


Lesson 8 Part 1: Introduction

Summarizing Literary Texts

 **MS CCRS RL.7.2:** . . . provide an accurate summary of the text based upon this analysis.

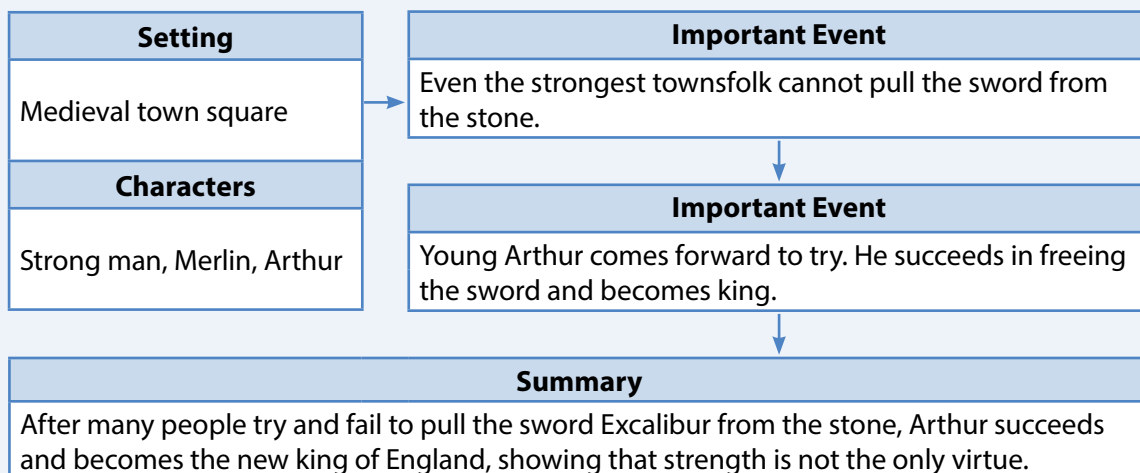
Theme: *Myths and Legends*

Have you ever seen a movie that you couldn't wait to tell your friends about? You probably described it to them using just a few sentences. A **summary** is a brief retelling of a story that includes the main characters, setting, important events, including the conflict and its resolution, and theme. When providing an **accurate**, or correct, summary, be sure to tell events in the order they happen. Also be sure to tell it using **objective** statements that are free of opinions or judgments.

Read the story below. Make notes in the margins about the characters, setting, and events.



Read the chart below, noting how it only tells important details about the story.



Summaries retell important events and identify setting, characters, and theme in an accurate and objective fashion. Good readers summarize to check their understanding and remember important plot details.



Read the first three paragraphs of an Algonquin legend.

Genre: Legend

Glooskap and the Wasis *by Edgar Ingersoll*

And so it was that Glooskap, the mightiest and most fearsome of all the Algonquin warriors, had traversed through the lands, defeating all his enemies. After many months, he returned to his village, where the people bowed their heads respectfully.

Upon arriving at his wigwam home, however, he glimpsed an odd creature sitting on the floor, sucking a piece of maple-sugar candy, troubling no one. Glooskap asked his wife what the creature was, to which she responded that it was the Wasis, a fierce being who was undefeated and would remain so until the end of time. She warned her husband that if he meddled with the Wasis, Glooskap would be plagued with suffering.

Glooskap was incensed that an enemy had infiltrated his home. He challenged the small creature to a test of strength, but the Wasis ignored him. Outraged, he ordered the Wasis to crawl to him and acknowledge him as its master, but the creature only laughed.

(continued)

Explore how to answer this question: *“What is the best way to summarize this part of the legend?”*

A summary includes characters, setting, important events, and theme. Underline these elements in the text above.

Summaries should also be objective, or free of opinions and judgments. Read the following summary and cross out any opinion words or statements. Then check your work against the bullet points.

Glooskap is an awesome Algonquin warrior who comes home to his village after defeating his enemies. I think it’s funny how he finds the Wasis sitting on the floor and thinks it’s another enemy. He foolishly challenges and orders the Wasis around, but the little creature won’t obey him.

- In the first sentence, “awesome” is an opinion, not a detail from the text. Cross it out.
- In the second sentence, “I think it’s funny” is a judgment and should be crossed out.
- The word “foolishly” in sentence 3 is also an opinion. It should be crossed out, too.

With a partner, discuss another important event that should be added to the summary to make it more complete. Then take turns summarizing the text accurately, objectively, and in your own words.



Close Reading

What are the most important events that occur in this part of the text? **Underline** two or more details that describe the ways the Wasis responds to Glooskap's actions.

Hint

Eliminate any choices that make a judgment, are inaccurate, or are vague.

Continue reading about Glooskap and the Wasis. Use the Close Reading and Hint to help you answer the question.

(continued from page 70)

In an uncontrollable fury, Glooskap screamed at the Wasis that he alone was the mightiest warrior! This time, the Wasis did respond: it opened its throat and let out a terrible, heartbroken wail.

Glooskap covered his ears, but the creature's howls split his skull. He asked it to stop crying, but it would not. He danced a funny dance, sang a song, and made a face, but it wasn't until Glooskap held the Wasis that the creature was finally appeased. Subdued, the baby cooed "goo" at his father—for son and father they were. And forever after, when a baby coos "goo goo" at his father, the Wasis remembers his victory over Glooskap.

Circle the correct answer.

Which of the following choices is the most accurate summary of the story ending?

- A** Glooskap finally figures out that the Wasis is his son. He may have been a mighty warrior, but he wasn't very smart.
- B** The mighty Glooskap is unable to defeat the crying baby Wasis. This victory is remembered every time a baby coos at its father.
- C** The wife's warning that Glooskap would suffer proves to be wrong. Glooskap ends up enjoying the time he spends with his son.
- D** Although Glooskap asks the Wasis to stop crying, it refuses to do so. Even dancing, singing, and making a face doesn't work.



Show Your Thinking

Explain why one other answer choice is not an accurate summary of the story ending.



With a partner, take turns accurately and objectively summarizing the entire legend in your own words. Include characters, setting, important events, and theme.



Read the myth. Use the Study Buddy and the Close Reading to guide your reading.

Genre: Myth



I know that a myth is a story set in a time and place unlike my own. Myths also often have fantastical characters. As I read, I'll think about how these elements might be included in a summary of the text.

Close Reading

Circle details that reveal the central conflict in this story and which characters are most affected.

What is the fate of the two main characters?
Underline the most important events in the story's ending.

Beowulf and Grendel *by Javier Moreno*

- 1 Long, long ago there lived a great king named Hrothgar who benevolently ruled over Denmark and its people. Every night the king hosted great feasts in Heorot Hall and joined in the merriment as songs were sung and stories were told.
- 2 Outside, lurking in the gloom, was a hideous monster named Grendel who hated the merry sounds that came from the hall. The sounds of song and laughter tortured him. Finally, late one night when the unsuspecting guests lay sleeping, Grendel entered the hall and killed thirty of Hrothgar's men. For the twelve long years that followed, no songs or laughter came from Heorot Hall. Even the bravest and strongest of Hrothgar's soldiers were powerless against the wrath of Grendel.
- 3 Finally, a hero appeared—Beowulf, who looked like a boy to Hrothgar's warriors. They gasped as he stood before the king of the Danes and declared, "I will kill this monster. I will leave behind my sword, and I shall destroy him with my bare hands."
- 4 The brave words of the youthful Beowulf filled King Hrothgar with hope. That night, there was feasting and merriment in Heorot Hall once more. When darkness fell over the land and each man went to take his rest, Beowulf alone stayed watchful and vigilant, waiting for the battle he knew was sure to transpire.
- 5 At last, Grendel entered Heorot Hall. Just as the monster was about to seize Beowulf, the youth caught Grendel by the arm, and man and monster wrestled until daylight. The battle was fierce and wild, but Beowulf emerged the victor. Fatally wounded, howling his song of death, Grendel fled the hall and ran until he reached the lake where he made his home. There, he plunged into the waters and quickly sank, never again to terrorize the Danes.



Hints

Which choice presents an accurate and objective statement that gives information about an important character and event?

Which choice gives an accurate and objective overview of the paragraph's important events?

As you write, think about where the story takes place, who it is about, what happens to those characters from beginning to end, and what lesson the story teaches.

Use the Hints on this page to help you answer the questions.

- 1** Which of the following statements would you most likely include in a summary of "Beowulf and Grendel"?
 - A** Heorot Hall was once King Hrothgar's favorite place.
 - B** Grendel preferred to live in dark, gloomy places.
 - C** Hrothgar shows great weakness compared to the courageous Beowulf.
 - D** Beowulf promises King Hrothgar that he will kill Grendel.

- 2** Which is the best summary of the last paragraph of the story?
 - A** Beowulf and Grendel have a fierce and unrestrained battle.
 - B** Beowulf defeats Grendel, who returns to his lake to die.
 - C** Grendel howls a song of death while he flees the hall.
 - D** Grendel gets what he deserves for terrorizing the Danes.

- 3** Write a summary of the story "Beowulf and Grendel" in your own words. Be sure to be accurate and objective. Include at least three details about the main characters, setting, and important events. Also include the story's theme.



Read the myth. Then answer the questions that follow.

Gift from the Heavens

by Flora Diaz

1 At one time, the gods lived in the heavens while the mortals toiled on the earth. Zeus, king of all gods, did not look kindly on the mortals. Zeus believed that all heavenly powers belonged only to the gods and goddesses. Prometheus believed that these powers should be shared with the mortals.

2 Prometheus and Zeus were constantly getting into disputes. Once, Prometheus was asked to solve a conflict between the gods and mortal men. The men were going to sacrifice a bull during a festival and they had to decide which parts of the bull should be offered to the gods and which parts should be reserved for the men. Prometheus saw this as an opportunity to play a trick on Zeus. He butchered the bull and put the lean, tasty parts of the meat into a small serving bowl and then placed the gristle, bones, and fat into a much larger serving bowl. When Prometheus asked Zeus to select his meal, naturally he chose the larger portion.

3 When Zeus realized how he had been deceived, he was furious and immediately sought revenge. To punish both Prometheus and the mortals he cared about, Zeus snatched fire away from the men of earth, and kept it only for the gods.

4 During one bitterly cold winter, Prometheus watched the mortals huddle together like a pack of animals to keep warm. “They need to have fire returned to earth,” he thought. So he decided to ignore Zeus’ decree, no matter the risk. Prometheus lit a torch with the fire from the wheels of the chariot that carried the sun across the sky. He brought the flaming torch to earth and delivered fire to the mortals. As a result, life on earth was transformed. Not only did fire keep people warm, it also enabled them to cook food for the first time, as well as smoke the food and preserve it for later use. With the heat of the fire, they could even smelt metals and turn them into tools to use for farming.

5 The king of the gods was furious when he learned what Prometheus had done. He wanted to punish Prometheus and return the mortals to a life of pain and hardship. So Zeus came up with a plan. He asked the other goddesses to help him create a beautiful, mortal woman. His daughter Athena offered her assistance, and when the lovely creature was fully formed, Athena breathed life into her. Zeus named the woman Pandora, and she possessed unequalled beauty and charm. Zeus gave Pandora an ornate lidded box and sent her to Prometheus as a gift. He told Prometheus that Pandora would make a perfect bride.

6 Prometheus was suspicious of any gift from Zeus, despite the woman’s incredible beauty. He suggested to his brother Epimetheus that he marry Pandora instead, which he willingly did. After they were wed, Epimetheus asked his bride what was inside the sealed box.

7 “I don’t know,” she replied. “I only know that Zeus gave me strict instructions never to open it.”

8 “That is most unusual, but I would not trust Zeus. Perhaps we should bury the box,” her husband responded.

9 Pandora had never given a thought to what was inside the box until her husband asked her about it. Now she was consumed with curiosity and she could think of nothing else. She wondered what it could be and



why Zeus was so determined to keep her from glancing inside. One night, while her husband was sleeping, Pandora pulled the box from its hiding place and cautiously opened the lid.

10 Immediately all manner of dreadful things were released from the box—disease, despair, malice, greed, death, hatred, violence, cruelty, and war. These torments traveled to earth, creating extreme discord and chaos for the mortals.

11 However, without Zeus' knowledge, his daughter Athena had put something else into the box, something that could help the mortals cope with all these miseries—hope. So hope also traveled to earth to serve as a balance to the woes that burden all mortals.

Answer the questions.

1

Which of these is the **best** summary of paragraph 1?

- A Zeus cared only about the gods and had no compassion for mortals. Prometheus believed that the powers of the gods should be shared.
- B Zeus decreed that mortals would toil as his slaves on earth.
- C Prometheus thought that power should be shared among all the gods equally. Zeus wanted all of the power for himself.
- D Prometheus did not get along with Zeus. He turned all of his attention to taking care of the mortals.

2

Which **two** sentences should be included in a summary of the story?

- A Epimetheus trusted Zeus more than he trusted his brother.
- B Prometheus made humans as powerful as gods.
- C Zeus gave Pandora the box but told her not to open it.
- D Pandora opened the box to rebel against Zeus.
- E Prometheus was suspicious of a gift from Zeus.
- F The items from the box traveled to Earth and created chaos.



3 This question has two parts. First answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

Which is the **best** summary of the key events of the story?

- A** Prometheus helped humans trick Zeus, so the king of all gods took fire away from humans. Prometheus lit a torch from the chariot that carries the sun and brought fire back to humans. Zeus saw how humans thrived with fire, so he had a beautiful woman created. She went to earth, married Prometheus' brother, and then released evil into the world.
- B** Prometheus helped humans trick Zeus by keeping the best part of a bull sacrifice for themselves. Zeus punished Prometheus and the humans by taking fire away from them. Prometheus felt pity for the suffering humans and brought fire back to them. Zeus took revenge by creating a woman who brought all the evil things to the world in a box.
- C** Zeus thought heavenly powers should not be shared with humans. Prometheus disagreed, so he showed humans how to trick Zeus. Zeus became angry and took fire away from humans. Prometheus saw how cold humans were, so he brought them back their fire. Humans began to cook, smoke food, and make farm equipment.
- D** Prometheus helped humans trick Zeus, so Zeus took fire away from humans. Prometheus, seeing how humans suffered, brought the fire back. Zeus then sent Pandora to Prometheus with a box she was not supposed to open. Prometheus' brother married Pandora. The curious Pandora then opened the box, letting out both evil and hope into the world.

Part B

Which sentence from the passage **best** shows a detail from the summary in Part A?

- A** "At one time, the gods lived in the heavens while the mortals toiled on the earth."
- B** "When Zeus realized how he had been deceived, he was furious and immediately sought revenge."
- C** "Now [Pandora] was consumed with curiosity and she could think of nothing else."
- D** "However, without Zeus' knowledge, his daughter Athena had put something else into the box. . . ."



Self Check

Go back and see what you can check off on the Self Check on page 44.