

Learning Project 4 Reading Business Documents

Inquiry Activity 4-1: Passage Reading Strategy – Summarizing

Summarizing is a reading strategy learners can use to better engage with and understand what they read. It is a metacognitive strategy that takes practice to develop. That practice and guidance is provided here under Doing the Work. Let learners do the work and learn how summarizing as a reading strategy works for them.

Resist trying to teach the strategy separate from the passage. Let learners inquire, discover for themselves, and then ask questions. Be actively available to provide more assistance after the IA is completed. You can model the strategy for your learners by using the Think Alouds found in Appendix B.

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to students.)

1. Identifying the Problem (Reading Passage only for Practice Test Items #s 13, 14, 15, and 16 PA)

Look over the passage. (Don't read word for word.)

What are you being asked to read? What will you have to do to be successful in this Activity?

Have you seen passages like this before? Where? When?

How does it look to you? Think about what you see and what you think you're going to see.

Jot down your thoughts or share them with your partner.

HOW MUST EMPLOYEES BEHAVE?

Strathmore College Employee Handbook

Employee Performance: Discipline and Dismissal

The College recognizes the importance of establishing and maintaining good working relationships with its personnel. However, problems of job performance and misconduct may arise and will be addressed with disciplinary actions. These actions include a process of verbal warnings, written warnings, and dismissal, when a situation warrants.

(5) Just Cause

The College will not normally discipline or dismiss an employee without just cause. Just cause includes but is not limited to

- a. failure to perform one's duties satisfactorily;
- b. insubordination, which is defined as willful failure to follow a legitimate order;
- (10) c. consumption of intoxicants or use, possession, or sale of legally prohibited or controlled substances on College property, or attendance at work under the influence of intoxicants or legally prohibited controlled substances;
- d. absence from work without authorization or appropriate excuse, or habitual tardiness;
- e. excessive absenteeism, which is defined as repeated absences



- (15) from work that are not included in an approved formal leave of absence;
 - f. willful falsification or alteration of a College record (including employment applications or resumes);
 - g. conviction of a felony or other crime, the nature of which is such that continued employment may be disruptive to College operations;
- (20)
 - h. presenting a possible or potential danger to the safety of other employees, the public, or College property;
 - i. unlawful sexual harassment as defined by Federal and/or State law; and
 - j. any other action detrimental to the College while on College property or while engaged in College work.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Four pre-reading strategies are introduced and used consistently to help learners develop the pre-reading skills for use with any reading they might do. These pre-reading strategies are:

- **Preview the Passage**
- **Activate/Build from Prior Knowledge**
- **Consider/Build Interest**
- **Set a Purpose**

Scan the passage and ask yourself questions like the following as the first step to understanding the passage.

Preview the Passage: *What do you see? How is the passage organized: does it have headings; are there lists, subheadings, bold type? What do you notice about the organization of the passage? Does the organization help you understand it?*

Activate/Build from Prior Knowledge: *Do you know anything about this topic from previous experience?*

Your students who have worked in almost any business will be familiar with the Employee Handbook. They may not have read it carefully, but they will be aware of the type of information it contains.

Consider/Build Interest: *Are you interested in learning the reasons that an employer might have for discipline or dismissal?*

Set a Purpose: *The purpose of reading this passage is to be able to summarize it.*

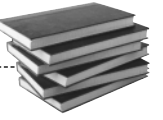
3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Planning: *Determine if you want to work individually, with a partner, or in a small group. Thinking aloud with a partner may help you do the **summarizing** strategy. (After you have used the strategy on several passages, try it alone in preparation for the test.)*

When learners choose to work alone and then share with a group, they are engaging in cooperative learning. When learners choose to do the learning and thinking together, they are engaging in collaborative learning.

Assigning: *For **summarizing**, you, you and your partner, or your group, will read and reread the passage several times. Decide if you will first read the passage alone or in a group, aloud or silently.*

As you read and reread the passage, you will choose information that is important and get rid of information that is not.



Doing the Work: As you read the passage, do the following:

Clarify:

Clarifying is a reading strategy used with every passage. Other strategies are introduced with each new passage.

Read the passage. Find and mark any words you might not know. See if the passage gives you enough information to **clarify** the meaning of those words. If not, find the meaning by asking somebody or looking it up.

Were there any places in the passage where you did not understand what was going on?

Summarize:

Read through the entire passage. After reading it, write your own title for the passage that best explains what the passage is about.

Share your title with your group. Decide which title best tells what the passage is about. Choose a title that is not too specific, but not too general to the passage.

Now re-read the passage line by line and decide what information is important according to the title, and what information is not important and could be left out.

Now write a **summary** of what this passage is about.

Pay attention to how the text structure might help you understand what the passage is about.

The outline structure will emphasize the various actions which provide “just cause” for the college’s actions.

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge, but also to learn it more completely.

Small Groups: Compare your **summary** with the others in the group. Explain why and how you **summarized** the passage as you did. Agree as a group what a good **summary** is and why. Then, agree on a good **summary** for this passage. Tell others why it is a good **summary**, and develop a plan for reading the passages for the purpose of **summarizing**.

Whole Class: Report to the class the various ways the group members **summarized** the passage, the **summary** the group thought was best and why, and the suggestions the group has for reading a passage, when you have to **summarize** it.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: Think about how you understood what you have done.

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don’t get much time to think about what you learned.

You were asked to put into words what the passage is mainly about, **summarizing**; then you were asked to write down what you would tell someone else about the passage. Is telling someone else what the passage is about the same or different from **summarizing** it? Explain.

Have you ever thought about reading in this way before? Explain.

How has **summarizing** helped you to understand the passage?

How did you answer the question in *Becoming Familiar with the Problem*, “Are you interested in learning the reasons that an employer might have for discipline or dismissal?”



How does your interest in a topic affect your reading?

What are some things you would do when reading a passage or a topic you are not interested in?

Extending: *Extend what you learned to new situations.*

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information presented in the Practice Test question to other information or situations.

If you work for a company with a disciplinary policy, how will this Inquiry Activity help you to read and understand your company's policy?

If you work for a company with a disciplinary policy, read that policy before the next class and report how it is different from or similar to the one presented in this passage.

Where else might you use the information in the passage?

Pick a passage from a GED practice book. Read the passage and re-title it. Get a hanger, and place your own title on the hanger. Hang the important details from the hanger. Share with your classmates.

Evaluating: *Assess what you learned and how you learned it.*

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods used in this IA.

What did you learn from this Inquiry Activity?

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when taking the GED test? Why?

How did reading this way make you feel?

