

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	Insignificant or no 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: Ice Cream

Structure	Format
Classification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the topic – Brands of ice cream ¶ 2: Brand – Breyers ¶ 3: Brand – Dreyer’s ¶ 4: Brand – Ben & Jerry’s ¶ 5: Concluding paragraph
Problem/Solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the problem – Harmful additives ¶ 2: Possible solution – Homemade ¶ 3: Possible solution – Avoiding certain brands ¶ 4: Possible solution – Eliminate ice cream from your diet ¶ 5: Concluding paragraph
Compare/Contrast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the comparison – Breyers vs. Dreyer’s ¶ 2: Similarities and differences – Flavor ¶ 3: Similarities and differences – Ingredients ¶ 4: Similarities and differences – Cost ¶ 5: Concluding paragraph
Sequence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the topic – How to make ice cream ¶ 2: Step 1 – Select a recipe and ingredients ¶ 3: Step 2 – Heat ingredients ¶ 4: Step 3 – Pour ingredients into an ice cream maker ¶ 5: Step 4 – Add salt and ice to the exterior portion of the maker ¶ 6: Step 5 – Churn for 30 minutes ¶ 7: Concluding paragraph
Chronological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the topic – History of ice cream ¶ 2: A.D. 54-86 ¶ 3: 1700s ¶ 4: 1800s ¶ 5: 1900s ¶ 6: Concluding paragraph

Group Activity

One Central Idea: Various Organizational Structures

Central Idea: French Fries

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:

Summary: Informative

Mysterious Mushrooms

by Emily Kissner

If April showers bring May flowers, what do September showers bring? Mushrooms!

In many places across the United States, a wet end to summer leads to an abundant supply of mushrooms.

They grow in forests. They grow on lawns. They even pop up out of the mulch around playgrounds!



But what are mushrooms, really? Are they plants? Are they poisonous? Should we be afraid of these autumn mysteries?

Mushrooms: More like an apple than a tree

Mushrooms are not plants. In fact, the mushroom that you see is only a part of a larger organism called a fungus. (When we talk about more than one fungus, we call them fungi.)

Fungi have long strands called hyphae that grow underground. These hyphae feed on dead matter. In rainy weather, some kinds of fungi send up mushrooms. While it seems like the mushrooms appear overnight, they're actually just a part of a larger organism—the fungus. This is why the mushroom is more like the apple than the tree.

Apples have seeds. These seeds allow trees to reproduce. Then what do fungi have? Instead of seeds,

Notes:

fungi have spores. Mushrooms produce the tiny spores. Spores float away on the wind. Some settle on the ground and grow new fungi.

Poisonous or edible?

Everyone has heard of poisonous mushrooms. It's true—there are some kinds of mushrooms that can be deadly, but millions of people pick and eat wild mushrooms every year with no problems.

Mushroom hunters must know which kinds of mushrooms are safe, and which are deadly. Many wild mushroom hunters stick to a few very common, very safe varieties. These mushrooms are almost impossible to confuse with a deadly mushroom.

Mushroom hunters also must take good field guides with them when they are looking for mushrooms. It's not enough to just match a picture.

Mushroom hunters read about where edible mushrooms can be found, what they look like, and what their stalks and spore prints are like. They have to look at several sources of information to be sure that a mushroom is safe.



When people aren't careful, they can become very sick or even die from eating the wrong mushroom. Every year, some people are hospitalized after eating the Death Cap mushroom. Because this mushroom looks similar to a common mushroom, people think that the Death Cap mushroom must be safe to eat. Sadly, this isn't the case.

Some people worry that just touching a poisonous mushroom can be deadly. Luckily, the poison cannot be absorbed through the skin. If you don't eat the mushroom, you can't be poisoned.

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Fungi and Trees

No one really knows how many kinds of fungi exist in North America. About 10,000 species have been described, but there might be more than twice as many.

What scientists do know is that fungi are important to forest ecosystems. Fungi help to break down dead leaves and wood. Some kinds of fungi live next to the roots of certain trees. The fungi help the trees to get minerals and moisture, while the tree gives the fungi nutrients. Gardeners can even buy beneficial fungi to put in the soil around trees. These fungi help the trees to grow.

Next autumn, try looking for mysterious mushrooms around your house!

Notes:

What Is a Cavern?

by Emily Kissner

Imagine that you're standing next to a big cliff of rocks. At the bottom, you see a hole. You might be looking at a simple gap in the rocks. But you might be looking at something more—the entrance to a cave.

Cave characteristics

A cave is more than just a hole in the ground. A cave is deep enough that part of it is not reached by sunlight.

Caves are formed in many different ways—by erosion, by water, by wind, and even by ice. They can be found on every continent in the world.

What is it like to be in a cave? Out of sight of the cave entrance, a cave is completely

dark. A cave can also feel cold or warm, depending on the time of year. If you visit a cave in the winter, it will feel warm. If you visit a cave in summer, it will feel cool. Many caves stay in the mid-50s all year long.

Caves, caverns, and sinkholes

Are caves and caverns the same? Every cavern is a cave—but not every cave is a cavern. Caverns are formed when certain kinds of rock dissolve. Acidic water can dissolve rocks like limestone and dolomite. When the water level goes down, caverns are left behind. Only caves that are formed in this way are called caverns.



A cave along the Swatara Creek near Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Notes:

Caverns are often found in the same areas as sinkholes. Sinkholes can be small depressions or large holes. Caverns and sinkholes are both caused by dissolving minerals and changing water levels. Sometimes, a sinkhole will form because the roof of a cavern has collapsed.

Limestone caverns

The United States is home to many caverns. These caverns were formed when a rock called limestone dissolved in acidic water. When the water levels went down, a cavern was left behind.

Many caverns share the same features. As water drips through the cave, minerals can be left behind.

Over many thousands of years, these minerals build special formations. A

stalactite is a long piece of rock that hangs down from the ceiling of a cave. A stalagmite is a similar

piece of rock that reaches up from the ground. When stalactites and stalagmites meet, a column is formed.



Flowstone is another common formation. Flowstone is caused by flowing water. It often looks smooth and wavy.

Flowstone can be found in caves. It is caused by flowing water.

Why don't we see these formations above ground? On the surface, rocks are exposed to wind and rain. These forces would quickly erode the delicate formations. In a cave, however, these formations can grow for thousands of years.

“Living” caves?

If you go on a cave tour, you will be told to keep your hands off of the formations. Some guides even tell you that the formations are “living”. Of course, they

Notes:

don't mean that the rocks are alive! When cave guides call the formations "living", they mean that they are still growing and changing.

The oils from your hands can stop the growing process. In caves that have been open to the public, many formations have stopped growing. This is why you will be asked to keep from touching the formations at a cave. In some caves, people have caused even more damage by breaking off formations to keep as souvenirs.

Visiting a cave

Some caverns, called "show caverns" are open to the public. People can pay to take a tour of the cavern and see the formations. At a show cavern, you will learn about the history of the cave, the formations in the cave, and the animals that live there.

Other caverns, called "natural caverns" are open only to cave explorers called spelunkers. These adventurers use special equipment and careful techniques

to avoid causing damage to caves. Natural caverns are treasures that need to be preserved.

If you want to learn more about caves, try to visit one. You will get to see special formations, like stalactites and stalagmites. You will get to experience cave darkness. A visit to a cave is a trip to remember.



The entrance to Indian Echo Caverns

*Summary: Informative
Lesson 2*

Sites to Summarize

Science:

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

<http://www.popsci.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 down the main idea of the passage. In other words, what is this passage about?

1. Being a clown isn't all fun and games. Rodeo clowns expose themselves to great danger every time they perform. When cowboys dismount or are bucked off of bulls at riding competitions, rodeo clowns jump in front of the bulls and motion wildly to get their attention. In this way rodeo clowns provide an alternate target, and in doing so protect the rider. So you see, sometimes clowning around can be serious business.
-

2. What's that humming sound? Could it be a hummingbird, the only bird capable of backward flight? Hummingbirds have many unique flight habits that distinguish them from other birds. Most birds flap their wings up and down to fly, but the hummingbird moves its wings forward and backward very rapidly in a figure eight pattern. This allows the hummingbird to hover in position, fly upside down, and move about very rapidly. And while other birds have to push off with their feet to begin flying, and work their ways up to their top speeds, the hummingbird can both start flying at maximum speed and stop flying instantaneously. After you've seen a hummingbird in flight, it's unlikely that you'll mistake them for another bird.
-

3. Every Valentine's Day millions of school children exchange cards with each other. Some are sloppily assembled, while others are more heartfelt and carefully composed. Most students have no idea how far back this practice dates. The earliest Valentine's Day card dates back to the 1400s. When postage rates dropped in the early 1800s, mailing them grew in popularity. Then, in the 1840s, the first Valentine's cards were mass produced. Today, the Valentine's Day card continues to evolve. In 2010, an estimated 15 million e-valentines were sent. But some things never change: *Will you be mine? Click "Y" or "N."*
-
-

Now read your article. Identify the main idea in each paragraph.

Transition Practice Paragraph

Going to the doctor's office is quite a process. You have to call and make an appointment. Go to the doctor's office. Try to find a parking spot. Check in with the receptionist. Sit in the waiting room. The nurse calls your name. Tell the nurse why you are visiting today. Sit in the office and wait for the doctor. See the doctor. The doctor tells you what is wrong with you. Pick out your favorite sticker! Go home.

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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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Summary of Informative Text Assessment

Summary: Informative

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- Uses transition words
- Includes a concluding sentence

Write a summary that reflects a level 3 from the rubric.

Notes:

Schoolhouses of Long Ago

by Emily Kissner

Long ago, there were no school buses, but children still went to school. They had to walk. This meant that schools had to be close to where children lived. Instead of one big school, there were many little schools. These little schools, or schoolhouses, were all over the countryside.

Schoolhouses were small buildings. Most had only one room. In some places, schoolhouses were made out of bricks. In other places, they were made out of wood or stone. On the prairie, schoolhouses were even made out of **sod**, pieces of grass and soil.

One-room schoolhouses had no electricity. This meant no electric lights. Students used sunlight from large windows to see their schoolwork. How did students stay warm? Every

Notes:

schoolhouse had a wood or a coal stove. The warmest place in a schoolhouse was right next to the stove. The other side of the room could get very chilly.

Students had to bring their own lunches to school. There were no cafeterias in a schoolhouse. In nice weather, they ate outside. In cold or rainy weather, students ate at their desks. Lunches were kept in the coatroom, right by the door. Sometimes the cold weather froze the students' lunches.

The teacher's desk was on a platform (called a **rostrum**) at the front of the room. The students sat in wooden desks that were arranged in rows. In some schoolhouses, the boys sat on one side of the room, and the girls sat on the other side.



The day began with a song or poem. Then, students started their lessons. Students learned by memorizing. This meant that they would read a part of their book, and then recite it from memory. Because there were so many different ages, students had to help each other. Older children helped the younger students to learn their lessons. Many children liked being helpful in the classroom.

School was not just about practice and work. Students did have recess. Their schoolyards often did not have swings or playgrounds, but children still played games. In some schools, students went sledding during the lunch hour. In other places, they could even go ice skating.

Country schoolhouses were used for many years. Over the years, things changed. More women became teachers. Schools added electricity and running water. Schools also started to add more subjects. Some areas had traveling music and art teachers. Teachers also started to add lessons in science and nature study.

By the 1940s, many country schoolhouses were beginning to close. Students began going to larger schools. More and more families were moving away from farms to live in towns and cities.

Notes:

Today, many schoolhouses can still be seen. Some are abandoned and falling down. Others are used as sheds or storage rooms. Some schoolhouses have been turned into restaurants or stores.

Very few small schoolhouses are still used as schools. These schoolhouses are updated and modern, with electricity, computers, and bathrooms. Most of these schoolhouses are in remote areas. One schoolhouse, Shaw Island, is on an island off the coast of Washington. This island can only be reached by a ferryboat.

In many places, old schoolhouses have become museums. These are places that people can visit to learn more about how students used to learn. Maybe someday you will get to visit a one-room schoolhouse, and imagine what it was like to go to school long ago.