

# SUMMARIZE

## Short Stories

**WHAT IS SUMMARIZING?**  
Summarizing means telling the main ideas of a story or passage in your own words without all the extra details. It's like giving a quick version that!

**THINK OF IT LIKE A MOVIE!**  
Summarizing is like sketching the main characters, events, and setting.

**HOW TO BE A SUMMARIZING SUPERSTAR**

**DO**

- Focus on the most important ideas.
  - Who is the story about?
  - What happened?
  - When and where did it happen?
  - Why did it happen or why is it important?
- Use your own words. Don't copy sentences straight from the text.
- Keep it short and clear. A good summary is usually 1-3 sentences long.
- Tell the big picture. Explain what the passage is mostly about, not every detail.

**DON'T**

- Write in order.
- Add funny details.
- Include definitions.
- Copy sentences.

**Quick Tip:**  
Ask yourself: "If I had to tell someone what this story is about in 20 seconds, what would I say?"

**That's your summary!**

**PRACTICE SUMMARIZING USING WHO WHAT WHEN WHERE AND WHY WORKSHEET**

**The Lost Lunchbox**

Mia had packed her favorite lunch: a turkey sandwich, apple slices, and a brownie. When lunchtime arrived, she opened her backpack and froze. Her lunchbox was gone! She checked under the desk, in her cubby, and even in the recycling bin. "Maybe you left it on the bus," her friend Sarah suggested. After school, the driver let Mia check every seat. She spotted a familiar blue box under a jacket when she was about to give up. "Found it!" she cheered. Mia learned to zip her backpack next time, so her lunch wouldn't take another adventure.

**WHO WHAT WHEN WHERE WHY**

**MARCY'S Mayhem**

**TEACH SUMMARIZING USING WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE AND WHY**

**20 SHORT STORIES, ANSWER KEYS & ANCHOR CHARTS**

This resource saves planning time while keeping students engaged! The short, relatable stories grab their attention, and the clear visuals help students see how to summarize effectively. Teachers can use the included slides to introduce summarizing, then follow up with the short story practice pages and summary templates.

## What's Included?

- ✓ 20 original short stories written for upper elementary readers
- ✓ "Who, What, When, Where, Why" graphic organizers for each story
- ✓ Answer keys for teachers
- ✓ Summarizing Anchor Charts
  - What Summarizing Is
  - Do's and Don'ts of Summarizing
  - Summary Sentence Starters
- ✓ Blank Page to use your own story.

Help your students master the art of **summarizing** with this engaging and easy-to-use resource!

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**PRACTICE SUMMARIZING USING WHO WHAT WHEN WHERE AND WHY WORKSHEET**

**The Mystery of the Classroom Plant**

The class plant was drooping, even though everyone said they had watered it. Mrs. Nguyen asked the class to be "Plant Detectives." Each group tested the soil, checked the sunlight, and measured water levels. Finally, Jenna discovered the problem: the plant's drainage hole was blocked! The plant couldn't escape, and the roots were drowning. After they fixed the pot, the plant perked up again. The students realized that solving problems sometimes takes closer observation and teamwork.

WHO	WHAT	WHEN	WHERE	WHY

WRITE A SUMMARY:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Use the film strip who, what, where, when, and why to write a 1-2 sentence summary.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

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**PRACTICE SUMMARIZING USING WHO WHAT WHEN WHERE AND WHY WORKSHEET**

**Tyler's Snow Day Surprise**

When Tyler woke up and saw snow covering the yard, he shouted, "Snow day!" He built a fort, threw snowballs with his sister, and drank cocoa afterward. Later that afternoon, his dad helped him make a snowman taller than them. The next day, school reopened, but the snowman had melted halfway. Tyler smiled anyway, remembering that the best part of snow days isn't the snow, but spending time with the ones you love.

WHO	WHAT	WHEN	WHERE	WHY
Tyler, his sister, and his dad	Tyler enjoyed his snow day by building a snowman and playing outside	On a snowy day in winter	At home, outside in the yard	School was canceled, and he wanted to have fun in the snow.

WRITE A SUMMARY:

Tyler spent his snow day playing outside with his family and learned that the best part was spending time together.

Use the film strip who, what, where, when, and why to write a 1-2 sentence summary.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

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WHO	WHAT	WHEN	WHERE	WHY

WRITE A SUMMARY:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

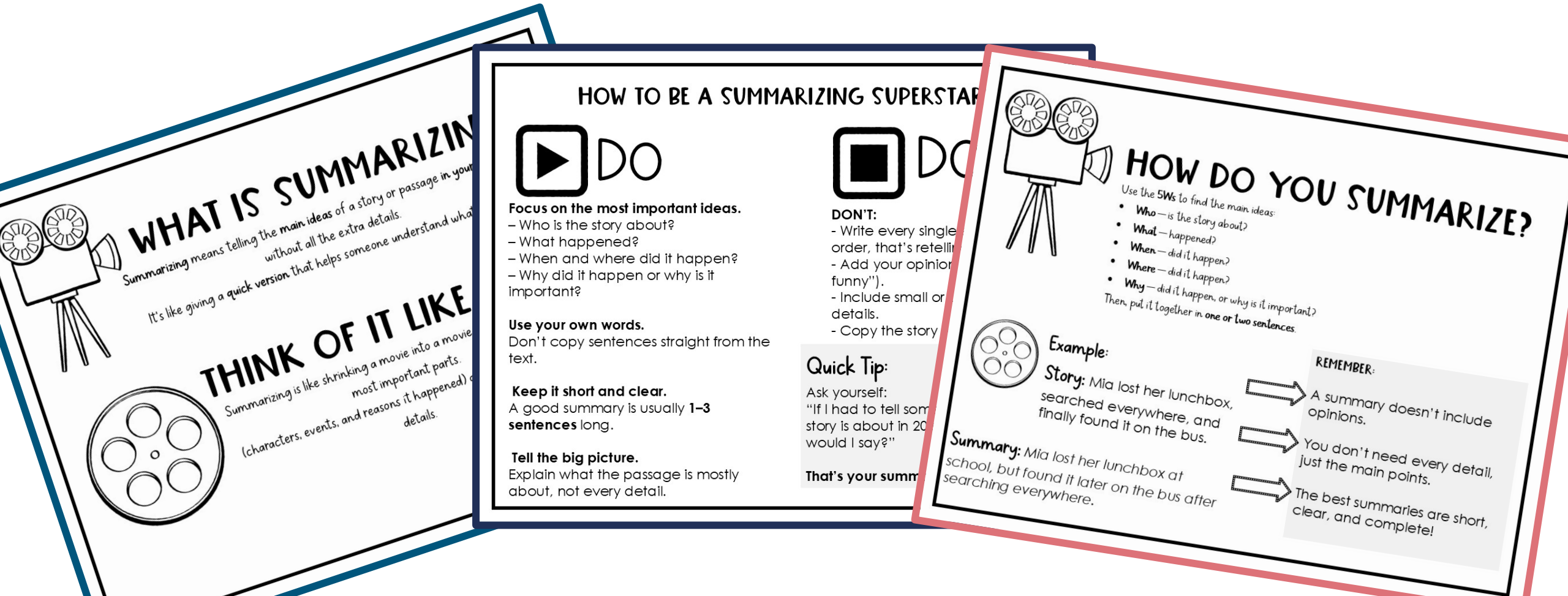
\_\_\_\_\_

Use the film strip who, what, where, when, and why to write a 1-2 sentence summary.

This printable and digital set includes short stories, graphic organizers, and teaching slides that guide students through identifying the 5Ws (Who, What, When, Where, Why) and writing concise summaries.



# THEMED ANCHOR CHARTS TO HELP STUDENTS LEARN THIS SKILL!



Perfect for upper elementary students (grades 3–5), this resource helps students understand what to include and what to leave out when summarizing fiction or nonfiction texts.

## PERFECT FOR:

- Whole-group mini lessons
- Reading centers or stations
- Independent practice
- Homework or review
- Small group intervention
- Test prep for reading comprehension

**PRACTICE SUMMARIZING USING WHO WHAT WHEN WHERE AND WHY WORKSHEET**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**The Science Fair Switch-Up**

Ethan had spent weeks building a baking-soda volcano for the science fair. The night before, his cat knocked it off the table, smashing it to pieces. Ethan almost gave up, but his sister suggested testing which paper towels absorbed the most water instead. They built a quick experiment, collected data, and made a chart. At the fair, the judges praised his effort and creative thinking. Ethan realized that real scientists have to adapt when things go wrong.

WHO WHAT WHEN WHERE WHY

WRITE A SUMMARY:

Use the film strip who what where when and why to write a 1-2 sentence summary.

**PRACTICE SUMMARIZING USING WHO WHAT WHEN WHERE AND WHY WORKSHEET**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Great Bake Sale Mix-Up**

The student council planned a bake sale to raise money for new library books. Mia was supposed to bring brownies, but her oven broke the night before. She panicked until her dad helped her make no-bake cookies instead. The next day, her cookies sold out first! The principal thanked her for being creative under pressure. Mia realized that problem-solving is just as important as planning.

WHO WHAT WHEN WHERE WHY

WRITE A SUMMARY:

Use the film strip who what where when and why to write a 1-2 sentence summary.

### SUMMARY SENTENCE STARTERS

#### GENERAL STARTERS

- This story is mostly about \_\_\_\_.
- The passage tells how \_\_\_\_.
- In this story, \_\_\_\_.
- The main idea is \_\_\_\_.
- This story shows that \_\_\_\_.

#### NONFICTION OR INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

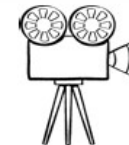
- The author explains \_\_\_\_.
- The text is mainly about \_\_\_\_.
- Readers learn that \_\_\_\_.
- The article gives information about \_\_\_\_.

#### FOR STORIES WITH A LESSON OR MESSAGE

- The character learned \_\_\_\_.
- The story teaches that \_\_\_\_.
- In the end, \_\_\_\_ realized \_\_\_\_.

#### USING THE 5WS

The story is about (who) who (what happened) at (where) during (when) because (why).



The short, relatable stories grab their attention, and the clear visuals help students see how to summarize effectively.



# Do you need additional practice?

Click any of the covers below.

