

Summary of Informative Text Rubric

Genre Chart Summary Informative	3 Accomplished Goal	2 Just Beginning	1 Hasn't Started
1 Includes a topic sentence that captures the central idea	Topic sentence captures the central idea of the text	Topic sentence includes the subject in a general way	No topic sentence
2 States the title and author	Clearly states the title and author with correct formatting	Includes the title or the author	Forgot to include the title and author
3 Includes only the main ideas	Includes only the main ideas	Includes some main ideas from some parts of the text	Includes a main idea from one part of the text
4 Paraphrases information using academic language	Restates information in your own words using similar academic language	Most of the summary is in your own words using minimal academic language	Copied from text
5 Follows same organizational structure as author	Information is presented in the same order as the author	Most of the information is presented in the same order	Information is not organized
6 Uses transition words	Transitions link together sentences/paragraphs	A few transitions are used to link together sentences/paragraphs	Missing transitions
7 Includes a concluding sentence	Sentence restates the main idea	Has a concluding sentence, but does not restate the main idea	No concluding sentence
8 Correct conventions support meaning	No or insignificant errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar	A few errors pop out but do not interfere with the summary	Frequent errors distract the reader

One Central Idea: Various Organizational Structures

Central Idea: French fries

Structure	Format
Classification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the topic – Types of french fries ¶ 2: Type – shoe string ¶ 3: Type – steak cut ¶ 4: Type – waffle cut ¶ 5: Concluding paragraph
Problem/Solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the problem – Calories ¶ 2: Possible solution – Baked fries ¶ 3: Possible solution – Smaller portions ¶ 4: Possible solution – Eliminate from diet ¶ 5: Concluding paragraph
Compare/Contrast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the comparison – McDonald’s vs. In-n-Out Burger ¶ 2: Similarities and differences – Flavor ¶ 3: Similarities and differences – Oils ¶ 4: Similarities and differences – Crispiness ¶ 5: Concluding paragraph
Sequence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the topic – How to cook french fries ¶ 2: Step 1 – Select potatoes ¶ 3: Step 2 – Cut the potatoes ¶ 4: Step 3 – Soak and dry ¶ 5: Step 4 – Fry the potatoes ¶ 6: Step 5 – Drain and season ¶ 7: Concluding paragraph
Chronological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the topic – History of french fries ¶ 2: Belgian and Netherlands 1680 ¶ 3: France 1775 ¶ 4: United States 1899 ¶ 5: (optional) ¶ 6: (optional) ¶ 7: Concluding paragraph

Group Activity

One Central Idea: Various Organizational Structures

Central Idea: Ice cream

Structure	Format
Classification	<p>¶ 1: Introduce the topic – _____</p> <p>¶ 2: Type – _____</p> <p>¶ 3: Type – _____</p> <p>¶ 4: Type – _____</p> <p>¶ 5: Concluding paragraph _____</p>
Problem/Solution	<p>¶ 1: Introduce the problem – _____</p> <p>¶ 2: Possible solution – _____</p> <p>¶ 3: Possible solution – _____</p> <p>¶ 4: Possible solution – _____</p> <p>¶ 5: Concluding paragraph _____</p>
Compare/Contrast	<p>¶ 1: Introduce the comparison – _____</p> <p>¶ 2: Similarities and differences – _____</p> <p>¶ 3: Similarities and differences – _____</p> <p>¶ 4: Similarities and differences – _____</p> <p>¶ 5: Concluding paragraph _____</p>
Sequence	<p>¶ 1: Introduce the topic – _____</p> <p>¶ 2: Step 1 – _____</p> <p>¶ 3: Step 2 – _____</p> <p>¶ 4: Step 3 – _____</p> <p>¶ 5: Step 4 – _____</p> <p>¶ 6: Step 5 – _____</p> <p>¶ 7: Concluding paragraph _____</p>
Chronological	<p>¶ 1: Introduce the topic – _____</p> <p>¶ 2: _____</p> <p>¶ 3: _____</p> <p>¶ 4: _____</p> <p>¶ 5: (optional) _____</p> <p>¶ 6: (optional) _____</p> <p>¶ 7: Concluding paragraph _____</p>

Notes:

The Ancient Civilization of Rome

by Emily Kissner

Rome was an ancient civilization. The armies of Rome conquered parts of Europe, Africa, and Asia. Today, Rome is remembered as one of the great civilizations of the world.

The Power of Rome

Around 2,500 years ago, the Romans began conquering other cities. They spread all over Europe. They spread over parts of Africa and Asia. The Romans had one of the largest civilizations ever.

The Romans had a very large army. They were well organized. They fought well. This helped them to win in battle.

The Romans devised many new innovations to help them conquer and run other countries. They made new roads to get from place to place. Romans also made long, impressive aqueducts. They used the aqueducts to bring water from distant rivers to busy cities.



Photo by Francesco Z

An ancient Roman aqueduct still stands in a grain field in Italy.

The Culture of Rome

Romans spoke a language called Latin. The languages of Italian, Spanish, and French formed from Latin. Today, many English words come from Latin word parts called roots.

Romans worshipped many different gods and goddesses. The stories they told about their gods and goddesses are called myths. The names of some of our months come from these Roman myths. For example, January is named after the Roman god Janus. The month of March is named after Mars, the Roman god of war.

The Romans did many things that would seem strange to us today. Rich and poor Romans ate foods that we would not choose. One popular sauce, called garum, was made from fish soaked in

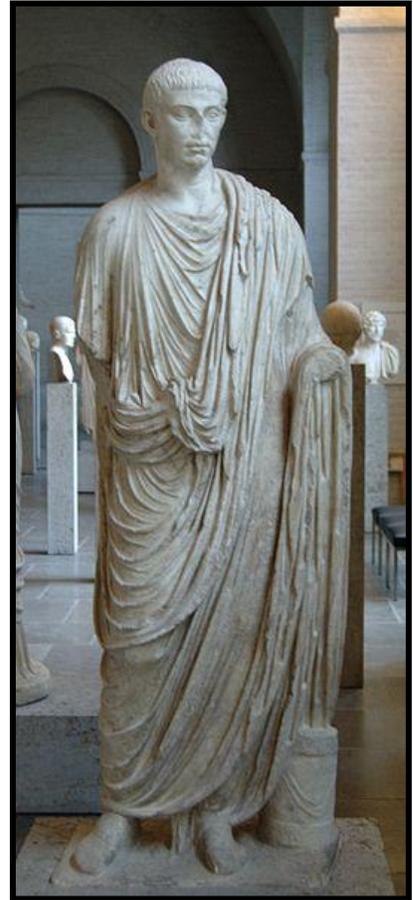
Notes:

saltwater for three months. Some Romans also ate small rodents called dormice.

Wealthy Roman men wore robes called togas. These togas were worn draped over the shoulder. Women wore loose, long dresses called stolas.

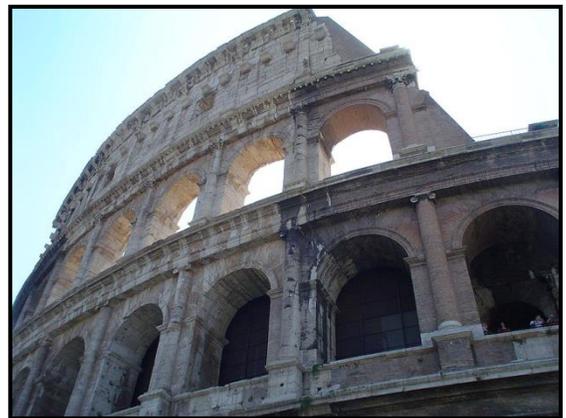
Romans liked to go to see fighting matches. In Rome, these fights took place at the Coliseum. The fighters in the games were called gladiators. The gladiators fought each other, often to the death. Sometimes, the people watching the games could decide if a fighter would live or die.

Many wealthy Romans also had slaves. These slaves were sometimes soldiers from other cities who had been captured in battle. Some cities had slaves as well. These slaves worked for the city by keeping records, doing errands, and cleaning.



Rome Today

The Roman Empire lasted nearly 1,000 years. Over time, it became less powerful. Today, Rome is a city in the country of Italy. Tourists can still visit and see what has been left behind. The civilization of Rome changed the world.



Today, the ruins of the Colosseum can still be seen in Rome.

Notes:

Red-Tailed Hawks: Sharp-Eyed Raptors

by Emily Kissner

If you have driven along a road that has a mix of field, meadows, and forest, you have probably passed a red-tailed hawk. This fierce raptor is common across North America. Today, people enjoy looking for red-tailed hawks and watching their yearly migration. It's hard to believe that farmers killed these birds as pests just 100 years ago.

What do red-tailed hawks look like? Like many other hawks, they are large birds. They have sharp, hooked beaks that they use to tear apart prey. The sharp talons at the ends of their toes are their main weapons. Each foot has four toes, with three facing forward and one facing back.



Red-tailed hawks have darker feathers on the top, and have light chests streaked with brown. But their appearance can vary across locations. These different looks are called **morphs**. Red-tailed hawks have a light morph, a dark morph, and an intermediate morph. But all red-tailed hawks have a tail that is brick red on the top and pinkish to rusty red on the bottom.

These adaptable birds do well in many different environments. They can live in deserts, along shorelines, and in meadows. What red-tailed hawks like best is an area that has lots of small rodents, like mice and voles, and a high perch. The red-tailed hawk can sit on the perch to watch for prey.

Do red-tailed hawks migrate? Some do, and some don't. Red-tailed hawks with good territory and lots of food will probably stay where they are all winter long. But hawks without prime territory, especially younger hawks, often migrate south for the winter. At Hawk Mountain, a bird sanctuary in Pennsylvania, more than 3,000 red-tailed hawks are spotted migrating south each autumn. Some go as far as South America, but others fly just south of the snow line.

Notes:

Besides adapting well to different environments, red-tailed hawks can adapt to hunting different kinds of prey. They can live close to humans. After all, settled areas like farm fields and yards often have plenty of mice and rats. Red-tailed hawks have also been seen eating snakes, insects, and squirrels.

In the past, farmers considered these hawks to be pests. Because they are frequently seen around farm fields, farmers thought that they were eating chickens. Red-tailed hawks were commonly called “chickenhawks”, and many farmers shot or trapped the raptors.

However, scientists have found that few red-tailed hawks prey on farm chickens. In fact, red-tailed hawks are much more likely to help a farmer by eating farm pests. Today, farmers value red-tailed hawks and are glad to see them flying in the fields.

And red-tailed hawks can fly quickly. While they can't reach the 200 miles per hour of the peregrine falcon, they have been clocked flying at 120 miles per hour. This speed allows them to capture their prey.

Their amazing eyesight also helps. Some scientists estimate that red-tails can see five to eight times better than people can. Like people, these hawks can see colors. Their eyes have colored oils that refract light, causing some colors, like blue and green, to be filtered. This helps the hawks to see the brown and gray colors of their prey more clearly against green grass and fields.

The next time you happen to ride by meadows and fields, look in the trees. Look at the fence posts and telephone poles. Maybe you'll see a red-tailed hawk, searching the field for its prey.



This 1859 painting shows a western red-tailed hawk.

Sites to Summarize

Science:

<http://www.sciencenewsforkids.org/>

<http://www.popsoci.com/category/tags/kids>

<http://accessexcellence.org/WN/SU/>

<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/science/index.html>

Social Studies:

<http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com>

Current Events:

<http://www.dogonews.com/>

www.nytimes.com

Main Idea

Directions: Read each passage. In one sentence, write the main idea of the passage.

The wolverine, a medium sized mammal weighing no more than 50 lbs., has earned its reputation for ferocity with its documented ability to kill prey many times its size. The reason why wolverines have so many conflicts with other animals (including wolves, cougars, and even bears) is probably because of the wolverine's preferred hunting style. Rather than chasing down or tricking its prey like most hunters, the wolverine prefers to take its meals directly from other hunters. So while a polar bear or a lone wolf might be enjoying a hard earned carcass, a hungry wolverine may try to take his lunch. This keeps the wolverine in plenty of fights.

Sometime in December of 1891, Dr. James Naismith, a gym teacher at the YMCA College in Springfield, Massachusetts, was trying to keep his gym class active on a rainy day. He wanted a vigorous game that would keep his students moving. After rejecting a few other ideas because they were too rough or not suited for the walled-in gym, Naismith wrote out the rules for a game with peach baskets fixed to ten-foot elevated tracks. Naismith's students played against one another, passing the ball around and shooting it into the peach baskets. Dribbling wasn't a part of the original game, and it took a while to realize that the game would run more smoothly if the bottoms of the baskets were removed, but this game grew to be one of the most popular sports in America today. Can you guess which one?

Remember, if something is worth doing, it is worth doing correctly. That said, the key to making perfect cookies is merely a matter of preparation and precision. To begin with, read your cookie recipe thoroughly before baking. Make sure that you have all of the necessary ingredients before you continue. Next, use good tools and utensils. Sometimes, the craftsperson is only as good as his or her tools. By using good tools you can minimize mistakes and improve the quality of your product. Lastly, you should use top quality ingredients. Unlike in the fairytales, you can't turn lead into gold. If you use poor quality materials, you'll create an inferior product. So, to make perfect cookies you should use the highest quality materials available. Bon appétit!

Adapted from Don Mortini: www.ereadingworksheets.com

Transition Practice Paragraph

With your group, rewrite the paragraph using transitions and varied sentences.

Explorer Francisco Vázquez de Coronado was born in Spain around 1510. He was the younger son of a wealthy aristocrat. He had a fine upbringing. He had no prospects of inheriting the family fortune. He sought to make it on his own in the New World.

(Additional copies for teacher use)

Explorer Francisco Vázquez de Coronado was born in Spain around 1510. He was the younger son of a wealthy aristocrat. He had a fine upbringing. He had no prospects of inheriting the family fortune. He sought to make it on his own in the New World.

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Revision: Summary of Informative Text

Name: _____

Date: _____

Peer Reviser 1: _____

Peer Reviser 2: _____

Rubric Score

Peer 1

Peer 2

Genre Chart	
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_____ _____ **Includes a topic sentence** that **captures the central idea**
Suggestion for improvement: _____

_____ _____ **States the title and author**
Suggestion for improvement: _____

_____ _____ **Includes only the main ideas**
Suggestion for improvement: _____

_____ _____ **Paraphrases information** using **academic language**
Suggestion for improvement: _____

_____ _____ **Follows same organizational structure as the author**
Suggestion for improvement: _____

_____ _____ **Uses transition words**
Suggestion for improvement: _____

_____ _____ **Includes a concluding sentence**
Suggestion for improvement: _____

Editing Checklist

Name: _____

Date: _____

Peer Editor 1: _____

Peer Editor 2: _____

Peer 1

Peer 2

- _____ 1. Paper includes name, teacher’s name, class name, due date, and title
- _____ 2. Correct punctuation at the end of each sentence
- _____ 3. Correct capitalization (beginning of sentences and proper nouns)
- _____ 4. Correct spelling, including “No Excuse” words
- _____ 5. Paragraphs indented ½ inch
- _____ 6. Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, one-inch margins, double-spaced
- _____ 7. _____
(Grammar focus for the class)

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- _____ 7. _____
(Grammar focus for the class)

Assessment: Summary of an Informative Text

Summary: Informative

- Includes a **topic sentence** that **captures the central idea**
- States the title and author
- Includes only the main ideas
- Paraphrases information using **academic language**
- Follows same organizational structure as author
- Uses transition words
- Includes a **concluding sentence**

Read "Fantastically Fun Fairy Shrimp" by Emily Kissner. Write a summary that reflects a level 3 from the rubric.

Notes:

Fantastically Fun Fairy Shrimp by Emily Kissner

You might be surprised at what you can discover in a vernal pool. You might see a spotted salamander coming to the pool to lay eggs. You might find a wriggling wood frog tadpole. And, if you're lucky, you might find a tiny crustacean: the fairy shrimp. But you can put away the tasty seasonings and the cocktail sauce. These are not shrimp for eating. They wouldn't be much of a meal, anyway – most fairy shrimp only grow to be 1.5 inches or so.

A vernal pool is an entire world for a fairy shrimp. Most people think of a vernal pool as just a big springtime puddle. For the fairy shrimp, however, the vernal pool is where it is born, where it grows, where it eats, and where it eventually dies.

Being Born a Fairy Shrimp

Fairy shrimp hatch from eggs. Depending on the conditions in the pool, these eggs may hatch quickly, or may hatch after several months or even years.



Notes:

During a drought, the eggs will dry out. Once the pool becomes wet again, the eggs hatch. This way, the fairy shrimp population can survive in the vernal pool from one spring to the next. Eggs can also be carried from one vernal pool to another by the wind or by traveling animals.

The young shrimp start their lives as larva. They can grow quickly or more slowly, depending on the temperatures. They molt, or shed their outer shells, as they grow.

(Crustaceans have their skeletons on the outsides of their bodies.) By the time they are fully grown, fairy shrimp have about 20 segments.



Fairy shrimp larvae grow in vernal pools.

A Simple Life

Life in a vernal pool is pretty great for a fairy shrimp. The young fairy shrimp hatch early in the year, before many other animals come to the pool. Sometimes you can even see fairy shrimp swimming under iced-over pools. Because vernal pools dry up, there are no fish to eat them. Frogs and salamanders will sometimes eat fairy shrimp, but they are not a serious problem.

Fairy shrimp can find plenty to eat in a vernal pool. The tiny creatures are in constant motion. Their legs filter *detritus* from the water. (*Detritus* is just a fancy word for rotten bits of dead things like algae, wood, and leaves.) After they filter the detritus, they use their legs to get the food to their mouths.



Fairy shrimp eat detritus.

The little creatures actually swim upside down. If you watch them closely, you might see that they have two sets of antennae and eleven sets of legs. Fairy shrimp swim by beating their legs from back to front. In their vernal pool, they can dart around quickly, drift slowly, or even settle at the bottom of the pool.

Mystery of the Fairy Shrimp

Scientists are still working on some questions about the fairy shrimp. The numbers of fairy shrimp in a vernal pool can change from one year to the next. For example, a vernal pool might have many fairy shrimp one year, and almost none the next year. Scientists aren't quite sure why this is.

Even though you can't fry them up and have them for lunch, fairy shrimp are fascinating creatures. The next time you observe a vernal pond, look carefully for fairy shrimp. You might be surprised at what you see!

Photos from USGS via Wikimedia Commons