Learning Target

Identifying the most important events and details in a story or play helps you summarize and better understand what you read.

A good summary includes only important story details. It tells about the main characters and setting. It also describes the plot, or story events, including the problem the characters face and its solution.

Read the story below. Think about which details to use to summarize it in two or three sentences.

When we visited my parents’ friends in England, their son James and I became fast friends. One afternoon, he and I decided to go to the park. It was cool outside, so James was looking for his jacket. Then he said, “Oh, I think I left it in the boot.” I looked at him, puzzled. Why would he leave his jacket in a boot?

James started laughing. Then he told me that, in England, the trunk of a car is a boot. We had taken a drive in the countryside earlier. Because it had been warmer then, he had left his jacket in the trunk instead of wearing it.
**Think**  To summarize the story, think about the details that were important to understanding it. Complete the *Story Map* below to identify important story details. Then write the summary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An American boy and James, an English boy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Summary:**

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**Talk**  Share your Story Map and summary with a partner. Did you agree about which details were important to include in your summaries?

**Academic Talk**

Use these words to talk about the text.

- **summarize**
- **plot**
- **problem**
- **solution**
Last month, Jenna announced to her mom that she planned on taking a long bike ride around the neighborhood.

“In that case,” her mom responded, “would you please deliver these packages for me? This one is for Great Aunt Sally, and this one is for your cousin, Joey.” Her mom explained that both relatives had birthdays coming up next week, and she wanted to surprise them.

“No problem,” replied Jenna quickly. Since all of Jenna’s relatives had settled in the same small town, no one lived too far away from the others. She tucked the packages in her backpack, hustled out to the garage, and grabbed her new bike.

When Jenna arrived at Great Aunt Sally’s house, she suddenly realized that neither package had a name on it. But she was certain that Sally’s was the one in the striped wrapping paper. Or was it? Wanting to be on her way, Jenna gave her great aunt the striped package and soon dropped off Joey’s present, too.

The following week, Great Aunt Sally invited Jenna and her mom over for lunch. Sally answered the door wearing a bright, new baseball jersey. “How did you know this is my new favorite team?” she asked smiling at her guests.

“Oh, just a guess,” said Jenna’s mom sarcastically. She glared at Jenna, who quickly recognized her mistake.
Explore
Which details should be included in a summary of “The Mix-Up”?

Think
1. Complete the Story Map below by adding important details.

HINT
Remember to tell the story events in the order they occurred. In your Story Map, list only important parts of the story, not unimportant details.

Talk
2. Compare the details from the story that you included in your Story Maps. How did you decide which details are the important ones?

Write
3. Short Response: Write a short summary of “The Mix-Up.” In it, be sure to include important characters and events from the text. Use the space provided on page 168 to write your answer.

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The Blind Men and the Elephant

based on an Indian folktale

1 [Four blind men stand by a road. A man on an elephant rides by.]
2 RIDER: Make way! Make way! I must take my elephant by.
3 FIRST MAN: I have never seen an elephant, sir.
4 OTHER MEN: Nor I!
5 RIDER: Never? Do you not know what he is like?
6 ALL FOUR MEN: No, sir.
7 RIDER: Come, then, stand by him, and touch him.
8 FIRST MAN [placing his hand on the elephant's side]: How interesting! Now I know all about him! He is exactly like a wall!
9 SECOND MAN [feeling the tusk]: Hah, not at all like a wall! He is round and smooth and sharp. He is like a spear.
10 THIRD MAN [feeling the trunk]: Oh, no! He is like a snake.
11 FOURTH MAN [feeling a leg]: Oh, how wrong you are! He is round and tall like a tree! [All four men start arguing.]
12 RIDER: Yet none of you can see! Ha, ha, ha! [He rides on, laughing.]
13 FIRST MAN: Ha, ha, ha! Hear how he laughs at you all!
14 SECOND MAN: He laughs at you and the others.
15 THIRD MAN: He laughs not at me!
16 FOURTH MAN: I say he laughs at all three of you!
17 [The four men shake their fingers angrily and shout at each other.]

Close Reader Habits

Why do the four blind men disagree about what an elephant looks like? Reread the drama. Underline details that explain why the men disagree.
Think  Use what you learned from reading the drama to respond to the following questions.

1 Choose the three most important events to use in a summary of the drama.
   A An elephant rider allows four blind men to touch the elephant.
   B The blind men touch different parts of the elephant.
   C One man says the elephant must be like a snake.
   D One man declares the elephant is round and tall, like a tree.
   E Each man claims that only he knows what an elephant is like.
   F The blind men cannot agree about why the rider is laughing.

2 Which statement best summarizes why the elephant rider laughs?
   A Each man believes the rider is laughing at the other men.
   B Three of the men agree the rider is laughing at what the fourth man has said.
   C None of the men can see the elephant, but all four claim to be experts on its appearance.
   D The four men foolishly thank the rider for allowing them to get close to his pet elephant.

Talk

3 Discuss the details in the drama that are important enough to include in a summary. Use the Story Map on page 169 to organize your ideas.

Write

4 Short Response Use the information in your Story Map to summarize the drama. Include details from the text to support your summary. Use the space provided on page 169 to write your answer.

HINT Retell the important events and ideas in the drama using your own words.
Write  Use the space below to write your answer to the question on page 165.

The MIX-UP

3 Short Response  Write a short summary of “The Mix-Up.” In it, be sure to include important characters and events from the text.

Don’t forget to check your writing.

Check Your Writing

☐ Did you read the prompt carefully?
☐ Did you put the prompt in your own words?
☐ Did you use the best evidence from the text to support your ideas?
☐ Are your ideas clearly organized?
☐ Did you write in clear and complete sentences?
☐ Did you check your spelling and punctuation?
The Blind Men and the Elephant

3 Use the Story Map below to organize your ideas.

<table>
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<td>Events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write Use the space below to write your answer to the question on page 167.

4 Short Response Use the information in your story map to summarize the drama. Include details from the text to support your summary.

HINT Retell the important events and ideas in the drama using your own words.
The Two Frogs

a Japanese Fable

Once upon a time in the country of Japan, there lived two frogs. One made his home in a ditch near the town of Osaka, on the seacoast. The other dwelt in a clear little stream that ran through the city of Kyoto. At such a distance apart, they had never heard of each other. But funnily enough, the idea came into both their heads that they should like to see a little more of the world. After much thought, the frog who lived at Kyoto decided he wanted to see Osaka and the sea. At the same time, the frog who lived at Osaka decided he wanted to go to Kyoto . . . .

So one fine morning, they both set out along the road that led from Kyoto to Osaka. Half way between the two towns, there arose a mountain that had to be climbed. It took them a long time and a great many hops to reach the top, but they were there at last. Each was surprised to see another frog standing before him!
They looked at each other for a moment without speaking. Then they fell into conversation, explaining the cause of being so far from home. It was delightful to find that they both felt the same wish—to learn a little more of their native country. As there was no hurry, they stretched themselves out in a cool, damp place for a good rest before they parted.

“What a pity we are not bigger,” said the Osaka frog. “We could see both towns from here and tell if it is worth our while going on.”

“Oh, that is easy,” returned the Kyoto frog. “We have only to stand up on our hind legs and hold on to each other. Then we can each look at the town we are traveling to.”
This idea pleased the Osaka frog. He jumped up and put his front paws on the shoulders of his friend, who had risen also. There they both stood, stretching themselves as high as they could and holding each other so they might not fall down. The Kyoto frog turned his nose toward Osaka, and the Osaka frog turned his nose toward Kyoto. But the foolish things forgot that when they stood up, their great eyes lay in the backs of their heads. Though their noses might point to the places they wanted to go, their eyes beheld the places from which they had come.

“Dear me!” cried the Osaka frog. “Kyoto is exactly like Osaka. It is certainly not worth such a long journey. I shall go home!”

“If I had had any idea that Osaka was only a copy of Kyoto, I should never have traveled all this way,” exclaimed the frog from Kyoto. As he spoke, he took his hands from his friend’s shoulders, and they both fell down on the grass. They gave a polite farewell and set off for home again. And to the end of their lives, they believed that Osaka and Kyoto, which are as different as two towns can be, were as alike as two peas.
Think  Use what you learned from reading the fable to respond to the following questions.

1  Create a summary of important story events by choosing sentences from the box below. Write three sentences that describe the events in the box titled “Summary.” Write the sentences in the order they happened.

   The frogs rested in the cool, damp shade.
   They decided not to continue their journeys.
   It took time for the frogs to climb the mountain.
   They tried to see the town they hoped to visit.
   Two frogs were traveling to new towns.
   They were surprised to see another frog.

   Summary

2  Which statement best summarizes paragraphs 7 and 8 in the text?

   A  Both frogs show each other proof that their hometowns and the towns they are traveling to are copies of each other.
   B  Both frogs decide to stop traveling because they incorrectly believe the new towns are like their hometowns.
   C  Both frogs politely say goodbye and leave for their hometowns after falling on the grass.
   D  Both frogs say they wish they had never started on their journeys, and then they leave for home.
This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

**Part A**
Which statement **best** describes why the frogs make the mistake they did?

A. Kyoto looked exactly like Osaka, so the frogs did not think such a long journey was worth it.

B. Each frog stood up on his hind legs and held on to the other frog to see the town he wanted to visit.

C. The frogs’ noses pointed in the right direction, but their eyes only saw what was behind them.

D. The frogs got confused about the direction each of them had been traveling.

**Part B**
Underline **two** details in paragraph 6 that **best** support your answer in Part A.

. . . . There they both stood, stretching themselves as high as they could and holding each other so they might not fall down. The Kyoto frog turned his nose toward Osaka, and the Osaka frog turned his nose toward Kyoto. But the foolish things forgot that when they stood up, their great eyes lay in the backs of their heads. Though their noses might point to the places they wanted to go, their eyes beheld the places from which they had come.

**4. In paragraph 1, what is the meaning of the word **dwell**?**

A. ate

B. lived

C. slept

D. swam
Write

5 Short Response Summarize important story events that occur after paragraph 4 when the frogs decide to view the towns from the mountain. Use story details to support your summary.

Learning Target

In this lesson, you learned to summarize the most important events and details in a literary text. Explain how learning to summarize will help you better understand a story or drama.