



## Summarization as an Indicator of Understanding in Türkiye: Curriculum, Textbooks, and Teachers \*

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### Abstract

This study aims to determine how the summarizing outcome in the Turkish Curriculum (1st–8th grades) is handled, the reflection of this outcome on Turkish textbooks, and the appropriateness of the summarizing instruction in the textbooks to the sub-process steps of summarizing. Within the scope of the research, the subject, main idea, supporting idea, and summarizing outcomes related to listening/watching and reading skills in the Turkish Lesson Curriculum were examined. In addition, it was investigated to what extent the summarizing activities in Turkish textbooks can provide the substages of summarizing as a skill. In the study, all seven Turkish textbooks prepared by the Ministry of National Education and private publishing houses and used as teaching materials between the 5th and 8th grade levels were examined as the study object. The data in the curriculum and textbooks were obtained by document analysis, and the “Evaluation Criteria Form for Summarizing Activities in Turkish Textbooks” created by the researcher was used to analyse the data in the textbooks. The data obtained in this direction were analyzed by descriptive analysis. Within the scope of the study, the opinions of classroom teachers and Turkish teachers were also consulted. As the study group, it consists of 15 classroom teachers and 15 Turkish teachers working in primary and secondary schools in Ankara. A semi-structured interview form was prepared to interview the teachers and their answers to these questions were analyzed by content analysis. The findings obtained within the scope of the study concluded that the curriculum did not adopt a certain systematic order, the activities in the textbooks were not prepared according to the sub-process steps, and the teachers’ knowledge about these skills was insufficient.

### Keywords

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## Introduction

The complex process called understanding in language teaching has mainly two different skill areas: listening and reading. In other words, the purpose of listening and reading is to make sense of a message (Özbay, 2015; Rost, 1994, 2016; Susar-Kırmızı, 2011; Ülper, 2019; Vellutino, 2003) and create a complete mental representation (Pečjak & Pirc, 2018; Richards, 1983). In terms of education, it is important to know if students are interested in the topic (Schiefele, 1996; Schiefele & Krapp, 1996) and/or able to understand and reconstruct the figurative representation, regardless of their way/manner of perception, either listening or reading (Deniz, Nunez-Elizalde, Huth, & Gallant, 2019; Florit, Roch, & Levorato, 2011). It entails long and intense cognitive processes to understand a text (McCloskey & Perkins, 2013; Oakhill & Yuill, 1996; Onan, 2019; van den Broek & Espin, 2012). This being the case, students are required to make respectively good use of skills and awareness such as will (Doğan, 2013; Rost, 2016), attention (Hidi, 1995), phonological awareness (Gunning, 2006; Wolf, 2008), vocabulary (Gunning, 2006; Karadağ, 2019a; Kurudayıoğlu & Dölek, 2018), fluency (Chang, Millett, & Renandya, 2019; Kuhn & Stahl, 2003), and world knowledge (Goldstein, 2013; Richards, 1983).

A student can be expected to successfully perform understanding and interpretation processes that include many acts such as identifying the topic as an indicator of understanding, explaining the main idea, and writing the text with different words of the same length. Summarization is one of the biggest indicators of understanding (Cordero-Ponce, 2000). This process is an interpretation signal at the comprehension level (Senemoğlu, 2018) and includes substages that require many cognitive processes (Brown & Day, 1983; Brown, Day, & Jones, 1983; Day, 1986; Karadağ, 2019b; Kintsch & van Dijk, 1978). Many studies consider this as an activity that facilitates reading (Brown & Day, 1983; Cordero-Ponce, 2000; Meyer, Brandt, & Bluth, 1980), but summarizing is also closely related to listening skill and is among the listening strategies (Kurudayıoğlu & Kiraz, 2020). Karadağ (2019b) defines summarizing as a process that takes place at the intersection of four basic language skills and states that summary texts are non-original narratives and are conveyed concisely within the existing boundaries of the source text.

In order for a student to summarize, they must perform deletion, generalization, and reconstruction (Kintsch & van Dijk, 1978). Based on these processes, Brown and Day (1983) identified six elements of summarization:

- Delete unnecessary and unimportant information.
- Erase the excess.
- Use an umbrella term instead of items.
- Use an umbrella instead of verbs.
- Select if there is a topic sentence.
- If there is no topic sentence, create it.

The first two elements specified for deletion indicate the deletion of unnecessary, unimportant, and redundant information in the text. At this stage, there is a situation that needs special attention today, which is the point of view of the deletion process. Considering the development of text linguistics and the criteria that a text should have since Brown and Day (1983) determined these elements, it can be clearly interpreted that if there is unnecessary, unimportant, and excess information in a text, the text in question is defective. In this study, we present a new perspective for this process. Today, the words “unnecessary and unimportant” should not be used among the elements that are components of the concept of deletion, the elements to be deleted should be considered as “redundancy in terms of summary text,” and the deletion process should be performed accordingly. In addition, the constituent elements (person, time, place, event) in the text should be deleted (except for the central person) and then generalized. Accordingly, it can be said that deletion may not be completely eradicated and that every generalization is the result of deletions. In its most concrete form, the use of the words “pants,” “shirt,” and “jacket” in the main text with the word “clothing” in the summary text shows that these words are not completely eliminated from the text, but transferred to the common upper category,

which is not a complete deletion but a generalization. From this point of view, it is understood that every deletion is not a complete destruction, and it is clearly seen that every generalization is the result of deleting the sub-elements that make up it. At this point, another situation that needs to be clarified is the concept of topic sentence. With today's understanding, the concept of the topic and the main idea in the texts are not exactly the same concepts. Thus, the student should also determine the main idea of the text.

Individuals can summarize the text while listening/reading to reach the main idea of the text, or they can summarize the text as a sign of understanding (Armbruster, Anderson, & Ostertag, 1986; Brown & Day, 1983; Cordero-Ponce, 2000; Kintsch & van Dijk, 1978; van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983). Hence, the importance of summarizing and reaching the main idea from both perspectives is important throughout the students' entire lives. After reading a text, a student should look at the title of the text to reach its topic; determine the topic of the first, second, and subsequent sentences; compare the topics they have determined with other sentences; determine whether the topic provides continuity; and determine the topic in order to determine the main idea, the topic and structure of the text, the purpose and direction of the text, and a sentence containing a single thought and judgment (Ülper, 2019). These processes require some elimination in the text and are similar for listening texts. Determining the topic of the text in its shortest form, generalizing the important concepts in the text, and determining the main idea are also generalizing the important propositions in the text, which requires mentally summarization steps.

There are three sub-steps of summarizing a text: deletion, generalization, and reconstruction (Kintsch & van Dijk, 1978). Before summarizing a text, the topic, main idea, and supporting ideas of that text should be determined by the students and the summary text should be constructed within the framework of these features of the text. To summarize a text, students should be open to studying, reasoning, and using the required strategies (Brown et al., 1983). In addition to the characteristics expected from the students, the expectations from the curriculum, textbooks, and teachers that students cannot interfere with are also very important. The learning processes in the books should be handled with more than one text, and this process should be taught to students in multiple weeks in accordance with the summarization sub-processes. Therefore, it is necessary to proceed with a predetermined learning process in order to provide the students with the summarization acquisitions in the Turkish Lesson Curriculum (Ministry of National Education [MoNE], 2019). In addition to these process steps that will be created in the textbooks, teachers who give Turkish lessons should also know the processes in question and support students in gaining these skills in cases where the textbooks are insufficient. The results of the studies conducted in the previous years show that the old textbooks did not consider these summarization processes and were prepared assuming that the students knew how to summarize (Dilidüzgün & Genç, 2019; Karadağ, 2019b; Ülper & Karagül, 2011). In addition to the situations where the textbooks expect direct performance, negative results have also arisen in the studies wherein the summarization success of the teachers who will provide this skill in the students was investigated (Yazıcı-Okuyan & Gedikoğlu, 2011). However, the results of Bulut's (2013) study showed that primary school teachers only use deletion when summarizing. Like teachers, teacher candidates also have low summarization success (Doğan & Özçakmak, 2014). At the same time, in longitudinal studies, it was seen that students could not write successful summaries during the 2-year normal education period (Özdemir & Kiroğlu, 2019). In Turkey, students' attitudes toward summarizing progress negatively as their grade levels increase (Bahçıvan & Çetinkaya, 2021). When the histories of these studies and the situations they present are examined, it is seen that there have been problems with summarizing in Turkish lessons for many years. Thus, the current state of the summarization should be discussed with all its stakeholders, in which students cannot be involved, and the current situation should be revealed. This study, unlike the previous studies, deals with entirely the problems that students cannot intervene (curriculum, textbooks, and teachers). In addition, it also discusses cumulatively the reasons for the failure in summarizing, which even the teachers who will teach students to summarize have problems in achieving.

This study aims to reveal the situation regarding the summarization activities in the Turkish Lesson Curriculum (MoNE, 2019) and Turkish textbooks and to determine the perspectives and knowledge levels of teachers who teach Turkish as their mother tongue about this understanding skill. In this way, all situations that students cannot change on their own will be revealed as a whole. The main problem of the research is “How is the ability to summarize in Turkish as a mother tongue education?” In the context of this question, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. How and in what way are the acquisitions of the topic, main idea, and supporting ideas, which are the basis of summarizing and summarizing, included in the Turkish Lesson Curriculum (MoNE, 2019)?
2. How is the learning process about summarizing in the activities after listening/watching and reading texts in Turkish textbooks?
3. What are the opinions and knowledge of Turkish and primary school teachers about listening/watching and post-reading summarizing activities?

## **Method**

### *Research Design*

This study is a case study that aims to examine the summarization activities in Turkish textbooks and to determine teachers' views on summarization activities and skills, as well as how summarization is handled in the Turkish Lesson Curriculum (MoNE, 2019). The case study is a research method that deals with a current phenomenon in its natural environment, the boundaries between the phenomenon and its content are not clearly separated, and it is used in cases where there is more than one data source (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç-Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2018; Yin, 2017). Since there are sub-dimensions of summarization skill in the research, nested multiple case studies from three different types of case studies were used. In the nested multiple case study, each situation included in the research can be studied by dividing it into sub-units (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016).

### *Participants*

The study units of this research are considered as three separate units. The first of the objects of study is the Turkish Lesson Curriculum, and the second one is seven Turkish textbooks used as educational material in secondary school from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes.

In addition to objects of study, it consists of 30 teachers, 15 classroom teachers working in 3 primary schools and 15 Turkish teachers working in 3 secondary schools, determined by the easily accessible sampling method. Easily accessible sampling was preferred to be used in this study, as it accelerates the study by allowing the researcher to reach the sample group that is easier to reach (Patton, 2005).

While 50% of the teachers participating in the research are Turkish teachers, 50% of them are classroom teachers, and 66.67% of them are female and 33.33% male. Equal distribution could not be achieved because the research was based on volunteerism and female teachers showed more interest in the research. However, within the scope of the research, the opinions of the teachers regarding the summarization activities were not evaluated according to gender discrimination, age status, or years of experience gained in teaching. Therefore, since the main purpose is to take the opinions of the teachers and determine the reflection of their knowledge on these issues to the lesson, such demographics, etc. information was not shared within the scope of the research.

### *Procedure*

In this study, Turkish textbooks were examined with the help of the “Evaluation Criteria Form for Summarizing Activities in Turkish Textbooks” created by the researcher, and data were obtained. After receiving expert opinions on the items of the data collection tool, validity and reliability studies were carried out by the researcher, and then the researcher performed the 5<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> grades. Seven Turkish textbooks, which are actively used at grade levels, were examined and scored separately.

Before the data collection process, necessary permissions were obtained from the Hacettepe University Ethics Committee, indicating that the research meets the ethical principles and rules within the framework of academic studies. Following these permissions, necessary permissions were obtained from the Ministry of National Education to interview teachers in six schools in Ankara within the scope of the General Directorate of Innovation and Educational Technologies Circular no. 2020/2. General information about the content and aims of the study was given by undertaking that there would be no risk if the teachers voluntarily participate in the study and that the teachers' name-surname, important demographic information, and information about the schools they work would not be shared with a third institution/person. Opinions of the teachers who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study were obtained through the semi-structured teacher interview form about the topic, main idea, and summarizing activities. Opinions were received from some teachers who volunteered to participate in the research due to the global epidemic that had an impact on the world, at appropriate time intervals, through an application that allows remote video calls with an Internet connection and recording these images/sounds. The teachers were informed that these interviews would be recorded (since the researcher had to listen again), and if this situation was not found appropriate by them, they could withdraw from the study. In this context, two secondary school Turkish teachers stated that they would not continue the interview and left the study.

### *Measurement*

Since multiple data sources such as observations, interviews, questionnaires, and documents can be used in case studies (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016), in order to analyse the books in this study, the Evaluation Criteria Form for Summarizing Activities in Turkish Textbooks and a semi-structured interview form were prepared to meet with the teachers.

### *Evaluation Criteria Form for Summarizing Activities in Turkish Textbooks*

It is an evaluation form with a total of 13 items, 2 of which are deletion, 9 of which are generalization, and 2 of which are reconstruction, for summarizing narrative/informative text activities. These items have sub-items included in the scoring. The items of this form were prepared and the opinions of two associate professors who were experts in Turkish education, who had studies on summarization, were sought. In line with the opinions of the experts, additions were made to the sub-items in the scoring key of three items in the form and one item was removed from the form. In the final version of the form, a book can get 37 points in total from the summarizing activities. For the items in the form, 6 points are received for deletion, 27 points for generalization, and 5 points for reconstruction. The reason for the high range of scores for the generalization process is that separate generalizations are made for narrative and informative texts. The maximum score a book can get is 37, and the minimum score is 0. The reason why the researcher evaluated a single book with the form was that a single and common upper score could not be determined because the number of activities in the books was different from each other. Consequently, only books were evaluated according to the form. Scoring was not done for each activity separately, but for the whole book.

At the next stage, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade Turkish textbook was examined with the form and the textbook was scored according to this form. The reason why this textbook was chosen and studied is that it is the first level that includes summarizing activities. Unlike the experts whose opinions were taken about the form, the rater reliability was calculated by two academicians, a Turkish education expert who had previously conducted various studies on Turkish textbooks and a Turkish education expert who had previously worked as a teacher and used the textbooks as course material. In terms of rater reliability, the scores of the expert in Turkish education, who conducted various studies on Turkish textbooks, were similar to the scores of the researcher at the rate of 90.47%. The scores of the Turkish education expert, who had previously used textbooks as a course material by teaching in schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education, and the scores of the researcher were 100% similar. The coefficient of agreement between the three coders, including the researcher, was calculated as 96.82%. The coefficient of agreement between the coders was calculated with the formula "(Consensus/consensus +

disagreement)  $\times 100$ ." A valid fit coefficient should be over 70% (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Accordingly, 96.82% fit coefficient is seen as positive.

### ***Interview Form***

The semi-structured teacher interview form consists of 14 questions about the topic, main idea, and summarizing activities. First of all, a question pool consisting of 23 questions was created to receive opinions on the topic, main idea, and summary. This pool of questions created was shared with three Turkish education experts, including an associate professor, a doctoral graduate lecturer, and a doctoral lecturer, in order to get their opinions. The field experts have stated that 10 of the questions in the question pool may be insufficient to reflect the opinions of the teachers, 13 of them can determine the opinions and knowledge of the teachers about these activities, and these questions can be used in the semi-structured teacher interview form. In line with these opinions, ten questions that were deemed inappropriate by the field experts were removed from the question pool. The remaining 13 questions and 1 additional question suggested by the experts were added to the interview form to be asked within the scope of the interview. The 14 questions described here were directed to the teachers and their answers were received. Since only the situations related to summarization activities were shared in this study, it is worth noting that only five of these questions are for summarizing teaching. Therefore, only these five questions and the answers given were shared within the scope of the study.

### ***Data Analysis***

While analyzing the research data, both descriptive and content analysis techniques were used. Descriptive analysis was used while examining the curriculum and textbooks. Descriptive analysis is an analysis method that allows the data obtained through observation, interviews, or documents to be coded under predetermined titles, converted into numerical data, and summarized and then interpreted (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). In this research, the textbooks were examined through the "Evaluation Criteria Form for Summarizing Activities in Turkish Textbooks" developed by the researcher, and then the data obtained for each book was analyzed and the total scores were reached.

Content analysis technique was used while examining teacher opinions. In content analysis, unlike descriptive analysis, the aim is to reach categories and themes that can explain the data based on the analysis unit, rather than evaluating the analysis unit according to certain categories (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). To conduct content analysis in the study, firstly, the interviews with the teachers were listened to and transcribed by the researcher, and then the data were analyzed through the NVivo 12 package program. For this purpose, categories and subcategories were determined based on the answers obtained from the questions asked to find and summarize the topic and main idea in the teacher interviews. For the coder reliability of this code, category and subcategories, the opinions of an expert in the field of measurement and evaluation were consulted. The coefficient of agreement between encoders obtained as a result of the calculations was calculated as 89%. After the corrections and discussions, 100% consensus was reached on the items. The coefficient of consensus between the coders was calculated with the formula  $[(\text{Consensus}/\text{consensus} + \text{disagreement}) \times 100]$ . A valid fit coefficient should be over 70% (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

## Results

### *Findings Related to the Turkish Lesson Curriculum*

The topic, main idea, summarization, and supporting idea acquisitions in the Turkish Lesson Curriculum are given in the table below in hierarchical order:

**Table 1.** Topic, Main Idea, Supporting Ideas and Summarization Acquisitions in Turkish Lesson Curriculum

Grade level	Acquisition expression (Listening/Watching)	Acquisition expression (Reading)
Topic acquisition		
Grade 1	T.1.1.7. Determine the topic of what they listen/watch.	T.1.3.17. Determine the topic of text.
Grade 2	T.2.1.4. Determine the topic of what they listen/watch.	T.2.3.13. Determine the topic which they read.
Grade 3	T.3.1.5. Determine the topic of what they listen/watch.	T.3.3.14. Determine the topic which they read.
Grade 4	T.4.1.5. Determine the topic of what they listen/watch.	T.4.3.16. Determine the topic which they read.
Grade 5	T.5.1.3. Determine the topic of what they listen/watch.	T.5.3.20. Determine the topic of text.
Grade 6	T.6.1.5. Determine the topic of what they listen/watch.	T.6.3.19. Determine the topic of text.
Grade 7	T.7.1.5. Determine the topic of what they listen/watch.	T.7.3.16. Determine the topic of text.
Grade 8	T.8.1.5. Determine the topic of what they listen/watch.	T.8.3.16. Determine the topic of text.
Main idea acquisition		
Grade 3	T.3.1.6. Determine the main idea/main sense of what they listen/watch.	T.3.3.15. Determine the main idea / main sense of the text.
Grade 4	T.4.1.6. Determine the main idea/main sense of what they listen/watch.	T.4.3.17. Determine the main idea / main sense of the text.
Grade 5	T.5.1.4. Determine the main idea/main sense of what they listen/watch.	T.5.3.14. Determine the main idea / main sense of the text.
Grade 6	T.6.1.6. Determine the main idea/main sense of what they listen/watch.	T.6.3.20. Determine the main idea / main sense of the text.
Grade 7	T.7.1.6. Determine the main idea/main sense of what they listen/watch.	T.7.3.17. Determine the main idea / main sense of the text.
Grade 8	T.8.1.6. Determine the main idea/main sense of what they listen/watch.	T.8.3.17. Determine the main idea / main sense of the text.
Summarization acquisition		
Grade 5	T.5.1.5. Summarize what they have listened/watched.	T.5.3.13. Summarize what they read.
Grade 6	T.6.1.3. Summarize what they have listened/watched.	T.6.3.16. Summarize what they read.
Grade 7	T.7.1.3. Summarize what they have listened/watched.	T.7.3.15. Summarize what they read.
Grade 8	T.8.1.3. Summarize what they have listened/watched.	T.8.3.13. Summarize what they read.
Supporting idea acquisition		
Grade 7	-	T.7.3.18. Determine supporting ideas in the text.
Grade 8	-	T.8.3.18. Determine supporting ideas in the text.

Table 1 shows that the acquisition of finding a topic, which is important for summarizing in the Turkish Lesson Curriculum, is from the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of primary school, the main idea acquisition is available from the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade of primary school, and the acquisition of identifying supporting ideas is to be provided to students from the 7<sup>th</sup> grade of secondary school. Summarizing acquisition is among the acquisitions starting from the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level of secondary school.

When the listening acquisitions are examined, while the summarizing acquisition should take place after the topic and main idea acquisition, at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level, summarizing is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place, the topic is in the 5<sup>th</sup>, and the main idea is in the 6<sup>th</sup>; at the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade levels, summarizing is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place, the topic is in the 5<sup>th</sup>, and the main idea is in the 6<sup>th</sup>. When looking at the reading acquisition, summarizing was in the 13<sup>th</sup> place before. Similar situation in 6<sup>th</sup> grade learning acquisitions (Summary 16<sup>th</sup> line, topic 19<sup>th</sup> line, main idea 20<sup>th</sup> line); they show themselves in 7<sup>th</sup> grade acquisitions (Summing up 15<sup>th</sup> line, topic 16<sup>th</sup> line, main idea 17<sup>th</sup> line) in 8<sup>th</sup> grade acquisitions (Summary 13<sup>th</sup> line; topic 16<sup>th</sup> line; main idea 17<sup>th</sup> line).

While the supporting idea acquisition should be included before the summarizing acquisition, the summarizing acquisition is included at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level, and the supporting idea acquisition is included at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade level and only for reading texts.

#### *Finding on Turkish Textbooks*

The table of findings regarding the summarization activities in Turkish textbooks is given below:

**Table 2.** Distribution of Summarizing Activities in Secondary School Textbooks

Grade Level	Textbook's Name	Publisher	Number of Listening/Watching Text Summarizing Activities	Number of Reading Text Summarizing Activities	Total Number
Grade 5	Secondary School and Religious Vocational Secondary School Turkish 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Textbook	Amntepe	2	7	9
Grade 6	Secondary School and Religious Vocational Secondary School Turkish 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Textbook	MEB	1	4	5
	Secondary School and Religious Vocational Secondary School Turkish 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Textbook	Ekoyay Eğitim	4	1	5
Grade 7	Secondary School and Religious Vocational Secondary School Turkish 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Textbook	MEB	2	8	10
	Secondary School and Religious Vocational Secondary School Turkish 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Textbook	MEB	3	3	6
	Secondary School and Religious Vocational Secondary School Turkish 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Textbook	Özgün	2	1	3
Grade 8	Secondary School and Religious Vocational Secondary School Turkish 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Textbook	MEB	3	4	7



According to Table 2, a book prepared by a private publisher at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level of secondary school is currently in use, and there are nine summarization activities in total, two for listening texts and seven for reading texts.

Two books prepared by MEB publisher and a private publisher are currently in use at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level of secondary school. While there are five summarization activities in total, one in listening texts and four in reading texts, in the book prepared by MEB publisher, there are also five summarization activities in total, four in listening texts and one in reading texts, in the book prepared by Ekoyay publisher.

At the secondary school 7<sup>th</sup> grade level, three books in total, two by MEB publisher and one prepared by a private publisher, are used in schools. In the first book prepared by MEB publisher (1<sup>st</sup> in the table), there are ten summarization activities in total, two for listening texts and eight for reading texts. In the second book prepared by MEB publisher (2<sup>nd</sup> in the table), there are six summarization activities in total, three in listening texts and three in reading texts. In the book prepared by Özgün printing, there are three summarization activities in total, two for listening texts and one for reading texts.

In schools, a book prepared by MEB publisher is used at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level, and there are seven summarization activities in total, three in listening texts and four in reading texts.

**Table 3.** Summarization Activity Directions and Distribution According to Textbooks<sup>3</sup>

Direction	Grade Level and Publisher							Total
	5 Anittepe	6 MEB	6 Ekoyay	7 MEB	7 MEB	7 Özgün	8 MEB	
Summarize.	1	3	1		4	2	7	18
Summarize using the places you marked.	3			1				4
Summarize based on your notes.	1	1		2				4
Summarize in your own sentences.	2		1			1		4
Summarize avoiding details.	2		2					4
Summarize the life of the main character based on the text.	1							1
Summarize based on your answers to the questions.	1							1
Summarize as the main character voice.		1						1
Summarize as a group.			1					1
Summarize in order of events.				6		1		7
Summarize based on keywords.				1				1
Summarize orally.				1	1			2
Summarize in items.					1			1
Summarize in line with the above summary.			1					1
Summarize based on images.			1					1
Total	11	5	7	11	6	4	7	51

<sup>3</sup> As far as this table is concerned, it should be noted that an activity directive can have two different orientations. For example: Summarize the task (*directive 1*) orally (*directive 2*) in the notes you took.

According to Table 3, there are 11 directions in the instructions of 9 summarizing activities in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade Turkish textbook. One of these directions is “Summarize,” three are “Summarize using the places you marked,” one is “Summarize based on your notes,” two are “Summarize in your own words”, two are “Summarize by avoiding the details”, one is “Summarize the life of the main character based on the text”, and one is “Summarize based on your answers to the questions”. Accordingly, there are 7 different direction styles within these 11 directions.

There are five directions in the instructions of the five summarizing activities in the first of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Turkish textbooks. Three of these directions are “Summarize”, one is “Summarize based on your notes”, and one is “Summarize main character’s voice”. Accordingly, there are three different direction styles within these five directions.

There are seven directions in the instructions of the five summarizing activities in the second of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Turkish textbooks. One of these directions is “Summarize”, one is “Summarize in your own words”, two are “Summarize by avoiding details”, one is “Summarize as a group,” one is “Summarize in line with the above summary”, and one is “Summarize based on images”. Accordingly, there are six different direction formats within these seven directions.

There are 11 directions in the instructions of the 10 summarizing activities in the first of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Turkish textbooks. One of these directions is “Summarize by using the places you marked”, two are “Summarize based on your notes”, six are “Summarize according to chronological order and logical flow,” one is “Summarize based on keywords”, and one is “Summarize orally”. There are 5 different direction styles in these 11 directions.

There are six directions in the instructions of the six summarizing activities in the second of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Turkish textbooks. Four of these directions were “Summarize”, one was “Summarize orally”, and one is “Summarize in items”. Accordingly, there are three different direction styles within these six directions.

There are four directions in the instructions of the three summarizing activities in the third of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Turkish textbooks. Two of these directions are “Summarize,” one is “Summarize in your own words”, and one is “Summarize in order of events”. Accordingly, there are three different direction styles within these four directions.

There are seven directions in the instructions of the seven summarizing activities in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Turkish textbook. All of these directions are “Summarize”. Accordingly, there is no difference in the directions; therefore, there is only one form of direction.

#### *Teachers’ Opinions on Summarizing*

Teachers' responses to the interview questions are shown in Figure 1.

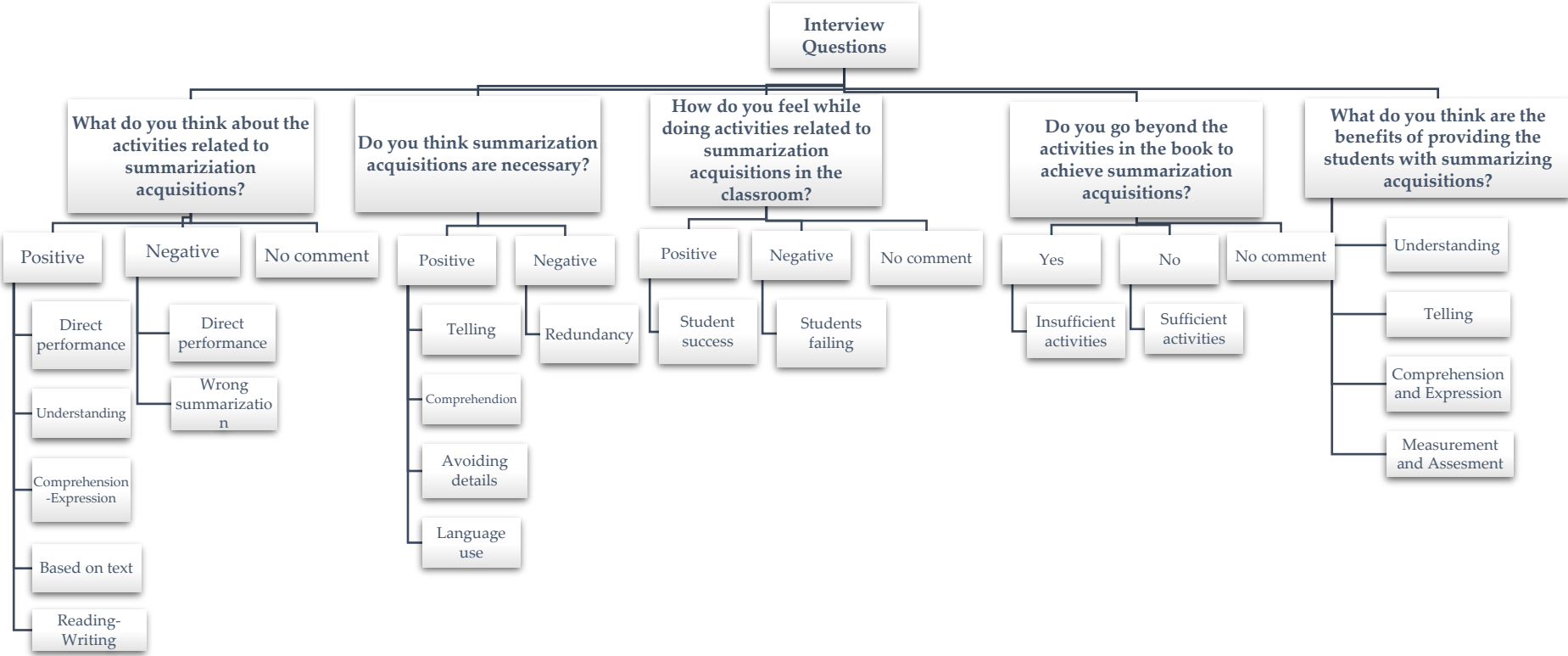


Figure 1. Categories based on the responses for summarization

Positive/negative/not wanting to answer or yes/no categories were formed according to the answers to the five questions asked to the teachers ( $f = 30$ ) who participated in the research. Subcategories of these categories were created. In addition, the questions asked to the teachers "What do you think are the benefits of providing the students with summarization acquisitions?" based on the answers given to the question, different categories were created.

"What do you think about the activities related to summarization acquisitions?" question was directed to the teachers. The answers given to the question were categorized as positive and negative. In Table 4, direct quotations are presented to exemplify the subcategories obtained from the teachers' positive/negative thoughts about the summarization activities in the textbooks:

**Table 4.** Responses Evaluated as Positive/Negative About Summarization Activities

Opinion	Categories	Expressions
Positive	Direct Performance	"Books say that you should summarize. I actually think it's enough." (T1)
	Comprehension	"It is a section that students like to do. I think it is a very important part for us to see how much be understood what is told in the text." (T20)
	Comprehension-Expression	"I think these activities improve the student's ability to understand and express." (T12)
	Based on text	"Summarizing listening texts is easier than summarizing reading texts. Students notice important places in listening texts more easily and take notes, they do not go into unnecessary details. That's why I think summaries in listening texts are better." (T16)
	Reading-Writing	"I think there are definitely useful activities for the development of reading and writing skills." (T17)
Negative	Direct Performance	"There is just 'summarize the text' is an activity. There are no directive activities." (T7)
	Wrong Summarization	"Summarizing achievements remain as headlines. The number of students who can express what they understand in their own words without going into details often does not exceed 30%." (T25)

According to Table 4, 53.33% ( $f = 16$ ) of the teachers who participated in the research expressed a positive opinion about summarizing activities. Then, 37.5% ( $f = 6$ ) of the teachers who gave a positive opinion expressed a positive opinion by considering the activities in the books that require direct performance. Again, 31.25% ( $f = 5$ ) of the teachers who expressed a positive opinion stated that these activities improved students' understanding. Some teachers ( $f = 2$ , 12.5%) stated that these activities improved students' comprehension and expression skills. While 12.5% ( $f = 2$ ) of the teachers who were positive talked about the differences according to the texts, 6.25% ( $f = 1$ ) stated that these activities improved the literacy skills of the students.

Moreover, 36.67% ( $f = 11$ ) of the teachers participating in the research expressed a negative opinion about the summarization activities in the textbooks. While 72.72% ( $f = 8$ ) of the teachers who gave negative opinions expressed negative opinions due to the direct demand for performance of the summarizing activities in the books, 27.27% ( $f = 3$ ) stated that the summary texts prepared by the students were prepared incorrectly. Therefore, they gave negative opinion.

Then, 10% ( $f = 3$ ) of the teachers participating in the research stated that because they are classroom teachers, summarizing activities are not included in the textbooks and they cannot answer this question. On the other hand, 12 of the 15 classroom teachers who participated in the research answered as if these activities were in the textbooks, although they were not in the textbooks and acquisition objectives.

“Do you think that summarization acquisitions are necessary?” question was directed to the teachers. The answers given to the question were categorized as positive and negative. In Table 5, direct quotations are presented to exemplify the subcategories obtained from the positive/negative opinions of the teachers about the necessity of summarization:

**Table 5.** Positive/Negative Responses Regarding the Necessity of Summarizing Acquisition

Opinion	Categories	Expressions
Positive	Expression	“I think the summary acquisitions are important and necessary. Summarizing acquisitions are important for the student to explain the text in their own sentences by selecting the important parts. With these studies, the students can explain the text in a concise way with their own words, and thus they can have a better command of the subject.” (T10)
	Comprehension	“While making a summary, students also comprehend what they have read in order to reach a conclusion by thinking in a planned manner. That's why it's important.” (T15)
	Avoiding details	“I think it's necessary, so they don't think details deeply.” (T16)
	Language use	“I think it affects their skills such as using Turkish correctly, and effectively, being critical and communicating.” (T6)
Negative	Redundancy	“Actually, I don't want to answer that question. Because I don't think it's necessary. I don't know what someone will say if they hear it.” (T28)

In Table 5, 86.67% (f = 26) of the teachers who participated in the research expressed a positive opinion about the necessity of summarization acquisition. Then, 46.15% (f = 12) of the teachers who expressed an opinion in this direction state that summarization improves the expression skills of students. Moreover, 38.46% (f = 10) of the teachers who were positive stated that summarization improves students' comprehension skills. While 11.53% (f = 3) of the teachers who gave a positive opinion stated that the students gained the ability to avoid details with summarization gains, 3.84% (f = 1) stated that they gained positive skills in terms of using the language effectively.

Then, 100% (f = 4) of the teachers who gave negative opinions stated that summarization acquisition is unnecessary without giving any reason.

“How do you feel while doing the activities related to summarization in the class?” question was asked to the teachers. The answers given to the question were categorized as positive, negative, and no opinion. In Table 6, direct quotations are presented to exemplify the subcategories obtained from the positive/negative thoughts of the teachers about how they felt while applying the summarization activities in the textbooks:

**Table 6.** Positive/Negative Responses About Their Feelings About Summarizing Activities

Opinion	Categories	Expressions
Positive	Student success	“I am happy to see that students have less difficulty with other reading comprehension activities.” (T18)
Negative	Student failing	“Many of the students think that summarization is just telling/writing the text. In each class, we have to explain how to summarize, how to find the topic, main idea, supporting ideas, how to analyze the characters in the text and how to write/explain them as a summary.” (T9)

According to Table 6, while 100% (f = 12) of the teachers who gave a positive opinion attributed this to the success of the students, 100% (f = 13) of the teachers who gave a negative opinion attributed this to the failure of the students. Since 16.67% (f = 5) of the teachers who participated in the research were classroom teachers, they did not answer this question because there were no summarization activities in the textbooks.

“Do you go beyond the activities in the book to achieve summarization acquisitions?” question was directed to the teachers. The answers given to the question were categorized as yes, no, and no opinion. In Table 7, direct quotations are presented to exemplify the subcategories obtained from the positive/negative thoughts of the teachers about the summarization activities in the textbooks in order to provide the summarization acquisitions:

**Table 7.** Answers Evaluated as Yes/No to the Question of Creating a Summarization Activity

<b>Opinion Categories</b>	<b>Expressions</b>
No	Sufficient Activities “I think that activities are enough. Sometimes I just have to be supportive. Sometimes I make them listen to the listening texts 2-3 times because they can't take quick notes. When they listen for the first time, they often do not realize what is being said. When the text is finished, I can explain the text myself when they do not understand what they are listening to. In the summaries in the reading texts, I make them close their books and write what they remember, so that they do not go into details.” (T16)
Yes	Insufficient Activities “I am doing a question-and-answer session. I make to write the questions that will lead to the summary in order. Then I ask them to write a one-paragraph summary. Then I review their summaries and give feedback. We cannot reach them with the textbook.” (T3)

According to Table 7, 36.67% (f = 11) of the teachers participating in the research answered no, stating that they did not go out of the activities because they found the summarization activities in the textbooks sufficient. Sixteen teachers (53.33%) who answered “yes” gave this answer because they thought the activities in the textbooks as insufficient. Then, 13.33% (f = 4) of the teachers participating in the research stated that because they are classroom teachers, summarization activities are not included in the textbooks, and they cannot answer this question.

“What do you think would be the benefits of providing the summarization acquisition for the student?” question was directed to the teachers. Based on the answers given to the question, four subcategories were created. In Table 8, direct quotations are presented to exemplify the subcategories obtained from the opinions expressed by the teachers about the contributions of providing the summarization acquisitions to the students:

**Table 8.** Teacher Answers Regarding Summarizing Acquisition

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Expressions</b>
Comprehension	“I think that having students make a summary will increase attention while reading the text, thus making it easier to understand.” (T13)
Expression	“I think it will be useful for the students to write their own stories.” (T5)
Comprehension-Expression	“I think it will be very useful for them to question and criticize the texts they read and the information they have acquired, and to create a new product/article out of them.” (S9)
Measurement and Assessment	“The summarization acquisition shows whether the student understands the subject as a result of the topic being taught. It reveals the inadequacies of the student about the subject. It has a great contribution to our assessment of the student.” (T24)

In Table 8, while 46.67% ( $f = 14$ ) of the teachers participating in the research stated that the summarization acquisition in the textbooks improved their “comprehension” skills, 26.67% ( $f = 8$ ) stated that they improved the students’ “expressing” skills. On the other hand, 16.66% ( $f = 5$ ) stated that summarizing improves “comprehending-expressing.” The remaining 10% defined summarization as a “measurement and assessment” tool.

### Discussion and Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, not the systematic progress of the Turkish Lesson Curriculum (MoNE, 2019) may lead to difficulty in summarizing teaching. In order for students to make inferences from the text, they need to perform some processing steps. The process of determining the main idea of the text begins with the identification of keywords and continues with determining the topic and expressing the main idea (Karadağ, 2012; Nelson, Smith, & Dodd, 1992). Clearly expressing the main idea of the text is at the forefront of the basic operations in summarizing (Brown & Smiley, 1978). Therefore, the next stage of determining the main idea is summarizing. According to the findings, the summarizing acquisition appears as an acquisition at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, while the acquisition of identifying supporting ideas, one of the most important elements of summary texts, is included as an outcome at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Although it is stated that the deficiencies of the previous curriculum have been eliminated, the acquisition of auxiliary ideas, which was in the same situation in 2018 (Karadağ, 2019b), displays a similar appearance in the renewed curriculum that entered into force in 2019. This systematic deficiency in curricula negatively affects the preparation of textbooks. As a matter of fact, Turkish textbook authors design reading activities by using the acquisitions in the program once, without taking into account the systematic in any way (Deniz, Tarakcı, & Karagöl, 2019). In addition to the summarization acquisitions in the program, the performance indicators of “finding/determining a new title for the text” are also examples of summarizing. In an activity designed for this acquisition, the last performance required from the student is to find a new title for the text. For this performance, the student needs to listen/read the text, understand it, and then generalize the whole text with a title, which is an example of a direct summary.

According to the findings of the study, summarizing activities in the textbooks show an uneven distribution. There are different amounts of summarizing activities (10, 5, 3) in three different textbooks at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade level. The fact that students spend a lot of time with the text while summarizing encourages permanent understanding (Wormeli, 2004) and that summarizing is one of the most comprehensive understanding strategies (Cordero-Ponce, 2000) shows how much 7<sup>th</sup> grade students who use different books can benefit from this activity. At the same time, the uneven distribution between class levels can be seen as one of the biggest indicators of this. In general, students are expected to work harder on fewer activities as they encounter summarization for the first time in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. However, this situation is seen in the opposite way in textbooks. A student who encounters nine summarizing activities at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level encounters five summarizing activities when he/she moves to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. It is seen that the systematic deficiency in the program is also in the textbooks. As a matter of fact, not the systematic progress of textbook authors (Deniz, Tarakcı, & Karagöl, 2019) makes it difficult for students to learn to summarize. This uneven distribution is also valid for main idea activities, which are the main components of summarizing (Ülper & Karagül, 2011). One of the main reasons why students have difficulty in determining the main idea and teachers in gaining this skill (Kanık Uysal & Gültekin Pala, 2022) can be seen as this systematic deficiency.

The basic sub-steps of summarizing are deletion, generalization, and reconstruction (Kintsch & van Dijk, 1978). In the Turkish textbooks examined within the scope of the research, no activity related to the sub-steps of summarization was found. According to this result, it is seen that the textbooks expect performance directly from the students without any preliminary preparation. The results obtained in studies on Turkish textbooks used in the previous years show that the sub-steps of summarization are not included in the books (Dilidüzgün & Genç, 2019; Karadağ, 2019b; Karadağ & Tekercioğlu, 2019; Ülper & Karagül, 2011). The fact that the results of the research match with the results of these studies reveals that the condition in question has become chronic. This chronic problem of understanding

education for many years may also negatively affect students' attitudes toward summarizing. The results of the study conducted by Bahçivan and Çetinkaya (2021) on students' attitudes toward summarizing showed that their attitudes toward summarizing progress negatively as the ages and grade levels of individuals increase. However, as the age level increases, students are expected to be able to summarize better (Brown & Smiley, 1977), as they become more able to predict the basic features of the text, the form of organization, and the important points in the text (Anderson, Hidi, & Babadoğan, 1991). In this case, it can be expected that the attitude of the students who are successful in summarizing is at a high level. Therefore, the attitude indicator that decreases with age can be seen as one of the reflections of the negative situation in the textbooks. In addition, it can be predicted that students who continue with the normal teaching process will have great problems in learning to summarize. As a matter of fact, the results of Özdemir and Kiroğlu's (2019) study showed that while 4<sup>th</sup> grade students had difficulty in summarizing a text, they had difficulty in summarizing the same text when they reached the 6<sup>th</sup> grade at the end of the normal education period. This negative situation can be seen as one of the most concrete examples of the problems that students may experience.

As a result of the inadequacy of summarizing teaching in the textbooks, it requires teachers to be very competent in this regard, because the importance of teacher support in teaching the skills of reaching text comprehension indicators is quite clear (Nelson et al., 1992). The negative results in the findings are quite worrying. For example, teacher coded T2 stated that while he found the textbooks successful in terms of effectiveness in summarizing teaching, they increased the number of clues while processing the activities in the classroom and they were worried about this. However, it is seen that the classroom teachers who express their opinions about the summarization activities, although they are not in their curriculum, have incomplete information about their curriculum. In addition, this situation is one of the indicators that teachers cannot clearly determine the harmony between curriculum attainment and book contents (activity, etc.). As a matter of fact, in the previous studies, teachers stated that the learning acquisitions and textbook contents were compatible (Arslan & Engin; 2019; Muradoğlu & Işık, 2019). Therefore, it seems quite natural for most teachers to give positive answers about the textbooks that do not prepare the teaching process.

One of the biggest reasons for these results is the inadequacy of the training that teachers or teacher candidates receive in summarizing. This situation is understood not only from the opinions of the teachers but also from the summary texts written by the teachers and teacher candidates. The results obtained from the study conducted by Yazıcı Okuyan and Gedikoğlu (2011) with Turkish and literature teachers showed that it was determined that teachers lacked knowledge and skills for summarizing. The study conducted by Doğan and Özçakmak (2014), in which Turkish teacher candidates' summarization skills were measured, concluded that Turkish teacher candidates are above the "average" level in terms of their summarization skills. Bulut's (2013) study reported that most classroom teachers use deletion, which is one of the sub-steps of summarizing, and do not use generalization and reconstructing at all. Therefore, this situation of the teachers and teacher candidates who will transfer and teach these sub-process steps to the students supports our thoughts on the answers given by the teachers in our study.



## Suggestions

Although subject and main idea identification and summarization activities are included in the Turkish Lesson Curriculum (MoNE, 2019) as an acquisition target, they do not include any sub-explanations on the cognitive processes of these skills, and the teachers' lack of field knowledge at the desired level makes it difficult to teach the summarizing skill. In addition, the problems in the selection and expression of the acquisitions in the preparation of the Turkish Lesson Curriculum (MoNE, 2019) make this teaching more difficult than usual. Considering all these situations, the program needs to be revised.

The pre-service teachers who will take Turkish courses should be taught the sub-steps for these acquisitions in the field courses given by teacher training institutions. It is of great importance that the classroom teachers and Turkish teachers currently teaching are informed about this issue and that these skills are provided to the students, because the acquisition of these skills is directly related to the daily and academic lives of individuals. Every individual encounters a lot of information daily. He uses these cognitive skills to select the most necessary/required information from this information.

Topic, main idea, and summarizing activities in Turkish textbooks should proceed in a certain order. Topic and main idea activities should be provided to the student in determined steps. Before the summarization activity, the topic, main idea, and supporting idea activities should take place. Deletion, generalization, and reconstruction activities should take place before or as part of the summarization activity. Students must pass through these steps and convert the source text into summary text. Activities that directly demand performance from students should not be created.

Progressions from small to larger texts should be observed to check the student's summarization ability. This can be in the form of paragraphs, starting at the sentence level, and then larger texts. At this stage, summarizing the words in the text in terms of quality is more important than summarizing them in terms of quantity. In addition, activities that will evaluate the performance of students at the end of the process for these skills should be included.

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## Appendix 1: Evaluation Criteria for Summarizing Narrative/Informative Text Activities

### a. Deletion

#### 1. Is there an activity to delete excess words in terms of summary text in the activities? (Narrative/ informative text)

Order	Scoring item	Score	Score Received
a.	No.	0	
b.	Yes.	1	
c.	The activity directive is sufficiently explanatory.	1	
d.	In the activity, there are enough clues to delete unnecessary words1 in terms of the summary text.	1	
<b>Total</b>			

#### 2. Is there an activity to delete extra sentences in terms of summary text in post-text activities? (Narrative / informative text)

Order	Scoring item	Score	Score Received
a.	No.	0	
b.	Yes.	1	
c.	The activity directive is sufficiently explanatory.	1	
d.	In the activity, there are enough clues to delete unnecessary words1 in terms of the summary text.	1	
<b>Total</b>			

### b. Generalization

#### 1. Is there a generalization activity for the characters who are the founding elements of the text within the scope of the activities? (Narrative text)

Order	Scoring item	Score	Score Received
a.	No.	0	
b.	Yes.	1	
c.	The activity directive is sufficiently explanatory.	1	
d.	There are sufficient clues to generalize other characters except the 1 central character/s.	1	
<b>Total</b>			

#### 2. Is there a generalization activity for places, which are among the founding elements of the text, within the scope of the activities? (Narrative text)

Order	Scoring item	Score	Score Received
a.	No.	0	
b.	Yes.	1	
c.	The activity directive is sufficiently explanatory.	1	
d.	There are sufficient clues to generalize other places except the 1 main place.	1	
<b>Total</b>			

#### 3. Is there a generalization activity for the events that are one of the founding elements of the text within the scope of the activities? (Narrative text)

Order	Scoring item	Score	Score Received
a.	No.	0	
b.	Yes.	1	
c.	The activity directive is sufficiently explanatory.	1	
d.	There are sufficient clues to generalize other events except the 1 main event.	1	
<b>Total</b>			

**4. Is there a generalization activity for time(s), which is one of the founding elements of the text, within the scope of the activities? (Narrative text)**

Order	Scoring item	Score	Score Received
a.	No.	0	
b.	Yes.	1	
c.	The activity directive is sufficiently explanatory.	1	
d.	There are sufficient clues to generalize the times of the events in the text.	1	
<b>Total</b>			

**5. Within the scope of the activities, is there an activity to identify the words that have common upper elements in sentences? (Narrative / informative text)**

Order	Scoring item	Score	Score Received
a.	No.	0	
b.	Yes.	1	
c.	The activity directive is sufficiently explanatory.	1	
d.	Within the scope of the activity, sufficient clues and examples were given to the students.	1	
<b>Total</b>			

**6. Is there an activity to generalize actions other than events within the scope of activities? (Narrative / informative text)**

Order	Scoring item	Score	Score Received
a.	No.	0	
b.	Yes.	1	
c.	The activity directive is sufficiently explanatory.	1	
<b>Total</b>			

**7. Is there an activity to generalize the information in the text within the scope of the activities? (Informative text)**

Order	Scoring item	Score	Score Received
a.	No.	0	
b.	Yes.	1	
c.	The activity directive is sufficiently explanatory.	1	
d.	There are enough clues to generalize other information except the basic information in the text.	1	
<b>Total</b>			

**8. Is there an activity to generalize the concepts within the scope of the activities? (Informative text)**

Order	Scoring item	Score	Score Received
a.	No.	0	
b.	Yes.	1	
c.	The activity directive is sufficiently explanatory.	1	
d.	There are sufficient clues to generalize other concepts except for the basic concept/s in the text.	1	
<b>Total</b>			

**9. Is there an activity to generalize around the generalizations made before within the scope of the activities? (Narrative / informative text)**

Order	Scoring items	Score	Score Received
a.	No.	0	
b.	Yes.	1	
c.	The activity directive is sufficiently explanatory.	1	
<b>Total</b>			

**c. Reconstruction****1. Is there an activity to write a text with fewer words within the scope of the activities?  
(Narrative / informative text)**

Order	Scoring items	Score	Score Received
a.	No.	0	
b.	Yes.	1	
c.	The activity directive is sufficiently explanatory.	1	
<b>Total</b>			

**2. Within the scope of the activities, is there a reconstruction activity by supporting it with supportive ideas within the framework of the subject and main idea of the text? (Narrative / informative text)**

Order	Scoring items	Score	Score Received
a.	No.	0	
b.	Yes.	1	
c.	The activity directive is sufficiently explanatory.	1	
d.	Examples and clues are given within the scope of the activity.	1	
<b>Total</b>			