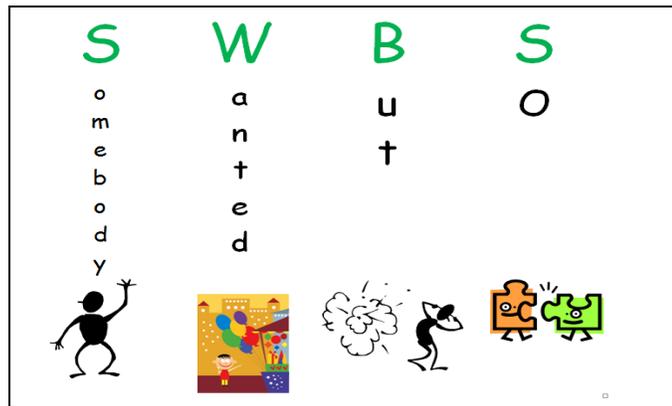


Jan Richardson: How to Teach Summarizing in Fiction and Non-Fiction

“Summarizing is one of the toughest strategies for students to learn, and one of the most difficult to teach. You must repeatedly model, provide scaffolds, and gradually release your support until they can summarize independently.” Jan Richardson, pg. 220, *The Next Step in Guided Reading*.

What should students do when they summarize?

- Identify key words and phrases
- Pull out main ideas
- Write enough to convey the gist of the passage
- Write succinctly



Summarize Fiction

Step 1: S-W-B-S

- Somebody-Wanted-But-So (**S-W-B-S**): Students read short text or chapter then write a single sentence telling who was the main character (**somebody**), what the character wanted (**goal**), **but** there was a problem, **so** this is how the problem was solved (**solution**).
- As students continue reading, extend the summary by adding, “then” and write a second S-W-B-S statement.

Step 2: Synthesize (Interpretive)

- Push summarizing to an interpretive level by teaching students how to add their thoughts to the important information to form a synthesis.

Chapter	Summary: What was the most important thing that happened?	What does this chapter mean to you?
1		
2		

Summarize Nonfiction (Teach this *after* students have learned to Determine Importance)

Key Words:	
_____	_____
_____	_____
Summary:	

(See & copy page 223 in, Next Step...for full page w/directions)

Key Word/Summary (Literal)

Step 1: Write the key words (with initial letters provided).

- Select text with clear key words (may be bold). Tell them to read text, then write key words that begin with those letters. Discuss why these words are important, and create a summary using the key words.

Step 2: Write the key words (without initial letter support).

- Now students find the key words without initial letter help. Prompt them to look for repeated, bold, and words from the title. After reading, students take turns sharing one key word. They must support choices with reasoning. Create a summary together as a group.

Step 3: Write the key words and a summary.

- Students read text, write three to five key words or phrases and then use these key words to compose their own summaries. Remind them to underline key words. Use all key words in their summaries. Spend time on this level. You are working on clarity, completeness, and making sense.

Step 4: Revise the summary to make it concise.

- Students continue to identify key words and write summaries, now focusing on revising first drafts and deleting unnecessary words. Aim for fewer than 20 words per summary.

Draw Conclusions (Interpretive)

Step 1: Use summarizing to draw conclusions. Use text information and background knowledge to stretch thinking and deepen understanding. A chart helps organize thinking.

Summary I read...	Background knowledge I know....	Conclusion Now I am thinking...
Summarizing is difficult to teach.	Students need this skill, and struggle learning it.	I need to scaffold them through Steps 1-4 above. 😊

Step 2: Another framework to teach students how to draw inferences is “If....Then...” Model providing the “If” part of the statement, students provide the “Then” part. Use texts your students have background knowledge about. Eventually, they create both “If” and “Then” statements.