

3-2-1 Summarizer

A 3-2-1 Summarizer is a strategy for closure at the end of a lesson. The numbers refer to how many of each kind of summary statement or response you require students to provide. For example, you might ask students to record:

- **3 facts** they've learned
- **2 questions** they have or wonder about

- **1 personal connection** they can make to the information

As students pause for a few minutes to consider their learning, they are given a chance to reflect, organize their thoughts, summarize, prioritize important ideas, and, therefore, move the information into long-term memory.

Step-by-Step

- 1.** At the end of your lesson, hand students a 3-2-1 Summarizer (page 24) or have them copy one from the board.
- 2.** Ask students to reflect upon the lesson and respond to your prompts. The more focused the prompts, the better the assessment will be. A generic

prompt like "List three things you learned today" will not provide you with as good an assessment as "State three causes of the Civil War."

- 3.** Collect the 3-2-1 Summarizer as students leave the classroom or ask students to deposit them in a box specifically marked "Exit Cards." (Tell students, "Today's Exit Card is your 3-2-1 Summarizer.")

Applications

The type of information that you ask for can be adapted to any topic or content area.

SOCIAL STUDIES:

- 3** *Contributions* of Greek civilization
- 2** *Ways* the Greek economy differed from the Egyptian economy
- 1** *Way* the geography of Greece influenced Greek life

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:

- 3** *Examples* of prejudice in the book
- 2** *Instances* that show how the main character's prejudiced views have changed
- 1** *Real-life situation* in which you were affected by or witnessed prejudice

SCIENCE:

- 3** *Parts (and functions)* of a plant
- 2** *Ways* to keep plants healthy
- 1** *Way* Earth would be affected if there were no plants

MATH:

- 3** *Strategies* for solving word problems
- 2** *Important things to look for* when solving word problems
- 1** *Solution* to a provided word problem

Teachers in one district I worked in modified this strategy to raise the level of thinking required. Integrating Bloom's Taxonomy into the three types of prompts, they suggested that "3" represent low-level knowledge/comprehension prompts, that "2" represent middle-level application/analysis prompts, and that "1" represent high-level synthesis/evaluation prompts. See page 23 for an example of integrating Bloom's Taxonomy into the 3-2-1 Summarizer.

3-2-1 Summarizer Using Bloom's Taxonomy

- 3 • KNOWLEDGE/COMPREHENSION PROMPTS: "PROVIDE 3 "**
(Examples, Facts, Ways, Reasons, Principles, Events, Characteristics, Features, etc.)
- 2 • APPLICATION/ANALYSIS PROMPTS: "PROVIDE 2 "**
(Causes/Effects, Comparisons [Similarities/Differences]
Steps in a Sequence, Connections, Advantages/Disadvantages, Benefits, etc.)
- 1 • SYNTHESIS/EVALUATION PROMPT "PROVIDE 1 ":**
What if ...? What is the significance of ...?
Which is better, ... or ...?
How would you prioritize ...?
Can you propose an alternative solution?
Can you create/design/invent a new ...?
Why is this important to know and understand?

Another variation of the 3-2-1 format is used in reading. Using the Question-Answer Relationship, or QAR (Raphael, 1986), teachers of reading can have students focus on four basic question-answer relationships: "Right There" questions (the answer is found in one sentence); "Think and Search" questions (the answer is found in more than one place; the reader needs to put ideas together); "Author and Me" questions (the answer is not in the text, but you need to think about what the author has said in order to respond); "On My Own" questions (the answer relies on your background knowledge of a topic, not the text).

A 3-2-1 Summarizer Using QAR

- **Provide 3** Right There questions for students to answer:
How many ...?
Who is ...?
Where did ...?
- **Provide 2** Think and Search questions for students to answer:
What is the main idea of this passage?
Why do you think ...?
What examples can you find of ...?
Compare and contrast ...
- **Provide 1** Author and Me or On My Own question for students to answer:
The author implies ...
The speaker's attitude is ...
In your opinion ...
Describe a time when you ...

3-2-1 Summarizer

Name _____ Date _____

3

■ _____

■ _____

■ _____

2

■ _____

■ _____

1

■ _____
