

Name _____

Date _____

English - "Summing up" - Summarizing

Here is the first verse of a poem by A.A. Milne called Beetle:

I found a little beetle, so that beetle was his name,
And I called him Alexander and he answered just the same.
I put him in a matchbox, and I kept him all the day
And Nanny let my beetle out
Yes, Nanny let my beetle out
She went and let my beetle out -
And beetle ran away.

What is the poem about? What is the most important thing it is telling us? That the poet's beetle ran away! If you wanted to tell the story to someone, you could say something like: I had a beetle, which I kept in a matchbox, and then Nanny let him out and he ran away. This is called summarizing, or making a summary. Summarizing means finding the most important ideas and leaving out the details, like the beetle's name; that it answered to Alexander and that the poet had kept it all day.

Here is a short story for you to read:

Jean and Robyn were playing in the woods. They were having so much fun they didn't watch the time. All of a sudden, they noticed it was getting dark. "We'd better go," said Jean. "My mom will be wondering where I am." They had wandered much further into the woods than they ever had before. In the dusk, it was difficult to see the pathway. After a while, they realized they were walking deeper and deeper into the woods. By this time, it was completely dark. All around them, they heard rustling and squeaking. Robyn sat on the ground and started crying and so did Jean. Suddenly, there was a louder, stomping, crunching sound coming towards them. They screamed and jumped up to run and then they heard a voice. "It's my dad," Jean shouted. And it was.

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English - "Summing up" – Summarizing Questions

A. The main idea.

Read the story again and see if you can identify the main idea. Choose one:

The friends were playing in the woods.

It got completely dark.

They got lost in the woods.

They were afraid.

B. Sharing stories

Now it's your turn to tell a story. Tell your friend something that happened to you and let him give your story a title. Then listen to his story and do the same. This is a good trick for working out the main idea because the title has to be short and has to tell you what the story is about!

C. Tell it in your own words.

Read the story of the children in the woods again then write it down in your own words. See if you can tell the whole story using only 30 words or less.

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Activity A

They got lost in the woods.

Activity C

This could vary tremendously but should contain the following ideas:

The friends were playing in the woods.

It got dark.

They got lost

They were afraid.

Jean's dad found them.