

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	Title and author not included
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 the author's organizational structure	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 errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar	A few errors, but no interference with the summary	Errors distract the reader

One Central Idea: Various Organizational Structures

Central Idea: Computers

Structure	Format
Classification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the topic – Types of computers ¶ 2: Laptops ¶ 3: Desktops ¶ 4: Tablets ¶ 5: Concluding paragraph
Problem/Solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the problem – Schools need more computers. ¶ 2: Possible solution – Grant funding ¶ 3: Possible solution – PTA funding ¶ 4: Possible solution – Donations ¶ 5: Concluding paragraph
Compare/Contrast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the comparison – Laptops v. Desktops ¶ 2: Similarities and differences – Speed ¶ 3: Similarities and differences – Price ¶ 4: Similarities and differences – Capabilities ¶ 5: Concluding paragraph
Sequence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the topic – Process for building an application ¶ 2: Step 1 – Get a feel for the market ¶ 3: Step 2 – Design your app ¶ 4: Step 3 – Register as a developer ¶ 5: Step 4 – Program the app ¶ 6: Step 5 – Test the app ¶ 7: Concluding paragraph
Chronological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¶ 1: Introduce the topic – History of computers ¶ 2: Early computers ¶ 3: First generation 1946-1955 ¶ 4: Second generation 1956-1965 ¶ 5: Third generation 1966-1976 ¶ 6: Fourth generation ¶ 7: Concluding paragraph

One Central Idea: Various Organizational Structures

Central Idea: Cars

Structure	Format
Classification	¶ 1: Introduce the topic – Types of cars _____ ¶ 2: Car type – _____ ¶ 3: Car type – _____ ¶ 4: Car type – _____ ¶ 5: Concluding paragraph _____
Problem/Solution	¶ 1: Introduce the problem – Limitations of electric cars _____ ¶ 2: Possible solution – _____ ¶ 3: Possible solution – _____ ¶ 4: Possible solution – _____ ¶ 5: Concluding paragraph _____
Compare/Contrast	¶ 1: Introduce the comparison – Electric cars vs. fuel-burning cars _____ ¶ 2: Similarities and differences – _____ ¶ 3: Similarities and differences – _____ ¶ 4: Similarities and differences – _____ ¶ 5: Concluding paragraph _____
Sequence	¶ 1: Introduce the topic – How to select a car to purchase _____ ¶ 2: Step 1 – _____ ¶ 3: Step 2 – _____ ¶ 4: Step 3 – _____ ¶ 5: Step 4 – (optional) _____ ¶ 6: Step 5 – (optional) _____ ¶ 7: Concluding paragraph _____
Chronological	¶ 1: Introduce the topic – History of cars _____ ¶ 2: _____ ¶ 3: _____ ¶ 4: _____ ¶ 5: (optional) _____ ¶ 6: (optional) _____ ¶ 7: Concluding paragraph _____

One Central Idea: Various Organizational Structures

Central Idea: _____

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

Notes:

Once Upon a Chestnut

by Emily Kissner

It was called the perfect tree. It grew tall and fast. Its nuts could feed people, wildlife, and livestock. Its wood was used for fences and railings. Its large leaves shaded forests up and down the East Coast. But now, it is almost impossible to see. One hundred twenty years ago, the American chestnut tree was common in North America. But virtually none can be seen today. What happened?

The 1800s was an exciting century for gardeners. Schooners and steamships made oceanic travel faster and easier, and shipping goods became less expensive. People enjoyed learning about new kinds of plants. They sent different specimens from place to place. American gardeners brought many beautiful plants from China and Japan.

One of these exotic plants was the Japanese chestnut. The Japanese chestnut was brought to the United States as a crop tree. People hoped to be able to sell the harvest from the Japanese chestnut tree. They also liked the appearance of the Japanese chestnut. They described it as more ornamental than the tall, fast-growing American chestnut.

What people did not realize is that these trees brought an unexpected problem. A fungus that caused a blight, or tree disease, had hitched a ride to America. This fungus did not cause much harm to the Chinese and Japanese trees, but the American chestnut trees had no resistance. Once they were infected, the trees died.

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The study of forestry, or tree management, was just beginning in the United States. Many states quickly had scientists set to work studying the blight. They tried to determine how to stop the spread of the fungus. Some scientists recommended cutting into a few trees to study the blight. Others thought the blight would kill trees for only a few years, and then the remaining trees would be able to bounce back.

Unfortunately, the problem could not be solved. Within fifty years, the American chestnut had disappeared almost completely. Scientists estimated that almost four billion trees died. In some places, the roots of the chestnut tree sent up new shoots, growing up to fifteen years before they, too, died of the blight.

The largest grove of mature chestnuts still standing can be found in Wisconsin. However, even these chestnuts are struggling. Will they last another hundred years? Or will they disappear like the other American chestnuts?

The American Chestnut Foundation is dedicated to reviving this once common tree. Through scientific research and genetic mixing, they are striving to save the American chestnut. Thousands of trees have been planted in the last ten years. Some of these trees were planted on bare mountainsides destroyed by coal mining. The goal of the foundation is to create a template for the restoration of other tree and plant species throughout the world.

Notes:

Leaves of Three, Let It Be

by Emily Kissner



Poison ivy. Just these two words make people shiver. Some worry that one step into the forest will lead to a red, itchy rash. Fear of poison ivy has caused homeowners to cut down meadows, park workers to spray weed killer through the forests, and mothers to tell their children not to play outdoors.

Why does poison ivy inspire such fear? And is it really such an awful plant?

Finding Poison Ivy

Poison ivy can be found in several forms. It can grow as a vine, a small bush, or a low-lying plant. Whichever form it takes, poison ivy always has three leaves. The old saying, “Leaves of three, let it be,” describes poison ivy well. Another saying, “Hairy vine, no friend of mine,” describes poison ivy in its vine form.



Poison ivy can grow as a vine, bush, or plant.

Poison ivy grows over most of North America. Today, poison ivy is even more invasive. It thrives in sunny locations, such as forests and meadows. As

people have developed areas that were once forests, they have created a perfect poison ivy habitat.

The Compound Behind the Itch

Poison ivy contains a compound called *urushiol* (say yoo-roo-shee-all). This substance is in the sap of the poison ivy plant. Urushiol reacts with the skin and causes many people to have an itchy,

Notes:

annoying rash. When people burn poison ivy, urushiol can get into the air and cause a rash in the lungs, which can be very serious.

Not everyone reacts to urushiol. In fact, fifteen percent of the population is immune to poison ivy. However, repeated exposure to the plant can cause some people to lose their immunity.

Animals do not seem to have any problems with urushiol. In fact, goats, rabbits, and deer all eat poison ivy leaves. In the wild, poison ivy berries are an important food source for many kinds of birds.

Poison Ivy Myths

Over time, many legends have grown up around this plant. Some people think poison ivy can be carried by wind, claiming to have developed the rash without touching the plant.

Contrary to that claim, scientists have found that poison ivy cannot be carried by wind, but urushiol can stay active over time. For example, if a person's shoe touched poison ivy and he/she later touched the shoe, an itchy rash could still develop — even though the actual plant was not touched directly.

Another poison ivy myth is that a plant called jewelweed can cure a poison ivy rash, suggesting that rubbing jewelweed leaves on a poison ivy rash will bring relief.

While unproven, some people still believe in this myth.



Poison ivy and jewelweed often grow side-by-side.

Preventing Poison Ivy

How can a poison ivy rash be prevented? The easiest way is to avoid the plant. Poison ivy can grow in many different kinds of habitats and can take on many different appearances. Look for the sets of three leaves as a good clue.

After touching poison ivy, washing well with soap and water may prevent the itchy rash, especially within fifteen minutes of contact. Once the rash had developed, scratching will open the sores. Calamine lotion or an oatmeal bath can be used to control the itching.

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 Practice

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

A penny for your thoughts? If it is a 1943 copper penny, it could be worth as much as fifty thousand dollars. In 1943, most pennies were made out of steel since copper was needed for World War II, so the 1943 copper penny is ultra-rare. Another rarity is the 1955 double die penny. These pennies were mistakenly double stamped, so they have overlapping dates and letters. If it is uncirculated, it would easily fetch \$25,000 at an auction. Now that is a pretty penny.

Before you put on that *Angry Birds* costume and exhaust yourself roving from door to door pandering for candy, take a minute to reflect on the tradition in which you are taking part. Halloween is believed to have come from an ancient Celtic festival dating back some 2,000 years. November 1st was the Celtic New Year and marked the end of the summer to the Celts, so they celebrated on its eve by wearing costumes made of animal skins and dancing around bonfires. Over the next two millennia, this primitive celebration grew to be the candy-fueled costume ball that we know today.

Screech! When a driver pushes on the brake pedal, it initiates a process that causes the vehicle to stop in motion. People trust automotive braking systems every time they get into a vehicle or cross a busy intersection. The breaking system begins when the pedal is pushed. At that moment, brake fluid is released into the breaking mechanisms. As the fluid collects, it creates a leverage which causes a friction to be applied. If the breaking system is functioning properly, this friction will create a force that will cause the wheels to stop.

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

Adapted from Don Mortini: www.ereadingworksheets.com

Transition Practice

Rewrite the following paragraph using transitions and varying sentence types.

Humans used to get their food by hunting and gathering. They did this over ten thousand years ago. They would forage nuts, berries, and insects. They fished and hunted small and large game. Each group of people would roam about a large territory of land. The large area of land was needed to meet the needs of a small group of people. Some plants were not edible and the plants that were edible were often seasonal.

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)
-
-

Editing Checklist

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- _____ 6. Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, one-inch margins, double-spaced
- _____ 7. _____
(Grammar focus for the class)

Assessment: Summary of 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 "International Ice Swimming Championship in Russia Attracts 400 Athletes" by Diane Christiansen (or a different article of your choosing). Write a summary that reflects a level 4 from the rubric.

Notes:

International Ice Swimming Championship in Russia Attracts 400 Athletes

By Diane Christiansen

DOGO News, March 25, 2019

<https://www.dogonews.com/2019/3/15/international-ice-swimming-championship-in-russia-attracts-400-athletes>



Olesja Pu, a Murmansk resident, competes in the 3rd International Ice Swimming Championships (Credit: murmanskiceswimming2019/Facebook)

Swimming in water temperatures of 41 degrees F and below, with air temperatures between 6.8 degrees F to -4 degrees F, wearing just a

Notes:

swimsuit, cap, and goggles, may sound foolhardy to some. But that is precisely what 400 athletes from 33 countries had to endure in the 3rd biennial International Ice Swimming Championships, held in Murmansk, Russia from March 14, 2019 to March 17, 2019.

Organized by the International Ice Swimming Association (IISA), the event was held in a 25-meter, ten-lane swimming pool created by carving out slabs of the 2-foot thick surface layer of ice on Lake Semyonovskaya with chainsaws. Participants spent the first day getting medical examinations and conducting practice swims to get acclimated to the frigid water. The competitions began in earnest on March 15, 2019, with 52 swimmers vying for the coveted final spots for the eight fastest men and eight fastest women. Swimmers also competed in the 200 m freestyle, 100 m breaststroke, 4x50 m freestyle relay, and the 1000 m freestyle dash, which was open only to experienced ice swimmers.

As you may have guessed, the extreme sport is not for the faint of heart. Ice swimming can cause hypothermia, asthma, and afterdrop - continued cooling of a swimmer's core temperature during the initial stages of rewarming, which could damage the heart. Hence, even the most experienced athletes are carefully monitored and medically examined before and after they enter the water. Individual spotters are assigned to each participant to check for any issues as they swim. Each event also has a strict time limit after which competitors who are still in the water are pulled out due to the danger of hypothermia.



A team uses chainsaws to cut through the 2-foot layer of ice on the lake
(Credit: murmanskiceswimming2019/Facebook)

Unlike normal swim competitions, participants do not dive in. Instead, they immerse themselves into the water slowly using ladders, allowing the body to get gradually accustomed to the low temperature. Swimmers

Notes:

must also stay horizontal in the water at all times and are forbidden to perform flip turns. That's because, in cold water, the warmer blood moves to the core of the body, protecting the organs from the extreme temperature. A flip turn could cause warm blood to move and endanger the organs.

Upon completing their race, swimmers are quickly ushered to a recovery center, where experts help them warm up by immersing their legs in cool water (hot water would be too drastic a change) and covering their bodies with heated towels. Once their body temperature stabilizes, the swimmers settle down into a sauna or hot tub.

If you're wondering why swimmers put themselves through this rigorous endurance test, Jonty Warneken, the world's first disabled person to complete an ice mile, has the answer. "There's three reasons why a lot of us do this. There's the physical challenge of actually swimming in water that is below five degrees and swimming distance. The second reason is that we open water swim because we love being out in nature. And the third thing is that the camaraderie amongst the swimmers is fantastic, it's a great group to be part of."

For Jade Perry, the British women's record holder for the fastest 1 km ice swim, it's about the euphoria associated with the sport. She says, "It's fantastic when you get in the water - you're just free. You're not worrying about work, or about your house, or anything like that. You're in the water, and you're just thinking about swimming. After you get over the initial gasping and the initial 'wow, this feels cold,' it's actually just wonderful."

Ice swimming is currently just a niche sport, enjoyed by a few brave souls. However, Ram Barkai, a South African open water swimmer and the founder of IISA, is hoping to change that and is trying to convince Chinese officials to include it as a competitive event in the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, China. While the ice swimmer even persuaded the decision makers to come to the Murmansk Championships, there is no word yet on if he met with any success.