

Summarizing and Sorting Details from an Informational Text

Identifying the Main Idea

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Grade Level	10th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	3-5 class period(s)
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	150 minutes

Essential Question

How can a reader identify the main idea of a text? How can a reader identify important supporting details?

Summary

In this lesson, students explore strategies that they can use to identify the main idea and key details in an informational text. Students identify main ideas, supporting details, and nonessential details in visual advertisements, paragraphs, and full texts. At the end of lesson, students reflect on their progress using both visual and written responses.

Snapshot

Engage

Students examine five creative advertisements and identify the main idea and key supporting details of each ad.

Explore

Students sort individual sentences from a paragraph and identify which sentences contain the main idea, key supporting details, and details that are not important.

Explain

Students participate in a 4–2–1 activity in which they identify important pieces of information in an article and compare their results with those of their classmates.

Extend

Students read an article then mark important pieces of information using Why-Lighting.

Evaluate

Students partner with a classmate and complete a Gramit activity in which they use images to identify the main idea and supporting details of their articles. Students then independently write a reflection on their learning.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

IDT501: Infer a central idea or theme in somewhat challenging passages or their paragraphs
IDT503: Summarize key supporting ideas and details in more challenging passages
ARG401: Analyze how one or more sentences in somewhat challenging passages offer reasons for or support a claim

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 10)

10.2.R.1: Students will summarize, paraphrase, and synthesize ideas, while maintaining meaning and a logical sequence of events, within and between texts.

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 10)

11.2.R.1: Students will summarize, paraphrase, and synthesize ideas, while maintaining meaning and a logical sequence of events, within and between texts.

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 10)

12.2.R.1: Students will summarize, paraphrase, and synthesize ideas, while maintaining meaning and a logical sequence of events, within and between texts.

Attachments

- 4-2-1 Organizer—Summarizing and Sorting Informational Texts.docx
- 4-2-1 Organizer—Summarizing and Sorting Informational Texts.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Summarizing and Sorting Details from an Informational Text.pptx
- Sentence Sort—Summarizing and Sorting Details from an Informational Text.docx
- Sentence Sort—Summarizing and Sorting Details from an Informational Text.pdf
- Visual Analysis—Summarizing and Sorting Details from an Informational Text.docx
- Visual Analysis—Summarizing and Sorting Details from an Informational Text.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Visual Analysis handout (attached; one per student)
- Sentence Sort cards (attached; one set per group of 2–3 students)
- 4–2–1 Organizer handout (attached; one per student)
- “American Dream Faces Harsh New Reality” article (linked)
- “I’m a Flint resident. I’m done paying for water that is not safe” article (linked)
- “Life on Reservations” article (linked)
- “Redlining’s legacy: Maps are gone, but the problem hasn’t disappeared” article (linked)
- “Is Military Service the Path to the American Dream?” article (linked)
- Highlighters

20 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note: Lesson Preparation

Consider seating students in groups before you begin the lesson for easier facilitation.

Display **slide 2** and briefly explain to students what an information text is. Explain to students that an informational text is a piece of writing that is intended to inform readers about a topic using specific details and facts. Show **slide 3–4** and introduce students to the essential questions and learning objectives of the lesson.

Distribute one copy of the attached **Visual Analysis** handout to each student. Display **slide 5** and introduce the instructions for the first activity. Explain to students that they will see a series of creative advertisements. Using their handout, they will analyze and record details from and infer the main idea of each advertisement.

Show **slide 6** and walk students through an example of the activity. Read aloud the main idea of the image and explain the details of the image that support that main idea. Point out any details that don't contribute to the main idea to assist students in understanding the difference between relevant and irrelevant details.

Display **slide 7** and ask students to study the image then record the main idea and supporting details on their handouts. Guide students through the activity by identifying a few details that do not support the main idea and point out that not all details will be relevant.

Repeat the process for **slides 8–10**.

Teacher's Note: Additional Advertisement Options

The ad images in the slides are sourced from Bored Panda's article "33 Powerful and Creative Print Ads That'll Make You Look Twice." You may consider pulling more images from the article to extend the activity, but some images are inappropriate for students, so preview each image prior to using it.

Show **slide 11** and direct students' attention to the text box on the bottom of their handouts. Ask students to reflect on the activity and consider the questions on the slide. Tell them to record their responses to the questions in the text box on their handouts.

25 minutes

Explore

Teacher's Note: Activity Preparation

To save time, consider cutting out each set of **Sentence Sort** cards and organizing them into sets for each group prior to this portion of the lesson.

Form groups of two to three students if you did not seat students in groups prior to the lesson.

Display **slide 12** and introduce students to the instructions for the Sentence Sort activity. Distribute once set of Sentence Sort cards to each group. Ask students to read the series of sentence cards then sort the cards into categories based on whether each sentence is a main idea, important supporting detail, or non-important supporting detail. Allow groups adequate time to complete the activity.

Show **slide 13** and introduce the instructions for a modified Elbow Partners activity. Invite students to form small groups with their nearby classmates. Tell them to compare, discuss, and explain the results of their Sentence Sort activities with their group members. Begin the 5-minute timer and allow students time to discuss.

Lead a class discussion in which you invite groups to share out their main ideas and details. As a class, arrive at a consensus on the main idea and important supporting details.

Lead students in analyzing the full paragraph and guide them to isolate where the main idea originated from. Point out to students that the topic sentence and final sentence of a paragraph are good places to start when looking for the main idea.

25 minutes

Explain

Teacher's Note: Article Access

Both the Explain and Extend phases of this lesson require students to read articles found online. You may choose to have students access these articles digitally, or you may choose to print copies of the articles.

Pass out one copy of the attached **4-2-1 Organizer** handout to each student. Display **slide 14** and explain the instructions for the 4-2-1 summaries activity.

Ask students to independently read the brief article, "American Dream Faces Harsh New Reality." Tell students to identify the four most important pieces of information in the article and record that information in their 4-2-1 Organizer handouts.

Pair up students and have them compare the information in their handouts. Have them collaborate to narrow both of their sets of four ideas down to two of the most important ideas. Ask them to record those two pieces of information in their 4-2-1 Organizer handout.

Pair up each group of two with other group of two to form groups of four students. Have these new groups collaborate to determine the most important idea from the article. Once they determine the most important idea, have them record it in the final box of their charts.

30 minutes

Extend

Show **slide 15** and review the Why-Lighting strategy. Instruct students to select an article and annotate it by identifying and highlighting important details. Emphasize that students must focus on on details that support the overall theme, or main idea. Tell them to write a brief explanation next to each detail explaining why they chose to highlight that detail.

Introduce students to the following articles and have them select one to annotate:

- "I'm a Flint resident. I'm done paying for water that is not safe."
- "Life on Reservations"
- "Redlining's legacy: Maps are gone, but the problem hasn't disappeared"
- "Is Military Service the Path to the American Dream?"

Teacher's Note: Article Choices

You may consider assigning articles or guiding student choices to ensure that an equal number of students is assigned to each article.

Allow students adequate time to read their articles. As they read, circulate the room and provide feedback on important details.

15 minutes

Evaluate

Teacher's Note: GramIt Activity Options

For the activity below, you may choose to have students draw images, find images online, or create other visual representations of their choice.

If you choose an online option, you may choose to have students publish their completed creations to a digital platform like Google Classroom. If you choose to have students create their posts on paper, you may choose to have students "publish" their creations by posting them on the class whiteboard or dedicated wall space.

Display **slide 16** and pair students with a partner that read the same article.

Introduce the GramIt activity and instruct pairs to create four images, one that conveys the main idea of the article and three that each convey a supporting detail. Instruct each pair to create a hashtag for each image that connects to the main idea and supporting details. Tell students when they are finished that they should publish the image to either your digital classroom page or a dedicated space in the classroom.

Teacher's Note: Activity Example

Consider creating your own post and hashtag to illustrate expectations for the activity.

After students have completed and published their posts, display **slide 17**. Have students take out a piece of paper and independently write a reflection on the lesson. Instruct them to respond to the following questions on the slide:

1. In what ways can you identify the main idea in an informational text?
2. How do supporting details help a reader identify the main idea?
3. What reading techniques can you use to approach an informational text?

You may consider collecting student responses to serve a formative assessment of the lesson.

Resources

Brooks, K. J. (2020). *Redlining's legacy: Maps are gone, but the problem hasn't disappeared*. CommonLit. https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/redlining-s-legacy-maps-are-gone-but-the-problem-hasn-t-disappeared

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