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Comprehension Strategy: Summarising - Year 5

Table of Contents	
Presentation: Comprehension Strategy: Summarising	
Classroom Display: Summarising Strategy	
Student Reference: Summarising	
Activity: Reading Roles Card Set	
Worksheet: Identifying Key Words	
Worksheet: Effective Note-Taking	
Worksheet: One-Sentence Summaries	
Worksheet: Summarising Graphic Organisers	
Activity: Roll and Respond	
Activity: Spin, Summarise and Share	
Quiz: Comprehension Strategy: Summarising	
Assessment: Summarising Assessment - Coral Reefs	
Rubric: Comprehension Strategy: Summarising - Year 5 Rubric	



Summarising at a Glance



A strong summary

- ✓ keeps it concise
- ✓ keeps the meaning
- ✓ leaves out minor details





Fiction and Non-Fiction Summary Toolkit



FICTION



Somebody

— main character



Wanted

— goal



But

— problem



So

— response



Then

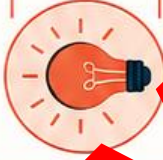
— resolution

NON-FICTION



Topic

— subject



Main idea

— most important point



Key details

— essential facts



Connections

— how ideas relate



Conclusion

— what it all means

A strong summary is accurate, concise and written in your own words.



Summarising



WHAT IS IT?

A summary restates the main idea and essential details in a shorter form.



HOW DO I DO IT?

1. Find the main idea.
2. Select only key details.
3. Take brief notes.
4. Write in your own words.



CHECK IT

- ✓ Is it accurate?
- ✓ Is it concise?
- ✓ Does it keep the original meaning?



Use this card with fiction, non-fiction and multiple sources.

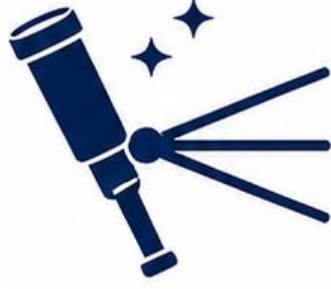
Reading Roles – Card Set A

DIRECTOR



Guide the discussion.
Invite each person to
share evidence and ideas.

PREDICTOR



Predict what may
happen next. Explain
which clues support
your prediction.

CLARIFIER



Identify confusing
words or ideas.
Help the group make
the meaning clear.

CONNECTOR



Make a meaningful
text-to-self, text-to-text
or text-to-world
connection.

Reading Roles — Card Set B



QUESTIONER

Ask questions about the main ideas, evidence, and meaning of the text.



SUMMARISER

Restate the main idea and key details briefly, accurately and in your own words.



VISUALISER

Create a mental image or quick sketch that shows an important idea.



WORD DETECTIVE

Find important or unfamiliar words. Explain their meaning in context.

Reading Roles — Rotation and Expectations

ROTATION ORDER

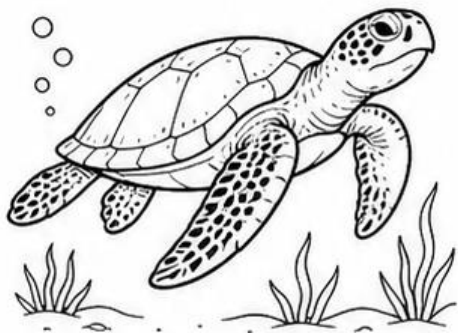
1.  1. Director
2.  2. Predictor
3.  3. Clarifier
4.  4. Connector
5.  5. Questioner
6.  6. Summariser
7.  7. Visualiser
8.  8. Word Detective

GROUP EXPECTATIONS

- ✓ Listen respectfully.
- ✓ Use evidence from the text.
- ✓ Invite every voice.
- ✓ Build on each other's ideas.
- ✓ Stay focused on the reading.

Identifying Key Words

Name: _____



WHAT MAKES A KEY WORD?

A key word names the topic, a main idea, an important fact or a relationship. Leave out repeated examples and minor details.



Read the information text. Underline the words and phrases that carry the most important meaning. Then complete the table on the next page.

GREEN SEA TURTLES

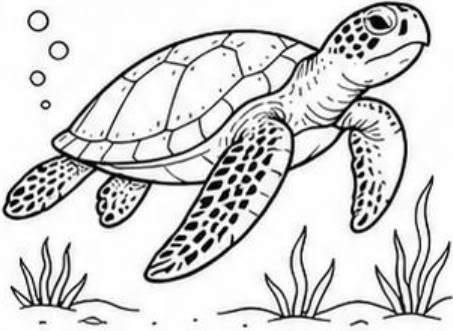
Green sea turtles are large marine reptiles that live in tropical and subtropical oceans. Along the Australian coast, they feed mainly on seagrass and algae. Adult females return to sandy beaches to lay their eggs, often near the places where they hatched. Hatchlings face many dangers as they cross the beach and enter the sea. Green sea turtles can be harmed by plastic pollution, fishing gear, boat strikes and the loss of healthy nesting beaches. Protecting feeding grounds and nesting sites helps these long-lived animals survive.

MY FIRST FIVE KEY WORDS OR PHRASES

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Identifying Key Words

Name: **ANSWERS**



WHAT MAKES A KEY WORD?

A key word names the topic, a main idea, an important fact or a relationship. Leave out repeated examples and minor details.



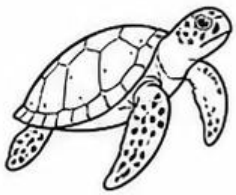
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GREEN SEA TURTLES

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MY FIRST FIVE KEY WORDS OR PHRASES

1. Green sea turtles
2. marine reptiles
3. seagrass and algae
4. nesting beaches and sites
5. pollution, fishing gear and boat strikes



Identifying Key Words — Sentence Table

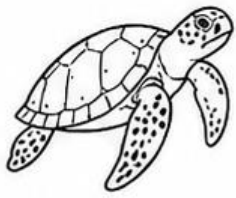


Name: _____

For each sentence, record only the key words and phrases. Then write the main idea in one sentence.

SENTENCE FROM THE TEXT	KEY WORDS AND PHRASES
1. Green sea turtles are large marine reptiles that live in tropical and subtropical oceans.	
2. Along the Australian coast, they feed mainly on seagrass and algae.	
3. Adult females return to sandy beaches to lay their eggs.	
4. Hatchlings face many dangers as they cross the beach and enter the sea.	
5. Plastic pollution, fishing gear, boat strikes and nesting beach loss can harm turtles.	
6. Protecting feeding grounds and nesting sites helps green sea turtles survive.	

MAIN IDEA IN ONE SENTENCE



Identifying Key Words — Sentence Table



Name: **ANSWERS**

For each sentence, record only the key words and phrases. Then write the main idea in one sentence.

SENTENCE FROM THE TEXT	KEY WORDS AND PHRASES
1. Green sea turtles are large marine reptiles that live in tropical and subtropical oceans.	large marine reptiles; tropical and subtropical oceans
2. Along the Australian coast, they feed mainly on seagrass and algae.	Australian coast, seagrass and algae
3. Adult females return to sandy beaches to lay their eggs.	adult females; sandy beaches; lay eggs
4. Hatchlings face many dangers as they cross the beach and enter the sea.	hatchlings; dangers; cross beach; enter sea
5. Plastic pollution, fishing gear, boat strikes and nesting beach loss can harm turtles.	plastic pollution; fishing gear; boat strikes; nesting beach loss
6. Protecting feeding grounds and nesting sites helps green sea turtles survive.	protect feeding grounds and nesting sites; turtles survive

MAIN IDEA IN ONE SENTENCE

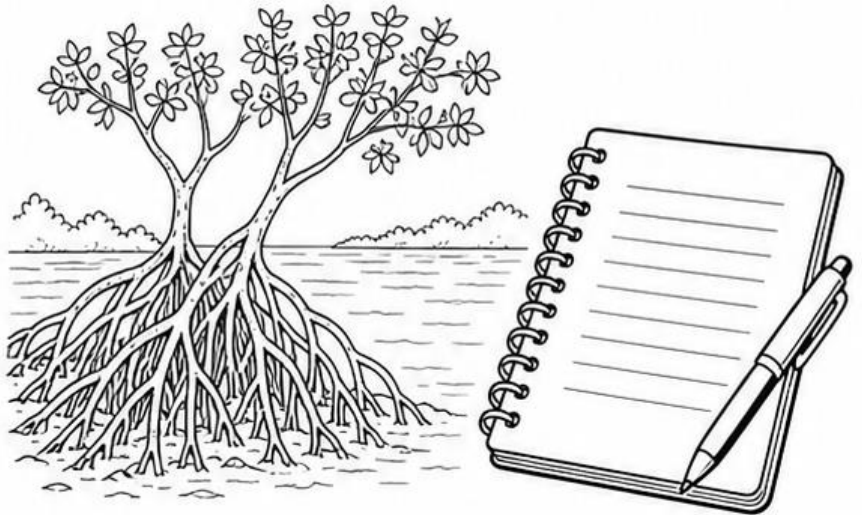
Green sea turtles are long-lived marine reptiles that rely on healthy feeding grounds and nesting beaches but face several human-caused threats.

Effective Note-Taking

Name: _____

NOTE-TAKING TIPS

- Use headings.
- Record key words and short phrases.
- Use symbols and abbreviations.
- Group related ideas.
- Leave out minor examples.



Read the passage. Write brief notes in the six boxes. Do not copy whole sentences.

MANGROVES: COASTAL GUARDIANS

Mangroves grow where land and sea meet in warm coastal areas. Their tangled roots trap sediment and slow moving water, which reduces erosion during storms. The roots also create sheltered nurseries where young fish, crabs and other animals can feed and hide. Mangroves store carbon in their wood and wet soils. However, clearing, pollution and changing sea levels can damage mangrove habitats. Communities can help by protecting coastal wetlands, reducing litter and restoring damaged areas.

HABITAT

COASTAL PROTECTION

ANIMAL NURSERIES

CARBON STORAGE

THREATS

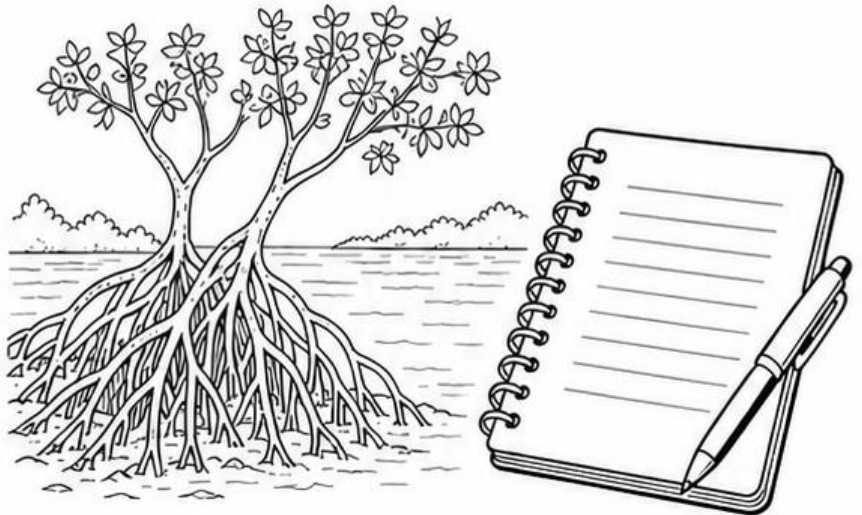
ACTIONS

Effective Note-Taking

Name: **ANSWERS**

NOTE-TAKING TIPS

- Use headings.
- Record key words and short phrases.
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- Group related ideas.
- Leave out minor examples.



Read the passage. Write brief notes in the six boxes. Do not copy whole sentences.

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HABITAT

warm coastal areas;
land meets sea

COASTAL PROTECTION

roots trap sediment;
slow water; reduce
storm erosion

ANIMAL NURSERIES

shelter for young fish,
crabs and other
animals

CARBON STORAGE

carbon held in wood
and wet soils

THREATS

clearing; pollution;
changing sea levels

ACTIONS

protect wetlands;
reduce litter; restore
damaged areas

From Notes to Summary

Name: _____



Use your notes about mangroves to plan and write a concise summary in your own words.



**TOPIC AND
MAIN IDEA**

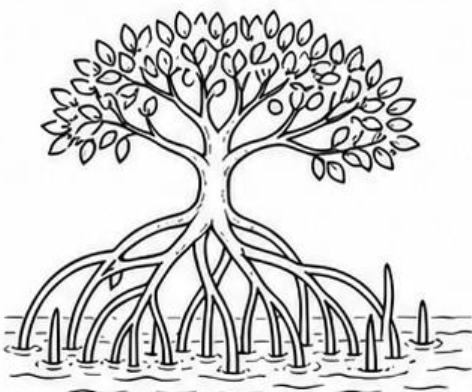
KEY DETAIL 1

KEY DETAIL 2

KEY DETAIL 3

**USEFUL
CONNECTING
WORDS**

MY 5-SENTENCE SUMMARY



CHECK

- ☐ Accurate
- ☐ Concise
- ☐ Own words



From Notes to Summary

Name: ANSWERS



Use your notes about mangroves to plan and write a concise summary in your own words.



TOPIC AND MAIN IDEA

Mangroves protect coasts and support ecosystems.

KEY DETAIL 1

roots trap sediment; slow water; reduce erosion

KEY DETAIL 2

roots shelter young fish, crabs and other animals

KEY DETAIL 3

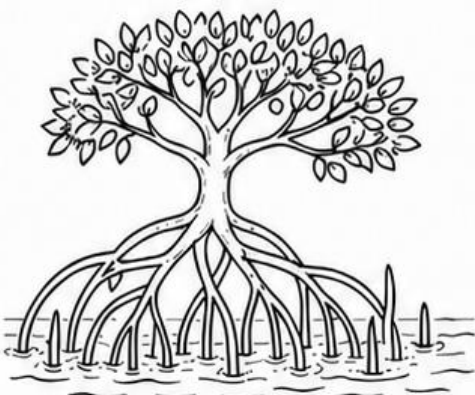
store carbon; threatened by clearing, pollution and sea level change

USEFUL CONNECTING WORDS

also; however; therefore

ONE SENTENCE SUMMARY

Mangroves grow in warm coastal areas and protect shores by trapping sediment and slowing water. Their roots provide nursery habitats for young animals and their wood and wet soils store carbon. Clearing, pollution and changing sea levels can damage these habitats. Protecting wetlands, reducing litter and restoring damaged areas can help mangroves survive.



CHECK

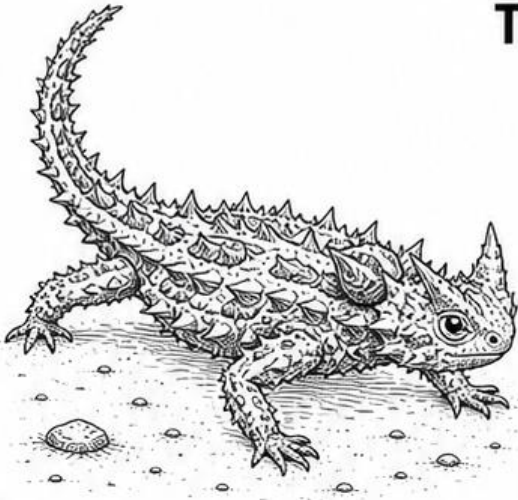
- ☒ Accurate
- ☒ Concise
- ☒ Own words



One-Sentence Summaries

Name: _____

Read the text. Complete each sentence frame with only the most important information.



THE THORNY DEVIL

The thorny devil is a small lizard found in arid parts of Australia. Its spiny skin helps it blend with sand and may discourage predators. Tiny grooves between its scales carry water from any part of its body towards its mouth. This means the lizard can collect moisture from dew or damp sand. Thorny devils mainly eat ants, using a quick tongue to catch thousands in a day. During very hot or cold conditions, they shelter in shallow burrows.

1. The thorny devil is a kind of _____ that _____.

2. Its grooved scales help it _____ because _____.

3. The thorny devil survives in the desert by _____,
_____ and _____.

FAST FINISHER

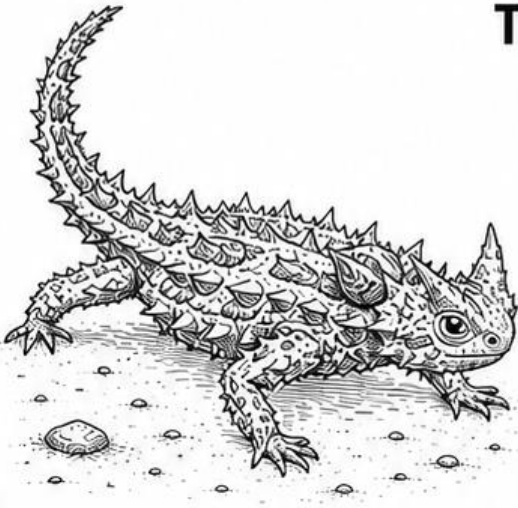
Write a summary in 25 words or fewer.



One-Sentence Summaries

Name: **ANSWERS**

Read the text. Complete each sentence frame with only the most important information.



THE THORNY DEVIL

The thorny devil is a small lizard found in arid parts of Australia. Its spiny skin helps it blend with sand and may discourage predators. Tiny grooves between its scales carry water from any part of its body towards its mouth. This means the lizard can collect moisture from dew or damp sand. Thorny devils mainly eat ants, using a quick tongue to catch thousands in a day. During very hot or cold conditions, they shelter in shallow burrows.

1. The thorny devil is a kind of small Australian lizard that is adapted to arid environments.

2. Its grooved scales help it collect water because the grooves carry moisture to its mouth.

3. The thorny devil survives in the desert by blending with sand,
collecting moisture and sheltering in burrows.

FAST FINISHER

Write a summary in 25 words or fewer.

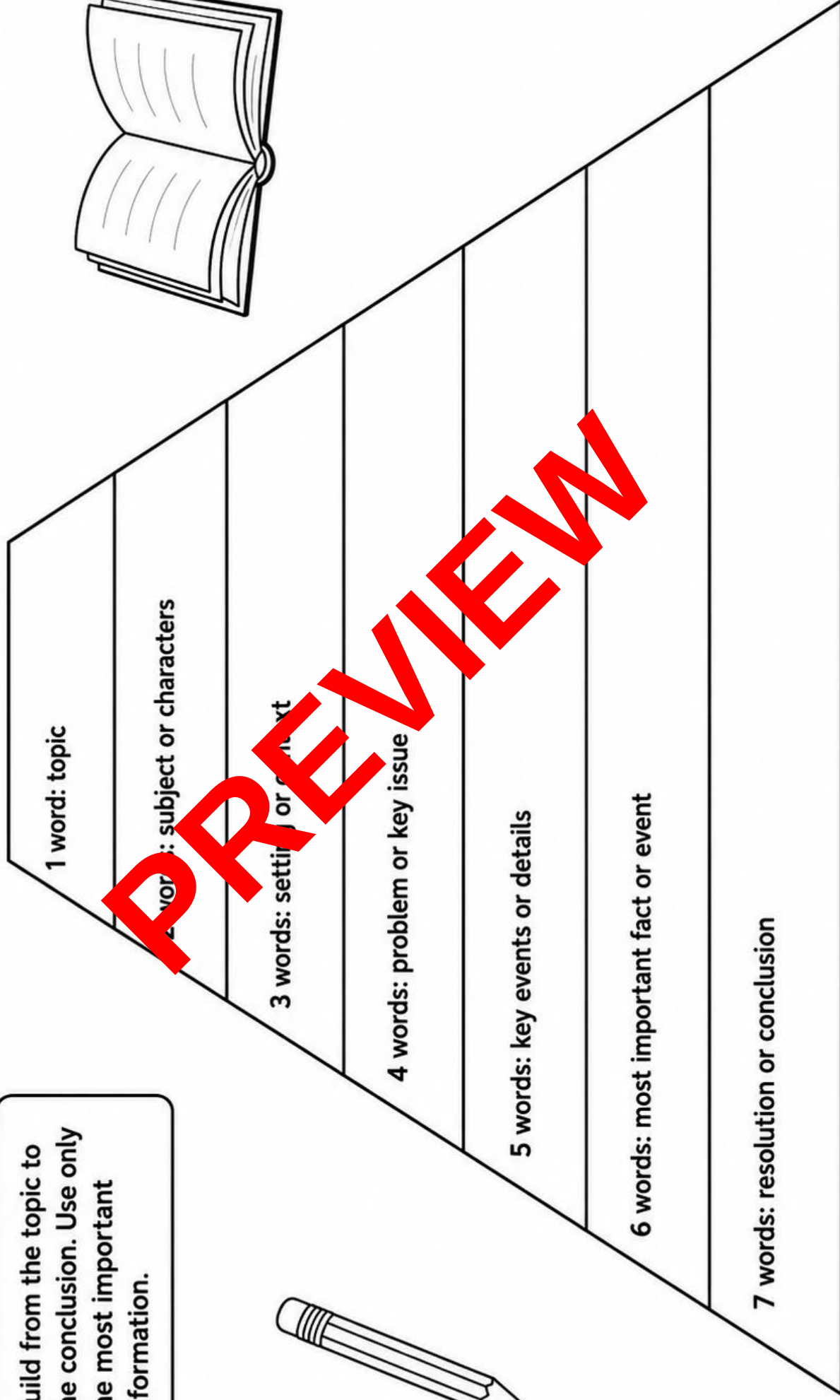
The thorny devil is an Australian desert lizard that survives
through camouflage, water-collecting scales, an ant diet
and sheltering in shallow burrows.



Name: _____

Summary Pyramid

Build from the topic to the conclusion. Use only the most important information.





Fiction Summary: Somebody-Wanted-But-So-Then



Name: _____

Use one brief note in each box, then combine the notes into a summary.

SOMEBODY

Who is the main character?

WANTED

What did they want?

BUT

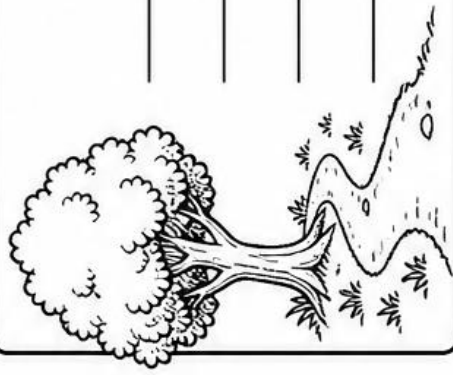
What problem stood in the way?

SO

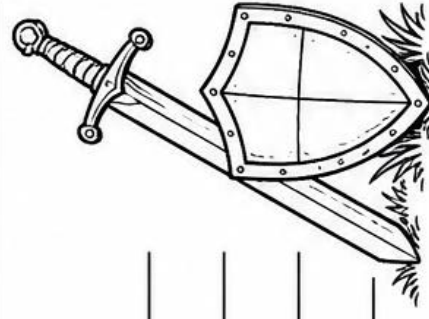
What did they do?

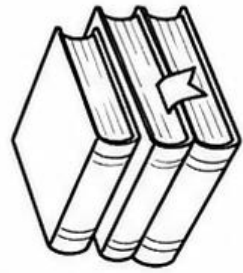
THEN

How did it end?



MY FICTION SUMMARY





Non-Fiction Summary Planner



Name: _____

Record only the information that belongs in a concise summary.

TOPIC

What is the text about?

MAIN IDEA

What is the most important point?

KEY DETAIL 1

KEY DETAIL 2

KEY DETAIL 3

HOW THE IDEAS CONNECT

MY SUMMARY IN MY OWN WORDS



Roll and Respond – Fiction A



YEAR 5



1

Identify the main character and what they want.



2

Explain the setting and how it affects the story.



3

State the central problem or conflict.



4

Describe one event that changes the situation.



5

Explain how the problem is solved.



6

Give a 30-second summary using Somebody-Wanted-But-So-Then.



**Roll, respond with evidence,
then pass the die.**



Roll and Respond – Fiction B

1

Name the two most important characters.



2

Describe the beginning in one sentence.



3

Explain the most important middle event.



4

Retell the climax in one sentence.



5

State the resolution.



6

Explain the theme or message with evidence.



Roll, respond with evidence, then pass the die.



Roll and Respond – Non-Fiction



YEAR
5

1

State the
topic.



2

Give the main
idea in one
sentence.



3

Name three
key details.



4

Explain one
cause-and-effect
relationship.



5

Identify an
important date,
name or term.



6

Give a 30-second
summary in
your own words.



Roll, respond with evidence,
then pass the die.

Spin, Summarise and Share — Fiction



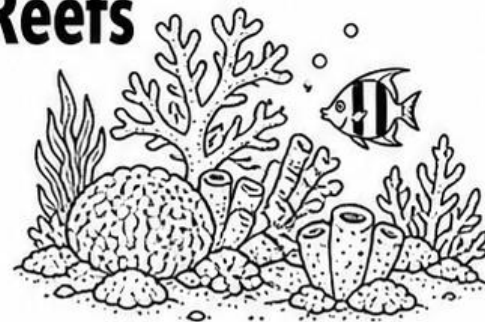
Spin. Think. Share evidence from the text.

Spin, Summarise and Share – Non-Fiction



Spin. Think. Share evidence from the text.

Summarising Assessment – Coral Reefs



Name: _____

Read Text A. Complete Questions 1–3 using key words, the main idea and your own words.

TEXT A: LIVING CITIES UNDER THE SEA

Coral reefs are built by tiny animals called coral polyps. Each polyp makes a hard skeleton, and over many years these skeletons form large reef structures. Warm, shallow, sunlit water allows algae living inside the polyps to provide food through photosynthesis. Although reefs cover a small part of the ocean floor, they support many kinds of fish, molluscs and crustaceans. The reef's cracks and branches provide shelter, feeding areas and nursery habitats.

1. Record eight key words or phrases.

1. _____

5. _____

2. _____

6. _____

3. _____

7. _____

4. _____

8. _____

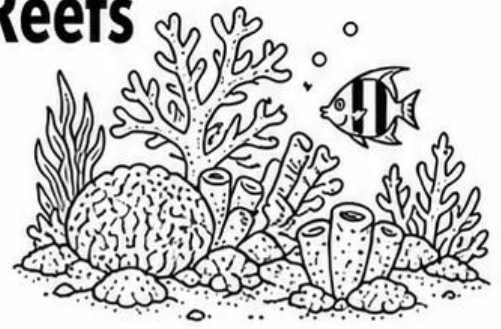
2. Which statement best expresses the main idea?

- A. Reefs are made only from rocks.
- B. Reefs are built by tiny polyps and provide habitat for many ocean species.
- C. All ocean animals live on coral reefs.
- D. Reefs can grow in any ocean conditions.

3. Coral reefs are important because _____.

Summarising Assessment – Coral Reefs

Name: **ANSWERS**



Read Text A. Complete Questions 1–3 using key words, the main idea and your own words.

TEXT A: LIVING CITIES UNDER THE SEA

Coral reefs are built by tiny animals called coral polyps. Each polyp makes a hard skeleton, and over many years these skeletons form large reef structures. Warm, shallow, sunlit water allows algae living inside the polyps to provide food through photosynthesis. Although reefs cover a small part of the ocean floor, they support many kinds of fish, molluscs and crustaceans. The reef's cracks and branches provide shelter, feeding areas and nursery habitats.

1. Record eight key words or phrases.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. <u>coral polyps</u> | 5. <u>photosynthesis</u> |
| 2. <u>hard skeleton</u> | 6. <u>support many species</u> |
| 3. <u>reef structure</u> | 7. <u>shelter</u> |
| 4. <u>algae</u> | 8. <u>nursery habitats</u> |

2. Which statement best expresses the main idea?

- A. Reefs are made only from rocks.
- ☒ B. Reefs are built by tiny polyps and provide habitat for many ocean species.
- C. All ocean animals live on coral reefs.
- D. Reefs can grow in any ocean conditions.

3. Coral reefs are important because _____.

they provide shelter, food and nursery habitats for many marine species.

Summarising Assessment — Coral Reefs



Name: _____

Read Text B. Complete Questions 4–5, then summarise both texts.

TEXT B: PROTECTING CORAL REEFS

Coral reefs can be damaged when ocean temperatures stay unusually high. Heat stress may cause corals to expel the algae living in their tissues, leaving the coral pale or white. This process is called bleaching. Bleached coral is not always dead, but repeated or severe bleaching makes recovery harder. Pollution, sediment and careless anchoring can also harm reefs. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving water quality and using moorings instead of anchors can help protect reef ecosystems.

4. Record brief notes from Text B.

THREATS	BLEACHING PROCESS	EFFECTS	ACTIONS

5. Write a 4–5 sentence summary that combines the main ideas from Text A and Text B.

Summarising Assessment — Coral Reefs



Name: **ANSWERS**

Read Text B. Complete Questions 4–5, then summarise both texts.

TEXT B: PROTECTING CORAL REEFS

Coral reefs can be damaged when ocean temperatures stay unusually high. Heat stress may cause corals to expel the algae living in their tissues, leaving the coral pale or white. This process is called bleaching. Bleached coral is not always dead, but repeated or severe bleaching makes recovery harder. Pollution, sediment and careless anchoring can also harm reefs. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving water quality and using moorings instead of anchors can help protect reef ecosystems.

4. Record brief notes from Text B.

THREATS	BLEACHING PROCESS	EFFECTS	ACTIONS
high temperatures; pollution; sediment; anchoring	Heat stress makes corals expel algae; coral turns pale or white	less food; repeated bleaching makes recovery harder	reduce emissions; improve water quality; use moorings

5. Write a 4–5 sentence summary that combines the main ideas from Text A and Text B.

Coral reefs are built over time by tiny coral polyps and support many marine species by providing food, shelter and nursery habitats. Algae living inside corals make food through photosynthesis. Reefs face threats from warming seas, bleaching, pollution, sediment and anchoring. Reducing emissions, improving water quality and using moorings can help protect them.

Comprehension Strategy: Summarising - Year 5 Rubric

Student: _____

Date: _____

CRITERIA	BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	ACHIEVING	CONFIDENT	EXCEEDING
1. Identifies the main idea	Needs support to identify the topic.	Identifies the topic; main idea is partly clear.	States a clear, accurate main idea.	States a precise main idea and explains its importance.	States an insightful main idea that captures nuance.
2. Selects key words and details	Includes mostly unrelated or copied details.	Selects summary with relevant details with minor information.	Selects relevant key words and essential details.	Prioritises the strongest evidence.	Selects and weighs essential evidence with insight.
3. Organises notes	Notes are copied, incomplete or unclear.	Records partial notes with some grouping.	Records notes under useful headings.	Uses efficient phrases and logical categories.	Synthesises notes flexibly across structures.
4. Writes a concise summary in own words	Summary is unclear, copied or too long.	Summary is partly accurate and partly in own words.	Writes an accurate, concise summary in own words.	Writes a cohesive summary that preserves meaning.	Writes a concise, nuanced synthesis.
5. Connects ideas across texts	Treats sources as separate and unrelated.	Notices one simple link between sources.	Combines shared ideas from both texts.	Explains how the sources support each other.	Integrates sources and resolves differences.

Comprehension Strategy: Summarising





Learning Goal

We are learning to identify main ideas and key details, take brief notes, and write accurate summaries in our own words.

Success criteria

- I can separate essential information from minor details.
- I can summarise fiction, non-fiction and multiple sources.





What Is Summarising?

Summarising means reducing text to its most important ideas.

A strong summary is accurate, brief and complete.

It uses your own words and keeps the meaning of the original text.





Why Summarising Matters

Summarising helps readers to:

- check that they understand a text
- remember important information
- connect ideas across a text
- explain things clearly to others





A Four-Step Process

1. Read the whole text and think.
2. State the purpose and main idea.
3. Select only the essential key details.
4. Combining the ideas in your own words.

The summary should be accurate, brief and complete?





Finding the Main Idea

The topic tells what the text is about.

The main idea tells the most important point about that topic.

Ask: What does the author most want me to understand?

Check that every essential detail supports your answer.





Key Details or Minor Details?

Key details explain, prove or develop the main idea.

Minor details may be interesting, but the summary still makes sense without them.

Test each detail: remove it, do I lose important meaning?





Identifying Key Words

Look for repeated ideas, important words, precise subject vocabulary and words that show cause, change or sequence.

Choose short words or phrases—not whole copied sentences.

Use your own words as often as you can when you write in your own words.





Effective Note-taking

Use headings, key words, short phrases, arrows and symbols.

Group related items together.

Avoid copying full sentences.

Good notes make it easier to structure your ideas and help you draft a concise summary.





Summarising Fiction

Use Somebody-Wanted-But-Then.

- Somebody – the main character

- Wanted – the goal

- But – the central problem

- So – the key response or events

- Then – the resolution

Use the theme only when it is important.





Fiction Worked Example

Somebody: three people

Wanted: safe homes

But: a wolf destroyed two houses

So: they sheltered in the brick house

Result: the strong house kept them safe

Summary: The three people sought safe homes, but a wolf destroyed two houses, so they sheltered in the brick house and stayed safe.





Summarising Non-Fiction

Start with the topic and main idea.

Select facts that explain the main idea, such as causes, effects, stages or comparisons.

Leave out examples that repeat the same point.

Connect the ideas into clear own-word sentences.





Try It: Tigers

Tigers are powerful cats that live in parts of Asia. Their striped coats help them blend into forests and grasslands. Tigers usually hunt alone and rely on stealth. Habitat loss and illegal hunting have reduced wild populations. Protected habitats and anti-poaching work can help them survive.

What is the main idea? Which details are essential?





Model Non-Fiction Summary

Main idea: Tigers are specialised hunters whose survival is threatened by human activity.

Model summary: Tigers are solitary man cats whose striped coats and stealth help them hunt. Habitat loss and illegal hunting have reduced their numbers, so protected habitats and conservation are important for their survival.





Summarising Multiple Sources

Read each source separately first.

Record its main idea and essential evidence.

Then compare the notes:

- Which ideas agree?
- What unique detail does each source add?
- Are there differences that need explaining?

Write a **synthesised** synthesis, not two mini-summaries.





Compare Two Sources

Source A: Elephants use their trunks to breathe, smell, drink, gather food and communicate.

Source B: Elephant herds are led by experienced females. Herd members cooperate to protect calves and locate water.

Shared theme: how elephants survive.

Unique trunk adaptations and social cooperation.



Combined-Source Summary



Elephants survive through both physical adaptations and social cooperation. Their versatile trunks help them breathe, smell, drink, feed and communicate, while experienced herd leaders guide groups to water and members protect calves. Together, these features help elephants meet daily needs and respond to danger.





Your Turn

1. Read the elephant practice text.
2. Record the main idea.
3. Choose six to eight key words or phrases.
4. Group details that belong together.
5. Write a three-sentence summary in your own words.
6. Check for accuracy, brevity and completeness.





Practice Text: Elephants

African elephants shape their habitats as they feed and travel. They push over small trees, open paths and dig for water, which can create resources for other animals. Elephants also spread seeds in their dung. However, shrinking habitats can bring elephants into conflict with farms and communities. Wildlife corridors and careful land planning can reduce these conflicts.





Model Response

Main idea: Elephants change ecosystems, but habitat pressure can create conflict with people.

Model summary: As African elephants feed and move, they open paths, create access to water and spread seeds, which benefits other species. Shrinking habitats can increase conflict with people. Life can be better, and careful land planning can help elephants and communities coexist.





Summary and Review

A strong summary

- states the main idea
 - includes only essential details
 - follows the text's structure
 - uses brief, organised notes
 - expresses ideas in your own words
- It remains accurate, concise and complete

Let's choose one strategy you will use in your next reading task.





Well Done!



DRAFT

Summarising Quiz





Question 1

True or false

Summarising a text can improve comprehension because it requires the reader to identify the main points and connect the most important ideas.





Answer 1

Correct answer: true

Summarising checks understanding by requiring the reader to select, organise and state essential meaning.





Question 2

True or

A summary should usually be written in the reader's own words.





Answer 2

Correct answer: True

Using your own words shows understanding and prevents the summary from becoming copied notes.





Question 2

What is summarising?

- A. Copying every important sentence
- B. Giving a brief account of the main ideas and essential details
- C. Sharing only your opinion about the text
- D. Listing every event in order





Answer 3

Correct answer: 3

A summary gives a brief, accurate account of the main ideas and essential details.





Question 11

True or False

A strong summary should include as many details as possible.





Answer 4

Correct answer

A strong summary includes details that are essential to understanding the main idea.





Question 5

When summarising non-fiction, what should you focus on?

A. Main ideas and key details

B. Every example

C. Only unfamiliar words

D. Your favourite fact





Answer 5

Correct answer: A

The main idea and details preserve the essential meaning of the text.





Question 6

Which is NOT a useful summarising skill?

- A. Identifying the main idea
- B. Selecting key words
- C. Copying the text exactly
- D. Combining related details





Answer 6

Correct answer is C

Copying exactly does not show that the reader has processed and restated the meaning.





Question 7

What is the main idea?

A. The longest sentence

The text's most important point

One interesting example

The final word





Answer 7

Correct answer: 3

The main idea is the most important point the author wants the reader to understand.





Question 8

True or

The main idea is always stated in the first sentence.





Answer 8

Correct answer: false

The main idea may be stated in another place or may need to be inferred from the whole text.





Question 1

In one or two sentences, explain the purpose of summarising a text.





Answer a

Model answer: Summarising helps a reader check understanding, remember important information and communicate the text's essential meaning concisely.





Question 10

Giant pandas mainly eat bamboo. Their strong jaws and broad teeth help crush tough stems. Although pandas can climb and swim, they spend much of the day feeding because bamboo provides limited energy.

Recall key words and phrases that belong in a summary.





Answer 10

possible key words or phrases:

- giant pandas
- mainly eat bamboo
- strong jaws and broad teeth
- bamboo provides limited energy
- and much of the day feeding

Answer rate essential ideas are acceptable.





Well Done!



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