

WORDS TO KNOW

summary
main idea
key detail
paraphrase

Lesson 13

SUMMARIZE A STORY 6RL2

INTRODUCTION

Real-World Connection

FAMILY LIFE

Tania is visiting her aunt in Florida. She keeps a journal of her experiences. One day, she writes this in her journal. *Saturday was very busy! It rained in the morning, but in the afternoon it was sunny, and Aunt Ida took me to the beach. I have never seen water so blue or sand so white. We walked along the beach and hunted for seashells. One of the shells still had a living creature in it, so we threw it back into the water. Then, we went swimming, which was probably my favorite part of the day. Aunt Ida taught me how to do the backstroke! The waves felt refreshing on my skin.*

Tania wants to write a postcard about her experiences to her best friend back home. However, a postcard is short, so Tania will not be able to share everything that happens during her visit. She will have to summarize. How will Tania decide which details to include on her postcard? We will practice the skills in Guided Instruction and Independent Practice. Then, we will come back to help Tania with her postcard at the end of the lesson.

What I Am Going to Learn

- How to identify ideas that should be included in a summary
- How to write a summary of a text
- How to paraphrase important ideas

What I May Already Know 5RL2

- I know what main ideas and key details are.
- I know how to recognize important ideas in a text.
- I know that a story has a beginning, middle, and end.
- I know that stories have themes.

▶ TIPS AND TRICKS

Use a pencil or highlighter to find the most important information in the beginning, middle, and end of a story you read!

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Vocabulary in Action

A **summary** briefly states the most important information in a text. When you summarize a story, you tell the **main idea** and **key details**. You tell what happens at the beginning, the middle, and the end. A story summary should include this information.

- the title of the story
- the author's name
- who the characters are
- the setting (where and when the story takes place)
- what important events happen
- what problems the characters solve
- theme or themes of the story

A summary should *not* include your opinion.

A **main idea** is the most important idea in a paragraph or part of a story.

A **key detail** is a detail that reveals and supports a main idea.

To **paraphrase** means to retell important plot events and details in your own words. A summary should be much shorter than the original story you are summarizing. When you summarize a story, you have to paraphrase.

This chart shows an example of how you might paraphrase some sentences from a story for a summary.

ORIGINAL SENTENCES	PARAPHRASED FOR SUMMARY
"Each cupful of milk meant more nourishment for the fawn. It seemed to [Jody] that he could see it growing. It stood firm on its small legs and leaped and tossed its head and tail. He romped with it until they dropped together in a heap to rest and cool themselves." (from Chapter 16 of <i>The Yearling</i> by Marjorie Kinnan)	Jody feeds the fawn and watches it grow stronger. Jody and his pet enjoy playing together.

GUIDED INSTRUCTION

Tania's aunt takes her to the local library. Read this story from a book that Tania has read: "The Yearling" from *Short Stories from Florida*. Think about the elements that you would include in a summary of the story. As you read, do the following.

- Draw a box around the author's name.

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TURN AND TALK

With a partner, summarize a book you read or a movie you saw.

Be sure to include all of the key information listed in Vocabulary in Action.

TIPS AND TRICKS

You can find key details by asking yourself, "Who? What? When? Where? Why?"

- Circle the names of the main characters.
- Draw a wavy underline underneath sentences that tell about the setting.
- Double underline the most important events.
- Put brackets around sentences that tell about a problem the characters solve.

The Keys to Happiness

by Marnie O'Connor

▶ THINK ABOUT IT

There are a lot of extra details in the story that do not belong in a summary. What are some details you would not include?

“Ouch!” Tammy cried. She felt her arm sting and wondered if she had brushed against a jellyfish. When she swam to the surface, she saw that she had scraped her arm against something rough.

Tammy’s father and brother surfaced, too. “Did you see that coral?” her brother, Beau, asked.

Tammy had read in a guidebook that Florida and Hawaii are the two U.S. states with coral reefs. Well, she had just accidentally bumped into one in the shallow waters of the Florida Keys!

Once they were on shore, Tammy’s father cleaned the place on her arm where she scraped the coral, spread ointment on it to prevent infection, and put a bandage on it.

“Dad, can we go diving again tomorrow?” Tammy asked. “I’ll be more careful and wear a wetsuit.”

“Well, your brother wants to ride on a glass-bottom boat instead and look at the reefs from above. That might be a good idea, considering what happened to your arm.”

“But I really want to go diving again because you can really see things differently from underwater, and I want to experience everything I can before our vacation is over in a few days!”

That night, Tammy, Beau, and their parents discussed what activities they wanted to do before they had to go home. Every member of the family had a different idea: Tammy wanted to dive and explore the reefs, Dad wanted to go to an aquarium, Beau wanted to ride a glass-bottom boat, and Mom wanted to visit historic homes and shop for souvenirs.

In the morning, Mom made a thoughtful proposal to the entire family. It was her belief that it’s always best to find a compromise. “There’s a solution, I think, that will make everyone happy. I read about the Shipwreck Trail, which offers a little bit of everything we all want to do. We can take a boat tour, dive with an underwater guide, learn about the history of the wrecks, *and* get an up-close look at sea turtles, fish, and other sea creatures.”

Complete the chart to show the most important events that happen in the beginning, the middle, and the end of “The Keys to Happiness.”

MOST IMPORTANT EVENTS	
Beginning	
Middle	
End	

Part A

What is the BEST summary of this story?

- Ⓐ “The Keys to Happiness” is about a family that goes diving in the Florida Keys while on their winter vacation. They can’t decide what to do next, so they decide to go look at some old shipwrecks.
- Ⓑ This story by Marnie O’Connor is about a girl named Tammy who scrapes her arm while she is diving near a coral reef. After her father takes care of her scrape, Tammy asks if she can go diving again.
- Ⓒ In this story, Tammy and her brother, Beau, are on vacation with their parents. Tammy has a minor accident, but this doesn’t stop the family from doing the activities they love. The story shows you can be happy if you are willing to compromise.
- Ⓓ “The Keys to Happiness” by Marnie O’Connor is about a family vacation in the Florida Keys. Tammy, Beau, Mom, and Dad each want to do different things, but they work out a plan to make everyone happy and decide to go on a tour of the Shipwreck Trail.

◀ HINT, HINT

Ask yourself, “What information belongs in a summary of this story?” Do not include unnecessary information in your summary.

Part B

Underline the sentence in the story that BEST states the story’s theme.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

READING NOTES

Read the selection. Then, answer the questions that follow.

Lobster on the Loose

by Michelle Dwyer | Genre: Short Story

1 When I ride my bike after school, I think about how happy I am to be going home after a long day of math and science worksheets. I have a 10-speed mountain bike. When I'm going downhill, I can feel the breeze in my face as I anticipate seeing my red tabby cat, Lobster.

2 Lobster and I have an after-school routine that is even better than the snack I usually have waiting for me on the kitchen counter: I pull into the driveway, ride my bike right to the front door, and ring my bike bell three times. This is usually the signal for Lobster to meet me at the door, so he can be the first one to say hello. I pick him up from the floor and give him a big hug as he purrs in my ear.

3 My brother, Nathaniel, installed the bell for me a few summers ago in a rare moment of kindness. Lobster and I have been enjoying it ever since. Most of the time, Nathaniel teases me and messes up the bathroom. Mom says the bathroom should be my "sanctuary," since I am a girl. Nathaniel does not see it that way.

4 A few weeks ago, Nathaniel and I had a big argument when he left his wet, dirty socks hanging on the edge of the bathtub. With my bubble bath bottle in hand, I swore that I could never feel clean in our tub again. Then I vowed to give him the silent treatment until forever, but Mom made us forgive one another the next day before school.

5 By the end of the school day, I forgot all about how angry I had been. It was too beautiful outside to stay bitter, and I could not wait to see Lobster. As usual, I rang my bell three times and quickly threw my bike in the garage so I could meet Lobster at the door. Instead, it was Nathaniel who greeted me and quite abruptly said, "Hey, have you seen my good basketball? I'm trying to work on my jump shot, and I can't do it properly without my good basketball."

6 "I don't know where your basketball is, maybe with your dirty socks? Anyway, you probably scared Lobster, so thanks a lot." I pushed my way into the house past Nathaniel. "Lobster? Where are you, Lob?" I called out, slightly irritated that my big brother had ruined our daily ritual over a stupid basketball.

"Check out this ball, what a dud. It hardly bounces anymore. I can't work on my jump shot," Nathaniel whined, squeezing a deflated ball.

"Who cares about your jump shot? I want to know where my cat is," I said as I anxiously raced to the pantry to pull out Lobster's food jar.

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READING NOTES

Anytime we thought we lost him, he would always come out of hiding at the sound of the jar lid turning. I poured his dry food loudly into his ceramic bowl and screwed on the jar lid a few times for extra measure, but still no Lobster.

- 9 “You know, I might have left the door open while I was playing basketball. I wanted to catch my reflection in the hallway mirror. I am getting really good,” Nathaniel admitted.
- 10 “Are you saying the cat might have gotten out? I could just strangle you, Nathaniel,” I shrieked louder than I had during our last argument, as I tore through the house in search of Lobster. I looked in all his usual spots—under the bed, in a box of toys, in one of Mom’s vanity dresser drawers—but there seemed to be no sign of him anywhere.
- 11 I felt my face growing hot and my eyes welling up with tears, but I knew I could not cry in front of Nathaniel. I could just hear it now, “Oh, little baby’s crying over her kitty cat, wah, wah.” But instead, he surprised me with the side of him I saw when he put on my bicycle bell. For a moment, I felt confident in having a big brother, like he could suddenly help fix any situation.
- 12 “Take a deep breath. I think I know where Lobster is.” Nathaniel took me by the hand and had me follow him upstairs. I was rooting around looking for Dad’s old basketball jersey,” Nathaniel explained in the rec room, which looked completely wrecked. “I think Lobster must have followed me up here without me noticing.”
- 13 “OK, well where is he then?” Right as I was about to grow flustered again, Nathaniel opened the storage closet that held all of the little kid stuff that we did not play with anymore. I could not remember the last time I had seen the inside of that closet. It had probably been back in the days when I looked up to Nathaniel as my hero. I closed my eyes and tried to think good thoughts, instead of how upset I would be if Lobster ran away. When I opened them to look inside the closet, it was too dark to see anything.
- 14 “I think the light is broken,” Nathaniel commented, fumbling his hands along the deep closet’s walls. I heard a weird bounce, and then Nathaniel said, “Wait a minute, I found my basketball!”
- 15 I angrily yanked the string hanging overhead and replied, “If I hear you talk about your basketball one more time . . .” Before I could finish my sentence, the light blinked on and revealed Lobster rolling around with Nathaniel’s ball.
- 16 “Looks like we killed two birds with one stone,” Nathaniel said cheerfully.
- 17 “I’d rather clean two dirty socks with one stone, but thanks for helping me find the cat.” I smiled as I scooped up Lobster into my arms.

1. Choose THREE events that you should include in a summary of this story. Then, use the details to fill in the chart.

- The narrator finds her cat, Lobster, in a storage closet.
- The narrator argues with her brother about dirty socks.
- The narrator looks in the house for her missing cat.
- The narrator rides her bicycle home from school.
- The narrator pours dry cat food into a ceramic bowl.
- The narrator pulls a string to turn on the closet light.

◀ TIPS AND TRICKS

Choose the most important details from the beginning, middle, and end of the story.

BEGINNING	
MIDDLE	
END	

2. Write one or two sentences to paraphrase paragraph 3.

◀ HINT, HINT

Remember that when you paraphrase, you put the ideas into your own words.

This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

3. Part A

Which sentence BEST summarizes the narrator’s main problem?

- (A) The narrator does not enjoy doing math and science worksheets.
- (B) The narrator does not want to share a bathroom with her brother.
- (C) The narrator does not want to look for Nathaniel’s good basketball.
- (D) The narrator does not find her cat when she looks around the house.

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HINT, HINT

Remember that a *theme* is a message about life that the author wants readers to know. A *summary* is a short description of what happens in the story.

This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

4. Part A

Which statement **BEST** summarizes a theme of the story?

- Ⓐ Cats make better friends than brothers.
- Ⓑ You can always turn to your family in times of need.
- Ⓒ It can sometimes be difficult to show your true feelings.
- Ⓓ Taking care of more than one problem at a time is best.

Part B

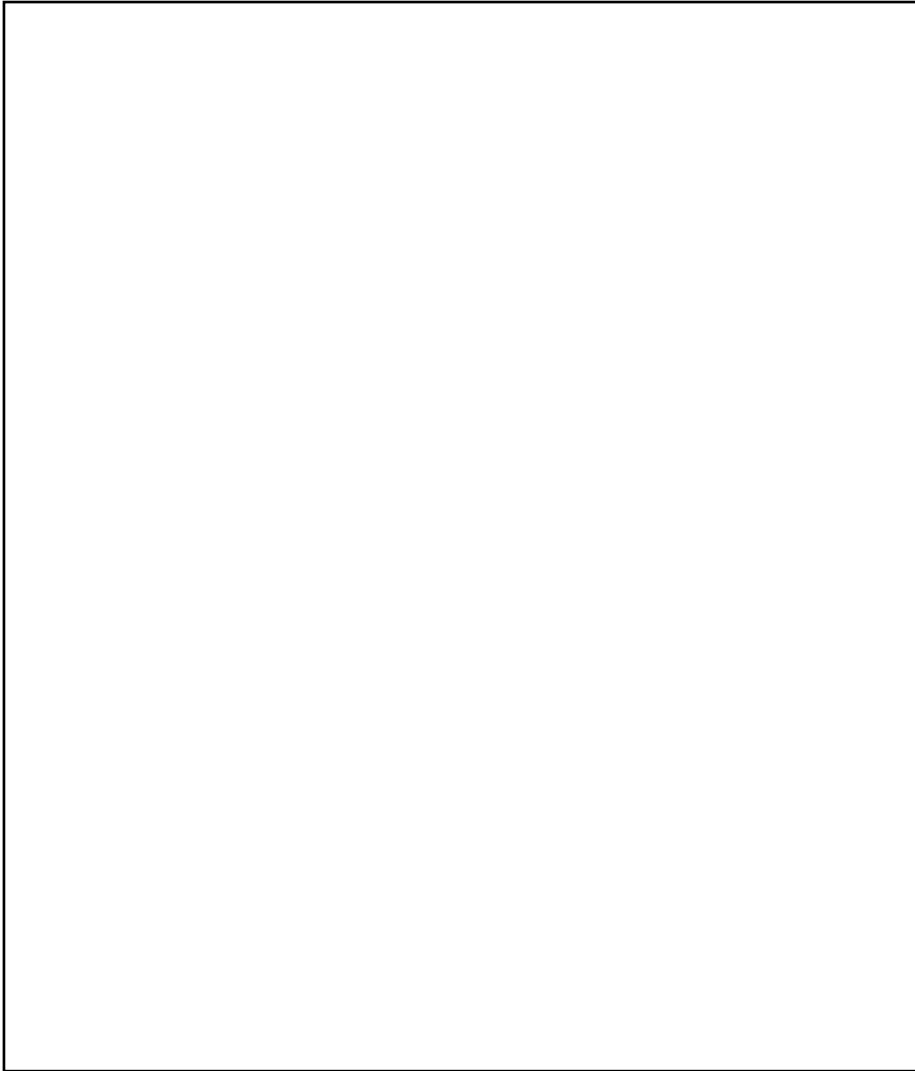
What sentence from the story **BEST** supports the answer to Part A?

- Ⓐ "I felt my face growing hot and my eyes welling up with tears, but I knew I could not cry in front of Nathaniel." (paragraph 11)
- Ⓑ "For a moment, I felt confidence in having a big brother, like he could suddenly help fix any situation." (paragraph 11)
- Ⓒ "Right as I was about to grow flustered again, Nathaniel opened the storage closet that held all of the little kid stuff that we did not play with anymore." (paragraph 13)
- Ⓓ "'Looks like we killed two birds with one stone,' Nathaniel said cheerfully." (paragraph 16)

5. Which TWO story details would be MOST important to include in a summary?

- Ⓐ Nathaniel is messy and careless.
- Ⓑ The narrator loves her cat, Lobster.
- Ⓒ Nathaniel enjoys playing basketball.
- Ⓓ Lobster snuck into a dark closet upstairs.
- Ⓔ Lobster eats dry food from a ceramic bowl.
- Ⓕ The narrator has a 10-speed mountain bike.

6. Write a summary of the story in your own words.



◀ HINT, HINT

Include the title, characters, setting, important events, a problem the characters solve, and the story's theme or message.

EXIT TICKET

6RL2

Now that you have learned how to summarize a story, let's take another look at the Real-World Connection.

Imagine that Tania has asked you for help writing her postcard. Look back at Tania's journal entry about her day at the beach. Explain to Tania which details she should include in her postcard and why. Then, write a one- or two-sentence summary of her journal entry as an example. Be sure to use what you have learned about main ideas, key details, and summaries.

