



Literacy at Hartford Public High School

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Summarizing

from Classroom Instruction that Works
by Robert Marzano, et al.

Summary Frames

A summary frame provides a series of questions that the teacher provides to the students. These questions are designed to highlight the critical elements for specific types of information.

The Definition Frame

The purpose of a definition frame is to describe a particular concept and identify the subordinate concepts. Definition patterns contain the following elements:

1. **Term**—the subject to be defined.
2. **Set**—the general category to which the term belongs.
3. **Gross characteristics**—those characteristics that separate the term from other elements in the set.
4. **Minute differences**—those different classes of objects that fall directly beneath the term.

Frame questions include

1. What is being defined?
2. To which general category does the term belong?
3. What characteristics separate the item from other things in the general category?
4. What are some different types or classes of the item being defined?

Example from a life sciences class:

Students in Mrs. Miller's life sciences class are studying about monotremes. This particular day she is showing a film. To guide their viewing of the film, Mrs. Miller presents students with the following frame questions with some answers filled in.

1. What is being defined? *A monotreme*
2. To which general category do monotremes belong?
Mammals
3. What characteristics separate monotremes from other things in the general category?
4. What are some different types of monotremes?

Mrs. Mill explains to her students that all of the answer to the frame questions can be found in the film, but they will have to identify which information answer a specific question and which information does not. Students watch the film with an eye toward answering the questions. When the film is over, Mrs. Miller organizes students into groups, where they compare their answers and construct a summary about monotremes as a group.

The Problem/Solution Frame

Problem/solution frames introduce a problem and then identify one or more solutions to the problem.

Problem: A statement of something that has happened or might happen that is problematic.

Solution: A description of one possible solution.

Solution: A statement of another possible solution.

Solution: A statement of another possible solution.

Solution: Identification of the solution with the greatest chance of success.

Frame questions include

1. What is the problem?
2. What is a possible solution?
3. What is another possible solution?
4. Which solution has the best chance of succeeding?

Example:

Mr. Farrington is teaching a unit called 'Monterrey—The Big Cleanup.' After a short introductory lecture about the biggest manufacturing center of Mexico, he shows some slides and a videotape depicting the problems that have been caused by mining. Because tailing from the mining process have caused land and water pollution, the government seeks solutions to their waste material problems. Mr. Farrington sets up various demonstration information centers for the students. Each center exemplifies a way to separate waste materials from earth or water. After visiting all of the centers, students answer the problem/solution frame questions. To summarize, the students use a graphic representation to show the best ways to extract waste materials.