

Summarizing a Passage

Grade 3 • ELA • Writing a short summary of a passage using your own words • Standards: RL.3.2, RI.3.2

Read each short passage carefully. Then write a two- or three-sentence summary in your own words that tells the most important ideas.

1. Passage: Lily planted sunflower seeds in her backyard in the spring. She watered them every day and made sure they got plenty of sunlight. By summer, the sunflowers grew taller than her dad!

Write your summary:

2. Passage: Penguins are birds that cannot fly. They use their wings like flippers to swim very fast in the ocean. Penguins eat fish and spend most of their time in cold places near the water.

Write your summary:

3. Passage: Marco was nervous about his first piano recital. He practiced his song every afternoon for two weeks. When the big day came, he played his piece perfectly and everyone clapped. Marco felt proud of himself for working so hard.

Write your summary:

4. Passage: Bees are important insects that help plants grow. When bees fly from flower to flower looking for nectar, they carry pollen on their fuzzy bodies. This pollen helps flowers make seeds and fruit. Without bees, we would have much less food to eat.

Write your summary:

5. Passage: Long ago, people did not have refrigerators to keep food cold. They had to find other ways to keep food from spoiling. Some people stored food in cool caves

or underground rooms. Others dried meat and fruit in the sun or added salt to preserve it. In winter, people in cold places cut blocks of ice from frozen lakes and stored them in special buildings covered with sawdust to keep the ice from melting.

Write your summary:

6. Passage: The town library was very old and needed repairs, but the town did not have enough money to fix it. Mrs. Chen, the librarian, had an idea. She organized a book fair where people could buy used books and baked goods. Many volunteers helped, and local stores donated items to sell. The event was so successful that they raised enough money to fix the roof and buy new books. The whole community celebrated together.

Write your summary:

Answer Key — Summarizing a Passage

For the teacher / parent. Do not distribute with the worksheet.

1. Lily planted sunflower seeds and took care of them by watering them and giving them sunlight. The sunflowers grew very tall by summer. *(The summary includes the main idea (planting and caring for sunflowers) and the result (they grew very tall).)*
2. Penguins are birds that cannot fly but are good swimmers. They live in cold places and eat fish. *(The summary captures the key facts about penguins: they can't fly, they swim well, and they live in cold areas and eat fish.)*
3. Marco practiced hard for his first piano recital because he was nervous. He played perfectly at the recital and felt proud of his hard work. *(The summary includes the problem (nervousness), the action (practice), and the result (successful performance and pride).)*
4. Bees help plants grow by carrying pollen from flower to flower when they collect nectar. This process is important because it helps make the food we eat. *(The summary explains the main idea (bees help plants through pollination) and why it matters (food production).)*
5. Before refrigerators were invented, people used different methods to keep food from spoiling. They stored food in cool places, dried or salted food, and even saved ice from winter to use later. *(The summary captures the main idea (food preservation before refrigerators) and gives examples of the methods used.)*
6. The town library needed repairs but there was no money to fix it. Mrs. Chen organized a successful book fair with help from volunteers and donations, which raised enough money to repair the library and buy new books. *(The summary includes the problem (library needs repairs, no money), the solution (book fair), and the positive outcome (enough money raised).)*