TABLE OF CONTENTS

LESSON 12

Summarizing Informational Texts

PART 1 Introduction

THEME: Making a Difference

When you **summarize** something, you tell the most important ideas in your own words. For example, if your grandmother asks what you did today, you don't start with getting out of bed that morning. You tell the most important events of your day. Similarly, when summarizing an informational text, you won't tell every detail, only the important ones.

A summary is often short. The length of a summary depends on the length of what you are summarizing.

Read this passage.

Working dogs are trained in different ways to protect people and to make life easier for them. Some of these dogs act as eyes for blind people, ears for the hearing impaired, and helpers for the physically challenged. They also can help police with parts of their jobs. Some dogs find people who are buried under buildings by an earthquake or a hurricane.

Dogs are born knowing how to find things. A handler, the dog's human partner, teaches the dog what to search for. Dogs use most of their senses—hearing, seeing, and smelling—to find a specific person or thing. Handlers might hide things in a suitcase or in a closet. The dogs love to practice finding those things!

Identify important ideas in the passage. Then put these ideas together to write a summary.

Important Idea:	**Important Idea:**	**Important Idea:**
Working dogs help blind people, hearing impaired people, and physically challenged people.		
Summary:		

Read the first part of the passage. Then answer the questions.

Judy Blume, A Very Special Author

1 Judy Blume was born on February 12, 1938, in Elizabeth, New Jersey. Her father was a dentist. Her mother was a stay-at-home mom. Judy's mom taught her to love books.

2 Judy often went to the library growing up. Judy read many books there. She had a lovely imagination. Judy was always making up stories in her head! No matter if she was running around outside or playing quietly inside, she was making up new stories. However, she never wrote down her stories. This early storytelling would help Judy become the author we know today.

3 As a high school student, Judy was an editor for her school's newspaper. After high school, she studied education at New York University (NYU). There she met her husband. They had two children. While she stayed at home with them, she still wanted to be creative. Judy wanted to write, so she took classes at NYU. It was then that her career took off. She published her first book, *The One in the Middle Is the Green Kangaroo,* in 1969.

Think About It

What points should be included in a summary of Judy Blume's life? Sort the important ideas from the less important details.

What are three important ideas that should be included in a summary of this author's life?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Summarize this part of the passage.

_____

_____

_____

A CLOSER LOOK
Underline the main ideas in these two paragraphs.

Continue reading the passage. Then answer the question.

4 In 1970, Judy wrote *Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret.* This book was written for teens. Judy was recognized for writing about real events that teens face. Her next book, *Tales of a Fourth-Grade Nothing,* was published in 1972 and was the first in a series of five books. In this book, Judy tells of Peter's life with his younger brother Fudge. A book like this makes children laugh and want to read more!

5 Judy writes about what she knows. That is why her books take place in the cities where she has lived. She has sold more than 80 million books in 31 different languages. Some of her other books include *Freckle Juice, Superfudge, Blubber,* and *Iggie's House.* Judy is still writing for people of all ages and working to turn her books into movies. She lives in Key West, Florida, with her husband.

If a friend asked what these paragraphs are about, what would you say? What would you leave out?

Which sentence is the *best* summary of this part of the passage?

A Her books are popular because she writes about real events that her readers face.

B *Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret* was written for teens.

C Her books include *Freckle Juice, Superfudge, Blubber,* and *Iggie's House.*

D Judy is working to turn her books into movies.

DISCUSS IT
With a partner, take turns summarizing the entire passage. Discuss the details that each of you included and left out and why. Did your summaries have enough details?

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

How Does Hail Form?

1 You have probably seen hail, tiny balls of ice that bounce a little when they land. Maybe you've seen much larger hail. Why does it hail during some storms and not others? How big can hail get? You're about to find out!

2 What causes hail? During thunderstorms, warm and cold air currents crash into each other. The warm air currents carry tiny drops of water, lifting them upward. They are like soap bubbles rising into the air. In a strong storm, the warm air currents can carry the raindrops high into the clouds. There, temperatures are below freezing. The raindrops instantly freeze into tiny balls of ice. Now, they are called hailstones.

3 Then a cold air current may pull the hailstones downward, where the air is warmer. If the hailstone melts completely, it will fall as rain. However, another warm air current may catch the hailstone before it melts and toss it back up into the freezing temperatures. There, the hailstone gains another thin layer of ice.

4 Each time the air currents toss the hailstone up and pull it down, it gets bigger. If the hailstone is tossed up and down for five to ten minutes, it can grow larger than a softball. In time, the hailstone gets too heavy for the air currents to carry it. It falls to the ground. The bigger hailstones do not have time to melt on the way down. Instead, they are still hail when they hit the ground.

5 A storm with few warm air currents creates only small, lightweight hail—or none at all. The currents are just not strong enough to keep the hailstones in the air. A strong superstorm, however, can produce hail weighing two pounds and measuring eight inches across. That is heavy enough to dent cars!

6 Hail falls mostly in the summer. What people call hail during a winter storm is actually sleet. In this case, raindrops fall through much colder air and freeze into sleet. They are not tossed up and down by the air currents. Pieces of sleet are quite small because they do not gain extra layers of ice, like hailstones. Sleet often melts quickly after it reaches the ground.

7 The next time you see hail, you will know it had an exciting journey before it reached the ground!

A CLOSER LOOK

How are hail and sleet different? Circle the sentence or sentences that tell you.

Which detail explains a key step in how hail forms?

1 Which point is important enough to include in a summary of this passage?

A The raindrops are like soap bubbles rising into the air.

B The warm air currents carry tiny drops of water.

C Some air currents are not strong enough to keep hailstones in the air.

D Pieces of sleet are quite small.

Summaries are short. Every sentence should help explain the main points of the article.

2 Which point is *not* important enough to include in a summary of this passage?

A Why does it hail during some storms and not others?

B A warm air current may toss the hailstone back up into freezing temperatures.

C There, the hailstone gains another thin layer of ice.

D Bigger hailstones do not have time to melt on the way down.

What is the most important point discussed in paragraph 2?

3 Summarize the *most* important idea in paragraph 2 in one sentence.

_____

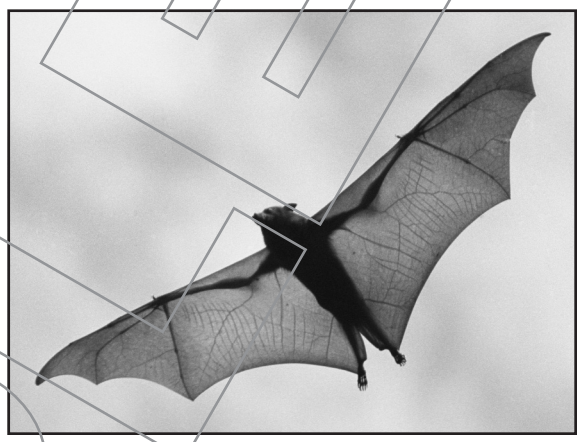
_____

_____

_____

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

The Beauty of Bats



1 Have you heard that bats suck your blood and can give you a deadly disease called rabies? Are bats just "flying rats"?

2 No! Bats are beautiful—in their own way. There are more than 40 kinds of bats in the US, and all of them help people. For example, bats eat billions of insects, and they help pollinate plants. Their droppings are excellent fertilizer. In addition, scientists are studying bats to learn about using sound to find things.

3 Bats are the only mammals that can fly. The bones in their wings are much like the bones in your hand. Between the bat's bones are flaps of skin that form wings. They allow the bat to fly.

4 The smallest kind of bat in the US is about 2.5 inches long with a wingspan of 8 inches. It weighs about the same as a penny. The biggest kind of bat in the US is about 7 inches long with a wingspan of 21 to 23 inches. It weighs about two ounces. Still not much! However, the bats' lighter weight makes it easier for them to fly.

5 You might be wondering about vampire bats. Here's the good news: the closest ones are in Mexico. None live in the US. Vampire bats usually drink animals' blood and do not bother people. They do not turn animals—or people—into vampires!

6 You might be wondering about rabies, too. Like raccoons and some other wild animals, bats can carry rabies. However, the chance of getting rabies from a bat is extremely small. It is even smaller if you never touch a bat!

7 Most bats hunt at night and eat flying insects, including mosquitoes, beetles, and moths. For example, about 20 million bats live in Bracken Cave in central Texas. In one night, they eat more than 200 tons of bugs! One bat can gobble up 600 to 1,000 mosquitoes in an hour.

8 Other bats live on nectar and fruit. These are the bats that help pollinate plants.

9 Bats have long lives, as long as 20 years. They like almost any kind of habitat, so you can find bats in deserts, forests—and attics. Some live in caves in the mountains, while others live under bridges. In the summer, 1.5 million bats live under the Congress Avenue Bridge in Austin, Texas. Large crowds of people gather every night to watch the bats swarm out from the bridge, on the hunt for insects. During winter, some bats hibernate in caves and trees, while others migrate to warmer places.

10 To find insects, bats send out a high-pitched sound wave that you cannot hear. This sound wave bounces off objects, including insects. It's like an echo. When the sound wave bounces back to the bat, it can tell where the insect is located. The bat also knows how big the insect is and how fast it is flying. Then the bat quickly swoops in to grab it. These echoes, called sonar, work so well that scientists borrowed this idea. Ships now use sonar waves to locate objects in the water.

11 Now you can see why many people think bats are beautiful!

1 Which point is important enough to include in a summary of this passage?

A Between the bat's bones are flaps of skin that form wings.

B The smallest bat in the US is about 2.5 inches long with a wingspan of 8 inches.

C About 1.5 million bats live under the Congress Avenue Bridge in Austin, Texas.

D To find insects, bats send out a high-pitched sound wave that you cannot hear.

2 Which point is *not* important enough to include in a summary of this passage?

A Bats are beautiful—in their own way.

B One bat can gobble up 600 to 1,000 mosquitoes in an hour.

C Bats in the US range in size from 2.5 inches to 7 inches long.

D Bats live in many different habitats.

3 Part A

Which sentence is an accurate summary of paragraph 10?

A Bats use high-pitched sound waves that echo.

B Scientists learned how to use sound waves to help ships locate objects.

C Bats send out sound waves that bounce off insects, telling the bats where the insects are located.

D Sound waves tell bats how big the insect is and how fast it's flying.

Part B

Which two statements *best* support the answer to Part A?

A "This sound wave bounces off objects, including insects."

B "Then the bat quickly swoops in to grab it."

C "When the sound wave bounces back to the bat, it can tell where the insect is located."

D "These echoes, called sonar, work so well that scientists borrowed this idea."

E "It's like an echo."

F "Ships now use sonar waves to locate objects in the water."

4 Summarize paragraph 9 in one sentence.

_____

_____

_____

_____