

# Reading Toolkit: Grade 7 Objective 2.A.4.d

Standard 2.0 Comprehension of Informational Text

Topic A. Comprehension of Informational Text

Indicator 4. Analyze important ideas and messages in informational text

Objective d. Summarize or paraphrase

Assessment Limits:

The text or a portion of the text

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## Lesson Seeds

### Reading Grade 7 Objective 2.A.4.d

#### Activities

- Read an informational text. Provide students with several different summaries written about that same informational text. Have students read each summary and determine which one is the best summary of the text based upon the criteria for summarization found in clarifications. Have students verbalize the points that make it the best summary while verbalizing the problems with the other summaries.
- Read an informational passage. Show students a series of sentence strips on which are written information from the passage. Using the criteria for summarization, have students select the strips that should be used for a summary. Next, have students organize the strips in summary order. After organization is complete, students should read the summary and make adjustments if necessary. As adjustments are made, students should justify/explain the changes.
- Read an informational text. Have students record important facts from the article on word cards, in a bulleted list, or in a double entry journal. Have students put the word cards on one side of their desk. On blank cards adjacent to the original word cards students are to rewrite these facts in their own words; the same can be done with the bulleted list. Students will then write a summary of the text in their own words.
- Read excerpts from an informational text. Using the criteria for paraphrasing found in clarifications students should review several different paraphrases of portions of the informational text. Have students select the accurate paraphrasing of the portion of text. Students should be able to verbalize why their choice is the best as well as identify the problems with the other choices.

## Clarification

### Reading Grade 7 Indicator 2.A.4

To show proficiency of the skills stated in this indicator, a reader will express an understanding of the key points or thoughts in the text, which are **the important ideas and messages**. These are sometimes directly stated in the text, but for more complex texts, a reader will determine the implied, important ideas and messages by synthesizing ideas across the text(s).

In order to understand important ideas or messages in a text, a reader should **determine the author's apparent purpose for writing**. The author's purpose, either implied or directly stated, is the main reason for the text. Most authors write to inform, persuade, or to express personal ideas relative to his or her selected topic. Authors write for different audiences; an author's intended audience should be apparent through the author's choice of topic, diction, organization, and graphic aids. Knowing these features and the intended audience for a text helps a reader determine a purpose for reading, which will enhance a reader's understanding of the text as a whole.

Once a reader understands an author's or text's purpose, he or she can speculate as to **how someone might use the text**. To do so, a reader explores the application of the text to personal or content-specific use. A critical reader applies the text for personal or content specific use and to determine issues and ideas within a text or across texts and their personal and societal implications.

The ability to **distinguish between facts and opinions** is a prerequisite reading skill for **identifying and explaining an author's argument, viewpoint, or perspective**. A fact can be defined as something that can be proven true while an opinion is a belief or feeling about a subject. Authors use a combination of facts and opinions in their writing, most often using facts to support their opinions. Once a reader can identify an author's opinion on a topic, the main idea or message can be more clearly understood. An author's opinion with the evidence, details, and examples used to support the opinion become the **author's argument, viewpoint, or perspective**.

When **stating and supporting main ideas and messages**, a reader must first identify the main idea of the text. To do so, a reader must identify the topic or subject of the text, which is often evident in the title or first paragraph(s) of an informational text. Then, after reading an entire text, a reader must identify the main point that the author/text makes about the topic or subject. The author's message is the same thing as the main idea; however, a message is usually present in more complex, subjective text. A message is often more author-centered, whereas a main idea is more text-centered. If the main idea or message is not directly stated in the text, a reader must use the details and information in the text to infer the main idea or message. A reader supports the main idea or message by using details from the text that relate to it and that help him/her understand the main idea. This process can be done for the entire text or for a small portion of text.

**Summarizing or paraphrasing a text or a portion of a text** is an essential skill for a reader when comprehending informational text. A reader is better able to determine the important ideas and messages in text if he/she is able to summarize it. To do so, a reader must state the main idea in his/her own words and then select only details from the text that contribute to the identified main idea. Paraphrasing, when a reader restates an idea in his or her own words, is a key step to summarizing a text. This can be done for a small portion of text, such as a paragraph, as well as for a chapter or the entire text.

Authors use details and examples in their writing to clarify, highlight, or enhance their ideas. A critical reader will be able to identify **information not related, or peripheral, to the main idea of a text**. Doing so will help a reader disregard redundant as well as extraneous information when summarizing the text or identifying the main idea or message. Especially for complex text, a reader may analyze the effect this extraneous information has on the main idea or message and make decisions or draw conclusions about why an author used that information. This skill is useful as readers develop their own opinions and ideas relative to a text.

When a reader compares and contrasts textual ideas, elements, and features within and across texts, he/she is **identifying relationships between and among ideas**. Authors also organize their ideas to show a sequence of ideas or to show cause and effect. Once a reader identifies a relationship that exists among ideas in a text, he/she can think more analytically about that relationship. A critical reader will also make **connections to prior knowledge**, which are the beliefs or background a reader brings to a text.

In order to **draw conclusions about and make generalizations from informational text**, a reader should first be able to state the main idea as well as to summarize a text. When a reader draws conclusions, he/she uses information from the text—such as the text patterns or text features—that can be either stated or implied. A reader makes a judgment or a decision that is new to him or her since it is not directly stated in the text. A conclusion or generalization is dependent on the information in a text but is external to it.

An ability **to connect text to prior knowledge or experience** helps a reader identify personally with a text. A reader identifies similarities between what is being described, explained, or narrated and what he or she has experienced, heard or read about. A critical reader forms opinions about the content within a text during and after reading and is then able to develop his or her own ideas about information from a text.

As readers have more experiences with these skills and with increasingly complex texts, their cognitive abilities will increase as well. Experienced readers will be able not only to determine a main idea or message, but also to develop skills at **analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating a main idea or message** by making connections to ideas and messages expressed in other texts or to their personal experiences.

## Public Release #1 - Selected Response (SR) Item

Handout(s):

- Tackling The Trash

Reading Grade 7 Objective 2.A.4.d

Read "Tackling the Trash" and answer the following question. Which sentence would make the best topic sentence for a summary of this article?

- Chad Pregracke of East Moline, Illinois, realized that cleaning up the polluted Mississippi River was a job that would require a great deal of money.
- Chad Pregracke planned to clean up the polluted Mississippi River shoreline by beginning in Iowa and ending in Missouri.
- Chad Pregracke made a decision to clean up the litter polluting the shoreline of the Mississippi River near his hometown of East Moline, Illinois.
- Chad Pregracke was skilled at convincing organizations to help him in his goal of cleaning up the litter polluting the Mississippi River.

Correct Answer:

C

## Handouts

## Tackling The Trash

By Jill Esbaum

<sup>1</sup>In May of 1997, Chad Pregracke came home from college for summer vacation. As usual, he was disgusted by the junk that littered the riverbanks of the Mississippi near his hometown of East Moline, Illinois. But this time, instead of wondering why someone else didn't clean it up, he decided to tackle a few miles of shoreline himself.

With only a flat-bottom boat, a wheelbarrow, and a sturdy pair of gloves, he motored up and down the river. Whenever he spotted trash, he pulled to shore and picked it up. When his boat was full, he took the load to a landfill. Chad even took pictures of the junk he hauled away. "I thought it might be fun to see how much I could pick up," he says.

<sup>3</sup>Soon the riverbanks near his hometown were litter-free. And Chad was hooked. "I really enjoyed it," he says. "I could see the results day after day. It made me feel good to help my community." So he kept going, sleeping under a tarp each night.

But Chad's money was disappearing fast. Food, gasoline for his boat, landfill charges, and film costs were gobbling up his resources. He wondered if others would help support his cleanup.

<sup>5</sup>First Chad talked to government agencies like the National Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. While happy about his work, they didn't have much money to donate.

So Chad called area businesses. He explained about growing up beside the river, the mess it had become, and his determination to clean it up. Most companies wouldn't help either. But finally one company decided to lend a hand. Chad got his first small grant and the encouragement he needed to find others to help as well.

<sup>7</sup>Chad began visiting other companies in person and found that his careful record keeping paid off. People couldn't help being impressed by his enthusiasm, or by the pictures of the junk he'd already hauled away. The next year, Chad received enough money to finish his summer's work with several volunteers to help him. In two years he raised enough money to buy two more boats and hire five helpers for the next summer.

In 1998, Chad's goal was to clean 1,000 miles of shoreline. Beginning in northern Iowa, he and his crew slowly worked their way south. Their final destination was St. Louis,

**What has Chad taken out of the rivers?  
Here is a partial list of what he's pulled out as of July 2001.**

- 13 air conditioners
- 8 anchors
- 348 bottles of antifreeze
- 18 duck decoys
- 3 baby pools
- 968 buckets
- 287 refrigerators
- 1,109 55-gallon steel drums
- 27 bicycles
- 40 barbeque grills
- 430 feet of steel cable
- 90 boat bumpers
- 75 water heaters
- 307 chairs
- 171 coolers
- 2 swing sets
- 49 sinks
- 72 TV sets
- 55 life jackets
- 4,870 car tires
- 28 garbage cans
- 14,240 pounds of metal
- 223 milk crates
- 46 washing machines
- 56 stoves
- 350 propane tanks
- 28 toilets

Missouri. Along the way, Chad had to receive permission from each town to pile his junk in a parking lot or field. When he finished each area, he trucked the trash to the nearest landfill.

<sup>9</sup>As the hot summer wore on, the work became more difficult. The farther south they traveled, the more trash littered the shore. One mile of shoreline was so full of old tires, it took more than a month to clean—one small boatload at a time. Sheltered only by tents and tarps, Chad and his crew battled mosquitoes and summer storms. By summer's end, only Chad and one helper remained on the job. When cold weather forced them to stop, they were just fifty miles from St. Louis.

Chad didn't spend the winter months catching up on sleep. He needed to raise more than \$100,000. Part of the money would go toward finishing his work near St. Louis. The rest would fund his next project, cleaning the 270-mile shoreline of the Illinois River.

<sup>11</sup>Chad also traveled from town to town. He spoke at schools, churches, and town halls. He shared his story with community groups, conservation clubs, and Scout troops. He asked them to help keep the river clean.

People were eager to help. Someone even offered him a used houseboat for free. There was only one catch: it was resting on the muddy bottom of the Illinois River. "It was a real mess," Chad remembers. "The most totally trashed thing you've seen in your life."

<sup>13</sup>After a lot of repair work and elbow grease, The Miracle became the crew's floating home and headquarters—a big step up from tents and tarps.

In 2000, Chad began hosting community-wide cleanup days in cities along the Mississippi. "I want to get as many people involved as possible," he says.