



WELLSTON CITY SCHOOLS

CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION FOCUS

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*"A mind once stretched by a new idea never regains its original dimensions."
~Anonymous*

Purpose: To recap the Summarizing & Note-Taking professional development

Summarizing

What is summarizing? Summarizing is the process of taking what has been read or heard, identifying the important information, and putting it in concise language. Summarizing not only involves identifying the main points of a passage, it also involves deleting repetitions and extraneous information.

According to the book, *Classroom Instruction that Works*, summarizing is a strategy that has a large body of research behind it. When summarizing is done proficiently, it leads to improved student achievement. According to Marzano, summarizing and note-taking were combined because both of these skills require students to condense and analyze information.

Summarizing requires students to synthesize content read which involves higher level thinking. However, with all strategies, students must be taught how to summarize through modeling, guided and independent practice. Summary frames are a series of questions created by the teacher and designed to highlight critical passages of text. When students use this strategy, they are better able to understand what they are reading, identify key information, and provide a summary that helps them retain the information (Armbruster, Anderson, & Ostertag, 1987).

We can teach our students to effectively summarize information in all content areas by using a structure or frame. By scaffolding students' learning experiences, we can help them learn to summarize text effectively. "Practice in summarizing improves students' reading comprehension of fiction and nonfiction alike, helping them construct an overall understanding of a text, story, chapter, or article." (Rinehart, Stahl & Erickson, 1986) What strategies do you use to teach students how to summarize?

Key Research Generalizations

- To effectively summarize students must delete, substitute or keep information (30).
- To effectively delete, substitute, and keep information, students must analyze the information at a fairly deep level (31).
- Being aware of the explicit structure of information is an aid to summarizing information (32).

Taken from *Classroom Instruction That Works* by Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock

Classroom Implications & Summarizing Strategies

1. Teach students a "rule-based" strategy.
2. Provide opportunities for students to use reciprocal teaching and group-enhanced summary that involve summarizing, questioning, clarifying and predicting.
3. Teach students explicit structures or summary frames. These six frames are commonly found in text: Narrative, Topic-Restriction-Illustration, Definition, Argumentation, Problem/Solution & Conversation Frames.

Rule-Based Summarizing

1. Delete material that is not needed for understanding.
2. Delete repetitive information.
3. Substitute a list of words with one word that describes the list (e.g. tulips, roses, carnations = flowers)
4. Select or write a topic sentence.

Reciprocal Teaching

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Summarize <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students read a short section of a passage.• Student leader summarizes what has been read, seen or heard.• Other students add to the summary. | 3. Clarify <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student leader clarifies any point that may be confusing.• Other students may also point them out as well. |
| 2. Question <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student leader asks questions designed to help students identify important information.• Other students respond to the questions based on what they have learned. | 4. Predict <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Student leader can ask for predictions about the next segment.▪ Student leader can write these out or each student can write in their notebooks. <p>(Palincsar & Brown, 1984)</p> |

Key Research Generalizations

- Verbatim note-taking is, perhaps, the least effective way to take notes (43).
- Notes should be considered a work in progress (44).
- Notes should be used as study guides for tests (44).
- The more notes that are taken the better (44).

Taken from *Classroom Instruction That Works* by Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock

Note-Taking

The second skill discussed was Note-Taking. Note-taking is closely associated to summarizing due to the fact that students must analyze information, determine what is important and then put it in concise meaningful language. Summarizing and Note-taking go hand-in-hand.



Like summarizing, it is imperative that we teach students how to become good note-takers. By doing so, we are providing our students with the necessary groundwork for learning. Otherwise, the students are likely to take notes verbatim or write down meaningless words or phrases thus skipping the analysis. Teacher-prepared notes show students what is important and how ideas relate, and offer a model for how students should take notes themselves (Marzano et al., 2001).

As Marzano stated, there is no correct or incorrect way to take notes. We need to provide students with the experience of experimenting with various note-taking strategies: webbing, outlining, Cornell Notes, Combination Notes, sketches, and informal notes. Each strategy has its advantages and disadvantages. These opportunities will allow students to find an effective way to take notes based on their learning styles and needs. Notes can also be used to document student learning and help review for upcoming tests. When students review and revise their own notes, the notes become more meaningful and useful (Anderson & Armbruster, 1986; Denner, 1986; Einstein, Morris, & Smith, 1985).

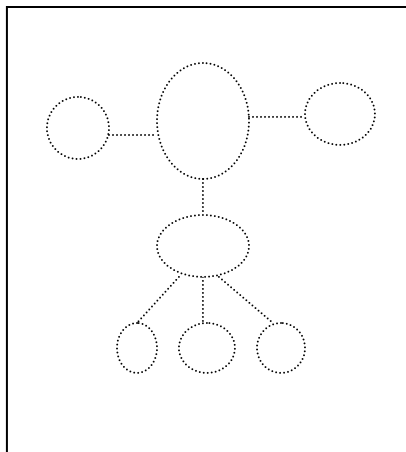
Classroom Note-Taking Strategies

1. Teach students a variety of note-taking formats.
2. Use teacher-prepared notes to make explicit what is considered important and to model how notes might be taken.
3. Remind students to review their notes.

Combination Notes

Regular Notes	Symbol or Graphic Interpretation
Summary Statement	

Webbing



Cornell Notes

Course Name _____	
Date _____	
Your Name _____	
Key Points	Explanation of Key Points
Summary Statement	

Resources

"What [summarizing and note-taking] both have in common is the notion that the student is taking what's out there – what the teacher said, or what they read, or what they observed – and they're encoding it themselves. They're putting their own translation on it. And that's the critical aspect of this category."

- Robert Marzano, McREL

Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement by Robert J. Marzano, Debra Pickering, and Jane E. Pollock (Paperback Jan 2001)

A Handbook for Classroom Instruction that Works (ASCD) by Robert J. Marzano, Jennifer S. Norford, Diane E. Paynter, and Debra J. Pickering

Websites

<http://www.netc.org/focus/strategies/summ.php>
<http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/instruction/ela/6-12/Tools/>

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