



## What Can A Parent Do To Promote Thinking?

“Children grow into the intellectual life around them.”

Lev Vygotsky

**The skill of summarizing means to:** Restate in a simplified or condensed version. As a reader, a person summarizes by discerning the most important ideas in a text, ignoring irrelevant information while integrating central ideas in a meaningful way.

A summary of *narrative text* focuses on story elements: characters, setting, plot (problem, sequence of events, outcome)

A summary of *informational text* focuses on the important information (main idea) about the text.

### **Ideas and tips for parents for the skill of summarizing:**

Create a summary board with your child. Read a story together. Then ask the child to identify the beginning, middle and end of the story. Depending on the child’s level, they can also identify characters, setting and plot. The child draws a picture for each part of the story and they write a sentence to summarize each part of the story. If the child is not yet able to write, then the parent can write the child’s words for him under the drawings.

### **Books that support the application of this skill:**

- The Old Woman Who Named Things – Cynthia Rylant
- The Night I Followed the Dog – Nina Laden
- A New Coat for Anna – Harriet Ziefert
- George and Martha – James Marshall
- The Paper Bag Princess – Robert Munsch

### **Questions that a parent can ask his/her child to reinforce this skill:**

#### **For Narrative Text: Story Structure Questions**

- Where and when does the story take place?
- Who is the story about?
- What is the problem the character faces?
- What does the character do about the problem?
- How does the story turn out?
- What lesson does the main character learn?
- What is the author trying to tell the reader?

#### **For Informational Text: Paragraph Shrinking**

- Identify **WHO** or **WHAT** (person, animal, place, or thing) a paragraph or section is mostly about.
- Identify the most important information about the WHO or WHAT.
- Shrink all the information into one main-idea statement of 10 words or less.
- Combine main-idea statements from other paragraphs to make a final summary of whole passage.