

The Shared Tool Case

Classroom copy · 1 October 2026

Invented instructional example.

The after-school makers' club at Juniper Hall used to keep scissors, rulers and tape in different drawers. Members sometimes searched for a tool during build time, then left it on a table after the club ended. The group tried one labeled case for the shared tools. A card inside listed the tools, and a short sign reminded members to return each item before leaving. At the end of each meeting, one member checked the card against the case. By the next week, the group could find the tools faster, and fewer supplies were left on tables. The club kept the case and check-in routine because the simple system made shared tools easier to find and return.

Modeled practice

Read "The Shared Tool Case." With the teacher, name the topic in a word or short phrase, state the central idea in one complete sentence, and draft a 2–3 sentence summary using at least two important details. Then compare the model response. Notice how it names a topic, states a point about the whole passage, and combines that central idea with details in a concise summary without adding an opinion.

Model response

Topic: shared tools. Central idea: A labeled case and check-in routine helped the club find and return shared tools. Summary: The club once kept tools in several drawers, so members searched for supplies and sometimes left them out. Members moved the tools into a labeled case, listed them on a card and checked the case before leaving. The routine made the supplies easier to find and put away.

Mentor Teaching • Identify a Central Idea and Write a Summary

The Labels That Could Move

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Invented instructional example.

At the fictional Harbor Room, a student group changed the pictures on a display each Friday. At first, they wrote the artist and title on paper labels and taped the labels under each picture. When a picture moved, its label sometimes stayed behind. The group tried a new method: each label went into a clear sleeve attached with a clip. Now members could move the whole label with the picture and replace the name without tearing the paper. At the next display change, every picture had the right label, and the students reused the same sleeves. The group kept the sleeves and clips because they made labels easier to move and reuse.

Guided practice

With a partner, read “The Labels That Could Move.” In a word or short phrase, name the topic. Then write one sentence that states the main point about how the labels helped the group update its display. Draft a 2–3 sentence summary with at least two key details. Use your own words and leave out opinions or details that do not explain the central idea. If you need more space, use a separate sheet.

Partner draft
