

Central Ideas and Summaries: Start Here

Choose a starting point

Grade 6 reading: help students state a whole-passage point, choose relevant details and write an accurate objective summary. Use this companion after introducing those ideas, or begin with Identify a Central Idea and Write a Summary when the introduction is needed.

- Read the teacher guide and print only the task you intend to use. Keep the answer guide and later texts with the teacher.
- For first teaching, use the existing lesson model and guided-practice selection. Its Shared Tool Case model and Notice Board check are different from this companion's new texts.
- If you need another unused entry task, give Looking for Shade. Ask about prior reading of each text; a publicly available file may or may not already be familiar to a learner.
- Review four features separately: whole-passage point, relevant details, concise own-word summary, and objective accuracy. Choose the smallest useful teaching task, then use The Sound-Cue Rehearsal after a learning opportunity.
- Later, use Two Planning Tools to see how the student summarizes a comparison across paragraphs. Interpret its added organization demand separately.

Preparation

Print the selected student pages and have a pencil or an agreed response method ready. No paid account or external text is needed. Allow roughly 5–10 minutes to prepare and about 15–25 minutes for a focused teaching route; these are planning estimates, not classroom timings. The two-page checks can be paused if access or fatigue obscures the target.

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Choose teaching from the response

What the response shows	What to investigate or teach next
No usable response	Check access to the text, directions and a way to respond. Invite the learner to explain the task; do not diagnose a reading difficulty from a blank page.
Only a topic, or one isolated detail	Use Find the whole-passage point. Ask how the chosen point fits the beginning and ending.
A supported point, but small or unrelated details	Use Choose and combine details. Check whether each detail explains the point rather than merely being true.
Relevant details copied as a list	Model combining related details and paraphrasing. Keep the passage available; copying alone does not show whether the learner understands it.
An opinion, invented result or overstatement	Use Keep the meaning accurate. Check each claim against the passage and preserve the remaining limitation.
Point, details, concise wording and accuracy are secure here	Use Compare defensible summaries and justify an omission. Then try a different text later.

These are teaching decisions from the work in front of you, not labels for children. More than one explanation may fit. A neutral question such as “Which part of the passage led you to that?” can clarify before choosing a task. Record help given. Do not reuse a discussed response as new independent evidence.

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Keep access and interpretation clear

- The target is understanding and summarizing the passage, not speed or independent decoding. Read-aloud, text-to-speech, enlarged text, chunked presentation, extra processing time, speech-to-text or a scribe may preserve this target. Record the method; assess decoding separately if that is the intended question.
- A scribe records the learner's words without selecting the point or details. Clarify directions without suggesting an answer. If you select details or co-write a summary, treat the response as supported practice.
- Use the same four features on entry and recheck, but compare the actual texts, supports and exposure. The tasks have not been calibrated to equal difficulty. A later stronger response does not by itself establish what caused it.
- Do not print the complete student folder as a daily practice packet. The first-teaching full lesson and the substitute reading kit repeat Notice Board; the new entry, recheck and transfer texts here are distinct.
- The editable Word copies may reflow when fonts, software or content change. Use the supplied PDFs for the planned print layout, or check the Word print preview before handing out pages.

All new passages and example student responses are invented for teaching. They do not report classroom results. The original teaching text can be copied or adapted under Mentor Teaching's Terms of Use. Classroom effectiveness has not been established.