



Mr. Barge's Instructional Tip of the Week! – Summarizing vs. Analyzing

I have always found that students tend to struggle with understanding the differences between summarizing and analyzing. To help students develop such skills I use a strategy that is both simple and practical. First, I provide students with a document. After actively reading the document, I ask them to write brief summary in the left column - just a few sentences (**summary**). For the summary, I tell students to "write down the information that is there." On the right side, I ask students to write 2-3 questions they have about the document (**analysis**). This would be their analysis (looking for information that is not so visible but needed to understand the document). This takes a little more time as students will need some guidance over the course of the semester on how to develop insightful questions. In other words, students should be able to see through such an activity that in a speech by Woodrow Wilson, he speaks of the "true spirit of neutrality" and the reasons for it (**summary**) because it clearly states that in the document. However, through the questions that students create from the document, they would look for why the speech was written in that particular year, for what audience and purpose, and whether his views were practical, etc. (**analysis** – information that is not clearly written in the document but if you dig a little deeper, it provides some more meaning and context).

Keep in mind that using this technique is just one method of developing students' reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. Please continue your efforts to include purposeful skill building activities in your instruction.

Sample document activity used during the unit on the "Roaring Twenties" (Red Scare and Palmer Raids lesson):

Document A: "The Case Against the "Reds" (Modified)

In 1917, Russia became a communist country. Also, right after WWI, the U.S. experienced high inflation, high unemployment, and a number of labor strikes. Against this backdrop, the United States began arresting and deporting anyone suspected of "radical" thinking (e.g., communism, socialism, anarchism, pro-labor). These arrests became known as the "Palmer Raids" after the Attorney General of the United States, A. Mitchell Palmer.

Summary

the reaction was spreading very quickly like a wild fire and destroying many businesses and homes

Like a prairie-fire, the blaze of revolution was sweeping over every American institution a year ago. It was eating its way into the homes of the American workmen, its sharp tongues of revolutionary heat were licking the altars of the churches, leaping into schools, crawling into the sacred corners of American homes, burning up the foundations of society.

My information showed that thousands of aliens supported communism in this country.

explaining the negative affects of communism how supporters are made up of criminals

The whole purpose of communism appears to be a mass organization of the criminals of the world to overthrow the decencies of private life, to usurp property that they have not earned, to disrupt the present order of life. Communism distorts our social law.

The Department of Justice will pursue the attack of these "Reds" upon the Government of the United States with vigilance, and no alien, advocating the overthrow of existing law and order in this country, shall escape arrest and prompt deportation.

definitely how the govt will solve this problem of communism -> Palmer Raids

Source: Excerpt from an essay written by A. Mitchell Palmer called "The Case Against the "Reds," 1920.

Vocabulary
 Aliens: Foreigners
 Usurp: take over
 Distort: Twist out of shape

Analysis

how in what way did the revolution -> leaping into schools?

were the foreigners that supported communism from foreign lands?

How are criminals criminals if they are just exercising their freedom of speech?

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Summary

Anarchist from Europe are entering the united states

immigrants were communist

capitalists believed that communist would ruin or disrupt private life of Americans like strike

The U.S govt will continue these arrests on aliens & communists believed to protect capitalism

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Analysis

How did the U.S respond? why was it such a big deal?

why did the aliens not change their ideas before entering a capitalist country?

in what point do we see communism in?

why were communist viewed as "Reds"? are the Reds the constitution?

... because at Edward R. Murrow High School, we CARE about our students!