Equipping students for deep comprehension
A CLERESTORY LEARNING INSTRUCTIONAL READING PROGRAM
FOUNDATIONS & FRAMEWORKS
Teacher Toolbox
KEVIN D. WASHBURN, ED.D.

Toolbox Sample

Kindergarten · **Unit 1**

Visualization

plus Retelling

What do I imagine?
How can I share this story?

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

Visualization is imagining a text, seeing characters, scenes, and even movie-like sequences in one's head while reading. Retelling is an unplanned verbal delivery of a text's basic happenings. Retelling depends on visualization.

Visualization helps a reader understand a text by mentally "seeing" the various parts of a story (e.g., characters, settings, events) and how they interact.

When visualizing, a reader imagines the story a text tells. The reader makes pictures or movies in his/her head.

The best way to foster visualization is to read to children *without showing them the illustrations.* (If possible, even hide or remove the cover illustration of books.) Have the students imagine as you read, and then draw one of the scenes they imagined.

One effective way to combine visualization and retelling is to read the same story to the students multiple times, having the students draw a different scene each time. These drawings can then provide a storyboard-like outline that can support a student's attempts at retelling.

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PATTERN

Things happen in an order.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected section of text, each student creates an illustration that accurately portrays the scene described in the text, and explains how the illustration portrays the description given by the author.

PROCESS

- Who is in this scene? Where is the scene happening?
- What do I imagine this scene looks like?
- What words or phrases help me imagine that scene?
- How does my picture match the author's words?

RUBRIC

Visualization			
Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Meets Objective**	**Not Yet**
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student creates a series of at least three illustrations that represent events in the text	▸ Meets Objective, plus... ▸ Student accurately illustrates a self-selected section of text that precedes or follows the teacher-selected section	▸ Student accurately illustrates a scene from a teacher-selected section of text	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

ADDITIONAL SKILL EMPHASIS ▸ *plus* Retelling

Retelling is presenting an unplanned oral synopsis of a book or section of text. It is spontaneous—though not completely unplanned—and oral. Although retelling may include elements of drama, the emphasis, especially initially, is on accuracy.

Retelling helps the reader sort out the various details of a text. While retelling, the reader is thinking about what happened in a text and what someone else might need to know about it. The reader who retells often understands a text better.

When retelling, a reader tells someone else about what he/she read. Without much planning, the reader tells someone else about the main things that happened in a text.

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Retelling is not mere recall; it helps readers move from text to meaning. Retelling requires the reader to integrate and reconstruct the parts of a text. It enhances comprehension by fostering thinking about a text. In addition to improving reading comprehension, retelling improves listening and language skills.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected text, each student retells the story in his/her own words and in sequential order.

PROCESS

- Who was in the story?
- What happened in the story? In what order did it happen?
- How can I retell the story, pretending the listener has never heard or read the story?
- What distracting details can I leave out?
- How can I add expression to my retelling so it sounds like I am telling a story?

VISUAL TOOL

No visual tool is used for this skill. However, visual aids, such as student-developed pictorial flow charts, may be helpful for some students.

RUBRIC (for formative use only)

Retelling			
Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Meets Objective**	**Not Yet**
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student retells the story with appropriate expression, like a storyteller	▸ Meets Objective, plus... ▸ Student retells the story without including unnecessary, distracting details	▸ Student retells the story in sequential order using his/her own words	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

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Kindergarten · **Unit 2**

Sequence of Events

What order did things happen in?

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

Sequence of events is the order in which events occur in a text. It is a foundational skill, establishing a basis for more complex comprehension skills, such as recognizing cause and effect, drawing conclusions, and following directions. In fiction, the event order often influences plot development, character perspectives, changes in characters and tone, and many other elements. In nonfiction, recognizing sequence can be critical to comprehending the essence and important details of a text.

Sequence is the most basic connection. By understanding sequence of events a reader can think more deeply about how the events are connected (e.g., cause and effect, hierarchy of influence).

A flow chart showing the order of events is the basic tool a reader develops when thinking about sequence of events.

In Kindergarten, student sequencing may include any events as long as they are presented in the correct order—i.e., emphasize correct order rather than discerning major events from minor ones. A simple flow chart is used to sequence story events with events noted in the boxes and ordered from left to right. At this level, students may use illustrations or words (or both) to complete flow charts.

If the students created illustrations to use as a guide for retelling in Unit 1, sequence of events will simply be a more formal approach to the same process. For this reason, the repeating of the pattern statement is intentional.

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PATTERN

Things happen in an order.

OBJECTIVE

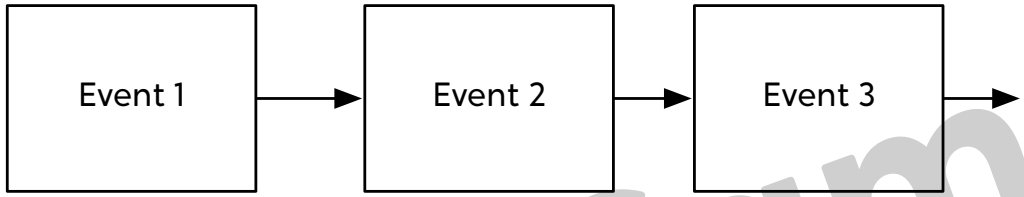
Given a teacher-selected text and teacher guidance, each student correctly sequences events from a story.

PROCESS

- What happened first?
- What happened next?

VISUAL TOOL

Flow Chart
Sequence of Events



RUBRIC

Flow Chart
Sequence of Events

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Student's sequence includes all the main events of a story; no main events are missing, although other events may be included	▸ Meets Objective, plus... ▸ Student includes additional events from the story (e.g., sequences more than one middle event)	▸ Student correctly sequences at least three events from a story (e.g., events from the beginning, the middle, and the end)	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

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Toolbox Sample

Sequence of Events

plus Visualization

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

Sequence of events is the order in which events occur in a text. It is a foundational skill, establishing a basis for more complex comprehension skills, such as recognizing cause and effect, drawing conclusions, and following directions. In fiction, the event order often influences plot development, character perspectives, changes in characters and mood, and many other elements. In nonfiction, recognizing sequence can be critical to comprehending the essence and important details of a text.

Sequence is the most basic connection. By understanding sequence of events a reader can think more deeply about how the events are connected.

A flow chart showing the order of events is the basic tool a reader develops when thinking about sequence of events.

In Grade 1, student sequencing may include any events as long as they are presented in the correct order. Emphasize correct order rather than discerning major events from minor ones. A simple flow chart is used to sequence story events with events noted in the boxes and ordered from left to right.

The Additional Emphasis, visualization, fits nicely with sequence of events. Consider having the students draw illustrations in their flow charts to combine the two skills.

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PATTERN

Things happen in an order.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected text and teacher guidance, each student correctly sequences events from a story.

PROCESS

- What happened first?
- What happened next?

VISUAL TOOL

Flow Chart
Sequence of Events

RUBRIC

Flow Chart
Sequence of Events

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student's sequence includes all the main events of a story; no main events are missing, although other events may be included	▸ Meets Objective, plus... ▸ Student includes additional events from the story (e.g., sequences more than one middle event)	▸ Student correctly sequences at least three events from a story (e.g., events from the beginning, the middle, and the end)	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

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ADDITIONAL SKILL EMPHASIS ▸ *plus* Visualization

Visualization is imagining a text, seeing characters, scenes, and even movie-like sequences in one's head while reading. This translation of text to imagined scenes is critical for comprehension. "Seeing" what a text describes enables a reader to build basic understanding.

Visualization helps a reader understand a text by mentally "seeing" the various parts of a story (e.g., characters, settings, events) and how they interact.

When visualizing, a reader imagines the story a text tells. The reader makes pictures or movies in his/her head.

During Collaborative Comprehension Sessions, engage the students in describing what they imagine as they read. Do not limit the conversation to visual details. As appropriate, encourage the students to imagine and describe what they hear, smell, taste, and feel as they imagine a scene.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected section of text, each student creates an illustration that accurately portrays the scene described in the text, and explains how the illustration portrays the description given by the author.

PROCESS

- Who is in this scene? Where is the scene happening?
- What do I imagine this scene looks like?
- What words or phrases help me imagine this scene?
- How can I draw the scene that I imagine?
- How does my picture match the author's words?

Toolbox Sample

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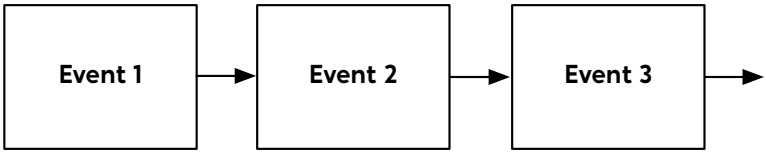
VISUAL TOOL

Pictorial Flow Chart
Visualization



RUBRIC (for formative use only)

Pictorial Flow Chart
Visualization

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student creates a series of at least three illustrations that represent events in the text	▸ Meets Objective, plus... ▸ Student accurately illustrates a self-selected section of text that precedes or follows the teacher-selected section	▸ Student accurately illustrates a scene from a teacher-selected section of text	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT NOTE

This assessment may be administered verbally to prevent reading abilities from influencing results. Also, if necessary, the teacher may rephrase questions to aid student understanding.

Toolbox Sample

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Name

Unit 1

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT
Sequence of Events

DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

1. What is **sequence of events**?

   a. the order of events in a story
   b. the place where a story happens
   c. the most exciting thing that happens in a story
   d. the front and back covers of a book

2. Which question can a reader use to find an event?

   a. How many pages does the story have?
   b. What picture is the best one in the story?
   c. What happened first?
   d. What is the title of this story?

3. After the first event, what question can a reader use to find the next one?

   a. What happened next?
   b. When did this story happen?
   c. Who wrote this story?
   d. Is this my favorite story?

Toolbox Sample

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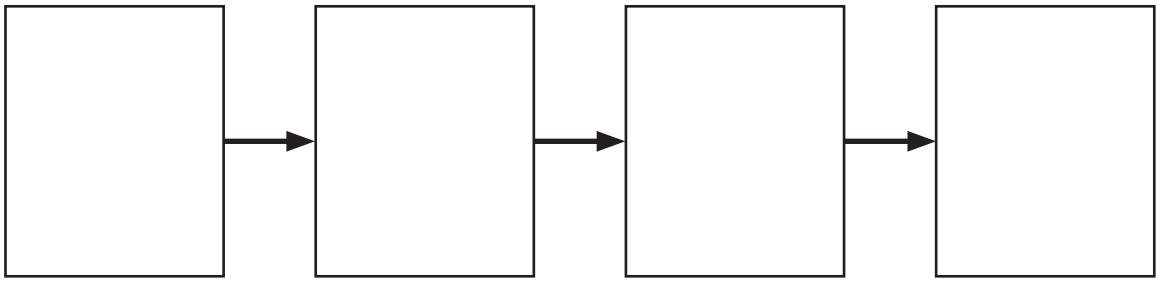
DIRECTIONS: Be ready to tell your teacher an answer to the question.

4. Why is the order of events in a story important?

DIRECTIONS: Take out your crayons or colored pencils.

5. Read each question, then use the flow chart to show your answer.

- When a reader asks, "What happened first?" where should the reader put the answer? Color that space **green**.
- When a reader asks, "What happened next?" where is the first place the reader should put the answer? Color that space **yellow**.
- When a reader finds the last event in a story, where should the reader put it? Color that space **red**.



Toolbox Sample

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Grade 1 · **Unit 2**

Retelling

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

Retelling is presenting an oral synopsis of a book or section of text. It is spontaneous, though not completely unplanned. Although retelling may include elements of drama, the emphasis, especially initially, is on accuracy.

Retelling helps a reader sort out the various details of a text. While retelling, the reader is thinking about what happened in a text and what someone else might need to know about it. The reader who retells often understands a text better.

When retelling, a reader tells someone else about what he/she read.

Retelling is not mere recall; it helps readers move from text to meaning. Retelling requires the reader to integrate and reconstruct the parts of a text. It enhances comprehension by fostering thinking about a text. In addition to improving reading comprehension, retelling improves listening and language skills. (NOTE: This is why sustained silent reading that *includes* retelling is more effective than SSR without it.)

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PATTERN

Things happen in an order.

The repetition of this pattern from Unit 1 is intentional. A major component of accuracy in retelling is sharing the events in order and not having to backtrack.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected text, each student retells the story in his/her own words and in sequential order.

PROCESS

- Who was in the story?
- What happened in the story? In what order did it happen?
- How can I retell the story, pretending the listener has never heard or read the story?
- What distracting details can I leave out?
- How can I add expression to my retelling so it sounds like I am telling a story?

VISUAL TOOL

No visual tool is used for this skill. However, visual aids, such as student-developed pictorial flow charts, may be helpful for some students.

RUBRIC

A variety of visual aids
Retelling

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student retells with appropriate expression, like a storyteller	▸ Meets Objective, plus... ▸ Student retells without including unnecessary, distracting details	▸ Student retells the story in his/her own words in sequential order	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT NOTE

This assessment may be administered verbally to prevent reading abilities from influencing results. Also, if necessary, the teacher may rephrase questions to aid student understanding.

Toolbox Sample

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Name

Unit 2

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT
Retelling

DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

1. What is **retelling**?

   a. showing someone the pictures in a book
   b. reading a book to someone else
   c. listening to someone else read a story to you
   d. telling a story you read to someone else

2. Which question can a reader use to help retell a story?

   a. Who was in the story?
   b. How many pages are in this book?
   c. What day of the week was it when I read this book?
   d. What word was used the most in the story?

3. When retelling a story, you should try to...

   a. tell about every tiny detail in the story
   b. tell the events in the order they happened
   c. keep your retelling as boring as possible
   d. add things that never happened in the story

Toolbox Sample

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DIRECTIONS: Be ready to tell your teacher an answer to the questions.

4. Why should a reader retell what he/she read to someone else?

5. What can a reader do to make his/her retelling more interesting for the person listening?

Toolbox Sample

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Grade 2 · **Unit 1**

Sequence of Events

plus

Visualization and Retelling

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

Sequence of events is the order in which events occur in a text. It is a foundational skill, establishing a basis for more complex comprehension skills, such as recognizing cause and effect, drawing conclusions, and following directions. In fiction, the event order often influences plot development, character perspectives, changes in characters and mood, and many other elements. In nonfiction, recognizing sequence can be critical to comprehending the essence and important details of a text.

Sequence is the most basic connection. By understanding sequence of events a reader can think more deeply about how the events are connected.

A flow chart showing the order of events is the basic tool a reader develops when thinking about sequence of events.

In Grade 2, students learn to recognize *important* events. Correct order still matters, but eliminating the non-essential events becomes an additional focus. The Flow Chart (with Edits) is used to sequence story events. Events are sequenced from left to right in the boxes. Events considered "nonessential" are crossed out.

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PATTERN

Important things happen in an order.

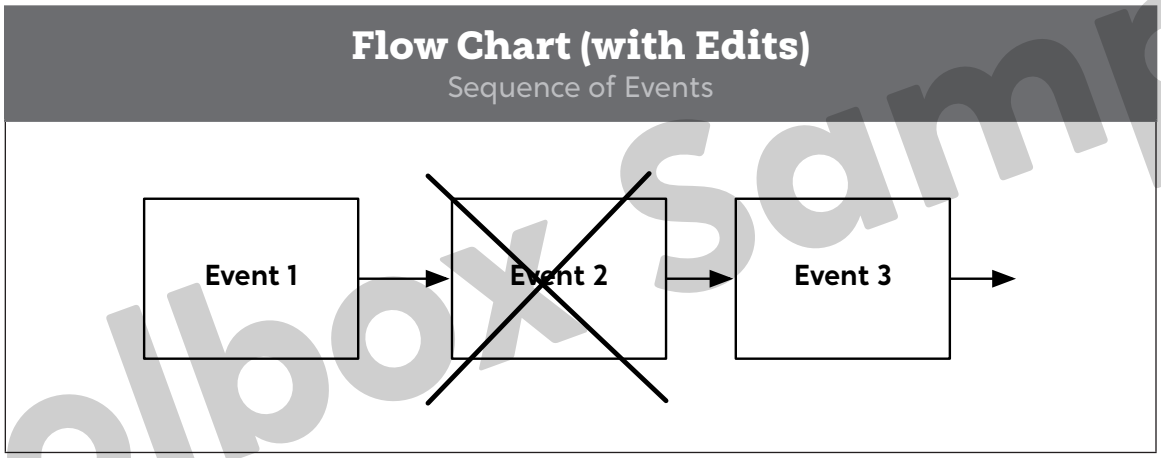
OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher- or self-selected text, each student sequences the events of a story and identifies the main events of the story, eliminating the nonessential.

PROCESS

- What happened first?
- What happened next?
- Is this event important?
  - Does this event relate to the main character's goal or problem?
  - Does this event make a character change his/her thinking or actions?
  - Why did the author include this event—to add interesting details, or to affect the story's outcome?
  - Does someone need to know about this event to understand the story?

VISUAL TOOL



Toolbox Sample

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RUBRICS

Flow Chart (with Edits) Sequence of Events			
Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Meets Objective**	**Not Yet**
▶ Proficient, plus... ▶ Connections between the important events in the flow chart are clear; it is obvious how each event relates to the one that came before and the one that comes after	▶ Student correctly sequences the main events of a story, eliminating all of the nonessential ones ▶ No main events are missing, and no unimportant events are included in the flow chart	▶ Student correctly sequences the events of a story ▶ Student identifies the story's main events by eliminating most of the nonessential ones	▶ Anything less than Meets Objective

Discovery Synopsis			
Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Meets Objective**	**Not Yet**
▶ Proficient, plus... ▶ Synopsis includes a response to a "discovery," such as a prediction, an insight (e.g., "This story is really about..."), or a presentation of the essence (e.g., use of a hashtag: "NotWhoYouThinkHeIs)	▶ Synopsis includes at least one new idea—a "discovery" (e.g.,relationship/ connection between visual tool elements) sparked by the student's thinking about the text through development of the visual tool	▶ Synopsis restates what is obvious on the visual tool	▶ Synopsis is missing, incomplete, or has no obvious connection to the visual tool

Toolbox Sample

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ADDITIONAL SKILL EMPHASIS ▸ *plus* Visualization and Retelling

Visualization is the ability to imagine or picture the events taking place in a text. Words convey ideas. Those ideas can generate images or a movie in the reader's mind. The skill involves merging a text's ideas with background experiences to develop a mental image of what is taking place.

In Grade 2, the students move from creating single illustrations based on text passages (Grade 1) to creating a series of related illustrations. This enables readers to imagine important text elements, such as advances in plot, growth in characters, and an author's development of theme. Such connected visual thinking significantly boosts text comprehension.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected section of text, each student: creates a series of three illustrations with significant details that accurately portray the scene and events described in the text, verbally retells the text using the illustrations as a reference, and explains how the illustrations relate to the selected section of text.

PROCESS

- Who is in this story? Where and when does this story take place?
- What happened in the text? In my imagination, how do I see what happened?
- What words or phrases help me imagine each scene?
- What three pictures could show what happened in the text?
- How do my pictures match the author's words?
- How can I retell the story, pretending the listener has never heard or read the story?
- What distracting details can I leave out?
- How can I add expression to my retelling so it sounds like I am telling a story?

Toolbox Sample

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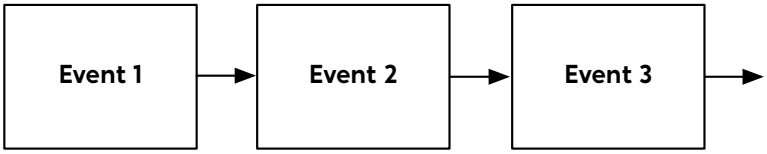
VISUAL TOOL

Pictorial Flow Chart
Visualization and Retelling



RUBRIC (for formative use only)

Pictorial Flow Chart
Visualization and Retelling

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Illustrations include more than just the main action, providing details related to other elements such as characters and settings ▸ Student retells the story with appropriate expression, like a storyteller	▸ Meets Objective, plus... ▸ Illustrations address the complete section of text, including events from the beginning, middle, and end, not just three events from one portion of the text ▸ Student retells the story without including unnecessary, distracting details	▸ Student creates a series of three illustrations that accurately represent events in a teacher-selected section of text ▸ Student uses the series of illustrations to retell the teacher-selected section of text	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

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Name Date

Unit 1

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT
Sequence of Events

DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

1. What is **sequence of events**?
   a. the order of events in a story
   b. the place where a story takes place
   c. the most exciting thing that happens in a story
   d. the front and back covers of a book

2. An **important** event in a story may...
   a. tell the reader an interesting fact about the author.
   b. only happen in a fairy tale.
   c. relate to the main character's problem or goal.
   d. not tell the reader anything that helps him/her understand the story.

3. One question a reader can use to find an important event is,...
   a. "What happened first?"
   b. "What happened next?"
   c. "Who wrote this story?"
   d. "Does someone need to know about this event to understand the story?"

4. An **important** event in a story may...
   a. not happen until the story is over.
   b. make a character change his/her thinking or actions.
   c. make the reader want to read a different story.
   d. not tell the reader anything that helps him/her understand the story.

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Toolbox Sample

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5. One question a reader can use to find an **important** event is,...
   a. "Does this event make an important character change his/her thinking or actions?"
   b. "Who is the illustrator of this book?"
   c. "Do I like this book well enough to tell my friends about it?"
   d. "Could this event happen at my school?"

DIRECTIONS: Write an answer to the question.

6. How does thinking about the **important** events in a story help a reader understand a story?

Toolbox Sample

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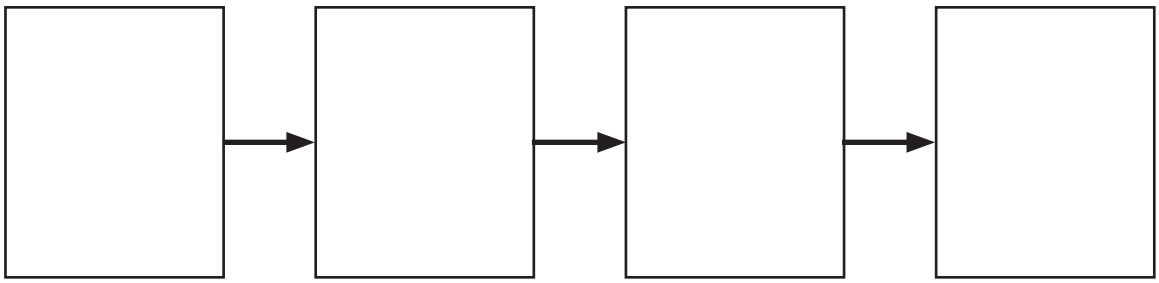
DIRECTIONS: Use this flow chart to respond to the following questions.
You need crayons or colored pencils for these questions.



7. When a reader asks, "What happened first?" where should the reader put the answer? Color that space **blue**.

8. When a reader asks, "What happened next?" where is the **first** place the reader should put the answer? Color that space **red**.

9. If a reader added an event to the third box but then decides the event is not important, what should the reader do? Use the **third** box to show your answer.

10. When a reader finds another important event in the story, how would the reader show this on the flow chart? Add what is needed **after the fourth box**.

Toolbox Sample

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Grade 2 · **Unit 2**

Retelling

plus Illustrations

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

Retelling is presenting an oral synopsis of a book or section of text. It is spontaneous, though not completely unplanned. Although retelling may include elements of drama, the emphasis, especially initially, is on accuracy and substance.

Retelling helps a reader sort out the various details of a text. While retelling, the reader is thinking about what happened in a text and what someone else might need to know about it. The reader who retells often understands a text better.

When retelling, a reader tells someone else about what he/she read without much planning.

Retelling is not mere recall; it helps readers move from text to meaning. Retelling requires the reader to integrate and reconstruct the parts of a text. It enhances comprehension by fostering thinking about a text. In addition to improving reading comprehension, retelling improves listening and language skills. (NOTE: This is why sustained silent reading that *includes* retelling is more effective than SSR without it.)

Building on the focus established in Unit 1, retelling in Grade 2 emphasizes leaving out unnecessary details. This requires a student to "think on his/her feet" while retelling to avoid including unneeded and potentially distracting details. A distracting detail is one that has no bearing on the happenings within a story. For example, in a story about a girl who loses and searches for her dog, the fact that her shirt is yellow probably does not affect the events or outcome of the story. However, the fact that her dog's collar is bright pink might be important. Differentiating between such details is the focus here.

Additional attention should be given to helping students retell with expression. Learning to communicate meaningfully enables better oral reading (and general communication) abilities.

The Additional Emphasis, illustrations, builds on this idea. In Grade 2, the students use the illustrations to identify details, especially important ones, that are not mentioned in the text. Engaging with the illustrations this way can provide additional information for a student's retelling.

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PATTERN

Important things happen in an order.

NOTE: The repetition of this pattern from Unit 1 is intentional.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected text, each student retells the story in his own words and in sequential order, leaving out distracting details.

PROCESS

- Who was in the story?
- What happened in the story? In what order did it happen?
- How can I retell the story, pretending the listener has never heard or read it?
- What details are important for helping someone else understand the story?
- What distracting details can I leave out?
- How can I add expression to my retelling so it sounds like I am telling a story?

VISUAL TOOL

No visual tool is used for this skill. However, visual aids, such as student-developed pictorial flow charts, may be helpful for some students.

RUBRIC

A variety of visual aids Illustrations			
Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Meets Objective**	**Not Yet**
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student retells with appropriate expression, like a storyteller	▸ Student retells the story in sequential order using his/her own words ▸ Student retells without including any unnecessary, distracting details	▸ Student retells the story in sequential order using his/her own words ▸ Student retells without including most unnecessary, distracting details	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

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ADDITIONAL SKILL EMPHASIS ▸ *plus* Illustrations

Illustrations do more than provide a visual representation of a story's events; they often add important details to what is conveyed in the text. Training students to study the illustrations in a text promotes deeper understanding of the text. Additionally, attending to illustrations equips students for identifying information from graphics within a nonfiction text, a critical skill for comprehension.

OBJECTIVE

Given teacher-selected illustrations, each student explains how the illustrations relate to the text (e.g., shows characters, settings, events) and identifies information from the illustration that is not stated in the text.

PROCESS

- What does the illustration show?
- What does the illustration show that the author did not mention?
- How does the illustration match the author's words?
- Do I know something more about the story because of the illustration? If so, what? Is it important?

RUBRIC (for formative use only)

A variety of visual aids Illustrations			
Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Meets Objective**	**Not Yet**
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student identifies information in the illustration that is not mentioned in the text as being important (meaning it affects the story in some way) or just an extra detail	▸ Meets Objective, plus... ▸ Student explains how information in the illustration that is not mentioned in the text "fits in" with the text	▸ Student matches a teacher-selected illustration with a corresponding section of text ▸ Student identifies details or additional information in the illustration that is not mentioned in the text	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT NOTE

NOTE: This assessment may be administered verbally to prevent reading abilities from influencing results. Also, if necessary, the teacher may rephrase questions to aid student understanding.

Toolbox Sample

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Name Date

Unit 2

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT
Retelling

DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

1. What is **retelling**?
   a. showing someone the pictures in a book
   b. reading a book to someone else
   c. telling a story you read to someone else
   d. memorizing all the words in a book

2. Which questions can a reader use to help retell a story?
   a. Was this a good book? Who is the author?
   b. What happened in the story? In what order did it happen?
   c. Who else read this book? Did they like it?
   d. How many words are in this story? Can I remember them all?

3. Which question can a reader use to help retell a story?
   a. What distracting details can I leave out?
   b. Which character in the story was my favorite?
   c. What is the first word in the book?
   d. When should I say, "The end"?

Toolbox Sample

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DIRECTIONS: Write an answer to the questions.

4. What is the difference between an important detail and a distracting detail?

5. What can a reader do to make his/her retelling more interesting for the person listening?

Toolbox Sample

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Toolbox Sample

Grade 3 · **Unit 1**

Sequence of Events

plus

Visualization and Retelling

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

Sequence of events is the order in which events occur in a text. It is a foundational skill, establishing a basis for more complex comprehension skills, such as recognizing cause and effect, drawing conclusions, and following directions. In fiction, the event order often influences plot development, character perspectives, changes in characters and tone, and many other elements. In nonfiction, recognizing sequence can be critical to comprehending the essence and important details of a text.

Sequence is the most basic connection. By understanding sequence of events a reader can think more deeply about how the events are connected.

A flow chart showing the order of events is the basic tool a reader develops when thinking about sequence of events.

In Grade 3, with the nonessential events eliminated from consideration (see Grade 2, Unit 1), students focus on the time intervals represented in the order of events. Some events may occur close together (e.g., within the same day) while others may be separated by years. Recognizing such time intervals clarifies understanding by placing events not only in order, but within the context of passing time.

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PATTERN

Important things happen in an order but not in the same amounts of time.

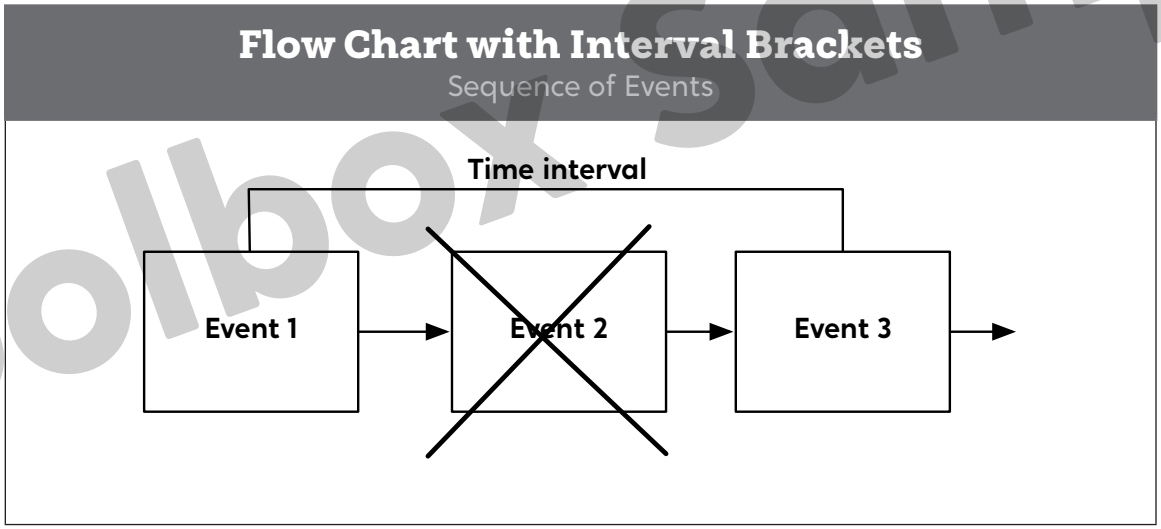
OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher- or self-selected text, each student sequences the events of a story, identifies the main events of the story (eliminating the nonessential), and creates a flow chart showing the sequence of events as related to real time intervals (e.g., days, weeks, months, early summer, years).

PROCESS

- What happened first?
- What happened next?
- Is this event important?
  - Does this event relate to the main character's goal or problem?
  - Does this event make a character change his thinking or actions?
  - Why did the author include this event—to add interesting details, or to affect the story's outcome?
  - Does someone need to know about this event to understand the story?
- When (time, day, season) did this event occur?
- What time intervals exist between these events?

VISUAL TOOL



Toolbox Sample

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RUBRICS

Flow Chart with Interval Brackets

Sequence of Events

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▶ Proficient, plus... ▶ Student adds overarching bracket(s) to the flow chart, showing real time intervals between events that are separated by other events	▶ Meets Objective, plus... ▶ Student adds multiple brackets to the flow chart, showing real time intervals between multiple pairs of side-by-side events	▶ Student correctly sequences the main events of the story (eliminating the nonessential) ▶ Student adds at least one bracket to the flow chart, showing real-time intervals between a pair of side-by-side events (e.g., times of day, days, weeks, months, seasons)	▶ Anything less than Meets Objective

Discovery Synopsis

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▶ Proficient, plus... ▶ Synopsis includes a response to a "discovery," such as a prediction, an insight (e.g., "This story is really about..."), or a presentation of the essence (e.g., use of a hashtag: "NotWhoYouThinkHeIs)	▶ Synopsis includes at least one new idea—a "discovery" (e.g., relationship/ connection between visual tool elements) sparked by the student's thinking about the text through development of the visual tool	▶ Synopsis restates what is obvious on the visual tool	▶ Synopsis is missing, incomplete, or has no obvious connection to the visual tool

Toolbox Sample

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ADDITIONAL SKILL EMPHASIS ▸ *plus* Visualization and Retelling

Visualization is the ability to imagine or picture the events taking place in a text. Words convey ideas. Those ideas can generate images or a movie in the reader's mind. The skill involves merging a text's ideas with background experiences to develop a mental image of what is taking place.

In Grade 3, students expand their thinking by creating illustrations that contain exciting details included in the text. These illustrations can be based on the flow charts students develop for processing a text's sequence of events.

Retelling is presenting an oral synopsis of a book or section of text. It is spontaneous, though not completely unplanned. Although retelling may include elements of drama, the emphasis, especially initially, is on accuracy and substance.

Retelling helps a reader sort out the various details of a text. While retelling, the reader is thinking about what happened in a text and what someone else might need to know about it. The reader who retells often understands a text better.

When retelling, a reader tells someone else about what he/she read. Without much planning, the reader tells someone else about the main things that happened in a text.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected text, each student creates a pictorial flow chart that illustrates the main events, including details that made the passage exciting, and explains how the author's words relate to the pictorial flow chart.

PROCESS

- Who is in this scene? Where is the scene happening?
- What do I imagine this scene looks like?
- What words or phrases help me imagine this scene?
- What other scenes happen in this section?
- What details make this section exciting?
- Which pictures from my imagination show the sequence of events with their exciting details?
- How do my imagined pictures match the author's words?
- How can I retell the story, pretending the listener has never heard or read it?
- What details are important for helping someone else understand the story?
- What distracting details can I leave out?
- How can I add expression to my retelling so it sounds like I am telling a story?

Toolbox Sample

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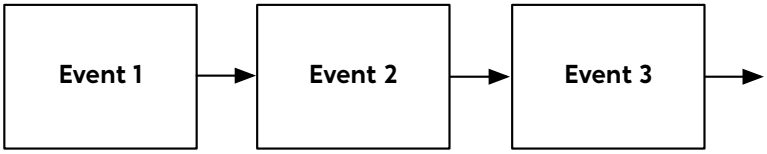
VISUAL TOOL

Pictorial Flow Chart
Visualization and Retelling



RUBRIC (for formative use only)

Pictorial Flow Chart
Visualization and Retelling

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student includes additional, logical details that could be inferred from the text (e.g., charred trees on the side of an erupting volcano) ▸ Student retells with appropriate expression, like a storyteller	▸ Meets Objective, plus... ▸ Student includes details of each event that added to the story's excitement ▸ Student retells without including any unnecessary, distracting details	▸ Student's pictorial flow chart shows the significant events in the text ▸ Student retells without including most unnecessary, distracting details	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

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Name Date

Unit 1

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT
Sequence of Events

▸▸ DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

1. What is ***sequence of events***?
   a. the order of how things happen in a story
   b. the place where a story takes place
   c. the most exciting thing that happens in a story
   d. the front and back covers of a book

2. An **important** event in a story may...
   a. tell the reader an interesting fact about the illustrator.
   b. only happen in a biography.
   c. relate to the main character's problem or goal.
   d. not tell the reader anything that helps him/her understand the story.

3. One question a reader can use to find an **important event** is,...
   a. "What happened first?"
   b. "What happened next?"
   c. "Who wrote this story?"
   d. "Does this event make a character change his thinking or actions?"

4. When a reader asks, "Why did the author include this event—to add interesting details, or to affect the story's outcome?" the reader is considering...
   a. the story's main character.
   b. if the event is important or not.
   c. the page number with the best illustration.
   d. the time and place where a story takes place.

5. One question a reader can use to **identify a time interval** between events is,...
   a. "When (time, day, season) did this event occur?"
   b. "Who is the illustrator of this book?"
   c. "Do I like this book well enough to tell my friends about it?"
   d. "What happened next?"

Toolbox Sample

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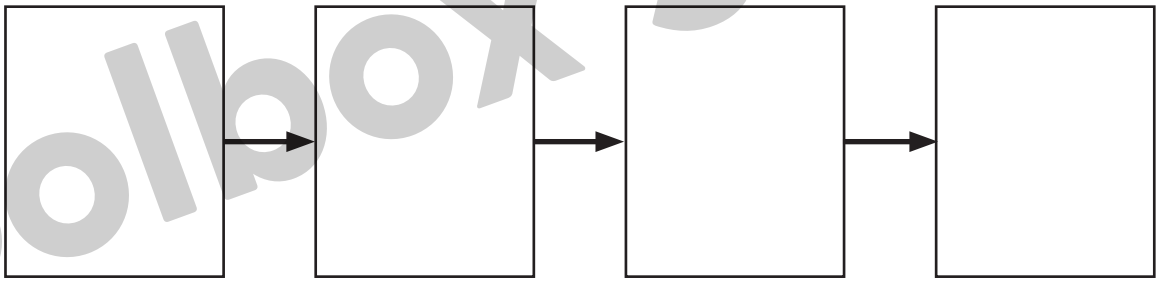
►► DIRECTIONS: Write an answer to the question.

6. How does thinking about how much time passes during and between events help a reader understand a story?

►► DIRECTIONS: Use this flow chart to respond to the following questions. *You need crayons or colored pencils for these questions*.



7. When a reader asks, "What happened first?" where should the reader put the answer? Color that space **blue**.

8. If a reader added an event to the fourth box but then decides the event is not important, what should the reader do? Use the fourth box to show your answer.

9. If a reader wanted to show that the first three events all happened on Monday, what should the reader do? Add what is needed to show this on the flow chart.

10. When a reader finds another important event in the story, how would the reader show this on the flow chart? Add what is needed **after the fourth box**.

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Toolbox Sample

Grade 3 · **Unit 2**

Summarization and Important Details

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

Summarization is a planned, written and often revised, succinct relating of the most important elements from a text. **Research consistently ranks learning to summarize as one of the most effective skills for increasing student achievement.**

Because it moves from identifying to organizing to combining ideas, summarizing follows the working memory processes involved in constructing understanding. This is one reason it contributes to, not just provides evidence of, reading comprehension.

Summarizing helps a reader narrow down the ideas from a text to the most important ones. It helps a reader focus on a text's most important concepts.

When summarizing, a reader creates a written statement of the most important ideas from a section of text.

In Grade 3, the focus with fiction is on moving from phrases to sentences to summary, and on eliminating unnecessary details. The Summary Balloons (Fiction) visual tool provides guidance and structure for student practice of the skill.

NOTE: The visual tool is designed for a summary of a complete story (or book). As needed, define the elements to match reading material. For example, if a chapter ends before something is resolved (which is common in chapter books), the final "balloon" may be labeled "How does the chapter end?" rather than "How did it resolve?" One interesting discussion starter to use during CCS is to develop the visual tool based on a story's antagonist rather than the protagonist.

The secondary skill, important details, complements summarization. Because of this close relationship, the Process Questions for important details have been added to those for summarization.

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PATTERN

Sifting and organizing reveals what really matters.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected text, each student writes a summary of the story, focusing on the events specifically related to the main character's goal or problem, identifying the attempts/blocks at reaching the goal/solving the problem, and the outcome.

PROCESS

- Who is in the story? Where does the story take place? Write a sentence or two describing the main character and where the story takes place.
- What is the main character's goal? Why does the main character want to achieve this goal? Write a sentence or two about the main character's goal.
- What does the main character do to try and achieve the goal? What blocks the main character from being successful? Write a sentence about the main events of the story.
- How does the character reach the goal or solve the problem? Write a sentence about the story's resolution.
- Are other details from the story important? If so, add the important details to other sentences or write new sentences about them.
  - What is the detail? Where is it found in the text?
  - Does this detail influence any characters or events?
  - If this detail were removed, would it change the story?
  - Is the detail essential (important) or nonessential (unimportant)?
- What part of the story does this essential detail connect to?
- How can the sentences be combined into a summary so that it makes sense to someone else?
- Is my summary clear? Is my summary concise?

Toolbox Sample

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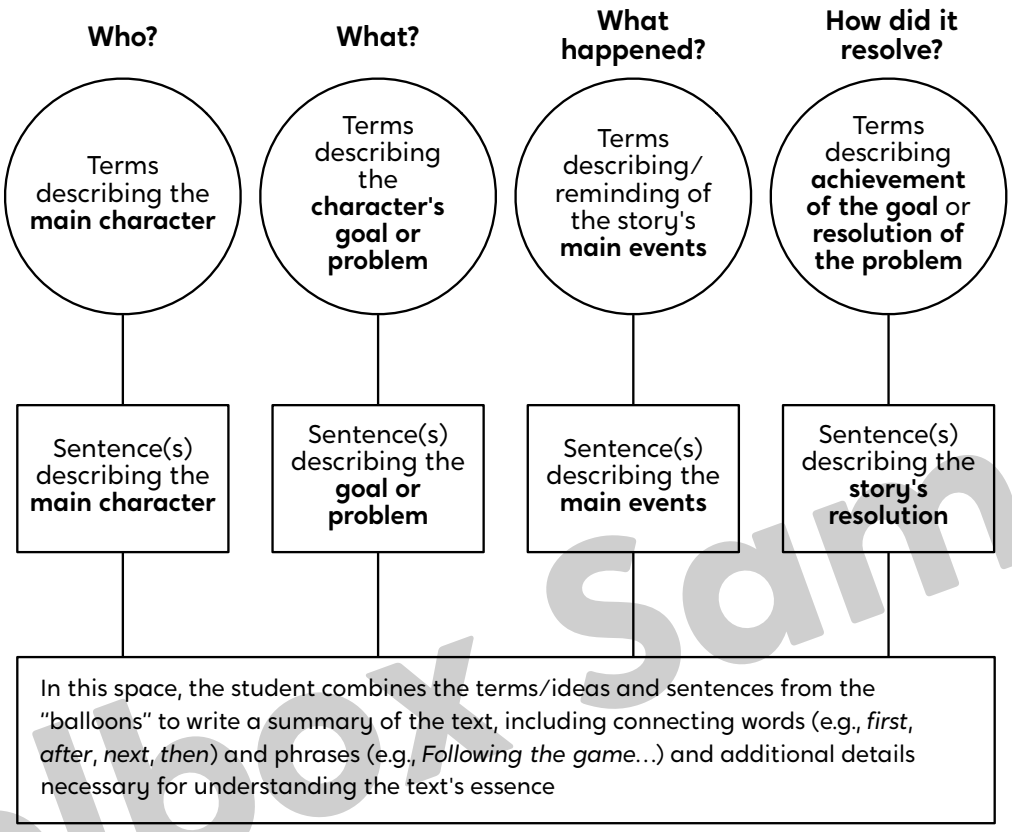
VISUAL TOOL

Summary Balloons (Fiction)

Summarization



Toolbox Sample

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RUBRICS

Summary Balloons (Fiction)
Summarization

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student's summary is clear (all important elements are included and the relationships between them are easy to understand) and concise (tells all that is necessary for understanding and interest but nothing more) ▸ Student's summary includes examples of important details that add clarity to the summary (i.e., the details help the summary make sense)	▸ Meets Objective, plus... ▸ Student adds necessary words (e.g., *then*, *because*) or phrases (e.g., *before the...*, *when it was over...*) to the summary to clearly and smoothly connect ideas	▸ Student creates summary balloons with sentences about the main character (who), goal/problem (what), the story's events (what happened), and the outcome (how did it end), or with sentences about similar elements within the assigned reading ▸ Student combines sentences from the visual tool to summarize the story, including all important elements (main character, goal/problem, main events, and conclusion) and limiting nonessential details	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Discovery Synopsis

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Synopsis includes a response to a "discovery," such as a prediction, an insight (e.g., "This story is really about..."), or a presentation of the essence (e.g., use of a hashtag: "NotWhoYouThinkHeIs)	▸ Synopsis includes at least one new idea—a "discovery" (e.g., relationship/connection between visual tool elements) sparked by the student's thinking about the text through development of the visual tool	▸ Synopsis restates what is obvious on the visual tool	▸ Synopsis is missing, incomplete, or has no obvious connection to the visual tool

Toolbox Sample

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Name Date

Unit 2

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT
Summarization and Important Details

▸▸ DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

1. What is a summary?
   a. a very hot day in July
   b. the place where a story takes place
   c. a short account of a story's important elements
   d. a long discussion about a story

2. One question a reader can ask to develop a summary is...
   a. "Why does the main character want to achieve this goal?"
   b. "When was this book written?"
   c. "What other books have a main character with the same name as this one?"
   d. "How many pages are in each chapter of this book?"

3. One question a reader can ask to develop a summary is...
   a. "Will this story be made into a movie?"
   b. "What blocks the main character from being successful?"
   c. "What is a different way the author could have ended this story?"
   d. "How long is this book compared to the last one I read?"

▸▸ DIRECTIONS: Write an answer to the question.

4. What kind of details should be included in a summary? Why?

Toolbox Sample

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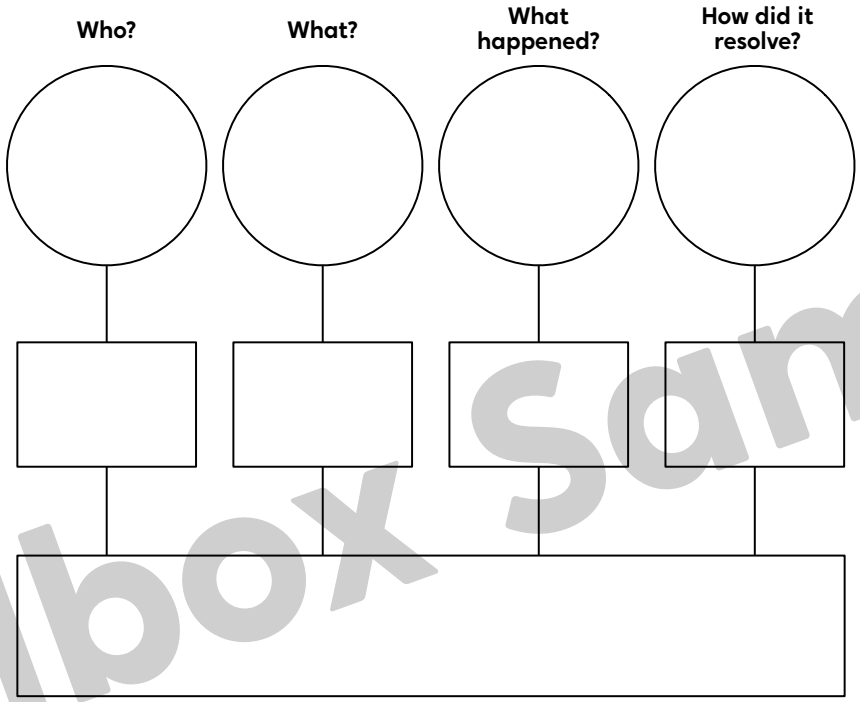
5. When a reader asks, "Is my summary concise?" the reader is thinking about...
   a. the length of the summary.
   b. the first sentence of the summary.
   c. the capital letters and periods in the summary.
   d. whether to use a pen or a pencil to write the summary.

►► DIRECTIONS: Use this Summary Balloons (Fiction) tool to respond to the following questions. *You need crayons or colored pencils for these questions.*



6. Where would a reader record details (not sentences) about the main character? Color that space **blue**.

7. Where would a reader record details (not sentences) about a character's goal or problem? Color that space **red**.

8. Where would a reader write one or two sentences (not just details) about a story's main events? Color that space **green**.

9. Where would a reader write one or two sentences (not just details) about a story's resolution? Color that space **yellow**.

10. Where would a reader combine sentences to write a summary? Color that space **orange**.

Toolbox Sample

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Toolbox Sample

Grade 4 · **Unit 1**

Central Idea, Main Ideas, and Supporting Details

plus Summarization

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

In their academic reading, students will use the skill of identifying main ideas, supporting details, and central ideas more than any other comprehension skill. This is a critical skill for comprehending nonfiction text, especially informational texts such as textbooks.

A main idea is a statement of the primary idea an author wants to communicate in a paragraph. A supporting detail is information that explains, defines, or proves a main idea. A central idea is a statement of an overarching idea that is explained, defined, or proven by main ideas. Supporting details support main ideas; main ideas support central ideas.

Identifying main ideas helps a reader get to the heart of a paragraph or section of text. It helps a reader recognize the key points an author makes. Identifying supporting details helps a reader evaluate the strength of an author's key points. Together, these help a reader know what and how an author is communicating. This then enables a reader to identify the central idea, or overarching concept, of a text. The better a reader understands the relationship between these levels of idea hierarchy, the more deeply he/she will comprehend the text.

When thinking about main ideas, supporting details, and central idea, a reader develops a structure known as an Extended Idea Framework. It shows the reader's thinking about how main ideas, supporting details, and a central idea relate to one another.

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In Grade 4, the concept of a central idea is introduced. The Extended Idea Framework is used to organize main ideas, supporting details, and a central idea. This visual provides material for the students' work with Summary Balloons in the Additional Emphasis. The flow from identifying key ideas to summarizing should be natural.

PATTERN

Something large can be supported by smaller things.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected nonfiction text, each student identifies the central idea, its supporting main ideas, and the supporting details of those main ideas. [For example: Lions are complex animals (central idea). Lions are carnivores (main idea). Lions hunt gazelle (supporting detail). Lions live in groups called prides (main idea). Prides may consist of both adult and young lions (supporting detail). Lions are cats (main idea). Lions, leopards, and domestic cats are all members of the same animal family (supporting detail).]

PROCESS

Main Ideas

- Who or what is this paragraph/passage about?

  For example: Gwen

- What aspects of (the who or what) is this paragraph/passage about?

  For example: Gwen's hobbies

- What does the author want me to know about (the aspect[s]) of (the who or what)?

  For example: Gwen's hobbies are playing chess, reading science fiction books, and kickboxing.

Supporting Details

- What sentences/statements support the main ideas?
  - What examples support the main idea?

    For example: Sometimes Gwen plays more than one chess game at a time! Gwen looks for the thickest books in the science fiction section of the library.

  - What explanations support the main idea?

    Gwen goes to kickboxing class every day after school. She's been kickboxing for three years. She wears special gear that keeps her safe.

Central Idea

- What are the main ideas in this passage?
- What more general idea do the main ideas suggest? What broader statement can be made that is supported by the more specific main ideas?

  For example: Gwen is an interesting person who likes many different activities.

Toolbox Sample

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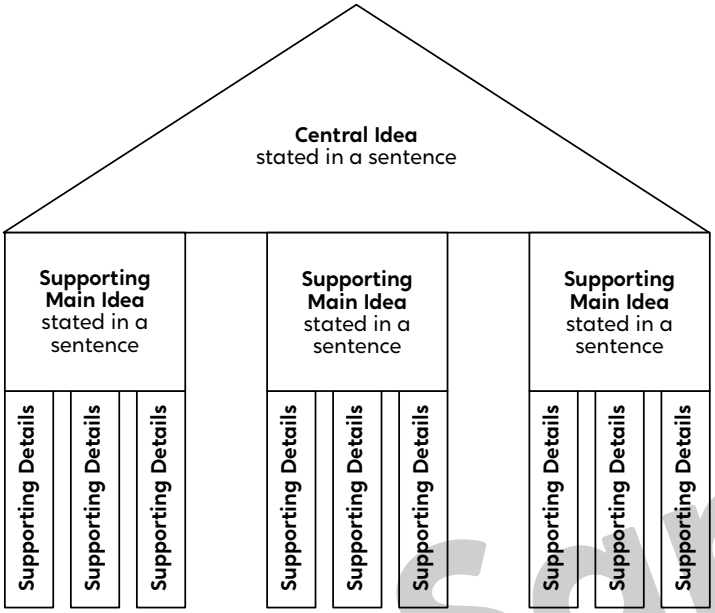
VISUAL TOOL

Extended Idea Framework

Central Idea, Main Ideas, and Supporting Details



RUBRICS

Extended Idea Framework

Central Idea, Main Ideas, and Supporting Details

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student explains the relationship between the central idea, main ideas, and supporting details, demonstrating understanding of how the structure of ideas communicates the author's message	▸ Student independently identifies the main idea and most or all of the supporting details, and the central idea for a teacher-selected passage	▸ Student independently identifies the main idea and most or all of the supporting details for a teacher-selected paragraph or passage ▸ With teacher support, the student identifies the central idea of a teacher-selected passage	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

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Discovery Synopsis			
Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Meets Objective**	**Not Yet**
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Synopsis includes a response to a "discovery," such as a prediction, an insight (e.g., "This story is really about..."), or a presentation of the essence (e.g., use of a hashtag: "NotWhoYouThinkHeIs)	▸ Synopsis includes at least one new idea—a "discovery" (e.g., relationship/ connection between visual tool elements) sparked by the student's thinking about the text through development of the visual tool	▸ Synopsis restates what is obvious on the visual tool	▸ Synopsis is missing, incomplete, or has no obvious connection to the visual tool

ADDITIONAL SKILL EMPHASIS ▸ *plus* Summarization (Nonfiction)

Summarizing helps equip students for academic success. "Serving as both a mirror and a sieve, summarization enables students to freely explore ideas and analyze them. It can improve student learning and increase student success in all grade levels and in all disciplines" (Wormeli, 2005).

In Grade 4, Summary Balloons (Nonfiction) are used to practice the skill of summarization. Words or phrases identifying the subject and its defining characteristics, aspects with connecting details, and additional details are noted in the balloons. Sentences describing the balloons are written in the boxes underneath. These sentences are combined to form a summary.

During the CCS, work on group-developed summaries, having the students refer to their Extended Idea Frameworks to contribute to the collaborative Summary Balloons. Remember that this is the Additional Emphasis. The students will not be tested on summarizing nonfiction. However, once it is taught, encourage use of the skill in other disciplines with textbook readings.

OBJECTIVE: SUMMARIZATION (NONFICTION)

Given a teacher-selected nonfiction text and teacher-identified central idea, each student writes a summary of the text.

PROCESS

- What is the central idea of this text?
- What are the topics (the who or what) of the supporting main ideas?
- What are the most important or strongest supporting details for each main idea?

Toolbox Sample

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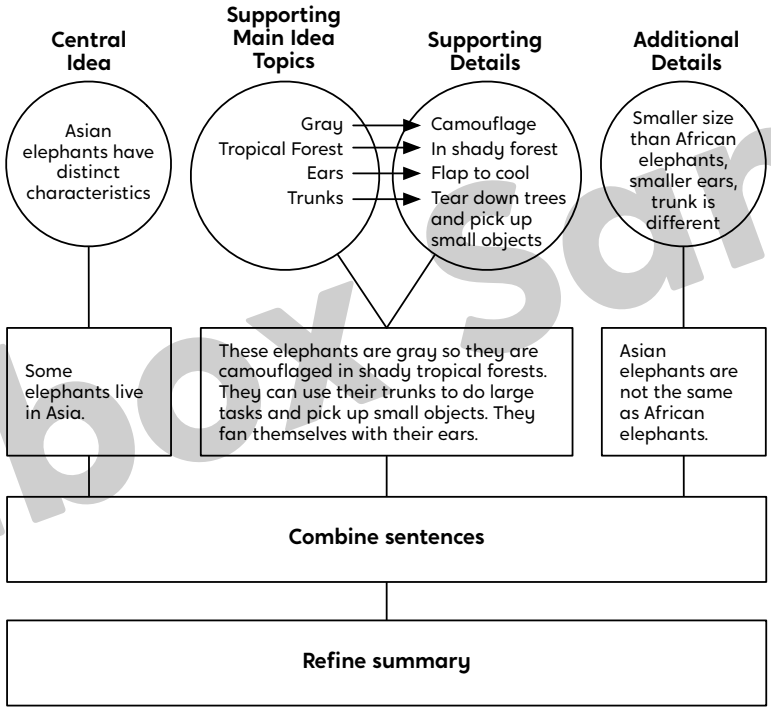
- Are other details from the text important? Will any other details make my summary clearer, more complete, or more interesting?
- How can I restate these ideas in my own words? Write the restatements in sentences.
- How can I combine these sentences to create a summary of the text?
- Read the summary. What words can I use to connect ideas and to clarify my summary (e.g., *after*, *first*)?
- Is my summary clear? Is my summary concise?

VISUAL TOOL

Summary Balloons (Nonfiction)

Summarization



Toolbox Sample

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RUBRIC (for formative use only)

Summary Balloons (Nonfiction) Summary			
Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Meets Objective**	**Not Yet**
▶ Proficient, plus... ▶ Student's summary is clear and concise; student uses tools, such as transition words, to connect ideas	▶ Meets Objective, plus... ▶ Student's summary clearly connects the central idea, main ideas, and supporting details; each idea obviously connects to another in the summary	▶ Student identifies the central and main ideas and most important supporting details of the text ▶ Relationship between the visual tool and the student's summary is obvious	▶ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

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Name Date

Unit 1

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT

Central Idea, Main Ideas, and Supporting Details

▸▸ DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

1. What is a **main** idea?
   a. a thought about something you can see on Main Street
   b. the primary idea an author wants to communicate in a paragraph
   c. a detail that supports an idea
   d. the first sentence in the first paragraph of a book

2. One question a reader can use to find a **main** idea is...
   a. Where does this story take place?
   b. Who are the characters in the story?
   c. How many pages are there in this book?
   d. Who or what is this paragraph about?

3. One question a reader can use to find a **main idea** is...
   a. What happened first?
   b. What does the author want me to know about that aspect of the who or what?
   c. What does the character look like?
   d. What is the turning point that leads to the story's ending?

4. A **supporting detail** is...
   a. information that explains, defines, or proves a main idea
   b. information that is about a different topic than the main idea
   c. any information a person finds on the internet
   d. information about a character's looks or actions

5. A **central idea** of a text is...
   a. the reader's favorite idea in a text.
   b. the idea that is in the middle sentence of a paragraph.
   c. an overarching idea that is explained, defined, or proven in a text.
   d. an idea found in the middle of a page in a text.

6. One question a reader can ask to help identify a central idea is...
   a. What more general idea do the main ideas suggest?
   b. Which idea is closest to the middle of the page?
   c. What is my favorite idea from this text?
   d. What is the least important detail in this text?

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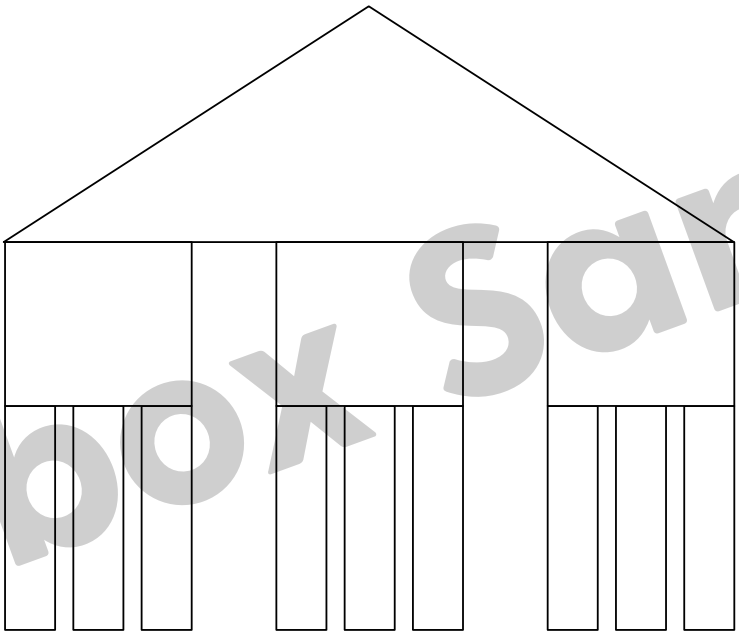
Toolbox Sample

►► DIRECTIONS: Write an answer to the question.

7. How does recognizing main ideas and supporting details help a reader understand a text?

►► DIRECTIONS: Use this Extended Idea Framework to respond to the following questions.
You need crayons or colored pencils for these questions.



8. Where does the **central idea** of a text passage get recorded? Color that space **blue**.

9. Where do the **supporting main ideas** get recorded? Color one of those spaces **red**.

10. Where do **supporting ideas** get recorded? Color one of those spaces **green**.

Toolbox Sample

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Grade 4 · **Unit 2**

Cause & Effect

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

Comprehending cause and effect is understanding the source(s) behind events and the results of preceding sources. It involves more than concrete elements: character goals, motivations, and responses often act as causes. Cause and effect also plays a role in making predictions, a skill effective readers apply while reading.

Thinking about cause and effect helps a reader identify relationships between events in a story, and between characters and events in a story. It provides a reader with a deeper understanding of a story than sequence of events alone.

When a reader thinks about cause and effect, he/she may identify and organize the relationships in a way that shows how an event can have multiple cause, or a single cause can have multiple effects. The tool a reader may develop for this is the Cause & Effect Multi-Flow Chart.

In Grade 4, students explore the relationships of multiple causes and multiple effects, recognizing that multiple elements (e.g., events, character motivations) can merge to create an effect, and that one effect can serve as a cause for multiple events that follow. The Cause & Effect Multi-Flow Chart organizes multiple causes (noted in boxes) leading to an effect (noted in a circle) or a single cause (noted in a box), leading to multiple effects (noted in circles). The more students can track these relationships throughout a book, the greater their comprehension of the text will be. You may need to frequently remind the students that they are tracking cause and effect, not sequence of events.

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PATTERN

Several things together can make another thing happen, and one thing alone can make several things happen.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected text, each student identifies a cause and multiple effects of it; given a teacher-selected text, each student identifies multiple causes contributing to an effect.

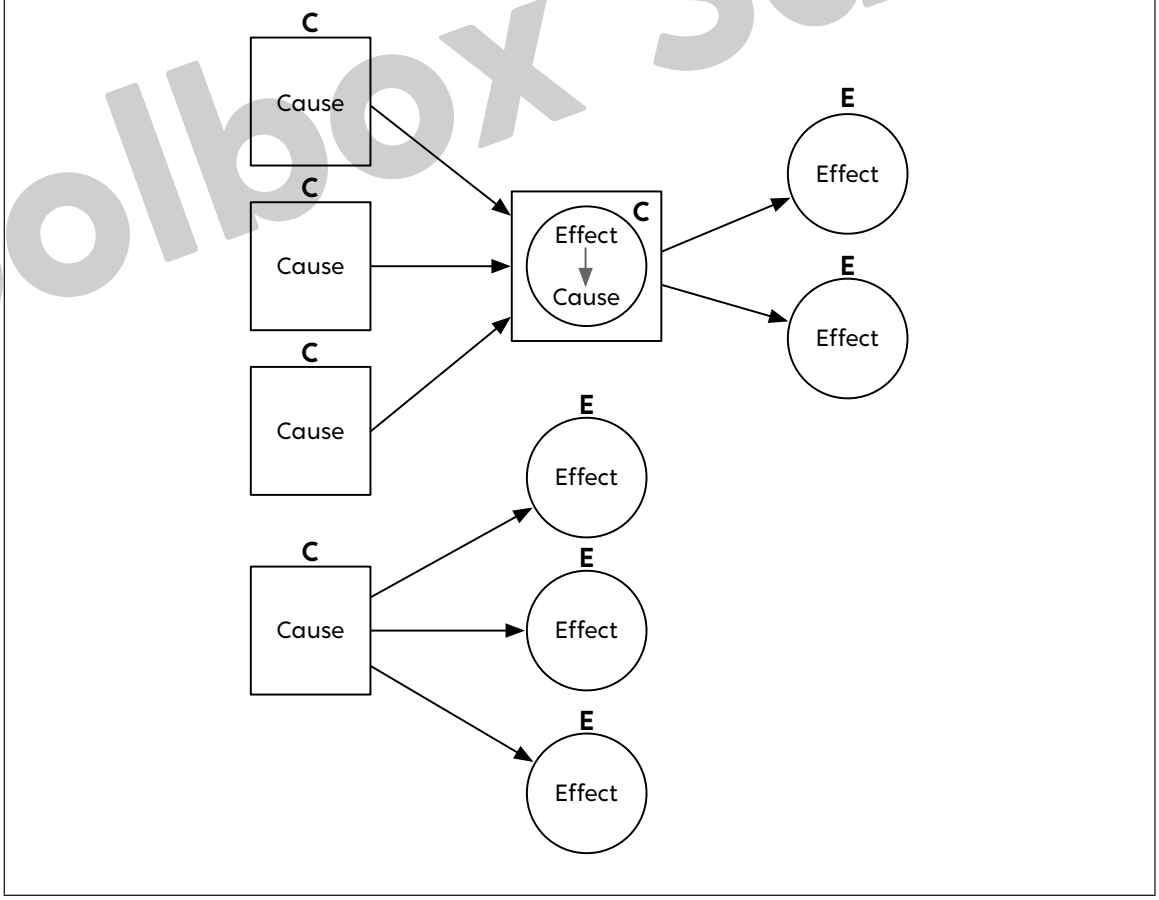
PROCESS

- What happened? (effect) What made it happen? (cause)
- Did that effect cause something else to happen? (Repeat to identify all following effects.)
- Is there a chain of causes and effects with some effects becoming causes for events that follow? If so, how did it start? "Because this happened, that happened, and because that happened, this happened..."
- Does a character want, think, or believe something that causes or is one cause of an event?
- How does the chain of causes and effects influence the story?

VISUAL TOOL

Cause & Effect Multi-Flow Chart

Cause & Effect



Toolbox Sample

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RUBRICS

Cause & Effect Multi-Flow Chart Cause & Effect			
Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Meets Objective**	**Not Yet**
▶ Proficient, plus... ▶ Student identifies a character's wants, thoughts, or beliefs as a cause of at least one event	▶ Student includes a flow chart with at least three steps, showing a chain of causes and effects and how multiple causes can have an effect that, in turn, becomes a cause, or how multiple effects can have a single cause	▶ Student identifies at least one cause with multiple effects OR ▶ Student identifies at least one effect with multiple causes	▶ Anything less than Meets Objective

Discovery Synopsis			
Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Meets Objective**	**Not Yet**
▶ Proficient, plus... ▶ Synopsis includes a response to a "discovery," such as a prediction, an insight (e.g., "This story is really about..."), or a presentation of the essence (e.g., use of a hashtag: "NotWhoYouThinkHeIs)	▶ Synopsis includes at least one new idea—a "discovery" (e.g., relationship/ connection between visual tool elements) sparked by the student's thinking about the text through development of the visual tool	▶ Synopsis restates what is obvious on the visual tool	▶ Synopsis is missing, incomplete, or has no obvious connection to the visual tool

Toolbox Sample

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Name Date

Unit 2

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT

Cause & Effect

▸▸ DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

1. "Several things that come together can make another thing happen" is illustrated by...
   a. one effect that has only one cause.
   b. the appearance of a story's main character.
   c. more than one cause making an event happen.
   d. the place where a story happens.

2. What is a *cause*?
   a. Something, like an event, that makes another thing happen
   b. Something, like an event, that happens because of something else
   c. Something that never happens
   d. Someone who is related to you

3. One question a reader can use to identify cause and effect is...
   a. Where did this story happen?
   b. Who are the characters in this story?
   c. Who or what is this paragraph about?
   d. Did that effect cause something else to happen?

4. Does a character want, think, or believe something that is a cause for an event? This question can help a reader...
   a. identify something other than an event being a cause.
   b. identify the main character of a story.
   c. identify an event that does not have a cause.
   d. identify the author of a story.

▸▸ DIRECTIONS: Write an answer to the question.

5. How does recognizing causes and effects help a reader understand a story?

Toolbox Sample

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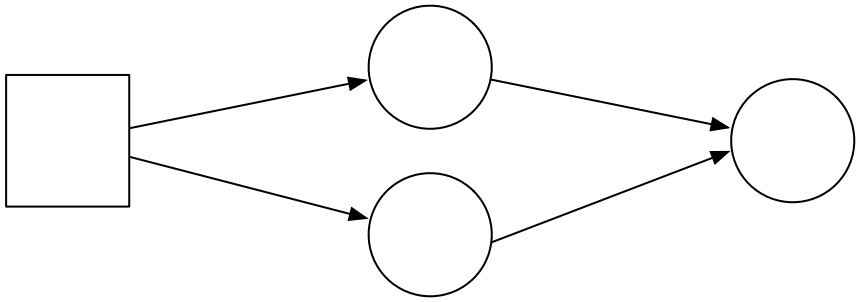
►► DIRECTIONS: Use this Cause & Effect Multi-Flow Chart to respond to the following questions. *You need crayons or colored pencils for these questions.*



6. Where would an effect **that is only an effect** be on this example? Color that space **blue**.

7. Where would a cause **that is only a cause** be on this example? Color that space **red**.

8. Where would an effect that becomes a cause be on this example? How would you show that the effect became a cause? **Draw what is needed to show the effect that becomes a cause in this example.**

►► DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

9. Which of these is a complete statement of cause **and** effect?
   a. I went to the store, and then I went to the library.
   b. Because it was raining.
   c. After the thunderstorm, we rode our bikes to the park.
   d. Because we were late we did not see our team score the first goal.

10. Which of these is a statement of cause **and** effect?
   a. We got on the bus and traveled to school.
   b. Because you answered all the questions, you have finished the test.
   c. First, I washed the car, and then I mowed the lawn.
   d. My dog dug a hole in the backyard, and then he came inside.

Toolbox Sample

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Toolbox Sample

Grade 5 · **Unit 1**

Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, and Summarization

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

In their academic reading, students will use the skill of identifying main ideas and supporting details more than any other comprehension skill. This is a critical skill for comprehending nonfiction text, especially informational texts such as textbooks. Relatedly, summarizing may be the most effective skill for building understanding and memory of nonfiction material. Together, these skills give students powerful tools for success with content area reading.

A main idea is a statement of the primary idea an author wants to communicate in a paragraph. A supporting detail is information that explains, defines, or proves a main idea. A central idea is a statement of an overarching idea that is explained, defined, or proven by main ideas of a passage. Supporting details support main ideas; main ideas support central ideas.

Identifying main ideas helps a reader get to the heart of a paragraph or section of text. It helps a reader recognize the key points an author makes. Identifying supporting details helps a reader evaluate the strength of an author's key points. Together, these help a reader know what and how an author is communicating. This then enables a reader to identify the central idea, or overarching concept, of a text. The better a reader understands the relationship between these levels of idea

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hierarchy, the more deeply he/she will comprehend the text. Converting these ideas into one's own words via summarizing promotes deep comprehension and helps construct lasting memory of the material.

When thinking about main ideas, supporting details, and central idea, a reader develops a structure known as an Extended Idea Framework with Summary. It shows the reader's thinking about how main ideas, supporting details, and a central idea relate to one another. It then reveals the reader's thinking in his/her own words about the critical ideas from the text.

In Grade 5, the skill of identifying central idea, main ideas, supporting details, and summarization builds on a similar unit in Grade 4, where layers of ideas and supporting details were introduced. This repetition is intentional; the skill is critical for student academic success. However, in that unit, summarization was an "Added Emphasis." In Grade 5, summarization is part of the primary instructional focus.

As students begin working with the skill, consider having them complete all but the summary independently. Then, in the CCS, work collaboratively to develop group summaries, offering support and direction as needed. Decrease this support as the unit continues until students are writing summaries independently in preparation for the CCS.

PATTERN

Something large can be supported by smaller things.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected nonfiction text, each student identifies the central idea, its supporting main ideas, and the supporting details of those main ideas. [For example: Lions are complex animals (central idea). Lions are carnivores (main idea). Lions hunt gazelle (supporting detail). Lions live in groups called prides (main idea). Prides may consist of both adult and young lions (supporting detail). Lions are cats (main idea). Lions, leopards, and domestic cats are all members of the same animal family (supporting detail).] Each student uses the resulting ideas and structure to write a summary of the passage.

PROCESS

Main Ideas

- Who or what is this paragraph/passage about?

  For example: Gwen

- What aspects of (the who or what) is this paragraph/passage about?

  For example: Gwen's hobbies

- What does the author want me to know about (the aspect[s]) of (the who or what)?

  For example: Gwen's hobbies are playing chess, reading science fiction books, and kickboxing.

Supporting Details

- What sentences/statements support the main ideas?
  - What examples support the main idea?

    For example: Sometimes Gwen plays more than one chess game at a time! Gwen looks for the thickest books in the science fiction section of the library.

  - What explanations support the main idea?

    Gwen goes to kickboxing class every day after school. She's been kickboxing for three years. She wears special gear that keeps her safe.

Toolbox Sample

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Central Idea

- What are the main ideas in this passage?
- What more general idea do the main ideas suggest? What broader statement can be made that is supported by the more specific main ideas?

  For example: Gwen is an interesting person who likes many different activities.

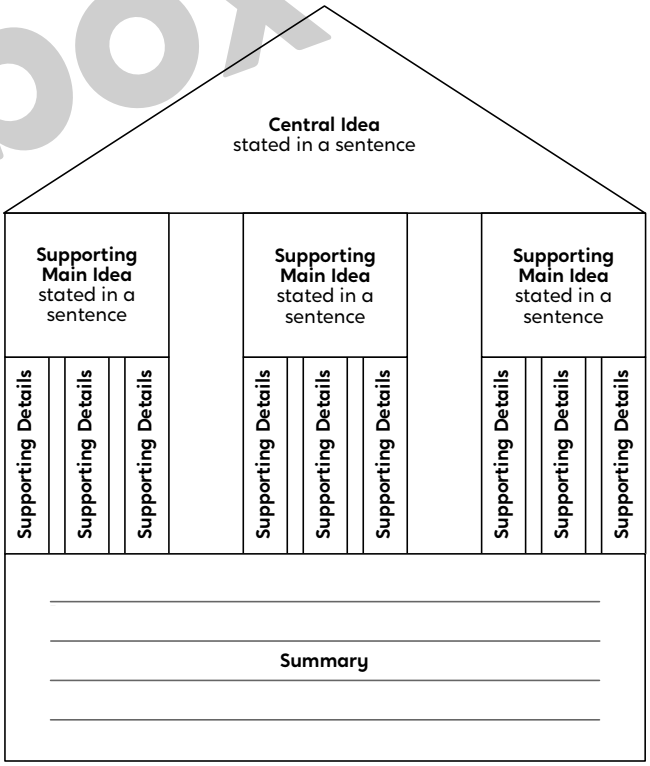
Summary

- What is the central idea of this text?
- What are the topics (the who or what) of the supporting main ideas?
- What are the most important or strongest supporting details for each main idea?
- Are other details from the text important? Will any other details make my summary clearer, more complete, or more interesting?
- How can I restate these ideas in my own words? Write the restatements in sentences.
- How can I combine these sentences to create a summary of the text?
- Read the summary. What words can I use to connect ideas and to clarify my summary (e.g., *after*, *first*)?
- Is my summary clear? Is my summary concise?

VISUAL TOOL

Extended Idea Framework with Summary

Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, Summarization



Toolbox Sample

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RUBRICS

Extended Idea Framework with Summary Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, Summarization			
Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Meets Objective**	**Not Yet**
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student includes most or all of the supporting details provided by the text; visual tool captures and structures most or all the important information from the text	▸ Student identifies the central idea, all supporting main ideas, and multiple supporting details provided by the text	▸ Student identifies the central idea, at least two supporting main ideas, and more than one supporting detail for each supporting main idea from a teacher-selected, multi-paragraph text	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Summary Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, Summarization			
Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Meets Objective**	**Not Yet**
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student includes additional, logical, supporting details that clarify the summary, including some that may be inferred from the text (e.g., charred trees on the side of an erupting volcano)	▸ Student's summary includes the central idea, all supporting main ideas, and multiple supporting details ▸ Student summary includes transition words (e.g., *after*, *first*) to clarify relationships of ideas in the summary	▸ Student combines ideas from the visual tool to create a summary of the passage, including the central idea, at least two supporting main ideas, and more than one supporting detail for each supporting main idea	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

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Name Date

Unit 1

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT

Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, and Summarization

►► DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

1. What is a **central** idea of a text?
   a. an overarching idea that is explained, defined, or proven by main ideas
   b. a detail that supports a main idea
   c. the middle sentence of a paragraph
   d. a section of text that reviews all the ideas that were already presented

2. One question a reader can use to find a **central** idea is...
   a. What explanations support the main idea?
   b. What is the title of this book?
   c. What more general idea do the main ideas suggest?
   d. Who is the author of this paragraph?

3. One question a reader can use to **develop a summary** is...
   a. What time was it when I finished reading this text?
   b. How old was the author when he/she wrote this text?
   c. Which graphic in the text is the most colorful?
   d. What are the most important or strongest supporting details for each main idea?

4. A **supporting detail** is...
   a. information about the author that you find at the end of the book.
   b. information that disagrees with the author's central idea.
   c. information that can only be found on the internet.
   d. information that explains, defines, or proves a main idea.

►► DIRECTIONS: Write an answer to the question.

5. How does recognizing a central idea and supporting main ideas help a reader understand a text?

Toolbox Sample

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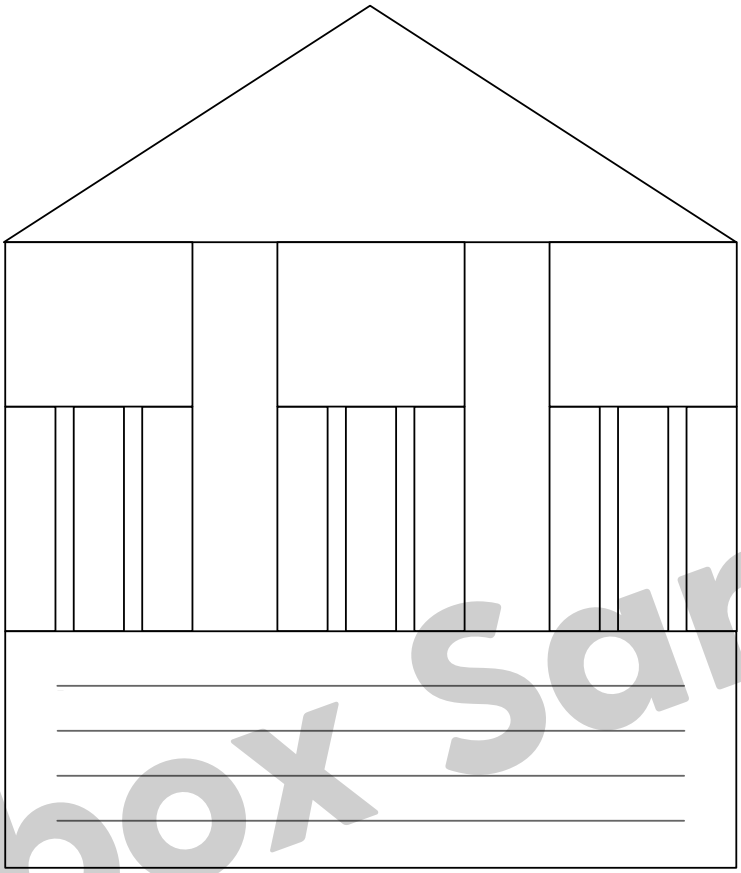
►► DIRECTIONS: Use this Extended Idea Framework with Summary to respond to the following questions. *You need crayons or colored pencils for these questions.*



6. Where does the **central idea** of a text passage get recorded? Color that space **blue**.

7. Where do the **supporting main ideas** get recorded? Color one of those spaces **red**.

8. Where do **supporting ideas** get recorded? Color one of those spaces **green**.

9. What goes in the lowest section of the visual tool?

►► DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

10. A **good** summary...
    a. includes the main ideas and most important supporting details of a text.
    b. has no connection to the text passage being summarized.
    c. is longer than the original text passage.
    d. includes ideas and details about other topics not covered by the text.

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Toolbox Sample

Grade 5 · **Unit 2**

Character

plus Setting

SKILL DESCRIPTION

Characters play a major role in establishing a work's theme. They often grow and change throughout a text as a result of interactions with other characters. By recognizing and considering such interactions, a reader builds a deeper understanding of a character, comprehending the character's growth and what sparks it. These connections between a character's growth and its causes often provide direction for identifying a work's theme.

However, other characters are not the only influences on characters. Events, places, and other things like memories can influence a character. The fullest understanding results from considering all the influences on a character throughout a text.

The main visual tool for this unit is the Cuneo Starburst. However, the Perspective Cloud can spark valuable thinking when the reading material lends itself to it. Upon conclusion of a text, the Chips-n-Salsa and Holliday Rainbow visual tools are excellent for helping the students consider the totality of a character's change/growth and the influences that led to it. (Keep in mind that any of these can be the focus of CCS interactions. For example, the students may develop a Cuneo Starburst in their SPECS Logs, and then work collaboratively on a Perspective Cloud during CCS.) For portions of text with limited character interactions, the original Character Bubble Map (Grade 3, Unit 5) can be substituted for SPECS Log assignments.

A second character-related objective addresses major, minor, and secondary character classification. A major character is a main character. This may be a protagonist or antagonist. Many stories are told from a major character's perspective. A secondary character is one that appears multiple times throughout a text. The story is not about a secondary character, but these characters likely have significant influence on the major characters. Minor characters have very limited presence in a text. They may show up in a scene or two but generally fill "necessary" functions—e.g., the store has to have a storekeeper. Students may indicate major, minor, and secondary characters by the size of the circles on the Cuneo Starburst.

Setting also influences a character. This can be obvious, such as a character trying to survive being lost in a harsh environment, or it can be more subtle, such as a character's thinking about changing loyalties during a time of conflict. More than time, place, and mood, students can start to view setting as having sway on characters and events. (See Additional Emphasis for more details.)

Toolbox Sample

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PATTERN

Interactions spark changes.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected text, each student identifies and supports, using text passages, the following elements of character: appearance, actions, dialogue, thoughts, connections of thoughts or feelings to actions, differing perspectives among characters, connections between characters, and changes/development of characters throughout the text.

PROCESS

Character Bubble Map

- Who is in this story?
- What does the character look like?
- What does the character do? (actions)
- What does the character say? (dialogue)
- What thoughts/feelings does the character have?
- How do the character's thoughts/feelings and actions connect?
- Do connections between the character's thoughts/feelings, dialogue, appearance, and/or actions suggest a certain trait?
- What elements of the main character's thoughts/feelings, dialogue, appearance, and/or actions are significant?

Perspective Cloud

- What does a character believe about what is good, desirable, or worthwhile? What values does the character seem to have?
- How does the character view this event? What section of the text supports this?
- Do any of the character's values seem related to how he/she views the event?
- Does another character have a different perspective of that event? What is that character's perspective?

Cuneo Starburst

- How is Character A related/connected to Character B? How do these characters interact?
- Does this interaction influence this character? If so, how?
- What other influences affect the character's values and beliefs?
- Is this character a major character, the focus of the story? Is this character a secondary character, not the focus but one that appears multiple times and is a likely influence on the main character? Is this character a minor character, only a necessary character in a few scenes of the story?

Toolbox Sample

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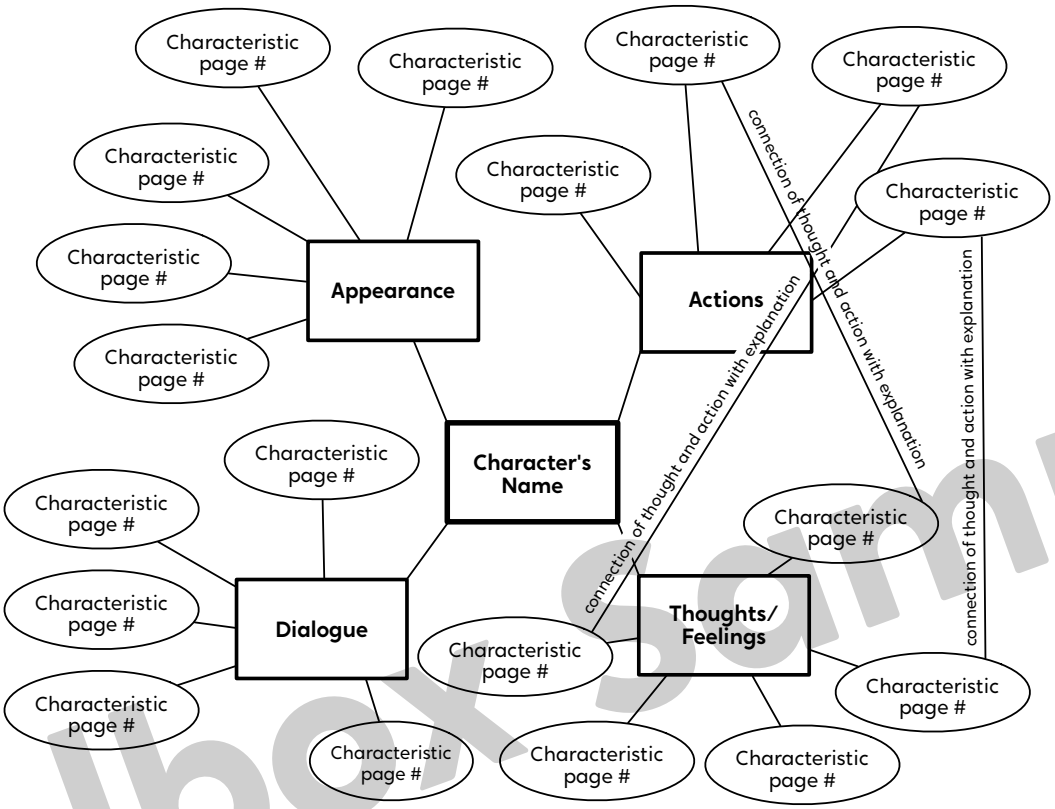
VISUAL TOOLS

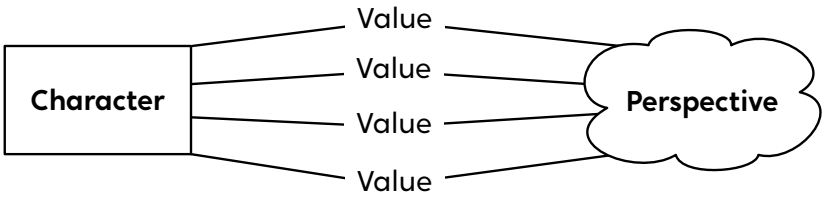
Character Bubble Map

Character



Perspective Cloud

Character



Toolbox Sample

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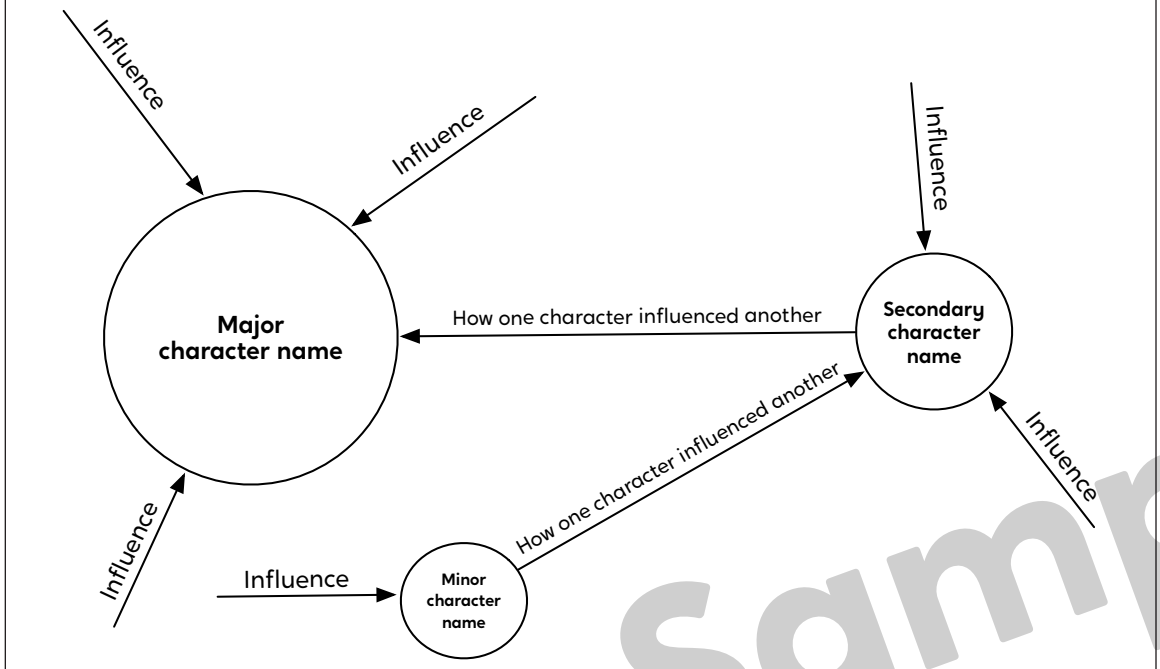
Cuneo Starburst
Character



RUBRICS

Cuneo Starburst
Character

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student presents a thorough organization of the interactions in the text. No significant interactions are missing from the visual tool.	▸ Meets Objective, plus... ▸ Student identifies interactions and other influences that are significant—i.e., the influences have an impact on the character's values and beliefs, not just the character's circumstances	▸ Student identifies interactions between characters ▸ Student identifies at least one other (non-interaction) influence on at least one major character ▸ Student identifies characters as major, secondary, or minor (via size of the circle/oval around character's name)	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

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Discovery Synopsis			
Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Meets Objective**	**Not Yet**
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Synopsis includes a response to a "discovery," such as a prediction, an insight (e.g., "This story is really about..."), or a presentation of the essence (e.g., use of a hashtag: "NotWhoYouThinkHeIs)	▸ Synopsis includes at least one new idea—a "discovery" (e.g., relationship/ connection between visual tool elements) sparked by the student's thinking about the text through development of the visual tool	▸ Synopsis restates what is obvious on the visual tool	▸ Synopsis is missing, incomplete, or has no obvious connection to the visual tool

ADDITIONAL SKILL EMPHASIS ▸ *plus* Setting

Setting frequently does more than provide a backdrop for a story.

In Grade 5, the skill focuses on the influence setting can have on a character's values and beliefs, and/ or growth and change. The Bubbled Flow Chart provides the basis for analyzing setting, but findings from it may be transferred to the Cuneo Starburst as students recognize setting as an influence. Such movement between the visual tools should be encouraged.

OBJECTIVE

Given teacher-selected text, each student identifies the time and place of a story's event, the importance of the setting to the story, contribution to the story's conflict and mood, and the nature of the influence the setting has on a character's values and beliefs, and growth or change.

PROCESS

- Where does this event take place? When does this event take place?
- How do I know that is where and when this event takes place? Does the text say so? If not, what clues am I using to figure out the setting?
- What are the main characteristics of the setting? How would I describe the setting beyond its time and place?
- How is the setting important to the story? How does the setting affect the decisions or actions of the characters?
- What feelings are generated by the setting of this event? What is the mood?
- How does the mood change from one event to the next?
- What is the overall mood for this section? for the entire story?
- How does the setting influence a character's values and beliefs? How does the setting influence a character's growth and change throughout the text?

Toolbox Sample

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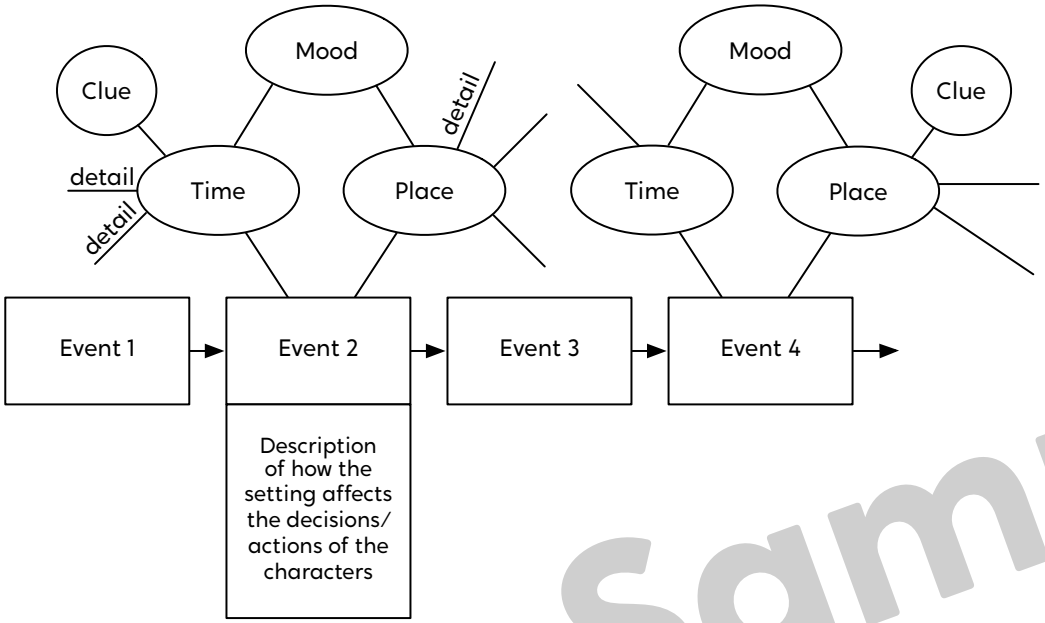
VISUAL TOOL

Bubbled Flow Chart
Character



RUBRIC (for formative use only)

Bubbled Flow Chart
Character

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student makes frequent entries on the Cuneo Starburst that reference the influence of setting—the student demonstrates an awareness of a setting's influence throughout a text	▸ Meets Objective, plus... ▸ Student identifies one way the setting acts as an influence on a character's values and beliefs or growth and change	▸ Student identifies and supports, using text passages, the time and place of the story's events ▸ Student identifies the mood of the setting	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

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Name Date

Unit 2

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT
Character

►► DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

1. "Interactions spark changes." What does this pattern have to do with understanding the characters in a text?
   a. As characters interact, they may influence each other's values or beliefs.
   b. Characters can only interact on the 4th of July.
   c. A character can only grow when he/she is alone.
   d. When characters interact, nothing important happens.

2. A **major** character is...
   a. a character who does not say or do anything throughout a story.
   b. a character who has a very limited presence in a text.
   c. a main character who is the focus of the story.
   d. an imaginary character.

3. A **secondary** character is...
   a. a character who is not the main character but appears multiple times throughout a text.
   b. a character who has very limited presence in a text.
   c. a main character.
   d. an imaginary character.

4. One question a reader can ask to think deeply about character is...
   a. What is the mood of this scene in the story?
   b. Who is the author of this story?
   c. Where else could this story have taken place?
   d. What influences affect the character's values and beliefs?

5. The influences on a character...
   a. can't be understood by a reader.
   b. can only be positive.
   c. can only be negative.
   d. may cause a character to grow or change throughout a story.

Toolbox Sample

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►► DIRECTIONS: Write an answer to the question.

6. How can paying attention to the influences on a character help a reader?

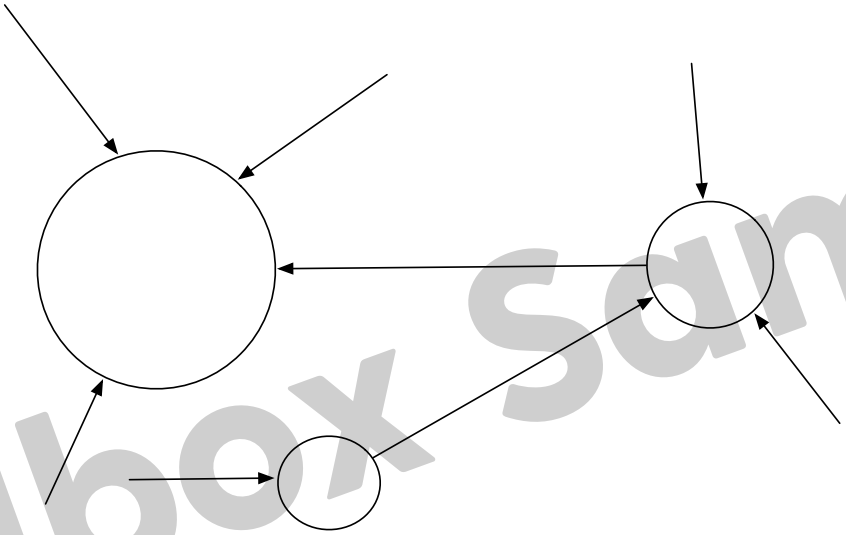
_____

_____

_____

_____

►► DIRECTIONS: Use this Cuneo Starburst to respond to the following questions. *You need crayons or colored pencils for these questions*.



7. Which space would feature a **secondary** character's name? Color that space **blue**.

8. Which space would feature a **major** character's name? Color that **red**.

9. Which lines show interaction **between characters**? Trace one of those lines **green**.

10. Which lines show other influences? Trace one of those lines **yellow**.

Toolbox Sample

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Grade 6 · **Unit 1**

Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, and Summarization

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

In their academic reading, students will use the skill of identifying main ideas and supporting details more than any other comprehension skill. This is a critical skill for comprehending nonfiction text, especially informational texts such as textbooks. Relatedly, summarizing may be the most effective skill for building understanding and memory of nonfiction material. Together, these skills give students powerful tools for success with content area reading.

A main idea is a statement of the primary idea an author wants to communicate in a paragraph. A supporting detail is information that explains, defines, or proves a main idea. A central idea is a statement of an overarching idea that is explained, defined, or proven by main ideas of a passage. Supporting details support main ideas; main ideas support central ideas.

Identifying main ideas helps a reader get to the heart of a paragraph or section of text. It helps a reader recognize the key points an author makes. Identifying supporting details helps a reader evaluate the strength of an author's key points. Together, these help a reader know what and how

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an author is communicating. This then enables a reader to identify the central idea, or overarching concept, of a text. The better a reader understands the relationship between these levels of idea hierarchy, the more deeply he/she will comprehend the text. Converting these ideas into one's own words via summarizing promotes deep comprehension and helps construct lasting memory of the material.

When thinking about main ideas, supporting details, and central idea, a reader develops a structure known as an Extended Idea Framework with Summary. It shows the reader's thinking about how main ideas, supporting details, and a central idea relate to one another. It then reveals the reader's thinking in his/her own words about the critical ideas from the text.

In Grade 6, the skill of identifying main idea and supporting details builds on similar units in Grades 4-5, where layers of ideas and supporting details resulting in a summary were emphasized. This repetition is intentional; the skill is critical for student academic success. The Extended Idea Framework is used to organize the central idea, main ideas, and supporting details. It is also the tool used for summarization. The skills are closely related, and moving from main idea and supporting details to summarization should flow naturally. The Discovery Synopsis rubric is replaced by one focusing on the student's summary for this unit.

PATTERN

Something large can be supported by smaller things.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected nonfiction text, each student identifies the central idea, its supporting main ideas, and the supporting details of those main ideas. [For example: Lions are complex animals (central idea). Lions are carnivores (main idea). Lions hunt gazelle (supporting detail). Lions live in groups called prides (main idea). Prides may consist of both adult and young lions (supporting detail). Lions are cats (main idea). Lions, leopards, and domestic cats are all members of the same animal family (supporting detail).] Each student uses the resulting ideas and structure to write a summary of the passage.

PROCESS

Main Ideas

- Who or what is this paragraph/passage about?

  For example: Gwen

- What aspects of (the who or what) is this paragraph/passage about?

  For example: Gwen's hobbies

- What does the author want me to know about (the aspect[s]) of (the who or what)?

  For example: Gwen's hobbies are playing chess, reading science fiction books, and kickboxing.

Supporting Details

- What sentences/statements support the main ideas?
  - What examples support the main idea?

    For example: Sometimes Gwen plays more than one chess game at a time! Gwen looks for the thickest books in the science fiction section of the library.

  - What explanations support the main idea?

    Gwen goes to kickboxing class every day after school. She's been kickboxing for three years. She wears special gear that keeps her safe.

Toolbox Sample

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Central Idea

- What are the main ideas in this passage?
- What more general idea do the main ideas suggest? What broader statement can be made that is supported by the more specific main ideas?

  For example: Gwen is an interesting person who likes many different activities.

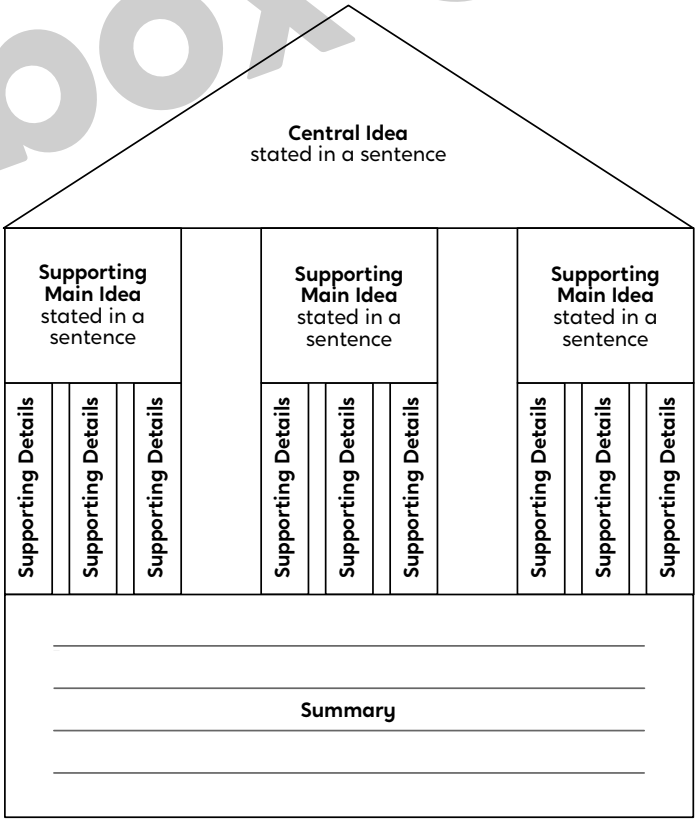
Summary

- What is the central idea of this text?
- What are the topics (the who or what) of the supporting main ideas?
- What are the most important or strongest supporting details for each main idea?
- Are other details from the text important? Will any other details make my summary clearer, more complete, or more interesting?
- How can I restate these ideas in my own words? Write the restatements in sentences.
- How can I combine these sentences to create a summary of the text?
- Read the summary. What words can I use to connect ideas and to clarify my summary (e.g., *after*, *first*)?
- Is my summary clear? Is my summary concise?

VISUAL TOOL

Extended Idea Framework with Summary

Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, and Summarization



Toolbox Sample

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RUBRICS

Extended Idea Framework with Summary

Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, and Summarization

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student includes most or all of the supporting details provided by the text; the visual tool captures and structures all the important information from the text	▸ Student identifies the central idea, all supporting main ideas, and multiple supporting details from a teacher-selected, multi-paragraph text	▸ Student identifies the central idea, at least two supporting main ideas, and more than one supporting detail for each supporting main idea from a teacher-selected, multi-paragraph text	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Summary

Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, and Summarization

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student includes additional, logical, supporting details that clarify the summary, including some that may be inferred from the text (e.g., charred trees on the side of an erupting volcano)	▸ Student's summary includes the central idea, all supporting main ideas, and multiple supporting details ▸ Student's summary includes transition words (e.g., *after*, *first*) to clarify relationships of ideas in the summary ▸ Student's summary is structured in logical paragraphs	▸ Student combines ideas from the visual tool to create a summary of the passage, including the central idea, at least two supporting main ideas, and more than one supporting detail for each supporting main idea	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

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Name Date

Unit 1

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT

Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, and Summarization

►► DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

1. What is a **central** idea of a text?
   a. A detail that supports a main idea
   b. A memory that distracts the reader from the ideas in the text
   c. The sentence closest to the center of a paragraph
   d. An overarching idea that is explained, defined, or proven by main ideas

2. One question a reader can use to find a **central** idea is...
   a. What broader statement can be made that is supported by the more specific main ideas?
   b. What examples support the main idea?
   c. Which paragraph in this text is the longest?
   d. Where does the author live?

3. One question a reader can use to find a **main** idea is...
   a. What year was this text copyrighted?
   b. What aspect of the *who* or *what* is this paragraph about?
   c. What is the first word of every paragraph?
   d. Why did the author write so many paragraphs about this subject?

4. One question a reader can use to identify **supporting details** is...
   a. How can I combine these sentences to create a summary of the text?
   b. What explanations support the main idea?
   c. Is this detail interesting enough to support the main idea?
   d. Is there a colorful illustration that goes with this detail?

►► DIRECTIONS: Write an answer to the question.

5. How does summarizing nonfiction text help a reader better understand the text?

Toolbox Sample

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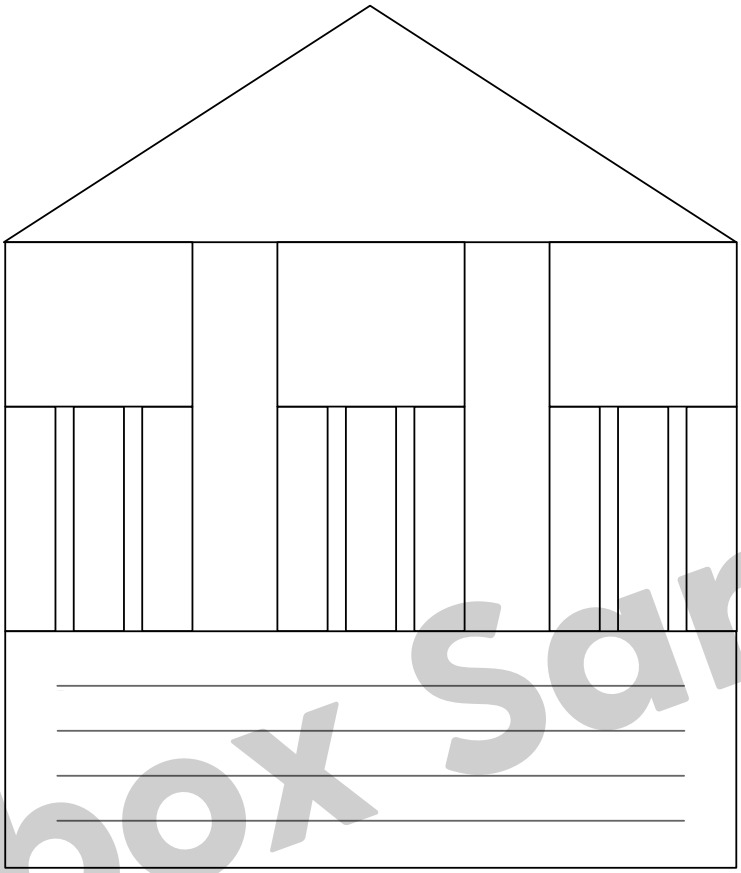
►► DIRECTIONS: Use this Extended Idea Framework to respond to the following questions. *You need crayons or colored pencils for these questions.*



6. Where does the **central idea** of a text passage get recorded? Color that space **red**.

7. Where do the **supporting main ideas** get recorded? Color one of those spaces **yellow**.

8. Where do **supporting details** get recorded? Color one of those spaces **green**.

9. What goes in the lowest section of the visual tool?

►► DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

10. A **great** summary...
    a. is one really long run-on sentence.
    b. includes details that make it clearer, more complete, or more interesting.
    c. is longer than the original text passage.
    d. includes funny and untrue details made up by the summarizer.

Toolbox Sample

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Grade 6 · **Unit 2**

Problem Solving

plus Character

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

Examining the problem-solving or decision-making process of a character reveals several details that deepen comprehension: the options a character considers, the values a character weighs, and the choices a character makes provide insights into the character's thinking. This gives the reader a more complete understanding of the character, and thus the story.

In addition to being a gateway to deepened thinking, understanding the basics of problem solving equips students with a beneficial life skill. Research suggests that studying problem solving boosts student confidence and achievement in multiple academic areas. It also makes students more aware of their own thinking. This enables them to revise and edit their own thought processes. When thinking about a character's problem solving, a reader may organize the choices the character has, the pros and cons of each, the values that the character likely considers, and the decision that is made. These are the building blocks of a Decision-Making Tree.

In Grade 6, the Decision-Making Tree serves as the main visual tool. However, the Perspective Cloud should also be used regularly. When neither applies to an assigned section of text, the students should work with visual tools associated with Character, such as the Cuneo Starburst. (See "Additional Skill Emphasis" for details.)

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PATTERN

Weight can influence direction.

A few illustrations that may be used as an introduction to the pattern (EX-ex) include: a balance scale, or video clips of weight used for steering—such as sleds, toboggans, motorcycles, mountain bikes.

OBJECTIVES

Given a teacher-selected text, each student: 1) identifies a choice to be made or problem to be solved by a character, 2) identifies the relevant facts to that choice or problem to be solved, 3) generates possible choices or solutions, 4) lists the pros and cons of each possible choice/solution, 5) identifies the values guiding the character's thinking about the choice or problem, 6) compares the values of the character with the reader's personal values, beliefs, or principles, 7) identifies the character's choice/solution, 8) identifies the choice the student thinks he/she would make and compares it with the character's choice, and 9) identifies traits of the character revealed by the choice/solution or the decision-making/problem-solving process.

Given a teacher-selected text, each student compares the choice/solution he/she would make with that made by a character. If they differ, the student identifies the support for his/her choice and explores how the events that followed the choice/solution may have been different if the character had made that choice/solution.

PROCESS

- What problem has this character encountered or what decision does this character face? What questions does this character need to answer?
- What facts from the context are relevant to the choice(s) that must be made or the problem that must be solved? What facts does the character need to consider?
- What are the possible choices this character has or possible solutions to the problem?
- What are the pros and cons of each possible choice or solution?
- What values, beliefs, or principles apply to the situation? What, besides relevant facts, should this character consider in making the choice or selecting a solution?

Perspective Cloud

- What does a character believe about what is good, desirable, or worthwhile? What values does the character seem to have?
- How does the character view this event? What section of the text supports this?
- Do any of the character's values seem related to how he/she views the event?
- Does another character have a different perspective of that event? What is that character's perspective?

- Based on this information, what choice would I make or how would I solve the problem? Why?
- What choice does this character make or how does this character solve the problem?
- What is the same and different about my choice/solution and this character's choice/solution?
- What does the choice/solution selected by this character reveal about the character? What do I now know or recognize about the character?
- What events follow the choice/solution? Do they suggest the choice/solution was the best one this character could make?
- Is there a justifiable argument for a different choice/solution? If so, what is that argument? How might that choice/solution have influenced the events that followed?

Toolbox Sample

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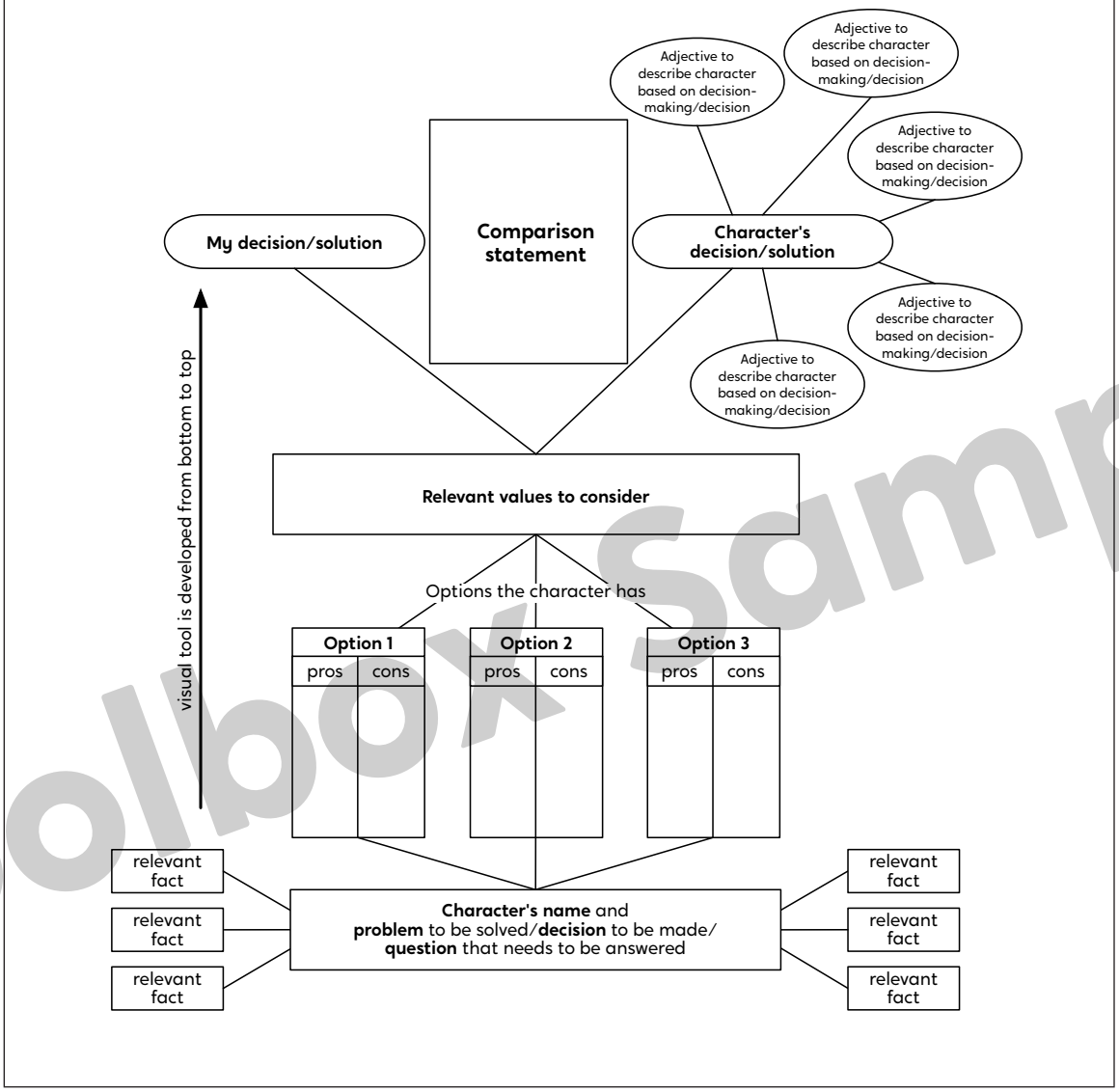
VISUAL TOOLS

Decision-Making Tree

Problem Solving



Toolbox Sample

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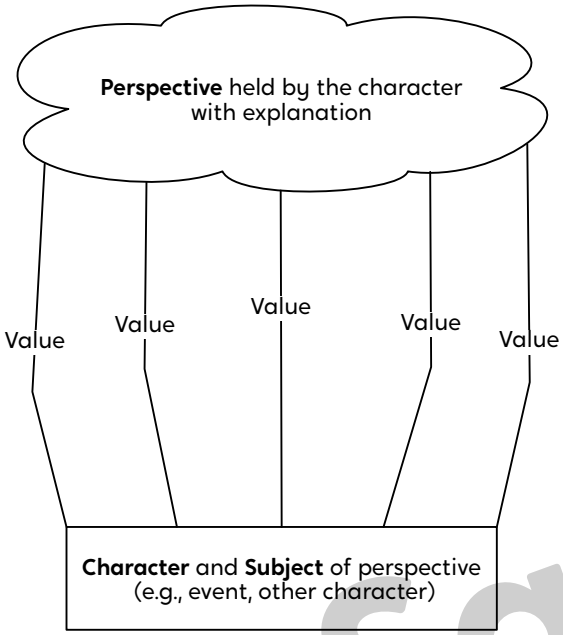
Perspective Cloud

Character



Toolbox Sample

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RUBRICS

Decision-Making Tree Problem Solving			
Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Meets Objective**	**Not Yet**
▶ Proficient, plus... ▶ Student presents alternative events that may have followed the reader's preferred choice/solution (NOTE: The alternative does not have to be superior to the events that followed the character's choice/solution.)	▶ Meets Objective, plus... ▶ Student identifies support for an alternative choice/solution to that made by the character; support may be from the text or based on personal values, beliefs, or principles (NOTE: The alternative does not have to be superior to the choice/solution of the character.)	▶ Student identifies a choice to be made or problem to be solved by a character, identifies the relevant facts of that choice or problem to be solved, generates possible choices/solutions, and lists the pros and cons of each possible choice/solution ▶ Student identifies the values guiding the character's thinking about the choice or problem, and compares the values of the character with the reader's personal values, beliefs, or principles ▶ Student identifies the character's choice/solution, identifies the choice the student thinks he/she would make and compares it with the character's choice, and identifies traits of the character revealed by the choice/solution or the decision-making/problem-solving process ▶ Student identifies events that followed the choice/solution and explains how they support or cast doubt on the character's choice/solution	▶ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

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Discovery Synopsis

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Synopsis includes a response to a "discovery," such as a prediction, an insight (e.g., "This story is really about..."), or a presentation of the essence (e.g., use of a hashtag: "NotWhoYouThinkHeIs)	▸ Synopsis includes at least one new idea—a "discovery" (e.g., relationship/connection between visual tool elements) sparked by the student's thinking about the text through development of the visual tool	▸ Synopsis restates what is obvious on the visual tool	▸ Synopsis is missing, incomplete, or has no obvious connection to the visual tool

ADDITIONAL SKILL EMPHASIS ▸ *plus* Character

A focus on character complements the primary focus on problem solving. Choices are made and solutions are found by characters. Their backgrounds, values, beliefs, goals, and other factors contribute to their thinking and thus, their choices and solutions.

Encourage the students to move between the two skills, identifying influences from their work with Character (via the Cuneo Starburst) that impact choices and solutions (via the Decision-Making Tree), and moving beliefs and values from the Perspective Cloud to the values section of the Decision-Making Tree. When an assigned text passage does not enable rich thinking about decision making, have the students focus on character. However, bring the ideas they discover about character to the Decision-Making Tree when the text does allow for its use.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected text, each student identifies and supports, using text passages, the following elements of character: appearance, actions, dialogue, thoughts, connections of thoughts or feelings to actions, differing perspectives among characters, connections between characters, and changes/development of characters throughout the text.

PROCESS

Character Bubble Map

- Who is in this story?
- What does the character look like?
- What does the character do? (actions)
- What does the character say? (dialogue)
- What thoughts/feelings does the character have?

Toolbox Sample

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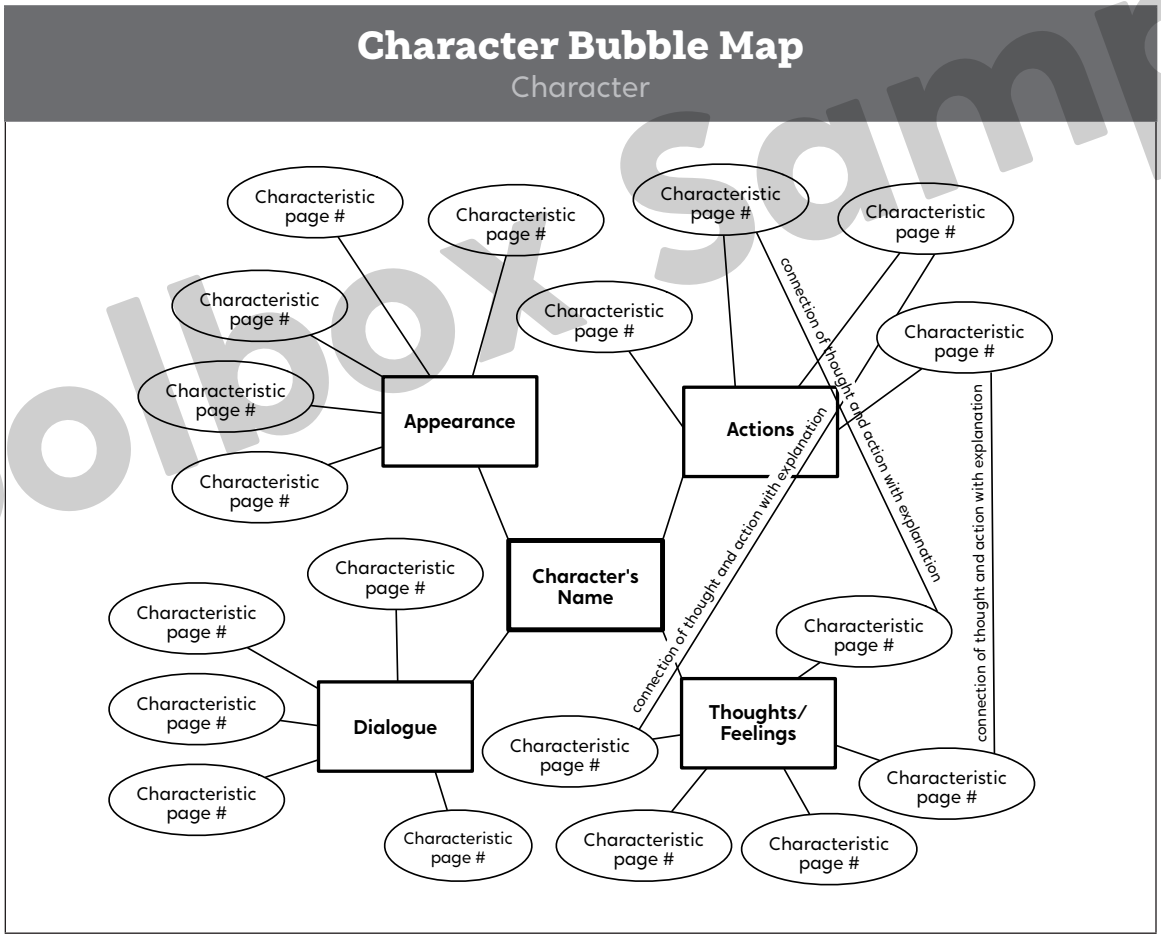
- How do the character's thoughts/feelings and actions connect?
- Do connections between the character's thoughts/feelings, dialogue, appearance, and/or actions suggest a certain trait?
- What elements of the main character's thoughts/feelings, dialogue, appearance, and/or actions are significant?

Cuneo Starburst

- How is Character A related/connected to Character B? How do these characters interact?
- Does this interaction influence this character? If so, how?
- What other influences affect the character's values and beliefs?
- Is this character a major character, the focus of the story? Is this character a secondary character, not the focus but one that appears multiple times and is a likely influence on the main character? Is this character a minor character, only a necessary character in a few scenes of the story?

VISUAL TOOLS



Toolbox Sample

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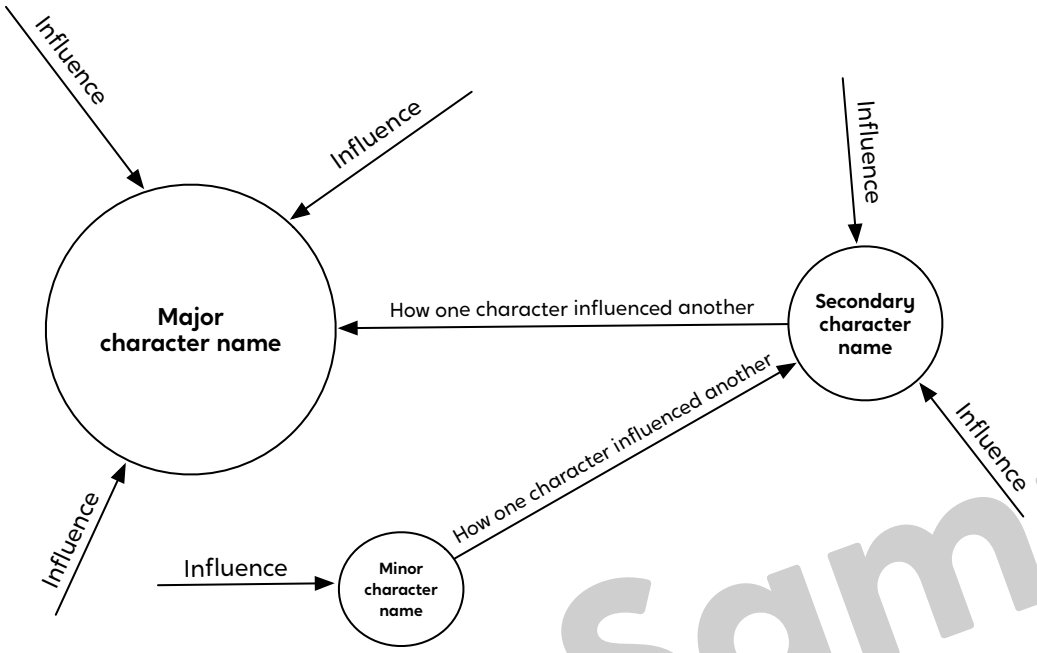
Cuneo Starburst
Character



RUBRIC (for formative use only)

Cuneo Starburst
Character

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student presents a thorough organization of the interactions present in the text; no significant interactions are missing from the visual tool	▸ Meets Objective, plus... ▸ Student identifies interactions and other influences that are significant—i.e., the influences have an impact on the character's values and beliefs, not just the character's circumstances	▸ Student identifies interactions between characters ▸ Student identifies at least one other (non-interaction) influence on at least one major character ▸ Student identifies characters as major, secondary, or minor (via size of the circle/oval around character's name)	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Toolbox Sample

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Name Date

Unit 2

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT
Problem Solving

►► DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

1. How does the pattern "Weight can influence direction" relate to a character's problem solving?
   a. The weight of the character's backpack can cause problems.
   b. The weight or importance a character gives certain values can steer him/her toward a choice.
   c. The weight a character can lift in the gym determines what his/her favorite color is.
   d. The weight of guilt a character feels can be heavy, very heavy, or very, very heavy.

2. One question a reader can use to think about a character's **problem solving** is...
   a. Which character speaks the most often in this story?
   b. What does this character look like?
   c. Is this character a major, secondary, or minor character?
   d. What values, beliefs, or principles apply to the situation?

3. One question a reader can use to think about a character's **problem solving** is...
   a. What does the choice/solution selected by this character reveal about the character?
   b. What does this character say?
   c. Where and when does this story take place?
   d. Does this event contribute to rising tension in the story?

4. Thinking about "pros and cons"...
   a. does not help a character make a decision.
   b. helps a character (or reader) identify better choices or solutions.
   c. helps a character (or reader) waste time until a problem solves itself.
   d. distracts a character (or reader) from what is important to consider about a choice or solution.

►► DIRECTIONS: Write an answer to the question.

5. How does examining a character's decision making or problem solving help a reader understand the character and story better?

Toolbox Sample

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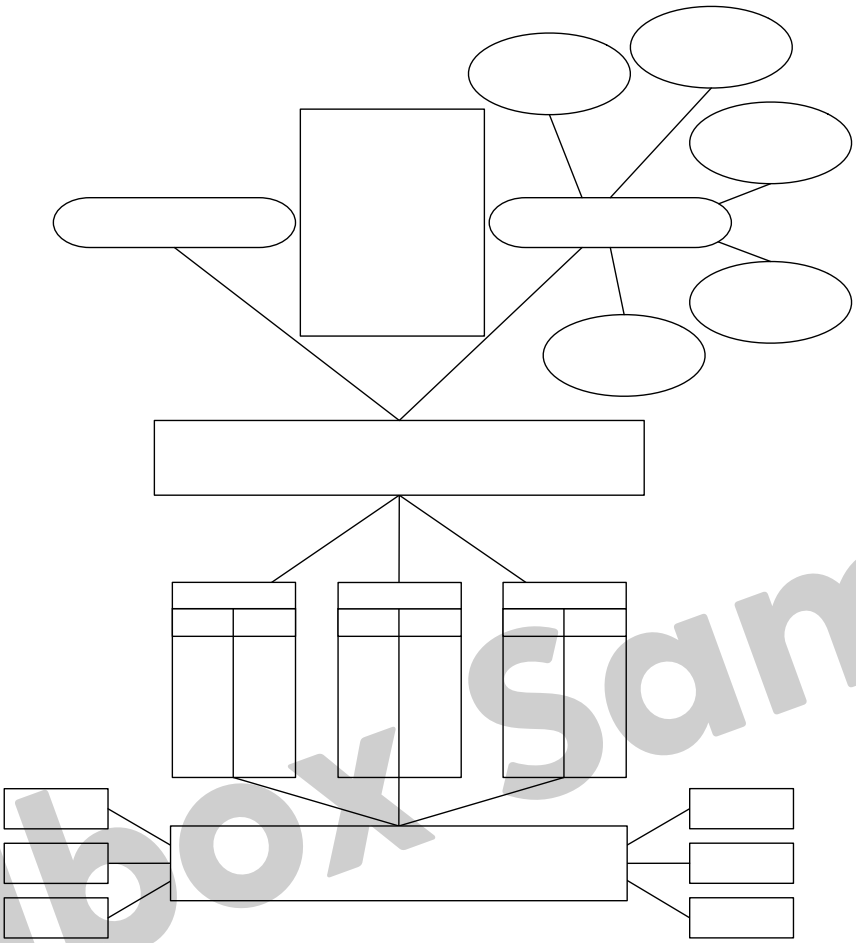
▸▸ DIRECTIONS: Use this Decision-Making Tree to respond to the following questions. *You need crayons or colored pencils for these questions.*



6. Where do the **options** a character has get organized? Color one of those spaces **red**.

7. Where do the **pros and cons** for an option get organized? Color one of those spaces **yellow**.

8. Where do **relevant values** for a decision get organized? Color that space **green**.

9. **After** a character's decision has been made, where do **new discoveries or insights about the character** get organized? Color one of those spaces **blue**.

10. What goes in the center box at the top of the visual tool?

Toolbox Sample

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Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, and Summarization

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

In their academic reading, students will use the skills of identifying main ideas and supporting details more than any other comprehension skills. They are critical skills for comprehending nonfiction text, especially informational text like that found in textbooks. Relatedly, summarizing may be the most effective skill for building understanding and memory of nonfiction material. Together, these skills give students powerful tools for success with content area reading.

A main idea is a statement of the primary idea an author wants to communicate in a paragraph. A supporting detail is information that explains, defines, or proves a main idea. A central idea is a statement of an overarching idea that is explained, defined, or proven by main ideas. Supporting details support main ideas; main ideas support central ideas.

Identifying main ideas helps a reader get to the heart of a paragraph or section of text. It helps a reader recognize the key points an author makes. Identifying supporting details helps a reader

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evaluate the strength of an author's key points. Together, these help a reader know what and how an author is communicating. This then enables a reader to identify the central idea or overarching concept of a text. The better a reader understands the relationship between these levels of idea hierarchy, the more deeply he/she will comprehend the text. Converting these ideas into one's own words via summarizing promotes deep comprehension and helps construct lasting memory of the material.

When thinking about main ideas, supporting details, and central idea, a reader develops a structure known as an Extended Idea Framework with Summary. It shows the reader's thinking about how main ideas, supporting details, and a central idea relate to one another. It then reveals the reader's thinking in his/her own words about the critical ideas from the text.

In Grades 7-8, the skill builds on the same units in Grades 5-6, which emphasized layers of ideas and supporting details resulting in a summary. This repetition is intentional; the skill is critical for student academic success. The skills are closely related, and moving from central idea, main ideas, and supporting details to summarization should flow naturally.

Students should be able to dedicate much of their time and effort to improving their summaries of text passages. (Work with the visual tool should be familiar as it has been used since Grade 4.) Writing is a means of constructing understanding; a better summary often correlates with deeper comprehension. Encourage the students to revisit and revise their summaries, moving up the rubric as the quality improves.

PATTERN

Something large can be supported by smaller things.

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected nonfiction text, each student identifies the central idea, its supporting main ideas, and the supporting details of those main ideas. [For example: Lions are complex animals (central idea). Lions are carnivores (main idea). Lions hunt gazelle (supporting detail). Lions live in groups called prides (main idea). Prides may consist of both adult and young lions (supporting detail). Lions are cats (main idea). Lions, leopards, and domestic cats are all members of the same animal family (supporting detail).] Each student uses the resulting ideas and structure to write a summary of the passage.

Toolbox Sample

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PROCESS

Main Ideas

- Who or what is this paragraph/passage about?

  For example: Gwen

- What aspects of (the who or what) is this paragraph/passage about?

  For example: Gwen's hobbies

- What does the author want me to know about (the aspect[s]) of (the who or what)?

  For example: Gwen's hobbies are playing chess, reading science fiction books, and kickboxing.

Supporting Details

- What sentences/statements support the main ideas?
  - What examples support the main idea?

    For example: Sometimes Gwen plays more than one chess game at a time! Gwen looks for the thickest books in the science fiction section of the library.
  - What explanations support the main idea?

    Gwen goes to kickboxing class every day after school. She's been kickboxing for three years. She wears special gear that keeps her safe.

Central Idea

- What are the main ideas in this passage?
- What more general idea do the main ideas suggest? What broader statement can be made that is supported by the more specific main ideas?

  For example: Gwen is an interesting person who likes many different activities.

Summary

- What is the central idea of this text?
- What are the topics (the who or what) of the supporting main ideas?
- What are the most important or strongest supporting details for each main idea?
- Are other details from the text important? Will any other details make my summary clearer, more complete, or more interesting?
- How can I restate these ideas in my own words? Write the restatements in sentences.
- How can I combine these sentences to create a summary of the text?
- Read the summary. What words can I use to connect ideas and to clarify my summary (e.g., *after*, *first*)?
- Is my summary clear? Is my summary concise?
- Is there anything I can add that will make my summary more interesting? Do I have a personal example that I can use to illustrate one of the ideas? Is there an important question that one of the ideas raises? Have I read any facts or examples from another source that would be helpful to include?

Toolbox Sample

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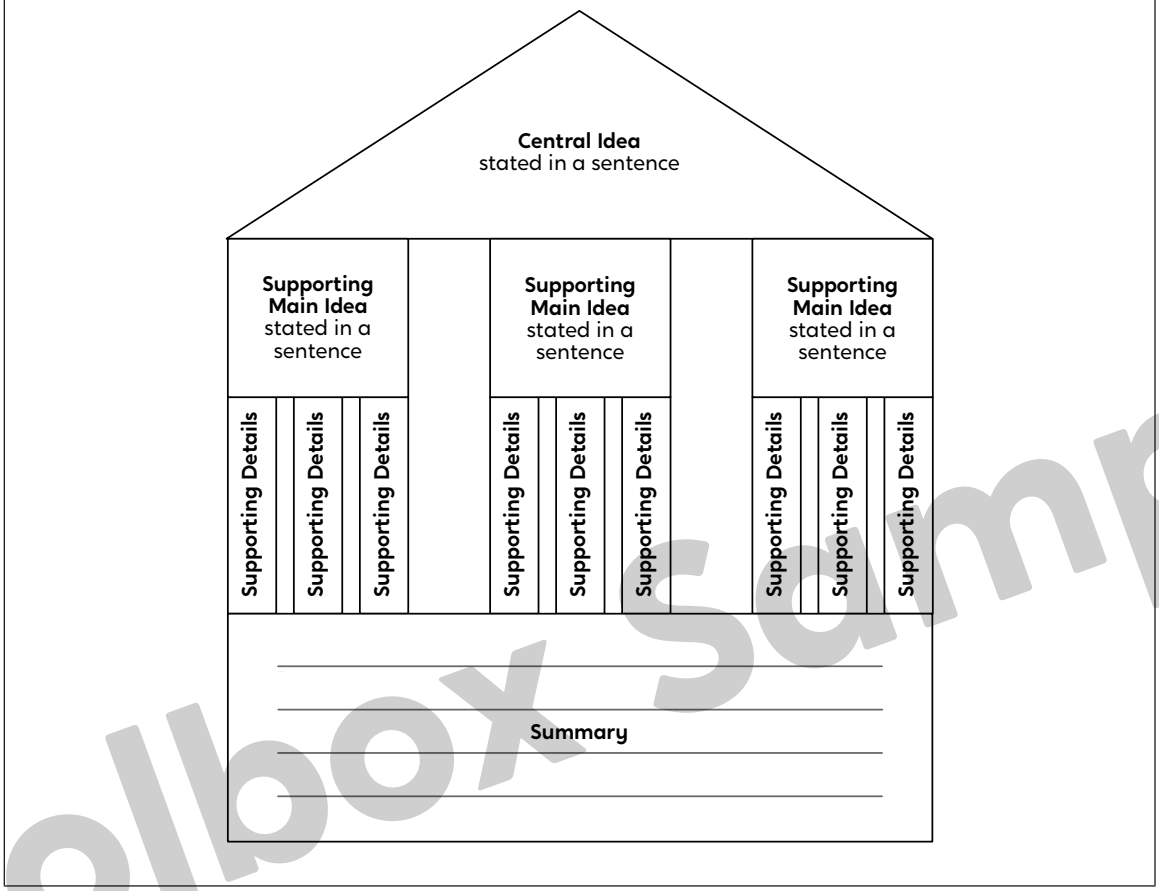
VISUAL TOOL

Extended Idea Framework with Summary

Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, and Summarization



Toolbox Sample

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RUBRICS

Extended Idea Framework with Summary

Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, and Summarization

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▶ Proficient, plus... ▶ Student includes most or all of the supporting details provided by the text; visual tool captures and structures most or all the important information from the text	▶ Student identifies the central idea, all supporting main ideas, and multiple supporting details provided by the text	▶ Student identifies the central idea, at least two supporting main ideas, and more than one supporting detail for each supporting main idea from a teacher- or self-selected, multi-paragraph text	▶ Anything less than Meets Objective

Summary

Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, and Summarization

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▶ Proficient, plus... ▶ Student's summary includes related items of personal interest, such as examples of ideas, questions an idea raises, or a related idea from another source	▶ Student's summary includes the central idea, all supporting main ideas, and multiple supporting details ▶ Student includes additional, logical, supporting details that clarify the summary, including some that may be inferred from the text (e.g., charred trees on the side of an erupting volcano)	▶ Student combines ideas from the visual tool to create a summary of the passage, including the central idea, at least two supporting main ideas, and more than one supporting detail for each supporting main idea ▶ Student summary includes transition words (e.g., *after*, *first*) to clarify relationships of ideas in the summary	▶ Anything less than Meets Objective

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Name Date

Unit 1

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT

Central Idea, Main Ideas, Supporting Details, and Summarization

►► DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

1. What is a **central** idea of a text?
   a. a detail that supports a main idea
   b. an overarching idea that is explained, defined, or proven by main ideas
   c. the idea closest to the center of a passage
   d. an idea that is so big it cannot be put into words

2. One question a reader can use to find a **central** idea is...
   a. What more general idea do the main ideas suggest?
   b. What details support the main idea?
   c. What idea would I add to this passage?
   d. How many ideas are presented in this passage?

3. One question a reader can use to find a **main** idea is...
   a. Who wrote this paragraph?
   b. What word is used the most often in this passage?
   c. What aspect of the *who* or *what* is this paragraph about?
   d. What sentence tells me something about the state of Maine?

4. One question a reader can use to identify **supporting details** is...
   a. How can I combine these sentences to create a summary of the text?
   b. What examples support the main idea?
   c. Is this detail interesting enough to support the main idea?
   d. Is there a colorful illustration that goes with this detail?

►► DIRECTIONS: Write an answer to the question.

5. How does summarizing nonfiction text help a reader better understand the text?

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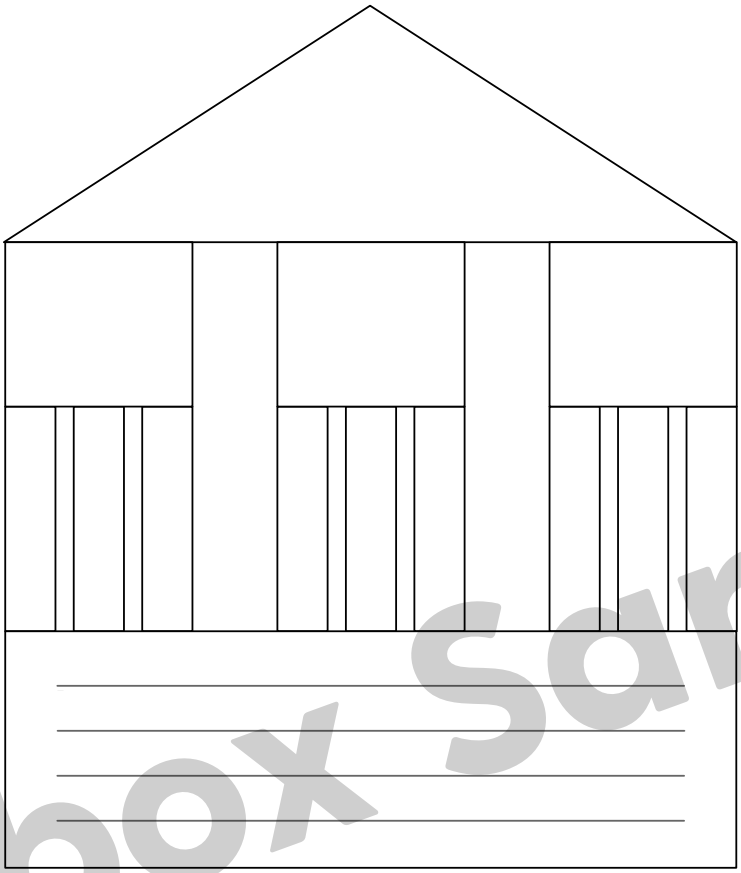
►► DIRECTIONS: Use this Extended Idea Framework with Summary to respond to the following questions. *You need crayons or colored pencils for these questions.*



6. Where does the **central idea** of a text passage get recorded? Color that space **red**.

7. Where do the **supporting main ideas** get recorded? Color one of those spaces **yellow**.

8. Where do **supporting ideas** get recorded? Color one of those spaces **green**.

9. What goes in the lowest section of the visual tool?

►► DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

10. A **great** summary...
    a. is just a list of phrases taken right from the text.
    b. only tells a reader the least important ideas of a passage.
    c. is longer than the original text passage.
    d. includes details that make it clearer, more complete, or more interesting.

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Toolbox Sample

Grades 7-8 · **Unit 2**

Cause & Effect

Toolbox Sample

SKILL DESCRIPTION

Comprehending cause and effect is understanding the source(s) behind events and the results of preceding sources. It involves more than concrete elements; character goals, motivations, and values often act as causes. Cause and effect also plays a role in making predictions, a skill effective readers regularly utilize.

Thinking about cause and effect helps a reader identify relationships between events, and between characters and events, in a story. It provides a reader with a deeper understanding than sequence of events alone can. It also helps a reader recognize how a character's actions can be caused by a character's values; it connects the character's internal world with the character's external behaviors.

When a reader thinks about cause and effect, he/she may identify and organize the relationships in a way that shows how an event can have multiple causes, or a single cause can have multiple effects. It may also show how specific perspectives or values held by characters can act as causes, or can result from events. The tool a reader may develop for this is the Cause & Effect Multi-Flow Chart with Value Clouds.

In Grade 7, greater emphasis is given to recognizing how **competing** values influence a story's events. Students should develop an increased awareness of characters' thinking and how these internal worlds impact actions and episodes.

Recognizing the values at work in a text is often a precursor to thinking deeply about the theme of a work and about author's viewpoint. Although neither is the focus of this unit, the better students become at recognizing and framing values, the better equipped they will be to examine a text for theme and author's viewpoint.

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PATTERN

Ideas have power.

The pattern *Ideas have power* can be illustrated by describing a scenario to students, and then assigning them an idea with which to respond. For example:

Your team is playing in the championship game. During halftime, someone approaches you and offers you money if you will try to lose the game on purpose. How will you respond? Why?

The students could meet in small groups to discuss and write down their plan and the reason for it. Each group could be given an idea to use the basis of their thinking (EX-ex). Here are some examples: **greed**, **teamwork**, **competitiveness**, **honesty**, **self-respect**.

After each group writes down their plan, the ideas could be switched. The discussion that follows may focus on how and why the plans changed as the ideas changed (Ex-co), leading to the pattern *Ideas have power* (EX-el). Further discussion could have the students identify where else they see ideas having influence (EX-ap).

OBJECTIVE

Given a teacher-selected text, each student identifies the chain of causes and effects (i.e., the "domino effect" or "chain reaction"), including multiple causes and multiple effects, and including characters' personal values and the clash of values between characters acting as causes or being influenced (affected) by events, demonstrating how an effect can become a cause, and how causes can have multiple effects and effects can have multiple causes, and how cause and effect relationships form threads throughout an entire text.

PROCESS

- What event happened? (effect) Why did that event happen? (cause)
- Did that effect cause something else to happen? (Repeat to identify all following effects.)
- Is there a chain of causes and effects with some effects becoming causes for events that follow? If so, how did it start? "Because this happened, that happened, and because that happened, this happened..."
- What ideas (i.e., values) does this character consider to be important?
- Does this character hold a value (e.g., loyalty, compassion, determination) that prompts him/her to take some action? Does the character's value cause something to happen?
- What is it exactly about the value that the character believes? How can the value be phrased as a statement? For example, rather than just *loyalty*, the value may be: *Loyalty should influence choices.*
- Does another character hold a competing value? What does this competing value emphasize or focus on that is different from the first character's value? Does this clash of values act as a cause for any events?
- Does this character hold a value that is influenced by events? Do events cause a change in this character's values?
- How does the final effect connect to the first cause? What is the chain of causes and effects that flows throughout the entire text?
- How does the chain of causes and effects influence the story?

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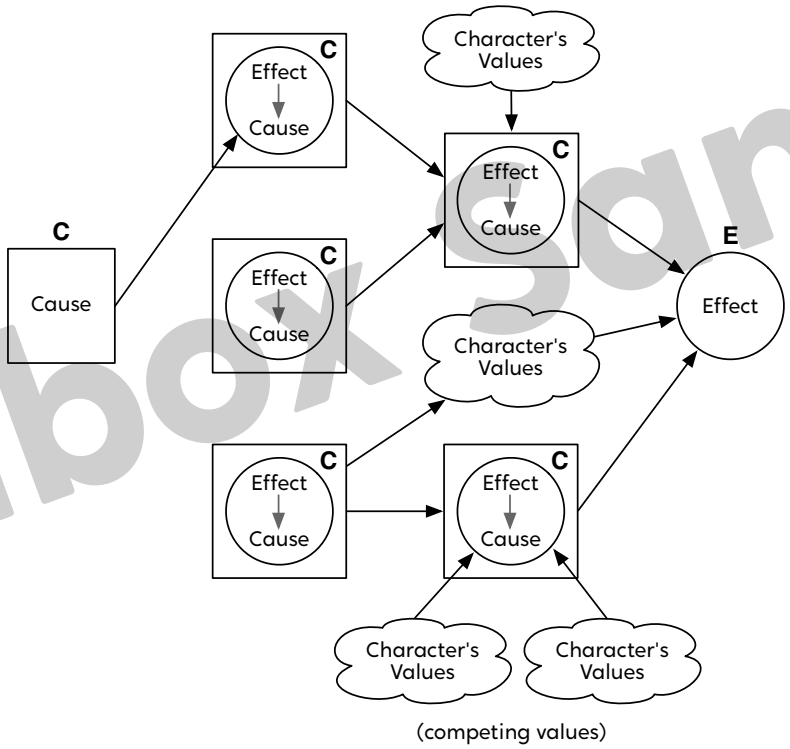
- ▸ What elements of plot are included in this chain of causes and effects?
  - What events relate to the goal and contribute to the conflict, tension, or suspense? (rising action)
  - When does the main character encounter the greatest risk and resistance to accomplishing the goal? (climax)
  - How is the character's goal achieved? (resolution)
  - What events occur after the climax and lead to the resolution? (falling action)
  - What events happen after the resolution? (denouement)

VISUAL TOOL

Cause & Effect Multi-Flow Chart with Value Clouds

Cause & Effect



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RUBRICS

Cause & Effect Multi-Flow Chart with Value Clouds

Cause & Effect

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Student frames the clash of values as conflicting statements, not just individual ideas; (e.g., *Teamwork gives the group the greatest success vs. Individual achievement brings me the most benefits*	▸ Meets Objective, plus... ▸ Student connects a clash of values to multiple events, showing how the difference acts as a cause throughout a text	▸ Student presents a chain of causes and effects, showing how multiple causes can have an effect that, in turn, becomes a cause, or showing how multiple effects can have a single cause ▸ Student includes a clash of values between characters as a cause for at least one effect	▸ Anything less than Meets Objective

Discovery Synopsis

Exemplary	Proficient	Meets Objective	Not Yet
▸ Proficient, plus... ▸ Synopsis includes a response to a "discovery," such as a prediction, an insight (e.g., "This story is really about..."), or a presentation of the essence (e.g., use of a hashtag: "NotWhoYouThinkHeIs)	▸ Synopsis includes at least one new idea—a "discovery" (e.g., relationship/ connection between visual tool elements) sparked by the student's thinking about the text through development of the visual tool	▸ Synopsis restates what is obvious on the visual tool	▸ Synopsis is missing, incomplete, or has no obvious connection to the visual tool

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Name Date

Unit 2

SKILL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT

Cause & Effect

▸▸ DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter next to the **best** answer.

1. The pattern "Ideas have power" is illustrated by...
   a. a character not caring at all about the events in a story.
   b. a character taking action based on his/her values.
   c. a character having values but acting in directly opposite ways.
   d. a character not having values and just responding to things that happen.

2. A reader might ask, "What ideas does this character consider to be important?" to identify...
   a. a character's values.
   b. the things a character wishes he/she had.
   c. a character's best lines of dialogue.
   d. the places a character has visited.

3. An example of competing values is...
   a. a character who has no values being grouchy to everyone.
   b. a character who values compassion competing with a character who values fairness.
   c. a character who values adventure not having conflicts with any other characters.
   d. two characters agreeing on everything.

4. To think about how character values and a story's events interact, a reader may ask...
   a. "What happened?"
   b. "Why does this character look like that?"
   c. "Where and when is this event taking place?"
   d. "Does a clash of values act as a cause for any events?"

5. Recognizing cause and effect means identifying...
   a. the source(s) behind events and the results of preceding sources.
   b. just the order of events, not anything more.
   c. the time and place of a story's events.
   d. the rising action and resolution of a story's plot.

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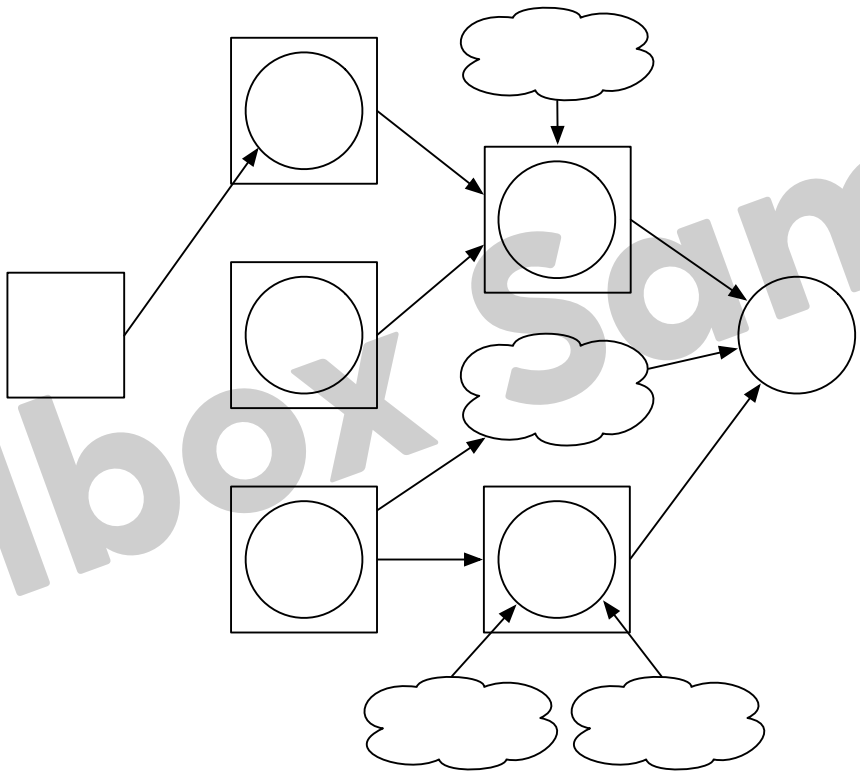
►► DIRECTIONS: Write an answer to the question.

6. How can recognizing that characters have competing values help a reader understand a story?

►► DIRECTIONS: Use this Cause & Effect Multi-Flow Chart with Value Clouds to respond to the following questions. *You need crayons or colored pencils for these questions.*



7. Where would the very first **cause** be recorded? Color that space **blue**.

8. Where are the effects that become causes? Color one of those spaces **green**.

9. Where would a **clash of values between characters that acts as a cause** be recorded? Color those spaces **yellow**.

10. Where would a character's **value that is an effect** be recorded? Color that space **red**.

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Toolbox Sample

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