest of the class and the other students will try to guess the correct fairy tale. Remind students that each scene consists of no movement or sound. Students will need to work quietly in the groups, so that others cannot inadvertently hear the name of the story or its characters.
  4. Design groups so that advanced students are in the same group. As the groups begin to work, take this time to meet with these students. Guide these students toward self-reflection on this activity.
    - What is going on with the *freeze-frame* process?
    - Why is summarizing an aid in comprehension?
    - How can this process increase comprehension in other subject areas?

### Instructional Tips:

- Students who have achieved mastery on this difficult task can use this opportunity to reflect and abstract on the process at a higher level of thinking. Allow students to keep this reflection in an ongoing notebook or writing journal to encourage further reflection.
  - Assign proficient students summarizing as a writing tool. Encourage students to create the main events first and then compose the narrative using the writing process.
5. Allow students to present *freeze-frame fairy tales* to the rest of the class.

### Day Two

6. Review the importance of summarizing as a reading comprehension strategy. Discuss the previous day’s practice in reducing nursery rhymes and fairy tales to the “bare bones” of the story, its main events. Discuss the pre-assessment story, *The Fall of Freddie the Bat*. If necessary, reread the story to the students.
7. Ask each student to record the five main events on five separate index cards and to place them in sequential order on their desks. Discuss student responses and point out there is some leeway in choosing events, but all chosen events must be critical to the development of the story.

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Remind students that extra events are important to the story, not only for today’s purpose.

Tell the students that to create the summaries, they are to make the first main event, the conflict or problem of the story. As they try to identify the main idea, remind students to ask themselves, “Is this what the WHOLE story is about?”

Ask the students if this new idea (with the first event being the main idea) creates a need to edit their own main events of *The Fall of Freddie the Bat*? Allow the students to change the main idea, if necessary. (The main idea is that Freddie is afraid to fly.)

8. Instruct the students to skip to the end to determine the concluding event of the story which MUST be the ending or answer to event one, the main idea. At this time, most students will need to correct their conclusions and everyone should be in agreement that the conclusion is that Freddie learned to fly.
9. Explain to students that the three or four events that connect the conflict to the resolution can vary, but that they should make sure the events are integral to how the problem is resolved. In this case, the main events can be
  - Freddie pretends to be sick to get out of flying.
  - He runs away to get out of flying.
  - While riding on his mom’s back, Freddie falls off and accidentally learns how to fly.
10. Divide students into groups of four. Provide a short picture book for each group. Students read the story together, identify the main events and list them in correct sequential order. Remind students that the first main event must be the conflict, the fifth main event must be the resolution and main events two through four are the connecting events. Instruct students to construct the summaries following that pattern.

### **Instructional Tip:**

In order to skip the reading of the book as a group, provide students with books that have already been read to or with the class. In addition to picture books, use stories from the reading basals or original student work.

### **Day Three**

11. Briefly review the importance of summarizing in improving reading comprehension. Allow students to explain the correct steps in constructing a well-developed summary practiced in the preceding day’s lesson.

### **Instructional Tip:**

Review the importance of transitional words and phrases in establishing coherence and consistency in a paragraph.

12. Allow each group to present its story and summary from the previous day’s lesson. Ask the students questions that allow students to check for the accuracy of the main events, such as:
  - Is main event one the main idea of the whole story?
  - Does the concluding event resolve main event one, the conflict?
  - Why are the connecting events critical to the main idea and its resolution?
13. Direct students to write summary paragraphs using the five main events identified by the group. Remind students to indent the topic sentence and to follow the established

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summarizing process: First, identify the main idea. Next, identify the resolution. Lastly, fill in the connecting main events.

14. Use *Paragraph Rubric*, Attachment E, to evaluate.

### **Differentiated Instructional Support:**

Instruction is differentiated according to learner needs, to help all learners either meet the intent of the specified indicator(s) or, if the indicator is already met, to advance beyond the specified indicator(s).

- Allow students to make interest-based decisions when selecting books.
- Add the component of self-reflection for advanced students.
- Require advanced students to further develop summarizing as a part of prewriting.
- Seeing the main events presented in the freeze-frame activity helps visual learners.
- Kinesthetic learners learn as they act out the main events.
- Auditory students benefit from hearing group summaries presented aloud.
- Address varying reading levels through the use of leveled books. Guide advanced readers to read more challenging and/or complex literature.
- Students with writing challenges benefit with the aid of a scribe or computer to compose the summary paragraph.
- Support students having difficulty by allowing longer practice times and/or additional days to develop these skills.

### **Extensions:**

- Videotape student presentations and allow students to teach a group of younger students.
- Students use a word-processing program to write summary paragraphs.

### **Home Connections:**

- Students watch a television show with their families and summarize the story using the freeze-frame technique. They can bring in a video recording of the activity. These videos could be combined into one classroom video and viewed by parents while waiting for conferences or linked to a classroom web page.
- Allow students to capture each “freeze frame” with a digital camera and use the photos to create a summary cartoon with captions.
- Ask students to draw each “freeze frame” to create a summary cartoon with captions.

### **Interdisciplinary Connections:**

**Content Area:** Social Studies

**Standard:** Social Studies History, grade 4

**Benchmark:** B. Describe the cultural patterns that are evident in North America today as a result of exploration, colonization and conflict.

Students can act out historical events with the freeze-frame technique. The events could be related to Social Studies instruction or student selected, based upon interest.



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### **Instructional Tip:**

This is a great way to introduce a new chapter or unit of study. Assign each group one section of the text and allow the presentations to be presented in order.

### **Materials and Resources:**

*The inclusion of a specific resource in any lesson formulated by the Ohio Department of Education should not be interpreted as an endorsement of that particular resource, or any of its contents, by the Ohio Department of Education. The Ohio Department of Education does not endorse any particular resource. The Web addresses listed are for a given site's main page, therefore, it may be necessary to search within that site to find the specific information required for a given lesson. Please note that information published on the Internet changes over time, therefore the links provided may no longer contain the specific information related to a given lesson. Teachers are advised to preview all sites before using them with students.*

*For the teacher:* picture book collection

*For the students:* index cards, paper, pencil

### **Vocabulary:**

- conflict
- resolution
- summary

### **Technology Connections:**

- Publish summary paragraph on word processor.
- Videotape presentations.
- Take digital photos for summary cartoons.

### **Research Connections:**

Cawletti, Gordon. *Handbook of Research on Improving Student Achievement*, Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service, 1999.

- Focus students on educational goals.
- Incorporate direct teaching that exhibits key features and systematic steps.
- Incorporate cooperative learning.
- Foster interactive learning.
- Utilize meaning-making skills such as summarizing, questioning and interpreting.

Marzano, Robert J., Jane E. Pollock and Debra Pickering. *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*, Alexandria, VA.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2001.

- Summarizing and note taking are two of the most powerful skills to help students identify and understand the most important aspects of what they are learning.
- Nonlinguistic representations or imagery help students think about and recall knowledge. They include the following:



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- Creating graphic representations (organizers),
- Making physical models,
- Generating mental pictures,
- Drawing pictures and pictographs and
- Engaging in kinesthetic activity.

Pressley, Michael. *Reading Instruction that Works: The Case for Balanced Reading*, New York: Guilford Press, 1998.

- Cognitive strategies like thinking aloud, constructing images, summarizing, predicting, activating prior knowledge, questioning, clarifying and analyzing text structure can promote reading comprehension.

### **General Tips:**

This lesson focuses on an important and challenging skill that can be practiced in different classroom situations. Provide students with a variety of media in which to practice summarizing, include varying types of fiction and nonfiction literature.

### **Attachments:**

Attachment A, *“The Fall of Freddie the Bat”*

Attachment B, *Events from “The Fall of Freddie the Bat”*

Attachment C, *“What’s in a Name?”*

Attachment D, *Events from “What’s in a Name?”*

Attachment E, *Paragraph Rubric*

### Attachment A

#### “The Fall of Freddie the Bat”

Freddie opened his eyes. What he saw confirmed his fear. It was getting dark. Of course, Freddie, who was a bat, was not afraid of darkness. Each evening the bats woke up as night approached, looking forward to the nighttime games and tasks. Freddie was no different. But tonight *was* different. Tonight Freddie was to fly – solo.

All the other bats Freddie’s age had taken the plunge. Freddie had avoided the task as long as he could. He’d heard the other mothers advising his mother to just toss him out of the tree. Freddie was afraid that his mother just might do that. He sensed her frustration with his refusal to fly. He heard his mother coming.

“Freddie,” his mother called, “Let’s go. It’s time to fly.”

Freddie coughed weakly, “Kof, kof.”

“I’m too sick to fly today,” Freddie continued.

His mother looked at him doubtfully. She knew that Freddie had gone to sleep that morning feeling perfectly fine. “Freddie,” his mother replied, “If you are too sick to fly, you are too sick to get out of bed all night. You will not play with your friends and you will not get to ride on my back when I go hunting.” Freddie sighed in disappointment. He loved to fly on his mother’s back each night as she searched for delicious treats. Freddie felt miserable. He listened to the other young bats playing and flying all night long. He knew that pretending to be sick would not work for long. Freddie came up with a plan.

He decided to run away. He didn’t want to leave his mother or his home. But Freddie could see no other way. The next night as darkness fell, Freddie packed a few belongings and began his journey. With each step, Freddie’s heart became heavier and heavier. With each step, the woods became darker and darker. The young bat became frightened. As he traveled farther and farther from his familiar territory, each strange sight and sound startled Freddie. He continued his journey and the woods became darker and darker. Suddenly, something grabbed Freddie from behind and flew him straight up into the dark sky with Freddie clasped in its mouth!

“Help!” Freddie cried in alarm. The creature deposited Freddie onto its back and answered calmly, “Freddie, what are you doing so far from home?” Freddie was very relieved to hear his mother’s voice. She had saved him!

“I’m sorry,” Freddie answered. “I was afraid to fly. Mama, why can’t I continue to fly on your back? Why must I fly on my own?”

Freddie’s mother answered gently, “You are getting too big to fly on my back. Even now, I am getting very tired and we have a long way to go.”

Freddie noticed that his mother was dipping lower and lower in the sky. With a sinking sensation, Freddie began to slip off his mother’s back. He cried out, “Help! I’m falling, I’m falling, I’m fall— Hey, hey! I’m flying!”

Freddie was flying. As he had begun to fall, Freddie had started flapping his wings to catch himself. Nature had taken over. Much to Freddie and his mother’s surprise, Freddie was flying and loving it.

“See, Freddie?” his mother asked. “I knew you could fly. Let’s go home.”

“I’ll beat you there!” answered Freddie. And off they flew.

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### Attachment B Events from “The Fall of Freddie the Bat”

As Freddie fell from his mother’s back, he realized that he could fly.

Freddie's mother was so proud of him for flying.

The bats looked forward to the nighttime games.

He took a few of his belongings with him on his journey.

Freddie decided to run away.

Freddie, the bat, was afraid to fly.

His mom found him and was carrying Freddie home.

Bats are nocturnal animals that sleep during the day.

Freddie began to cough.

He tried everything to get out of flying.

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### Attachment C “What’s in a Name?”

“Did I ever tell you my name?” asked Grandpa.  
“I know your name, it’s Jimmy.” I answered.

Grandpa continued, “True enough, my name is Jimmy. But, I didn’t find that out until I was 18 years old. That would have been in 1956, long before you were born.”

I was puzzled. I had always known my own name, didn’t everyone? As usual, I was eager to hear my grandpa’s story. His stories were my favorite part of bedtime. I got comfortable and Grandpa began to explain.

*This story begins before I was born. My family used to go to town every Saturday. This was a time when most families did all their shopping on Saturday. Before cars were common, getting into town was quite a chore and it was no different for my folks. My mommy and daddy would bundle up the kids and head into town on a wagon. There were just four children then. You know your Great Aunts Geraldine and Cotha Lee? They were just little girls and they loved to go to town. My brothers Bob and Ralph were young then too. It was fun to go to town, see friends and have a day off from all the chores.*

*It was a mild October day and I bet the mountains were brilliant with fall colors. Like I said, I wasn’t born yet, so I can only guess. I sure remember those October days when I was a boy; the mountains looked like they were on fire with brilliant reds, bright yellows and blazing oranges. The family made it to town uneventfully. The adults did the errands and the children tagged along enjoying the sights. The children knew that if there was any way possible, Mommy would make sure they each got a piece of candy. Extra pennies weren’t always available, but if there were, the candy would be a delightful treat.*

*The town was filled with many other families going about the Saturday chores. Often musicians would set up shop at city hall and play many favorite tunes. This Saturday was no different. Hours later, the whole family met at the wagon and began the journey home. At the bottom of Pine Mountain, railroad tracks crossed the dirt road to their home. Daddy could hear a train coming, so he stopped the wagon and settled in for a wait. My brother and sisters cheered when the train came into sight. Back then, trains were still a new thing down home and the sight was amazing. The engine billowed black, puffy smoke and the loud noise caused the family to hold their ears in disbelief.*

*Suddenly, the train jumped its track and barreled right toward my family in its wagon. Everyone was too shocked to do anything but watch in horror as the train’s second car came right for the wagon. The train car and the wagon collided. Everything came to a screeching halt. It would be hours before my family got home that day. Everyone agreed that it was a miracle that no one had been hurt. Eventually, a neighbor happened by and offered to take my tired but relieved family home.*

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### Attachment C (Continued) “What’s in a Name?”

*As they arrived home, my Mommy and Daddy realized that the relief had been premature. This is where I come into the story. I wasn’t supposed to be born for another three months, but the train accident changed all of that. I was born that very day. Back then, there weren’t hospitals anywhere near our mountain. Without a wagon, we probably wouldn’t have been able to even get to one. I know that by the time my daddy returned home with help for my mother, I was already born. The nurse told my mom that I was too little to survive. My mommy disagreed. She told the nurse that she would name me Benjamin Eugene and call me Ben. Sadly, the nurse told my mommy that I probably wouldn’t make it because of my size, but IF I did, she should just mail the details to the courthouse.*

*Mommy said that I was the funniest looking baby that she had ever seen. I was covered in hair and really tiny. I was so little; she used to carry me tied to a pillow. She thought that she might drop me and not even notice! At night, she put me to sleep in a shoebox. My brothers and sisters took turns feeding me from a little bottle that Daddy had made. After a few months, everyone realized I was going to be just fine. Mommy asked my granny to send in the paperwork for the birth certificate. Granny did that but she didn’t tell Mommy that she wanted me to be named Jimmy Douglas and NOT Benjamin Eugene. Granny sent in the paperwork with the name - Jimmy.*

*For the next 18 years, I was known to family and friends as Ben. I never really thought about my name much, just like I bet you don’t think about your name. When I turned 18, I wanted to move up north to find a good job in a factory, so I sent for my birth certificate. When it came, I found out that Granny had named me Jimmy. She had never told my mommy or me. From then on out, I went by the name Jim. Here it is nearly fifty years later and I still have some people calling me Ben and some people calling me Jimmy. I have had to tell this story quite a few times to explain it!*

Grandpa looked at me to see if I was awake and if I had enjoyed his story. He knew I had when I said, “Goodnight, Benjamin Eugene.”

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### Attachment D Events from “What’s in a Name?”

<p>Musicians would perform free concerts at the town hall.</p>
<p>The whole family took care of the tiny baby and he grew strong.</p>
<p>The children loved the sights and sounds of the town on Saturdays.</p>
<p>The family took the wagon into town.</p>
<p>Without telling anyone, Ben’s granny decided to send in the birth certificate with the name Jimmy Douglas on it.</p>
<p>A boy grew up thinking his real name was Ben.</p>
<p>A wagon wreck caused the boy to be born early.</p>
<p>The nurse did not think the baby would make it, so she didn’t record the details of the birth.</p>
<p>Ben’s mommy asked his granny to send in the paperwork for the birth certificate.</p>
<p>At eighteen years of age, Ben sent for his birth certificate and found that his real name was Jimmy Douglas.</p>

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### Attachment E Paragraph RUBRIC

<p><b>4</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete paragraph (1+5+1)</li> <li>• Elaboration/descriptive writing</li> <li>• Complex sentences/interesting vocabulary</li> <li>• Few or no mistakes</li> <li>• Variety in sentence formats</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete paragraph (1+3+1)</li> <li>• Some capitalization, punctuation or verb tense mistakes</li> <li>• Basic sentences and vocabulary</li> <li>• Stays on topic</li> </ul>
<p><b>2</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic sentence (may be poorly written)</li> <li>• At least 2 detail sentences</li> <li>• Short/plain sentences</li> <li>• Many mechanical errors</li> </ul>
<p><b>1</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No topic sentence</li> <li>• Incomplete sentences</li> <li>• Strays off topic</li> <li>• Errors make reading difficult</li> </ul>