

## Summary Chart - Primary

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| Characters | Setting  |
| Problem    | Solution |

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# Summary Chart - Primary

First off, remember that this is a summary, not a retelling. Retellings have details, summaries do not. I like to display the chart on my SmartBoard, or draw it on the whiteboard. Using four different colors, list or write a short phrase for each box. For example:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Characters<br>Goldilocks<br>Three bears   | Setting<br>Bears' house in the woods                           |
| Problem<br>Goldilocks goes into the bears' home and makes a mess of their things. | Solution<br>The three bears come home and Goldilocks runs away |

Once the chart is completed, I use my finger, point to each part of the summary and tell it. This is critical as students must recognize that a quality summary is not static and should flow. I would say, "Three bears lived in a house in the woods. A little girl named Goldilocks went into their house without permission, messed everything up, then ran away when they came home."

Notice how I never said, "The characters are...the setting is..." That's not how real book summaries are written, and neither should your students. Also, keep summaries short, at one or two sentences.

After I point and read, I invite the students to come up and point and read. They are free to change the summary around, as long as they do not add extra details.

Once we have said our summary a few times, we write it. I would write it just as I wrote it up above, except I write the summary only in black. I then go back and ask the children to pick out the parts of the story that are the characters, setting, problem and solution. We underline those parts in the colors that correspond to the chart.

Later in the year, once the students are very proficient at telling a summary, we will begin to write it individually and underline with color. That is what the lines below the Summary Chart are for (do not use them right away! Give your students lots of practice telling the summary first).

If you wish to extend the lesson, revisit your chart the next day, cut it apart and add details in correct sequence of events. This will give you the foundation for a retelling.