



**A reading comprehension and writing tool**

**Curriculum Guide:**  
*Summary Writing*

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## Introduction

Educational technologies are most effective when they go hand-in-hand with classroom lessons and activities. The goal of this curriculum guide is to offer high-level lesson plans and ideas to get you started integrating **WriteToLearn**<sup>™</sup> into your curriculum. As a language arts teacher, you could follow the lesson plans as they are or use them as suggestions for adapting your own curriculum to the use of **WriteToLearn**. As a subject matter teacher, you might only choose a few lessons that help you introduce summary writing and **WriteToLearn**. After that, you might find it easier to allow students to use **WriteToLearn** independently. Either way, **WriteToLearn** will help you to extend the reading comprehension and writing instruction you already provide to your students. **WriteToLearn** can motivate your students to read and write by providing them with feedback on their writing and comprehension performance during a number of revision and edit cycles. Through automated content-based feedback, **WriteToLearn** will offer your students many more opportunities for practicing their comprehension and writing skills than you can usually provide.

The lesson plans provided here are designed to illustrate why and how to teach students summary writing. They provide you with real, hands-on examples for linking your classroom lessons to the technology-supported exercises in **WriteToLearn**.

*Disclaimer: All data, including student, teacher, school names, location, grades and scores, and associated data are fictional and are modeled for sample purposes only; any form of familiarity is coincidental.*

## Summary Writing

*“Summarization is one of the most underused teaching techniques we have today, yet research has shown that it yields some of the greatest leaps in comprehension and long-term retention of information.”* (Wormeli, 2005<sup>1</sup>).

One of the challenges of language arts instruction is turning students into active readers who come away from the reading of a text with a deep and thorough understanding of its content. The ability to quickly determine the main ideas of a text, and understand the logical structure of its basic argument, is one crucial comprehension skill. Summary writing lends itself naturally to developing and exercising this ability. With each written summary, students exercise the skills of identifying main ideas and expressing them in a short composition in their own words. This allows students to become better at distinguishing important information from less relevant details, and integrating these new facts with their pre-existing knowledge about the topic. With sufficient exposure, reading turns into an active search for new and important facts and insights.

Aside from fostering active comprehension, the practice of writing summaries presents additional benefits:

- It allows students to integrate the information from each summarized text more deeply into their memory structures, resulting in better long-term retention.
- It allows the teacher to assess how well their students understand the subject matter.
- Last but not least, it develops writing and composition skills.

In teaching the subject matter areas, such as biology or history, teaching comprehension skills might not be at the center of the curriculum. However, reading and comprehension of textbook materials are the prerequisites of meaningful instruction. As students struggle with understanding their reading assignments, they are left ill-prepared to participate in classroom discussions or other instructional exercises that build on this knowledge. Asking students to summarize their assignments will motivate and direct them to work with the texts more actively and may also help teachers assess which students need more help with comprehension.

Obviously, grading summaries, especially giving feedback on a number of revisions, can be a daunting and time-consuming chore for classroom teachers. This may explain why summary writing is not used more often in classroom instruction. **WriteToLearn** is meant to help with this aspect of teaching summary writing. While teachers may want to prepare their students for the exercise, **WriteToLearn** can lighten the burden of providing feedback and letting your students know that they are on the right track. **WriteToLearn** informs them when important ideas are missing, or if too much irrelevant information is included. Based on this feedback, students can edit their writing. This process provides opportunities to check their understanding, re-read sections of the material, and incrementally improve their summaries and their comprehension of the text.

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<sup>1</sup> Wormeli, Rick. (2005). *Summarization in any subject: 50 techniques to improve student learning*. Alexandria, VA: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.

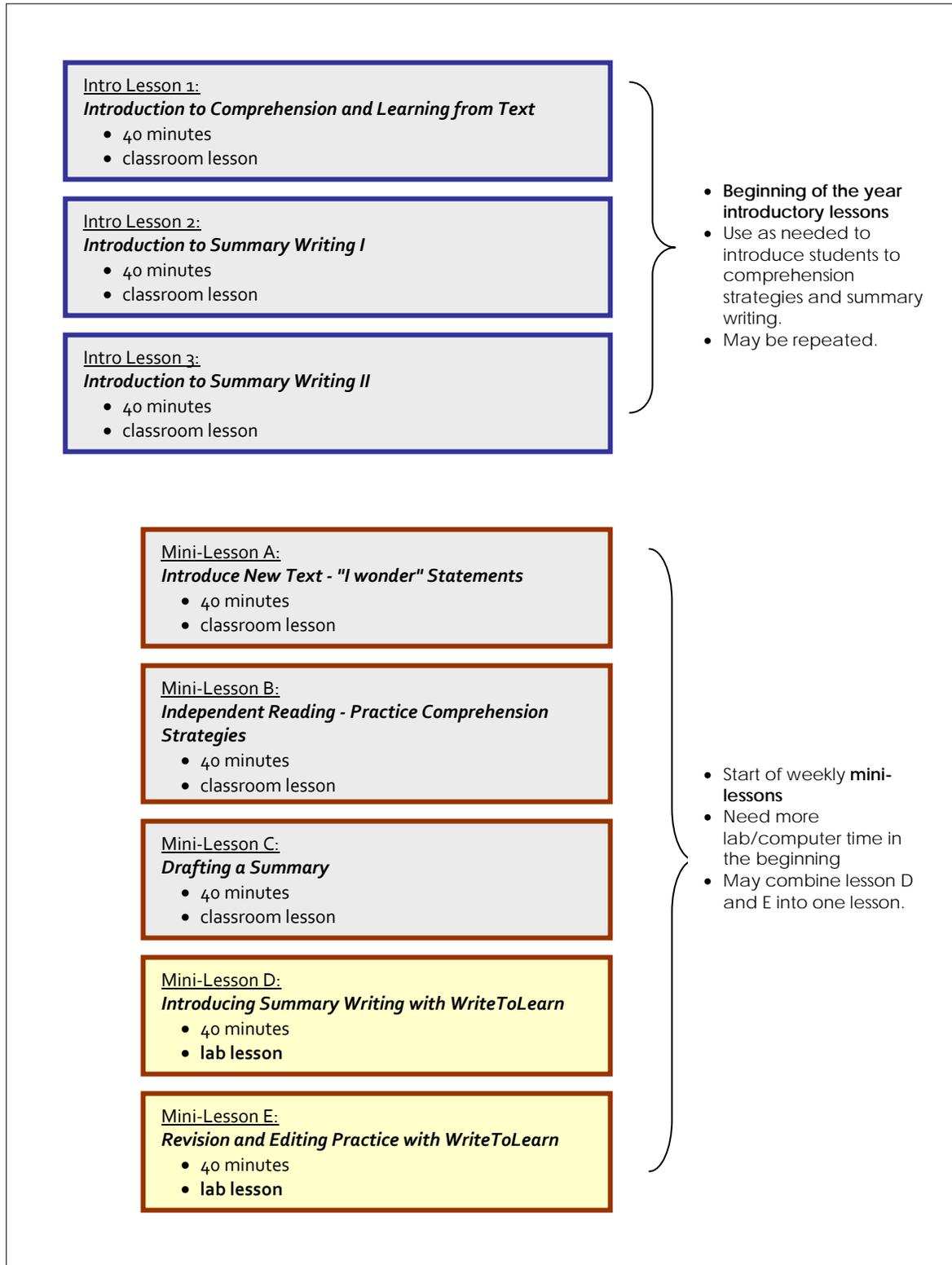


Figure 1. Example Lesson Plan A – Introductory Lesson Sequence

## Integrating the *WriteToLearn* Summary Component into Lesson Plans

The summary component of *WriteToLearn* can be used in conjunction with a structured approach to teaching comprehension. As an illustration, we developed the example **lesson sequences** in this guide (see *Figures 1* and *2*). These figures illustrate in flowchart format an introductory lesson sequence (*Figure 1*) and a sequence that can be used repeatedly for the rest of the term (*Figure 2*). Each chart refers to lesson plans that can be found in the remainder of this guide.

**At the beginning of the year**, establishing routines and setting expectations is crucial for creating a positive learning environment. At this time, we recommend presenting the introductory sequence (see *Figure 1*): “*Introduction to Comprehension Strategies and Learning from Text*”, “*Introduction to Summary Writing I*”, and “*Introduction to Summary Writing II*”. These lessons contain collaborative, scaffolded summarization exercises in the classroom, and aim at conveying some basic summarization techniques. As part of these lessons, you can introduce the content of the upcoming mini-lessons. The mini-lessons in the introductory sequence are designed to establish the weekly practice components of reading, comprehension exercises, and summary writing. They also include an introduction to **WriteToLearn**.

**After you have set the stage**, you can follow a weekly routine contained in the five mini-lessons shown in *Figure 2*. These lessons assume that the topics of comprehension strategies, summary writing and the use of **WriteToLearn** have been introduced. Here, your students have the opportunity to systematically apply and practice comprehension strategies and summary drafting, revising and editing with **WriteToLearn**. Applying summarization to new texts, with possibly increasing difficulty, will develop the skill of finding main ideas and supporting facts while reading. When used in subject matter instruction, it will guide your students toward a more thorough understanding of textbook material, preparing them for follow-up classroom instruction.

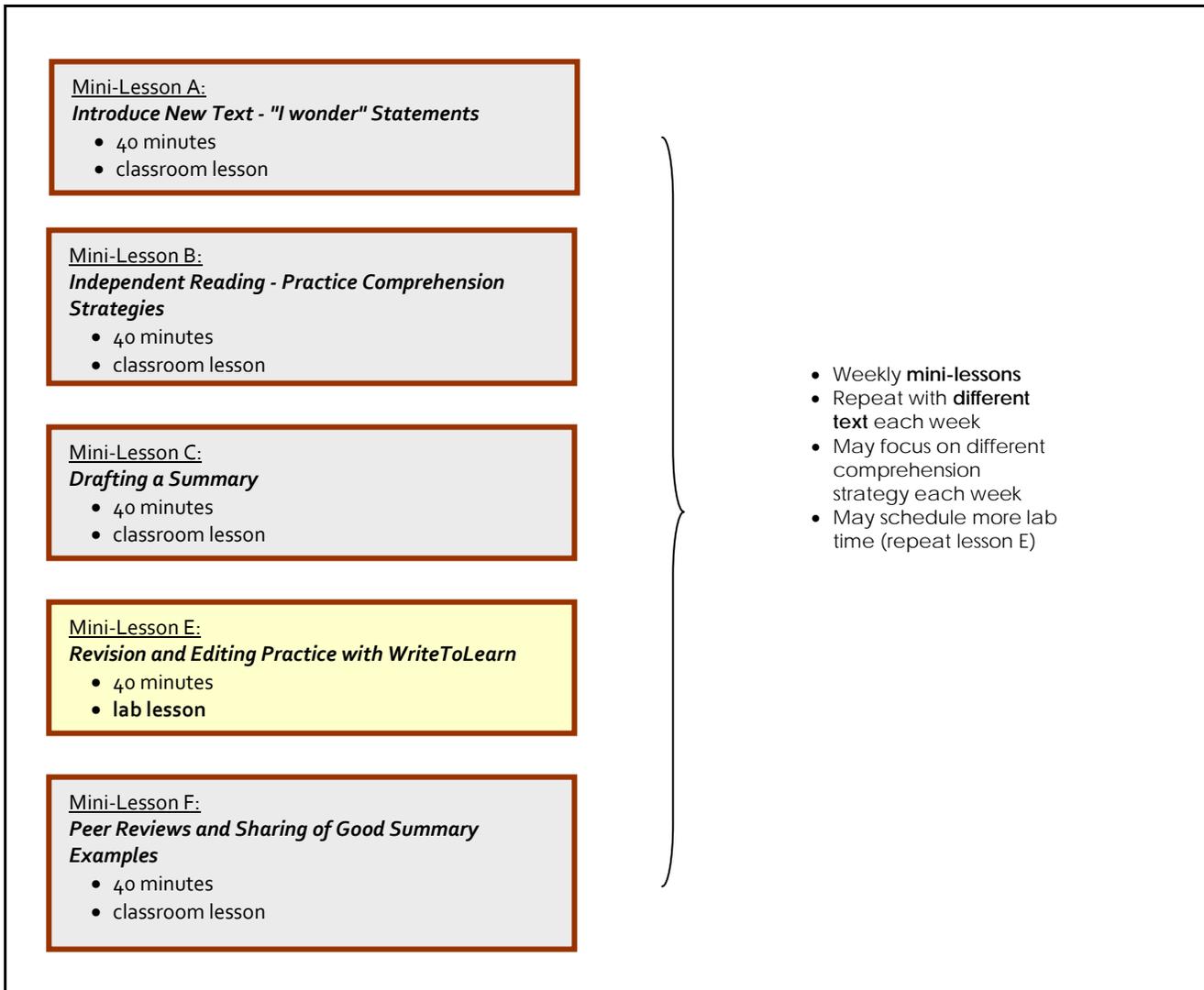


Figure 2. Example Lesson Plan B – Repeated Mini-Lessons

## Teacher Preparation

We recommend that you take the time to prepare for using **WriteToLearn** at the beginning of the school year. Once you have set up the student accounts, and have familiarized yourself with the system and the mini-lessons, teaching with **WriteToLearn** will become a simple routine.

### At the beginning of the year:

1. Set up your student accounts and class rosters in **WriteToLearn**.
2. Familiarize yourself with the texts in the **WriteToLearn** library. Find a number of materials that can be used by your students in consecutive order. Use shorter, less difficult texts at first and plan for more challenging materials later in the year.
3. Read through the lessons plans and make adjustments, as needed, to accommodate your specific student population and curriculum.
4. Schedule lab time (at least once per week for 45 minutes is recommended, possibly twice per week in the beginning of the year).

**Before the introductory lessons:**

1. Read through the lesson plan and make adjustments.
2. Prepare needed materials (for example: prepare charts, make copies of texts, etc.).

**At the beginning of each week:**

1. Select text(s) to be used during the week. Print out materials.  
In selecting texts to assign from the **WriteToLearn** library, it will be important to select texts that are at the appropriate reading level (by considering Lexile<sup>®2</sup> values, recommended grade level and length) for your students. You may want to start with texts that are slightly below your students' reading level and work your way up to more challenging texts as the school year continues. A second important consideration is to select texts of high interest to your students. The wide library of Prentice Hall and Scott Foresman texts within **WriteToLearn**, searchable by topic and grade level, provides much material from which to choose.
2. Familiarize yourself with the text.
3. Make adjustments to mini-lessons as needed. For example, choose different comprehension strategies to focus on each week.

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<sup>2</sup> Lexile is a registered trademark of Metametrics, Inc.

## Individual Lesson Plans

Each **lesson plan** begins with a teacher-guided student discussion that leads up to a definition of a concept (e.g. “*What is a summary?*”) or process (e.g. “*How to identify main ideas*”). These concepts or processes are summarized on **charts** that the students should copy into their notebooks. All charts are referenced in the lesson plans and models for these charts are included in the Appendix. Please review these charts before each lesson and prepare if necessary ahead of time.

Teachers can model procedures for the students and then give students the opportunity to practice their scaffolded application through small group and individual exercises. The mini-lessons assume that the more general concepts (i.e. “*what is a summary*”, “*how to draft a summary*”, “*how to use WriteToLearn*”, etc.) have been discussed and provide the opportunity to practice the new skills throughout the school year with ever more challenging material and more and more unassisted use of **WriteToLearn**. These lessons plans are meant as templates; you may find it necessary to adapt the particular classroom activities, example charts, and materials to your specific student population.

## Intro Lesson 1

### ***Introduction to Comprehension and Learning from Text***

- 40 minutes
- classroom lesson

#### **Student Objective:**

During this lesson, expectations for the year will be set. Materials will be distributed. Students will be introduced to:

- The importance of using comprehension strategies.
- Summarizing as a key comprehension strategy.

#### **Resources Needed:**

- Student notebooks.
- Chart paper.
- Possibly prepare *Chart 1* in the Appendix.
- Markers.

#### **Teacher Process:**

##### **Introduction:** (15 min)

Distribute the student notebooks. Introduce the importance of comprehension by asking students about their most important study skills. Focus the discussion on text comprehension, understanding, or learning from text. Ask students to reflect on why this is such an important skill. Ask them to consider what they will be doing in secondary education, everyday life, their career, or in college.

Introduce specific comprehension skills. This may be a review of skills they have learned about in the past. Ask: “*What does it mean to really understand or comprehend a text that you have read? Do you have some ideas? What are some of the things you might try to do to understand what is in a text? How do you know that you have learned from a text that you just read?*”

Allow students to respond, repeat and record some of the correct answers on *Chart 1*. Direct students to think about things to do “*before you start reading*”, “*while you read*”, “*after you read*”. Include categories (before, while and after) and a few examples only.

##### **Small Group Activity:** (5 min)

Students brainstorm with a partner on more examples for comprehension skills at each point in time. They take notes on their ideas to be shared with the whole classroom later.

##### **Sharing/ Classroom Activity:** (15 min)

Small groups share their ideas with the whole class. Teacher completes *Chart 1* with their ideas. Students copy completed chart into their notebook.

##### **Conclusion:** (5 min)

Conclude with setting expectations. Students will be introduced to specific comprehension skills and will have a chance to practice these on a weekly basis. Special attention will be given to learning to write summaries. They will be using a computer program called ***WriteToLearn*** to help them practice their summary writing. More details about summary writing and ***WriteToLearn*** will be covered in the next lessons.

## Intro Lesson 2

### ***Introduction to Summary Writing I***

- 40 minutes
- classroom lesson

#### **Student Objective:**

During this lesson students will:

- Be introduced to summary writing.
- Define what makes a summary.
- Discuss the purpose and value of summary writing.
- Define “*main ideas*”.
- Practice identifying main ideas.

#### **Resources Needed:**

- Student notebooks.
- Short text to summarize, see *Example Text* in the Appendix\*.
- Chart paper.
- Markers, highlighters.
- Possibly completed *Chart 1* from previous lesson.
- *Chart 2* and *Chart 3* in the Appendix.

#### **Teacher Process:**

##### **Introduction:** (5 min)

Quickly review comprehension skills discovered in the first lesson. Remind students that they will focus on summarization in this lesson. Collaboratively work out a definition for summary writing. Ask: “*What is a summary?*” Take notes and create example *Chart 2*.

##### **Classroom Activity:** (10 min)

Discuss the importance of summary writing for comprehension. Ask: “*Why do you think summary writing might be a good tool to teach us comprehension skills? What do you have to know to be able to write a good summary?*” For example, they need to be able to distinguish important ideas from less important details and need to be able to reproduce the basic argument or logic of the text so that someone else can understand it. You can only do that when you have really understood the text yourself. Discuss the importance of summary writing as a study skill. Students brainstorm with a partner or in the classroom on situations in which good summarization skills might come in handy. For example, to prepare for exams, prepare for research papers, to learn from reading textbooks. Let them list all subject areas such as biology, history, social studies, etc.

##### **Individual Activity:** (10 min)

Students read a short text. See the *Example Text* in the Appendix.\* Instruct your students to read independently and highlight the main ideas.

##### **Small Group:** (5 min)

Small groups compare their notes about the main ideas. Have them compile tables with “*main ideas*” on one side, “*minor details*” on the other.

##### **Classroom Activity:** (10 min)

Compile a chart of “*main ideas*” vs. “*minor details*” with the whole class for the *Example Text* in the Appendix. See example *Chart 3* in the Appendix. Have small groups report their work. Discuss the difference between main ideas and minor details with the whole class. Conclude with setting expectations: “*Next time we will use these notes to write our first summary together.*”

\* **Important Note:** This text, *Greenhouses*, is from the **WriteToLearn** library, with a Lexile of 880 and 569 words, recommended for upper elementary or lower middle school. Depending on the age and reading level of your students you may only assign the first section, or find a text that is more appropriate for their level.

## Intro Lesson 3

### ***Introduction to Summary Writing II***

- 40 minutes
- classroom lesson

### **Student Objective:**

During this lesson students will:

- Learn about basic summary organization.
- Practice summary writing through scaffolded instruction.

### **Resources Needed:**

- Student notebooks.
- Short text to summarize, see *Example Text* in the Appendix\*.
- *Charts 2* and *3* from previous lesson.
- Chart paper.
- Markers.
- *Charts 4, 5* and *6* from the Appendix.

### **Teacher Process:**

#### **Introduction:** (20 min)

Quickly review the summary definition discovered in the last session. Also review the main ideas and minor details discussed in the previous session. Tell students that in this session they will write their first summary collaboratively. Ask: “*Now that we have identified the main ideas, how would you start your summary?*” Take notes. Organize student responses into a summary that is similar to the one presented in *Chart 4*. Have students copy this work into their notebooks. Before you start with this, you may first want to review the process for writing a summary as outlined in *Chart 5*.

#### **Classroom Activity:** (15 min)

Discuss the example summary. Point to the parts of the summary and ask students about the function of each section. Mark up the chart labeling the sections. Start *Chart 6* that abstracts these sections into outline format. Have students copy this chart into their notebooks.

#### **Closing:** (5 min)

Set expectations. Tell students that they now have learned about the basic process and tools for writing summaries on their own. Tell them that they will be reading a different text together each week, discussing and practicing comprehension strategies together. They will also be taking notes about main ideas and writing a summary about each of those texts. They will be using a computer program that will give them feedback about whether their summary was appropriate starting the next week.

\* **Important Note:** This text, *Greenhouses*, is from the **WriteToLearn** library, with a Lexile of 880 and 569 words, recommended for upper elementary or lower middle school. Depending on the age and reading level of your students you may only assign the first section, or find a text that is more appropriate for their level.

## Weekly Mini-Lesson A

### **Introduce new text – “I wonder” statements**

- 40 minutes
- classroom lesson

### **Student Objective(s)**

During this lesson students will:

- Be introduced to a new text.
- Write a few “*I wonder statements*” in their reader’s notebook.
- Activate their background knowledge about the topic.
- Form some expectations about the text.

### **Resources Needed:**

- Chart paper.
- Markers.
- Student copies of the first text from the **WriteToLearn** library, identified ahead of time. For the first weekly session, find a text that is slightly below the students’ reading level. For consecutive weeks, find texts with increasing difficulty, as appropriate.
- *Chart 7* from the Appendix.

### **Teacher Process:**

#### **Introduction:** (10 min)

The “*I wonder*” strategy allows students to ask questions about a text they are just about to read. It allows the reader to activate some background knowledge about the topic and form expectations about the text. *Chart 7* provides several example sentences starting with “*I wonder*”. Model the strategy. Hold up the text to all the students in your class so that they can see the title and the front picture cover. Ask the following question to your students, “*I wonder what this book will teach me about?*” Allow students time to respond to your question through oral discussion. Tell students that using “*I wonder*” statements is a great strategy in helping reading comprehension and that they will practice it today.

#### **Activity:** (20 min)

Students will receive a copy of the text. Tell the students to skim through the text and look at the pictures and headers while turning the pages. Ask the students to write two or three “*I wonder statements*” about what they think the text might reveal. Ask the students to write the statements in the section titled “*summary writing*” in their reader’s notebooks. Create an “*I wonder chart*” (*Chart 7*) to help guide students in their question asking.

#### **Sharing/Closing:** (10 min)

Students are asked to turn and talk to their neighbor about the “*I wonder statements*” they created for the given text. Share examples of your wonderings about the text and discuss with the class. Explain to students that asking questions is a great way to become interested in reading material and increase reading comprehension.

## Weekly Mini-Lesson B

### ***Independent Reading – Practice Comprehension Strategies***

- 40 minutes
- classroom lesson

### **Student Objective(s):**

During this lesson students will:

- Read the weekly text.
- Practice underlining main ideas.

During the classroom practice over the course of the year, you can also focus on other comprehension strategies. Several examples are provided in *Table 1* below. In addition, many of the texts in **WriteToLearn** include comprehension questions or exercises that you can use to guide your lesson planning.

### **Resources Needed:**

- Chart paper.
- Markers.
- Printed copies of the weekly text.
- Student notebooks.

### **Teacher Process:**

#### **Introduction:** (10 min)

Tell students that they will have time to read the text on their own today. They are expected to do the first step in preparation for summary writing. Ask if they remember what that first step is, and what to do. (If they don't remember underlining main ideas or how to do it, quickly review it with them.)

**Weekly strategy practice; change this routinely. Select a strategy that suits the material of the current week.** Also point the students to one other comprehension strategy that they will practice during this week's reading. For example, you might introduce or reinforce their recognition of unknown words. Ask them to underline unknown words in another color. Ask them to try and predict the meaning of each word from the context. Then, direct them to the use of a dictionary to confirm or correct their interpretation of each word. You may want to model this strategy with them in the class before the independent reading time.

#### **Activity:** (20 min)

Hand out copies of the weekly text. Students will read the text independently and underline main ideas and unknown words, following the procedures discussed at the beginning of the session.

#### **Sharing/Closing:** (10 min)

Have students report to the class the main ideas they have identified. Compile a list of main ideas for the whole class. Alternatively, or additionally if there is time, have students report their use of a second comprehension strategy. For example, have them report unknown vocabulary that they discovered. Have them explain how they predicted the meaning and whether the dictionary confirmed or corrected that prediction.

**Table 1. Comprehension strategies that can be practiced during this mini-lesson.**

- Use context clues to identify the meaning of a word.
- Look up terms that are not known in a dictionary.
- Use the table of contents to find out what the text is about.
- Scan headers, illustrations and other text elements to find out what the text is about.
- Underline the most important ideas.
- Take notes in your notebook.
- Use graphic organizers to sketch how main ideas are related.
- Notice when you don't understand something, something that is not clear.
- Question the author about something that is not clear.
- Make inferences to explain what may not be clear to yourself or others.
- Make inferences between different parts of the text.
- Make inferences between the text and something you already know about the topic.
- Use context to help your understanding.
- Use your background knowledge to help your understanding.
- Complete the reader response questions at the back of the text and record your answers in the "summary section" of your reader's notebook.
- Begin the outline for your summary within the "summary section" of your reader's notebook.
- Use any of your own favorite comprehension strategies!

## Weekly Mini-Lesson C

### **Drafting a Summary**

- 40 minutes
- classroom lesson

### **Student Objective(s):**

During this lesson, students will:

- Use their marked-up text and notes to start drafting their summaries.
- Practice the summary writing process with the basic outline to be used for summary writing.

### **Resources Needed:**

- *Charts 2* and *5* from the Appendix.
- Markers.
- Printed copies of the weekly text.
- Student notebooks.

### **Teacher Process:**

#### **Introduction:** (10 min)

Display the summary definition chart (*Chart 2*) and the summary writing process chart (*Chart 5*) so they are easily visible to all students. Review the main ideas from the text that you have discussed during the last session. At the beginning of the term you may want to model the sections of the summary in front of the class. With more practice, students can be expected to start their summary draft on their own.

#### **Activity:** (25 min)

Students will start a draft of the summary in their notebook. You should walk around to address individual questions and for short student-teacher conferences.

#### **Sharing/Closing:** (5 min)

Tell students to bring their notebook and the original text to the computer lab for the next session. They will be entering their drafts into **WriteToLearn** for feedback. Then they will use the tool to refine their summary.

## Weekly Mini-Lesson D

### **Introducing Summary Writing with WriteToLearn**

- 40 minutes
- **computer lab lesson!**

### **Student Objective(s):**

During this lesson, students will:

- Type their summary drafts into **WriteToLearn**.
- Be introduced to the feedback and the editing tools.
- Get a first glance at how the feedback will help them write a more complete summary.

### **Resources Needed:**

- Printed copies of the weekly text.
- Student notebooks with summary drafts or notes.
- Student logins, access to computer lab, one machine per student.
- Nice-to-have: overhead LCD display.

### **Important Note to Teacher:**

At the beginning of the year, typing might be a time-consuming process for your students, but with more practice, students will become much better typists. It is important to schedule enough time in the beginning to allow students to ask **WriteToLearn** for feedback during this session. During the first session have all students ask for feedback at the same time. Step students through the feedback display and editing tools and answer all questions. As the term goes on, students can be expected to work on typing and editing independently. It will help tremendously if you acquaint yourself with using **WriteToLearn** before this lesson.

### **Teacher Process:**

**Introduction:** (10 min)

**Note:** *For the first use of WriteToLearn it might be helpful to step students through the use of the tool using an overhead LCD display.* Create student logins and passwords that are easy to remember but are unique to each student so as not to invite confusion through typos. Step students through the logging in process and guide them to the summary input window. Using an LCD will make it possible to address questions about the feedback or the tools to the whole class. If no overhead display is available, it is perfectly fine to have students work independently and address questions on an individual basis. Ask them to wait to use the tools or ask for feedback until you direct them. This will make it easier for you to explain the features once, rather than having to take a number of individual questions. Once students are familiar with **WriteToLearn**, they will work best independently at their own pace.

**Activity:** (15 min)

Students will type their summary draft into **WriteToLearn**.

**Feedback:** (15 min)

When students have entered a few sentences, ask the class to click on the **Get Feedback** button. Have students report what they see and talk them through the interpretation of the feedback. Most likely, students will have included some content from the beginning sections of the text, but may not have gotten to the later sections. Have them guess on what the feedback bars mean. Then have them make predictions about what might happen as they enter more text into the tool. You may also want to step them through the use of the *Spelling* tool and the *Repeated* and *Unimportant Content* tools.

## Weekly Mini-Lesson E

### **Revision and Editing Practice with WriteToLearn**

- 40 minutes
- **computer lab lesson!**

### **Student Objective(s):**

During this lesson, students will:

- Revise and edit their summary drafts with **WriteToLearn**.
- Work with the feedback and editing tools.
- Request individual conferences with you to work on specific issues.

### **Resources Needed:**

- Printed out copies of the weekly text.
- Student notebooks with summary drafts or notes.
- Student logins, access to computer lab, one machine per student.

### **Teacher Process:**

#### **Introduction:** (2 min)

After students are familiar with **WriteToLearn**, they can immediately start working with it on their own. You may want to reinforce that they should wait to click the **Get Feedback** button until they have typed at least 3-5 new sentences. Remind them that their goal is to move the feedback bars into the green zone. **If you want students to refine their writing after using WriteToLearn, ask them to print their final draft and bring that copy to the class on the next day.** Also remind them that you are available to answer individual questions throughout the session. You may be surprised how quickly students will get used to this practice and how it will focus their attention on the writing process.

#### **Activity:** (38 min)

Students will type their summary draft into **WriteToLearn** and work independently, using the feedback and editing tools provided. If students finish their assignment, they could use their extra time to further refine a previous assignment, or you could assign some additional texts that students can work on periodically, after finishing their weekly assignment. During this session you can work with students who need extra help or who have questions.

## Weekly Mini-Lesson F

### ***Peer Reviews and Sharing of Good Summary Examples***

- 40 minutes
- classroom lesson

### **Student Objective(s):**

During this lesson, students will:

- Learn how to use a basic summary writing checklist to evaluate their peers' and their own writing.
- Help each other refine their summaries and understanding further.

### **Resources Needed:**

- Printed copy of their last summary draft.
- A copy of a summary writing checklist (use the simple checklist in *Chart 8* in the Appendix or your own writing rubric).

### **Teacher Process:**

#### **Introduction:** (5 min)

Tell students that using ***WriteToLearn*** has helped them to produce a relatively complete summary, but there are ways to make it even better. Tell students that critiquing someone else's summary also provides you with the skills to review your own writing. Hand out the summary writing checklist. Have students work in pairs. Remind them to respect each other's work and to keep in mind that providing a critique is supposed to help, not hurt, the other person. Have them mark up their partner's summary. Have them find three good attributes and three that could use improvement.

#### **Small group activity:** (20 min)

Students have 10 minutes to mark up their partner's summary. After this, they review each other's summary for 5 minutes, then switch, so that each student has a chance to receive feedback on their summary. At the end of this session, they should decide jointly if they think one or both summaries are good enough to share with the whole class.

#### **Classroom activity:** (15 min)

Ask students to report on their experience critiquing and receiving a critique. If critiquing was difficult, work on the issues. Some checklist items may need explanation. Then ask who wants to suggest their partner's summary for a class review. Explain that a partner should suggest a summary if they thought it was a great example of writing a good summary. Make sure you select different students each week. Ask the partner to read the summary aloud; then present their critique to the class. Make sure each critique is presented in the context of a concrete example. Make sure both positive and negative comments are discussed. Have other students elaborate. Support or correct the critique, as appropriate.

## Appendix - Classroom Charts and Example Text

### Chart 1 - Review or Introduction of Comprehension Skills

#### Comprehension Strategies

##### **Before you read**

- Ask “*I wonder*” questions.
- Remind yourself what you already know about the subject.
- Make predictions about the text.
- Scan table of contents, headers, etc.
- ...

##### **While you read**

- Use context clues to identify the meaning of a word.
- Find new terms that are not known in the dictionary.
- Use the table of contents to find out what the text is about.
- Scan headers to find out what the text is about.
- Underline the most important ideas.
- Take notes in your notebook.
- Use graphic organizers to sketch how main ideas are related.
- Notice when you don’t understand something.
- Use context to help your understanding.
- Use your background knowledge to help your understanding.
- Complete the reader response questions at the back of the text and record your answers in the “*summary section*” of your reader’s notebook.
- Begin the outline for your summary within the “*summary section*” of your reader’s notebook.
- ...

##### **After you read**

- Use a graphic organizer to sketch the main ideas of the text.
- Tell somebody else about the text.
- Reread a section you might not quite understand.
- ...
- Write a **summary** of the text.
- Compare and contrast this text with a text on a similar topic.

Chart 1. Review or Introduction of Comprehension Skills

## Chart 2 - "What Makes a Summary?"

What Makes a Summary?	
What belongs	What does not belong
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a very short version of the text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a retelling of the whole text</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the main ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all the details</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the main argument</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all the side arguments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it states how the ideas connect to each other logically</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anything else you might know about the subject that was not covered in the text</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an objective representation of opinion of the original author</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your own personal opinions on the subject</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the title of the original text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• why you read the text</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• opinions expressed in the text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anything about you, or your own opinion</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• indirect language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• direct dialogue</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what anyone else thinks about this subject</li> </ul>

Chart 2. What Makes a Summary?

### Chart 3 - Main Idea Scaffold

<b>Greenhouses</b>	
<b>Main ideas, important facts</b>	<b>Minor ideas, less important details</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plants can grow in a greenhouse when it's cold outside</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dark clothes in summer are a lot hotter than lighter clothes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It's made out of glass</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Air blows around the greenhouse</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Glass lets the light and heat from the sun in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once the air gets hot, it rises</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Glass keeps the light and heat in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Polar bears and buffalo might die</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The earth is like a greenhouse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fish might die</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The layer of carbon dioxide acts like the glass</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flooding might occur</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The gas lets the sun energy in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>...</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The gas keeps the heat in</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More gas can lead to overheating</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overheating can have unhealthy side effects</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is important to know how to keep the earth at the right temperature</li> </ul>	

Chart 3. Main Idea Scaffold

## Chart 4 - Example Summary

### **Example Summary – Based on Example Text**

This text explains how greenhouses work and compares them to the earth. A greenhouse is made up of windows that let in sunlight. Like dark clothing in summer, the dark interior of the greenhouse absorbs the heat and warms the air without using electricity. Light colors would reflect the heat and let it escape. The glass windows keep out the freezing winter air. Plants use the absorbed heat and light to grow and make their own food. When the air inside becomes too hot for the plants, it rises to vents in the roof and escapes.

The earth, like a greenhouse, also has a protective layer that absorbs energy from the sun and keeps it in the atmosphere. The layer is made from a gas called carbon dioxide. Recently, more carbon dioxide has been released, leading to increased heating of the earth. This could have serious consequences for living conditions on earth. Therefore, it is important to understand how to control the earth's temperature.

**Chart 4. Example Summary**

## Chart 5 - Summary Writing Process

### Summary Writing Process

1. Read text and underline main ideas
2. Copy main ideas into your notebook
3. Write a summary using your notes. Include some supporting details from the text if you feel you need to fill in some gaps.
  - a. Introduction: State the topic of the text clearly. Introduce the title of the text and the author, if available.
  - b. Repeat for all important main ideas:  
  
State the main idea. State how it connects to the topic of the text. State how it connects to other main ideas in the text.
  - c. Conclusion: Conclude with a sentence that sums up the whole text. Check that your summary reflects the original conclusion.

Chart 5. Summary Writing Process

## Chart 6 - Basic Summary Outline

### Basic Summary Outline

1. Introduction.
2. Paragraph 1: Summary and explanation of main idea.
3. Paragraph 2: Summary and explanation of main idea.
4. Paragraph ... Repeat as many times as needed. Sections in text often correspond to main ideas and explanations.
5. Conclusion.

Chart 6. Basic Summary Outline

## Chart 7 - "I wonder" Statements

***"I wonder" Statements***

*"I wonder if \_\_\_\_\_."*

*"I wonder who \_\_\_\_\_."*

*"I wonder what \_\_\_\_\_."*

*"I wonder when \_\_\_\_\_."*

*"I wonder where \_\_\_\_\_."*

*"I wonder why \_\_\_\_\_."*

*"I wonder how \_\_\_\_\_."*

Chart 7. "I wonder" Statements

## Chart 8 - Summary Writing Checklist

### Summary Writing Checklist:

- A clear main topic is stated in the first sentence or paragraph.
- Title and author (if appropriate) are mentioned.
- All important facts are included and are in a logical order.
- Ideas are connected to make the writing flow.
- Writer restates the main idea in a reflective sentence in the conclusion.
- No unnecessary, unimportant details.
- No personal comments or statements.
- No unrelated information.
- Writing shows no or few spelling errors.
- Writing shows no or few punctuation errors.
- Writing shows no or few grammatical errors.

Chart 8. Summary Writing Checklist

## Example Text

### Greenhouses

#### *How Do Greenhouses Work?*

Have you ever seen a building that is mostly windows and has a lot of plants in it? That is a greenhouse. Even in the winter when it is cold outside, plants can still grow if they are in a greenhouse. Yet, a greenhouse doesn't need electricity to stay warm. So how does it work?

All of the glass windows on a greenhouse let the light and heat from the sun in. The plants use the energy from the sunlight to grow and make their own food. The heat keeps the plants from freezing in the winter. Once it passes through the window, the heat is trapped inside. Outside of the greenhouse the air can blow heat away from plants. However, in a greenhouse the plants stay warm because all of the heat stays there. The windows and walls of the greenhouse keep the heat from moving away from the plants.

Have you ever noticed that when you wear dark colored clothing in the summer it is a lot hotter than when you wear light colored clothes? That is because dark colors absorb heat, and light colors reflect heat. A greenhouse uses this idea to trap heat as well. Most things in a greenhouse such as the pots, paint, tables, and even the plants are dark colors to help absorb the heat. Heaters that use electricity are not needed because the dark colors absorb the heat and keep the greenhouse warm.

Just like other living things, most plants can't be too hot. However, once the heat gets inside the greenhouse it does not leave unless there is a way for it to leave. Hot air rises, so there are usually vents at the top of the greenhouse as well to let some of the heat escape. Many greenhouses also have fans to help regulate the temperature.

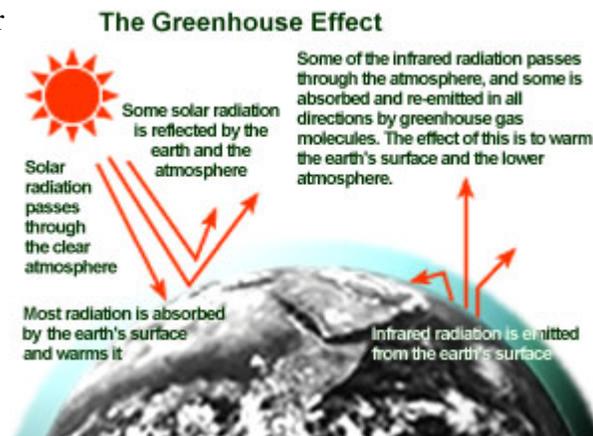


## Greenhouse Earth

The earth is like a giant greenhouse. There is a layer of gas that surrounds the earth. This layer is called the atmosphere. Much of this layer is made up of carbon dioxide which is the gas we breathe out. Carbon dioxide also comes from burning fuel like in cars.

The gas in the atmosphere is like a window on a greenhouse. Light and heat from the sun can get through but then they are trapped there. The atmosphere keeps the heat near earth so it can't blow away into outer space. If the heat blew away into outer space the earth would be a very cold place to live. When the heat and light stay close to earth, plants can use this energy to grow and make food for themselves, humans and other animals.

However, if we keep putting more gas into the atmosphere, the earth might absorb more and more heat. What would happen if the earth got too hot? Some animals like polar bears and buffalo might not be able to live in a warmer climate. If the temperature of the oceans and lakes rose too drastically, the fish might die. If the earth gets too hot all of the ice in the north and south poles might melt. All of that ice would turn to water and might cause floods all over the world.



It is important to study the temperature of the earth and how it is changing. It is also important to know what humans can do to help keep the earth at the right temperature.