

Conveying Necessary Information: Summarizing Articles

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Contentions

My demonstration is meant to suggest and support my contentions that:

1. Teaching summary writing helps students develop the necessary skills for extracting important information from lengthier texts.
2. Doing a peer review of a summary paragraph helps students in checking work for clarity and objectivity when it comes to their audience.

The Approach/Process

In order to introduce students to the proper methods of obtaining important information for a research paper, this is a lesson used at the beginning of a research unit that teaches students how to sift through their findings for important details by writing summaries.

- Step 1: The lesson begins with a brief discussion about the importance of being able to summarize effectively.
- Step 2: The teacher shares a sample summary and the class reads through it. The teacher may then ask the students to jot down some questions that have come up as they read the summary.
- Step 3: Students then read the original article in its entirety from the overhead. As a class, the important points used to write the summary are noted.
- Step 4: The teacher next displays a list of strategies for composing a solid summary and explains each one.
- Step 5: The entire class reads an article. Students are then placed in small groups and assigned to highlight important details from the article. Together, with the teacher acting as the scribe, the class writes a summary paragraph of the article.
- Step 6: Next the teacher directs students through the revision of the paragraph with the list of strategies that were mentioned earlier. When the class approves of the summary, move onto the next step.
- Step 7: Students are assigned to choose an article from the given list that they would like to read.
- Step 8: Students need to either underline or jot down important details from the article.
- Step 9: Using the strategies for summary writing, students need to compose a summary paragraph.
- Step 10: Once everyone has finished their first draft, the teacher will once again review the components of a strong summary before asking the students to swap summaries with each other. During this step, the students should be reading someone else's summary, making sure that the summary is clear and follows the strategies. Students should be encouraged to write questions in the margins or offer up other suggestions that might help that student revise.

- Step 11: Students are then asked to go back to their own piece to evaluate the comments from their peer. Using those comments along with their own knowledge, students will be asked to make revisions to their draft.

Bibliography/Related Reading

Kemper, Dave, Patrick Sebranek, and Verne Meyer. "Research Writing: Summary

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Samples

- Sample 1- Embedded in the slide show on slide 3.