



DRAW CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

Alert readers know how to use the facts and evidence in a text to draw conclusions. **Drawing conclusions** means making judgments about what has happened or what you have learned in your reading.

Writers usually lead the reader to a conclusion by arranging their facts in an orderly way. When you read, use a diagram like the following to keep track of the facts and the conclusion you can draw from them.

<p>Supporting Facts</p> <hr/> <hr/> <p>Conclusion</p> <hr/> <hr/>

Model

What conclusions can you draw from the supporting facts in this passage from “The Friends of Kwan Ming” by Paul Yee? Compare your answers to the ones below.

When his father died, the peasant Kwan Ming was forced to sell his little plot of paddy¹ and the old family house to pay for the burial. After the funeral, Kwan Ming looked around at the banana trees surrounding his village, and saw that he had nothing left to his name—not even one chipped roof tile. He had just enough money to buy a steamship ticket to the New World, where he had heard jobs were plentiful.

“I can start a new life there,” he told his mother. “I will send money home.”

The voyage lasted six weeks, over rocky waves and through screaming storms. Kwan Ming huddled together with hundreds of other Chinese deep in the ship’s hold.²

1. **paddy:** Rice field.

2. **ship’s hold:** Inside of the ship, under the decks, where cargo is usually carried.

1. Supporting Facts: Kwan Ming had to sell his plot of paddy and the family house. He had nothing left to his name.

Conclusion: The family was poor.

2. Supporting Facts: The voyage lasted six weeks. There were rocky waves and screaming storms. Hundred of Chinese huddled in the ship’s hold.

Conclusion: The voyage to the New World was very uncomfortable.



Practice

Part I

The passage below, from “Mowgli’s Brothers” by Rudyard Kipling, is followed by three conclusions. List the supporting facts above the conclusions that are correct and cross out the conclusions that are wrong.

“Shere Khan does us great honor,” said Father Wolf, but his eyes were very angry. “What does Shere Khan need?”

“My quarry. A man’s cub went this way,” said Shere Khan. “Its parents have run off. Give it to me.”

Shere Khan had jumped at a woodcutter’s campfire, as Father Wolf had said, and was furious from the pain of his burned feet. But Father Wolf knew that the mouth of the cave was too narrow for a tiger to come in by. Even where he was, Shere Khan’s shoulders and forepaws were cramped for want of room, as a man’s would be if he tried to fight in a barrel.

“The Wolves are a free people,” said Father Wolf. “They take orders from the Head of the Pack, and not from any striped cattle-killer. The man’s cub is ours—to kill if we choose.”

“Ye choose and ye do not choose! What talk is this of choosing? By the bull that I killed, am I to stand nosing into your dog’s den for my fair dues? It is I, Shere Khan, who speak!”

The tiger’s roar filled the cave with thunder. Mother Wolf shook herself clear of the cubs and sprang forward, her eyes, like two green moons in the darkness, facing the blazing eyes of Shere Khan.

1. Supporting Facts:

Conclusion: Father Wolf knows that Shere Khan will not be able to harm him and Mother Wolf.

2. Supporting Facts:

Conclusion: Mother Wolf will kill the child known as the “man’s cub.”

3. Supporting Facts:

Conclusion: Shere Khan wants to kill the man’s cub.



NAME _____

DATE _____

Part II

Below is a passage from “Childhood and Poetry” by Pablo Neruda. Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

One time, investigating in the back yard of our house in Temuco¹ the tiny objects and minuscule beings of my world, I came upon a hole in one of the boards of the fence. I looked through the hole and saw a landscape like that behind our house, uncared for, and wild. I moved back a few steps, because I sensed vaguely that something was about to happen. All of a sudden a hand appeared—a tiny hand of a boy about my own age. By the time I came close again, the hand was gone, and in its place there was a marvelous white sheep.

The sheep’s wool was faded. Its wheels had escaped. All of this only made it more authentic. I had never seen such a wonderful sheep. I looked back through the hole but the boy had disappeared. I went into the house and brought out a treasure of my own: a pinecone, opened, full of odor and resin,² which I adored. I set it down in the same spot and went off with the sheep.

1. **Temuco:** Town in Chile.

2. **resin:** Sticky substance, like sap, that oozes from some plants and trees.

1. What conclusion can you draw about the narrator?

2. List three facts from this passage that support the conclusion you have drawn.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____



Part III

Below is a passage from "Thunder Butte" by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve. Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

As the boy entered the room, which was kitchen and living room as well as his parents' bedroom, he heard his mother say, "What if there is a rock slide and Norman is hurt or buried on the butte? We won't know anything until you get home from work, John. I don't want Norman to go."

"The boy is old enough to have learned to be careful on the butte. He'll be all right," John answered as he tried to reassure Sarah. "Besides," he added, "my father dreamed of this happening."

Sarah grunted scornfully. "No one believes in dreams or in any of those old superstitious ways anymore."

"I'll be okay, Mom," Norman said as he sat down at the table. "I should be able to find lots of agates² on the west side where there is all that loose rock. Maybe I can talk the trader into giving me money for them after all." He spoke bravely despite his own inner misgivings about going to the butte.

2. agates: Hard, semiprecious stones with striped or clouded coloring.

Give one conclusion that you have drawn from this passage about each of the following characters. Under the conclusion, give one supporting fact that backs it up. The first conclusion is filled in for you.

1. Sarah

Conclusion: Sarah is very protective of her son Norman.

Supporting Fact: _____

2. John

Conclusion: _____

Supporting Fact: _____

3. Norman

Conclusion: _____

Supporting Fact: _____



NAME _____

DATE _____

SUMMARIZE

Introduction

To **summarize** means to tell briefly in your own words the main ideas of a piece of writing. When you summarize, you can condense your ideas or those of the writer into precise statements and omit unimportant details. When you are reading, you can choose and remember the most important parts of the author's writing. When readers write or tell the "short version" of what they've read, they summarize it. A summary includes the author's main ideas but leaves out the supporting details.

Model

Below is a passage from "Hard as Nails" by Russell Baker.

I was confused. I had expected the newsroom to have glamour, but this place had nothing but squalor. The walls hadn't been painted for years. The windows were filthy. Desks were heaped with mounds of crumpled paper, torn sheets of newspaper, overturned paste pots, dog-eared telephone directories. The floor was ankle deep in newsprint, carbon paper, and crushed cigarette packages. Waist-high cans overflowed with trash. Ashtrays were buried under cigarette ashes and butts. Ugly old wooden chairs looked ready for the junk shop.

Here is a *summary* of the same passage:

I had expected the newsroom to be a glamorous place, but everywhere I looked I saw dirt, trash, and junk.



NAME _____

DATE _____

Practice

Read the following paragraph from “How to Write a Letter” by Garrison Keillor. Then answer the questions that follow.

Probably your friend will put your letter away, and it’ll be read again a few years from now—and it will improve with age. And forty years from now, your friend’s grandkids will dig it out of the attic and read it, a sweet and precious relic of the ancient eighties that gives them a sudden clear glimpse of you and her and the world we old-timers knew. You will then have created an object of art. Your simple lines about where you went, who you saw, what they said, will speak to those children and they will feel in their hearts the humanity of our times.

You can’t pick up a phone and call the future and tell them about our times. You have to pick up a piece of paper.

1. What is the main idea of this paragraph?

2. Name two details that give more information about the main idea.

3. Use a complete sentence or sentences to summarize the paragraph.

4. Challenge!

Read the following passage from “Señor Coyote and the Tricked Trickster” by I. G. Edmonds. Then write one or two sentences to summarize the passage.

One day long ago in Mexico’s land of sand and giant cactus *Señor*¹ Coyote and Señor Mouse had a quarrel. None now alive can remember why, but recalling what spirited *caballeros*² these two were, I suspect that it was some small thing that meant little.

Be that as it may, these two took their quarrels seriously and for a long time would not speak to each other.

Then one day Mouse found Señor Coyote caught in a trap. He howled and twisted and fought, but he could not get out. He had just about given up when he saw Señor Mouse grinning at him.

1. *Señor*: Spanish title used like “mister.”

2. *caballeros*: Spanish for “gentlemen.”

Summary



NAME _____

DATE _____

PARAPHRASE

Introduction

When you use your own words to repeat someone else's message, you **paraphrase** what they have said. Paraphrasing is a helpful reading tool. When you are reading, identify the main ideas and their supporting details. If you can tell a story accurately in your own words, it shows that you understand the meaning of what you have read. Unlike a summary, where the reader is concerned mostly with the author's main ideas, a paraphrase also includes details.

Model

Read this passage from "Turkeys" by Bailey White. Paraphrase it in your mind as you read it. Compare your paraphrase with the one below.

Something about my mother attracts ornithologists. It all started years ago when a couple of them discovered she had a rare species of woodpecker coming to her bird feeder. They came in the house and sat around the window, exclaiming and taking pictures with big fancy cameras. But long after the red cockaded woodpeckers had gone to roost, the ornithologists were still there. There always seemed to be three or four of them wandering around our place and staying for supper.

Paraphrased Version

Ever since the time that some ornithologists discovered we had a rare species of woodpecker coming to my mother's bird feeder, bird experts have been regular visitors to our house.



NAME _____ DATE _____

Practice

Paraphrase the following passage from "The Emperor's New Clothes" by Hans Christian Andersen.

Many years ago there was an emperor who was so fond of new clothes that he spent all his money on them. He did not give himself any concern about his army; he cared nothing about the theater or for driving about in the woods, except for the sake of showing himself off in new clothes. He had a costume for every hour in the day, and just as they say of a king or emperor, "He is in his council chamber," they said of him, "The emperor is in his dressing room."



NAME _____

DATE _____

FORM GENERALIZATIONS

Introduction

Effective readers sometimes act as detectives. They look for specific clues in their reading material and put these clues together to solve the mystery of the larger meaning of what they have read. When readers do this, they form **generalizations**, or broad ideas on what might be true in the book, story, or passage.

To form generalizations as you read, look carefully for sentences that relate to each other. Then ask yourself if the sentences give you general information that might be true, but is not directly stated. If so, you have formed a generalization.

Model

Read the following passage from “Dentistry” by Mark Twain. As you read, try to form one or more generalizations about the information in the passage. See if your generalizations agree with the example given below.

Monday morning found Tom Sawyer miserable. Monday morning always found him so—because it began another week’s slow suffering in school. He generally began that day with wishing he had had no intervening holiday, it made the going into captivity and fetters again so much more odious.

Tom lay thinking. Presently it occurred to him that he wished he was sick; then he could stay home from school .

Generalization

Tom Sawyer hated school.

This sentence states the central idea of the passage.

Supporting information from the passage

Tom was miserable every Monday morning when he knew he would have to go back to school.

Having a holiday over the weekend made going back to school even more painful.

Tom wished he was sick because then he would not have to go back to school.

This supporting information helps to illustrate the generalization.



NAME _____ DATE _____

Practice

- A. Read this passage from “Restoring the Circle: Native American Literature as a Means of Preserving Cultural Traditions,” by Joseph Bruchac. Make at least one generalization about the passage, and support it with information found there.

In many Native American traditions life is seen as a circle. We enter that circle when we are born and as we travel around that circle we come back, as elders, to the place where we began. The elders, who have spent a lifetime learning their cultural traditions, are the ones who are supposed to be closest to the children, passing on their traditions through the teaching to be found in stories. As long as that circle remains unbroken, the people will survive.

1. Generalization(s)

2. Supporting Information

- B. Read this passage from “An Astronaut’s Answers” by John Glenn. Make at least one generalization about the passage, and support it with information found there.

We are a curious, questing people and our research in this new laboratory of space represents an opportunity to benefit people right here on Earth and to increase our understanding of the universe. The potential scientific, medical, and economic benefits from space are beyond our wildest dreams. That’s why astronauts went to the moon, and that’s why we continue to pursue our dreams of space exploration.

1. Generalization(s)

2. Supporting Information
