

9. ONE-SENTENCE SUMMARY

Approx. duration: 30-45 min

Groups of: 4-6

Competencies involved: S, L, W, R

Level: All

Required Material

- Notebook or piece of paper and pen
- Whiteboard and marker (optional)
- Laptop (optional)

Activity Description

Summarizing activities in the ESL classroom are beneficial for students because they “[...] enhance critical thinking and writing skills, prepare learners for assessments, and facilitate language learning”. [1] One-sentence summaries go a bit beyond by adding grammatical constraints, which benefits the teacher or the peer evaluator since they can “[...] scan and compare responses quickly and easily”. [2] This activity can be used as an original follow-up task to listening and reading comprehension activities. The summarized content should be based on information and content-rich material such as a short story, an informative text or video, or a content-specific lesson.

First, the students work in pairs to answer these questions about the content: “Who Did/Does What to Whom, When, Where, How, and Why (WDWWWWHW)?” [2] on a piece of paper or a whiteboard. Next, they team up with the rest of their small group (5-6 students) to “turn [their] answers into a grammatical sentence that follows the WDWWWWHW pattern.” [2] Once their one-sentence summaries are ready, they must team up with a neighboring team to “[...] critique and improve each other's summaries”. [2]

To push the students a bit further, the instructor can ask them to turn the final version of their one-sentence summaries into “[...] concise, informative, and elegant two or three-sentence summaries”. [2] Finally, the teacher can use their previously completed WDWWWWHW pattern as an example to complete the final recap with the class.

TEACHER

- Content choice and completion of the WDWWWWHW pattern
- Assessment and/or feedback tool preparation (optional)
- Team formation
- Assignment explanation and task assignment

STUDENTS

- Preliminary research/work (if applicable)

Preparation

TEACHER

1. Gives the activity instructions and the topic.
2. Times the activity steps.
3. Walks around the classroom to verify the students' progress.
4. Encourages students to give each other feedback.
5. Proposes the extra task: extending the one-sentence summary. (optional)
6. Proceeds with a collective recap.

STUDENTS

1. Complete the WDWWWWHW pattern with a partner.
2. Team up with the rest of their small group to complete the one-sentence summary.
3. Join another team to give and receive feedback.
4. Complete the extra task. (optional)
5. Assess their own work through the collective recap.

Workflow

TEACHER

- Formative or summative assessment of the one-sentence summary using a basic evaluation grid that has previously been shared with the students

STUDENT

- Formative assessment of their own work using basic assessment elements previously provided by the teacher
- Formative or summative assessment of other teams' work using basic assessment elements previously provided by the teacher

Evaluation options

Tips

· It's important that the teacher completes the activity beforehand to ensure the accuracy of the content choice and the time required to complete the task. They should give the students twice the time it took them to do the assignment.

· Since they are quite easy to assess, one-sentence summaries are appropriate activities for asking the students to either self-assess or assess their peers' work.

[1] Sadikova, G. (2024). The role of summarizing as a cognitive reading strategy in second language acquisition. *Modern Science and Research*, 3(5), 103-108. <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/31691>

[2] Angelo, T. Cross, P. (1993). *Classroom Assessment Techniques*. Jossey-Bass Publishers, 427 pages.