

ANALYZING AND SUMMARIZING THE CENTRAL IDEA

RI.8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

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STUDENT FEEDBACK GUIDE	A feedback tool for students to complete following the lesson set.

ANALYZING AND SUMMARIZING THE CENTRAL IDEA

TEACHER NOTES

RI.8.2, Lessons 1–3

UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit examines how to determine the central idea of an informational text by analyzing how it develops through the main ideas and supporting details. Students complete the unit by using the central idea, main ideas, and key details to create a summary.

Lesson 1: In this lesson, students determine the main ideas of the text’s paragraphs by locating key details and topic sentences.

Lesson 2: In this lesson, students determine the text’s central idea by looking at the main ideas identified in the previous lesson. The lesson uses an analogy of a road trip to help students understand how a text’s main ideas and details form a path to the central idea, and students complete a graphic organizer to map out the text.

Lesson 3: In this lesson, students write a summary with the central idea, main ideas, and details identified in the previous lessons. First, students identify the most important words and ideas that answer the 5 Ws. Next, students give an oral summary to a partner and then write their own summary.

Research Findings

Lesson Strategies, Approaches, or Activities

Research demonstrates positive outcomes in training designed to teach students to identify the main ideas and details that support the central idea and to visually represent the ways an author connects ideas.

(Pearson & Fielding, 1996)

“Going through this process [identifying the main ideas that support the central idea] is causing them to think about the text in a much deeper, more active way, to see others’ perspectives and interpretations of the same text, and to listen to and maybe even emulate the thinking processes of their fellow students.”

(Rhoder, 2002, p. 510)

This unit guides students through the process of deconstructing a text to identify the main ideas and key details that combine to form a central idea. Each lesson includes collaborative work and graphic organizers to help students think deeply about the text.

<p>To determine the central idea of a text effectively, “readers must distinguish between ideas that the author deems important and those that are interesting but secondary.”</p> <p>(Sisson, 2014, p. 26)</p>	<p>In Lesson 1, students determine which details support the main ideas of each paragraph and are therefore the most important.</p> <p>In Lesson 2, students analyze the main ideas and supporting details to determine how they lead to the central idea.</p>
<p>“The best way to help readers improve their nonfiction summarizing skills is to provide a frame through which they can deconstruct the text, chunk important information, and reconstruct the text in a concise, clearly written summary.”</p> <p>(Sisson, 2014, p. 28)</p>	<p>Lessons 1 and 2 guide students through deconstructing the text to identify main ideas, key details, and the central idea. Lesson 2 increases understanding by using an analogy of a road trip as a framework.</p> <p>In Lesson 3, students use the elements they found in the previous lessons to reconstruct the text in a summary.</p>
<p>“Dyadic peers are two, paired students in the same class who engage in a face-to-face, in-school academic task with each other after a reading. Dyadic peer talk is defined as the use of dialogue as a social and communicative cue between two peers at school for a ‘situationally-specific nature’ (Fisher, 1993, p. 159) where each peer within the dyad may ‘reformulate and express their ideas’ (Fisher, 1993, p. 159) as each ‘assigns meaning to her [or his] own and the other’s cues’ (Wilmot, 1980, p. 8).”</p> <p>(Lawrence, Rabinowitz, & Perna, 2008, p. 51)</p>	<p>Each lesson includes time for dyads (partners) to discuss and practice the target skills.</p>

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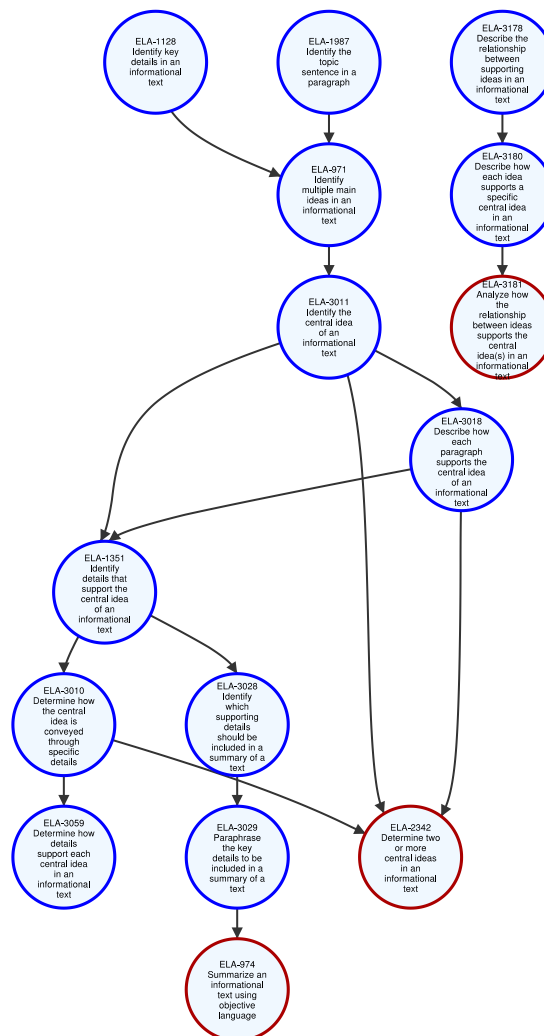
ANALYZING AND SUMMARIZING THE CENTRAL IDEA

LEARNING MAP TOOL

RI.8.2

STANDARD

RI.8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.



**Learning map model for RI.8.2.*

Node ID	Node Name	Node Description
ELA-971	IDENTIFY MULTIPLE MAIN IDEAS IN AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT	Identify two or more main ideas (explicit or implicit) in an informational text.
ELA-974	SUMMARIZE AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT USING OBJECTIVE LANGUAGE	Summarize the central idea, the main ideas, and the supporting details of an informational text in an objective manner.
ELA-1128	IDENTIFY KEY DETAILS IN AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT	Determine which details in an informational text are most important.
ELA-1351	IDENTIFY DETAILS THAT SUPPORT THE CENTRAL IDEA OF AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT	Identify which details in an informational text are relevant and contribute to the understanding of the central idea.
ELA-1987	IDENTIFY THE TOPIC SENTENCE IN A PARAGRAPH	Identify the topic sentence in a paragraph when it is not explicitly stated.
ELA-2342	DETERMINE TWO OR MORE CENTRAL IDEAS IN AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT	Determine multiple central ideas in an informational text, either when they are explicitly stated in the text or must be inferred by combining the main ideas from each paragraph.
ELA-3010	DETERMINE HOW THE CENTRAL IDEA IS CONVEYED THROUGH SPECIFIC DETAILS	Determine how a central idea of a text is conveyed through specific details.
ELA-3011	IDENTIFY THE CENTRAL IDEA OF AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT	Identify the central idea of an informational text.
ELA-3018	DESCRIBE HOW EACH PARAGRAPH SUPPORTS THE CENTRAL IDEA OF AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT	Describe the ways in which individual paragraphs support the central idea of an informational text.
ELA-3028	IDENTIFY WHICH SUPPORTING DETAILS SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN A SUMMARY OF A TEXT	Identify which details are important and contribute the most to the central idea or the main idea of each chapter or section in an informational text.
ELA-3029	PARAPHRASE THE KEY DETAILS TO BE INCLUDED IN A SUMMARY OF A TEXT	Paraphrase the important details that support the central idea or the main idea of each chapter or section in an informational text.
ELA-3059	DETERMINE HOW DETAILS SUPPORT EACH CENTRAL IDEA IN AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT	Determine how specific details support each central idea in an informational text.
ELA-3178	DESCRIBE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUPPORTING IDEAS IN AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT	Describe how the ideas supporting the central idea(s) of an informational text are related.
ELA-3180	DESCRIBE HOW EACH IDEA SUPPORTS A SPECIFIC CENTRAL IDEA IN AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT	Describe how each idea supports a specific central idea in an informational text.
ELA-3181	ANALYZE HOW THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IDEAS SUPPORTS THE CENTRAL IDEA(S) IN AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT	Analyze how the central idea(s) develop over the course of an informational text by investigating the relationship between the supporting ideas.

FINDING THE MAIN IDEAS

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY

RI.8.2, Lesson 1

LEARNING GOAL

In this lesson, students determine the main ideas of the paragraphs in an informational text.

STANDARD

RI.8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

PREPARATION

Before the lesson, select an informational text from a curriculum resource that has been purchased for individual student use, such as a class set of textbooks. Follow all copyright restrictions and guidelines as they pertain to material you select for classroom use from any other source.

MATERIALS & HANDOUTS

- ▶ informational text
 - ▶ whiteboard or chart paper
 - ▶ [STUDENT HANDOUT: FINDING MAIN IDEAS](#)
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IMPLEMENTATION

As a class, turn the learning goal into an I Can statement: “I can find the main ideas of an informational text.”

Explain that the sentences and paragraphs in a text show the central idea that the author is trying to explain.

Direct students to turn and tell a neighbor a definition of a central idea. **Ask** for volunteers to share their answers.

Tell students that a central idea is an overall idea that the author shares about the text topic. It is the idea that the author wants the reader to remember most after reading the passage.

Explain that each sentence and paragraph has words or ideas that point to the text's central idea. Today, students will look for the most significant ideas in a text to help them determine the central idea. One way to find significant ideas is to locate the topic sentence that gives the main idea in each paragraph.

Give students the informational text, and ask them to follow along as you read it aloud.

Think aloud as you locate the main idea in the topic sentence and the supporting details in the first body paragraph.

Pass out [STUDENT HANDOUT: FINDING MAIN IDEAS](#). **Write** the following questions on the board or chart paper:

- ▶ Who or what is the paragraph about?
- ▶ What is happening to that subject?

Record student responses, and **direct** students to place the information in the first two detail boxes for paragraph one on the student handout.

Tell students that it is important to know the difference between the less significant details and the main idea. Explain that the details describe the when, where, why, what kind and how of the paragraph's topic, while the main idea tells why the who or what is important. **Direct** students to place other details they find in the remaining boxes for paragraph one.

Next, students will locate the topic sentence, which tells the main idea. **Say**, "Now that you've identified the important details, which sentence shows the main idea that the details point to?" **Direct** students to write the topic sentence of paragraph one on the handout.

Instruct students to check with a partner to make sure that all the details they have placed in the boxes relate to a single key topic, such as a person, issue, or event. **Call on** students to share their answers.

Direct students to continue working on the handout with a partner. If your text piece is long, assign sections instead of the whole piece. While students work, **circulate** and ask the Checking for Understanding questions.

CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

Determine if the student can IDENTIFY KEY DETAILS IN AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT (ELA-1128):

- ▶ Who or what is the paragraph about?
- ▶ What is happening to the subject?
- ▶ What words help you know this?

Determine if the student can IDENTIFY THE TOPIC SENTENCE IN A PARAGRAPH (ELA-1987):

- ▶ What sentence tells the most important idea in the paragraph? How do you know?
- ▶ What words helped you find the main idea?

Determine if the student can IDENTIFY MULTIPLE MAIN IDEAS IN AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT (ELA-971):

- ▶ What are the main ideas of the text?
- ▶ What details help you know this?

Ask students which topic sentences they think best describe the main ideas of the text and why. **Ask** for volunteers to share their answers and to support their ideas with evidence from the text. **Collect** handouts.

For a discussion of the research that supports this instructional model, see the [TEACHER NOTES](#) for this lesson set.

FINDING MAIN IDEAS

STUDENT HANDOUT

Lesson 1

Directions: Identify the key details and topic sentence for each paragraph. Then use them to describe the paragraph's main idea.

Paragraph #___:

Details

Topic Sentence



Main Idea

Paragraph #___:

Details

Topic Sentence



Main Idea

Paragraph #___:

Details

Topic Sentence



Main Idea

Paragraph #___:

Details

Topic Sentence



Main Idea

Paragraph #___:

Details

Topic Sentence



Main Idea

FINDING THE CENTRAL IDEA

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY

RI.8.2, Lesson 2

LEARNING GOAL

In this lesson, students determine the central idea of the informational text.

STANDARD

RI.8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

MATERIALS & HANDOUTS

- ▶ informational text from Lesson 1
- ▶ completed handout from Lesson 1
- ▶ [STUDENT HANDOUT: ROAD TO THE CENTRAL IDEA](#)

Follow all copyright restrictions and guidelines as they pertain to material you select for classroom use.

IMPLEMENTATION

As a class, turn the learning goal into an I Can statement: “I can find the central idea of an informational text.”

Review the definition of *central idea*. Remind students that a central idea is an overall idea that the author shares about the text topic. It is the idea that the author wants the readers to remember most after reading the passage.

Remind students that each sentence and paragraph has significant words and ideas that help the reader determine the author’s central idea. **Explain** that you will use the analogy of a road trip to describe reading the informational text to find the central idea. Explain that an analogy is a comparison between two ideas that helps you better understand a concept.

Tell students that the central idea is like the destination of a road trip. It is the place you are going to visit and make memories about. Likewise, the central idea is what the author wants you to remember about a topic. The main ideas in the text are like the stops on the way to the final destination. When you go on a trip, you have to stop along the way to refuel, eat, and rest. In a text, the main ideas tell the reader supporting information that helps them reach the destination—the central idea. **Explain** that today we will use the main ideas and details to determine the central idea of the text.

Give students their completed handout from Lesson 1, and review how they determined the main ideas of the paragraphs by looking for details and topic sentences. **Explain** that students may see that some of the main ideas have the same topic. This is like eating at the same fast food restaurant at each stop you make on your trip. You may order different items, but you still stop at the same place. In the text, there may be ideas that are repeated, but the details or reasons are different.

Instruct students to follow along, and reread the text aloud.

Pass out [STUDENT HANDOUT: THE ROAD TO THE CENTRAL IDEA](#), and group students with partners. If your text is large, you may want to assign pairs to work on one section of the text, such as the beginning, the middle, or the end.

Tell students they will determine the final destination or central idea based on their work with main ideas.

Direct students to discuss with their partner what they think the central idea is and why, using the previous student handout. **Ask** for volunteers to share.

Tell the class that as they work through the text, they may need to adjust their description of the central idea and that it is OK if partners have different ideas of how to explain it. However, each person's description should relate to the same topic. **Direct** students to write the central idea on the handout.

Remind students that they need to separate less important ideas and details from more important ones. The main ideas and supporting details are the important stops on the way to the central idea. **Remind** students that when they take a road trip, they do not stop at every town they pass. They only stop when they need to rest or refuel. Likewise, students should not list all the details in the text but only the ones that are most important in determining the central idea. **Tell** students that the supporting details describe the when, where, why, what kind and how of the topic, while the main idea tells why the who or what is important.

Direct partners to complete the handout. **Walk around** and check student understanding.

CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

<p>Determine if the student can DESCRIBE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUPPORTING IDEAS IN AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT (ELA-3178):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How are these two ideas similar? ▶ What do all the main ideas in this text have in common? 	<p>Determine if the student can DESCRIBE HOW EACH IDEA SUPPORTS A SPECIFIC CENTRAL IDEA IN AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT (ELA-3180):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How does this idea support the central idea of the text? 	<p>Determine if the student can ANALYZE HOW THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IDEAS SUPPORTS THE CENTRAL IDEA(S) IN AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT (ELA-3181):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Why did you select these details? ▶ How do the ideas support the central idea? ▶ Why do you think the author includes these ideas?
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Invite volunteers to share their road maps with the class. Ask presenters to explain how the main ideas and supporting details help to describe the central idea.

Instruct students to review the sentence that describes the central idea on their handout and to revise it if needed. **Collect** handouts.

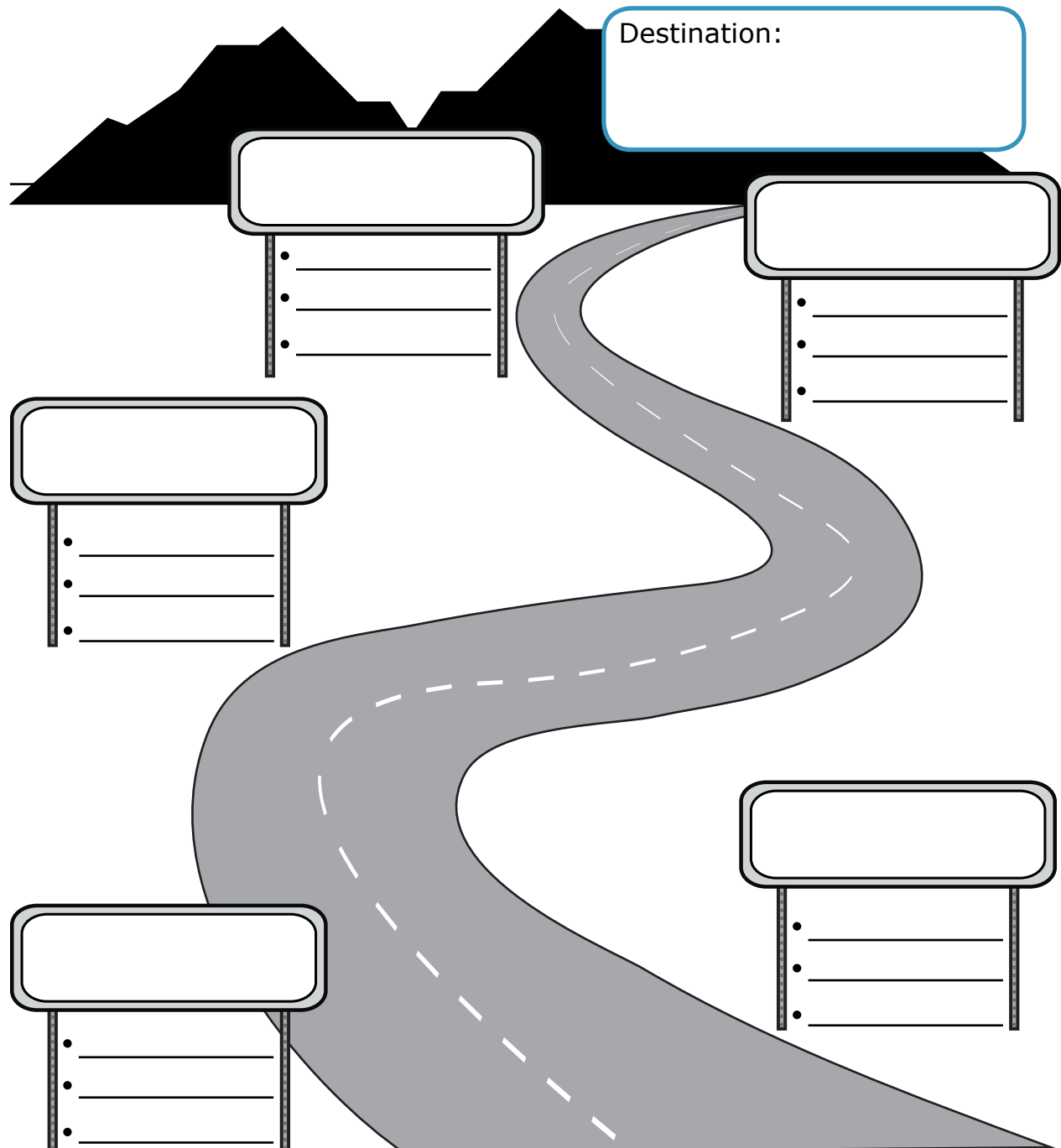
For a discussion of the research that supports this instructional model, see the [TEACHER NOTES](#) for this lesson set.

THE ROAD TO THE CENTRAL IDEA

STUDENT HANDOUT

Lesson 2

Directions: Complete the road map by filling in the main ideas and supporting details that help you get to the central idea.



SUMMARIZING AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY

RI.8.2, Lesson 3

LEARNING GOAL

In this lesson, students write an objective summary of the main ideas and the central idea of the informational text.

STANDARD

RI.8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

MATERIALS & HANDOUTS

- ▶ completed handouts from Lessons 1 and 2
- ▶ informational text from previous lessons
- ▶ **STUDENT HANDOUT: SUMMARIZING AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT**

Follow all copyright restrictions and guidelines as they pertain to material you select for classroom use.

IMPLEMENTATION

As a class, turn the learning goal into an I Can statement: “I can write a summary of the ideas in an informational text.”

Explain that a summary is an overview of the ideas in a text. Students will summarize the text by describing the central idea and main ideas.

Invite volunteers to share a definition of a central idea. **Tell** students that a central idea is an overall idea that the author shows about the text topic. It is the idea that the author wants the readers to remember most after reading the passage.

review how to identify the central idea and main ideas.

Tell students that they will include the most important ideas from the text in their summary, including the central idea. The central idea can also be called the gist, or the heart, of the text. **Explain** that students will tell the gist of the article to a partner and the partner will take notes. Then students will use their partner's notes to write a summary of the text.

Pass out [STUDENT HANDOUT: SUMMARIZING AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT](#).

Instruct students to select five to ten most important words or ideas from the text and write them on the handout.

Next, **direct** partners to take turns telling each other the gist of the text with the words and ideas they just wrote down. **Explain** that students will take notes on their partner's handout, and show the space for notes. **Direct** partners to trade handouts and write their names in the notes box. Allow time for each partner to share and to take notes.

Direct students to read their partner's notes and label the 5Ws and 1 H. If students are missing any, they should add them into their written summary.

Explain that when you summarize a text, someone who has not read the text should know what it is about and what details are most important. **Remind** students that when writing a summary, you do not use the author's exact words. Students should paraphrase the information, which means to put the ideas into their own words. Also remind students that a summary does not include opinions. They should restate the author's ideas without revealing what they think about them.

While students work, **circulate** and collect evidence about student thinking.

CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING		
<p>Determine if the student can IDENTIFY WHICH SUPPORTING DETAILS SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN A SUMMARY OF A TEXT (ELA-3028):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ What words or details are you including in your summary?▶ Why are you including this idea?	<p>Determine if the student can PARAPHRASE THE KEY DETAILS TO BE INCLUDED IN A SUMMARY OF THE TEXT (ELA-3029):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ What's one detail you are including in your summary? How can you put it into your own words?	<p>Determine if the student can SUMMARIZE AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT USING OBJECTIVE LANGUAGE (ELA-974):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Why did you include this detail in your summary?▶ Did you use opinion words in your summary? Why or why not?

Invite volunteers to share their summaries. **Collect** handouts.

For a discussion of the research that supports this instructional model, see the [TEACHER NOTES](#) for this lesson set.

SUMMARIZING AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT

STUDENT HANDOUT

Lesson 3

Directions:

1. Write five to ten key words. The words should support the central idea.
2. Use the words to tell your partner the gist of the text. Have your partner take notes.
3. Label the 5Ws and 1H in your partner's notes.
4. Write a summary of the text on a separate piece of paper.

Key Words

Notes by _____

ANALYZING AND SUMMARIZING THE CENTRAL IDEA

STUDENT FEEDBACK GUIDE

RI.8.2, Lessons 1–3

Directions: For each learning goal, circle the sentence that best matches what you can do.

Learning Goal	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Describe how each paragraph supports the central idea of an informational text.	I can describe how the topic of a paragraph connects to the central idea of an informational text.	I can describe how the main idea of a paragraph supports the central idea of an informational text.	I can describe how the main ideas in the paragraphs of an informational text build up to form the central idea.
Determine how the central idea is conveyed through specific details.	I can identify one key detail and explain how the author uses it to show the central idea.	I can identify two key details and explain how the author uses them to show the central idea.	I can identify multiple key details and explain how the author uses them to show the central idea.
Summarize an informational text using objective language.	I can identify the 5 Ws of a text.	I can write the 5 Ws of a text in my own words.	I can summarize the 5 Ws and central idea of a text in my own words without including my opinion.