Considerations for Teaching Students to SUMMARIZE
Summarizing

“...summarizing helps us to understand and make meaning of the events of everyday life —what we read, what we view, what we experience.”

(Kissner, 2006, p.3)
Summarizing

“To summarize effectively, students need to recognize main ideas and key details, disregard unimportant or repetitive ideas, construct topic sentences, paraphrase, and collapse or combine lists or events into general statements.”

(Graham, S., MacArthur, C., & Fitzgerald, J., 2013, p.339)
Laying the Foundation for Summarizing

“Model many times over how to make a summary of a short passage or a paragraph; progress gradually to longer segments of text. Summarizing is difficult and in the beginning should be taught through extensive modeling and supported practice.”

(Moats, 2005, p. 52)
Summarizing

A summary should

• reflect the structure of the text,
• include a topic sentence,
• include the main ideas,
• include important details, and
• be paraphrased and shorter than the original text.
Ecosystem Changes

Slow Changes
An ecosystem usually has stability, or balance. There are many changes occurring all the time, but they cancel each other out. For example, organisms live, die, and decompose, returning the materials they were made of to the soil. New plants grow and use the materials. Water evaporates from a pond, but rain adds more water. Because these changes balance each other, they do not cause the overall ecosystem to change.

Over time, however, changes in climate, rate of erosion, and populations can cause big changes in an ecosystem. New communities can develop, the food chain can change, and the whole ecosystem may change.

Summary: What are the main ideas and important details that are necessary to include? How will you state them in your own words following the structure of the text? (As concisely as possible.)

Small changes in the ecosystem, such as rain and evaporation, cancel each other out. These small changes have no effect on the overall ecosystem.

Succession occurs when big changes, like erosion, cause an ecosystem to change into a different ecosystem.
Engage Students (Step 6)

Provide opportunities for students to Think-Turn-Talk as you work through the reading and complete the graphic organizer as a class.
Scaffold Practice (Step 7)

Complete the graphic organizer in pairs or small groups with teacher monitoring and support as necessary.
Provide Accountability (Step 8)

Complete the graphic organizer independently to demonstrate understanding. Use a rubric to support students and to assess.
Your Turn to Summarize

• Use the completed graphic organizer in the Graphic Organizer packet.
• Plan how you will share your thinking with students.
• Complete a summary for the entire text.
“Given the rapidly changing world in which today’s students operate and given the plethora of information at their fingertips, the importance of modeling how we determine importance has increased dramatically.”

~ Keene & Zimmermann, 2007