



Strategy: Determining Importance- for both primary or intermediate (2 lessons)

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Learning Intention: To be able to determine the main ideas from a fiction text (or a chapter of a novel).

Resources: Skeleton Man by Joseph Bruchac (any text- short or long that can be adapted/changed for grade level)



Activity/Lesson: Collaborative Summary – Faye Brownlie

- 1) Each student has one sheet of blank paper that is divided into 4 quadrants
- 2) As the teacher is reading the text the students are listening for important points. They are instructed to put **key words or pictures** that represent what they view as an 'important idea' in each quadrant (one idea per quadrant). They don't need sentences or details at this point. While reading the teacher is using 'think aloud' and 'questioning' to provoke thought! Each student decides what they think are important points on their own.
- 3) Partner up students purposefully! Within each pair they must pick the 4 most important points from the 8 points they have as a pair. What are the 4 most important points? They rewrite their points on a new sheet and at this point they can synthesis and add details.
- 4) Each pair is now purposefully partnered with another pair (groups of 4). Again their job is to pick the 4 most important points from the 8 points. There should be a lot of discussion and justification of why their points are important. Ask "Why?, So what? Answer with because..."
- 5) Lesson 2- To start this lesson refresh student's memories by sharing the important points and details from each group. This will serve to move some students along and to allow for 'sharing' and changes in thinking.
- 6) As a team they 'flesh out' the details for each important point. Then each group member picks one of their group's important points (each member needs to pick a different point so that all 4 covered). Their job is to describe in detail the important point they've chosen, the details they remember from

the book and to draw a picture of what it might look like (for older students this may be done in paragraph form).

- 7) After individuals are done they are posted, chronologically, on the front board. These are then read together to check for understanding and to compare and contrast ideas.

Adaptations for primary:

- 1) Present the passage on the overhead and highlight 'key words' that represent the important point as the teacher is reading. One important point will be enough! Use questioning, think aloud and connections to illicit details.
- 2) Give out paper and let the students jot down key words that represent the important point. They can then add illustrations that represent the main idea and some details.
- 3) Students should pair up and share their ideas.
- 4) Follow up with a class discussion so they can share their ideas with the class.
- 5) In subsequent lessons the children could pair up and collaborate to find their main points. This can be done when they are ready to justify their choice of a main point from 2 or more important points.