

Lesson Plan

Structuring a Summary

Book: *Engineering for Floods*

Series: Engineering for Disaster

Level: Navigator

Objective

To help students practice identifying the structure and key ideas of a text and using that structure to write a clear summarizing paragraph.

Supplies

- *Engineering for Floods* book
- Pencils and paper

Before the Activity

Read *Engineering for Floods* out loud, or assign it to students to read on their own. Pass out a pencil and paper to each student.

Activity

Summaries help people quickly grasp the topic and main ideas of a text. Having the ability to write clear summaries demonstrates students' understanding of a text. Students will use the title and main idea of each chapter to write a concise summary of *Engineering for Floods*.

First, students will create an outline of *Engineering for Floods*. Students should write the title of each chapter and then identify the key topic or idea of that chapter. The topic or idea should answer the question: What is this chapter about? Students should write these answers at the top of their papers. The topics or ideas can be written out as phrases rather than full sentences.

Then, students will write a five-sentence paragraph summarizing the *Engineering for Floods* book. Students should have one sentence summarizing and identifying the main idea of each of the five chapters.

Evaluation

Collect students' papers at the end of class. Use the attached answer key to give students 1 point for correctly identifying the main topic of each chapter in their outlines and 1 point for each sentence in the paragraph, for a total of 10 points.

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational texts, grade 4 (RI 4.5).

Answer Key

Outline

Chapter 1: The Great Flood—highlights the Great Flood of 1993

Chapter 2: The Destructive Force of Floods—discusses the causes of floods

Chapter 3: Hard Engineering—describes human-made structures used for flood management and prevention

Chapter 4: Soft Engineering—describes how using the land's natural defenses can help with flood management and prevention

Chapter 5: Preparing for Future Floods—discusses the future of flood management and prevention

Sample Paragraph

The Great Flood of 1993 was one of the worst natural disasters in US history. Floods such as that one can happen because of heavy rain, melting snow or ice, breaks in dams and other barriers, and hurricanes. Human-made structures such as levees, floodwalls, floodgates, channels, and dams can help prevent and manage flooding. Engineers can also use the land's natural defenses by ensuring the health of river ecosystems, using catchments to control the flow of floodwater, and creating living shorelines. Future flood prevention and management will combine hard and soft engineering methods and also use satellite imagery to coordinate emergency response efforts.