



Snapshots: Synthesize THIS!

Student edition



Purpose for reading: To synthesize information and develop creative presentations

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Introduction: This lesson will help you use a variety of strategies to analyze charts and graphs. It will also give you the chance to turn a Snapshot's information into an innovative presentation. In this lesson, you will:

- ▶ Build background knowledge about a topic.
- ▶ Use critical thinking to comprehend information.
- ▶ Synthesize information found in a visual representation and change it into another format.
- ▶ Evaluate other groups' work.

1. **As a class**, look at the USA TODAY Snapshot, "Teens on the road" (below).

Skillful readers must use critical thinking skills when looking at different types of text. Charts and graphs help readers understand large amounts of information. Think about how the author of the Snapshot chose to present certain facts to you and how you could rephrase or illustrate this information in a different way.

2. **In pairs**, underline or highlight its significant features. Answer the following questions:

- What is the essential message or most important fact?
- Do you believe the message or fact? Why or why not?
- Did you know this fact, or is it new information?
- Is the author's purpose to inform, entertain or persuade?
- What methods does the author use to get your attention?
- What kind of language does she or he use?
- How could you present the same information in a different way?

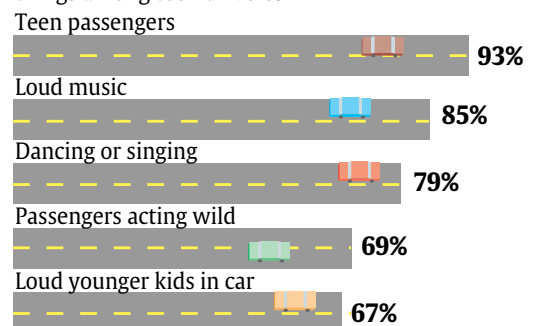
3. **As a class**, come back together and discuss your answers to the questions. What general statements can you make about visual representations? How else could the author have shown these same facts?

4. **In groups of four**, choose a USA TODAY Snapshot that presents interesting or challenging information.

USA TODAY Snapshots®

Teens on the road

This week marks National Teen Driver Safety Week, and one area of focus is teen driving distractions. Percentage of teens who report observing these things among teen drivers:



Source: Report by the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and State Farm Insurance

By David Stuckey and Adrienne Lewis, USA TODAY

Proficient readers apply critical thinking skills to identify the most important facts and details in a piece of informational text. Using clues in the text can help you figure out the author's intent, point of view and message.



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- 5. Discuss your opinions about the topic in the Snapshot. On a piece of paper, answer the same questions you used for the first Snapshot.
- 6. Choose what you think is the main message of the Snapshot. Find three less important facts or details that are also represented or implied in the Snapshot.
- 7. Decide how you could present this information to a group of people in a different way. For example, you could write an article (two to three paragraphs would be sufficient) to communicate the data or create a skit, song, newscast or commercial that demonstrates the information. Perhaps you could create a poster or a model using simple materials such as paper clips and pencils to show your facts. Or, maybe you have a different, creative idea you'd like to share with the class.
- 8. After developing your presentation, select one team member who will tell the class why you chose to represent your Snapshot's facts in this way. Next, decide what role other team members will play in the presentation. (The presenter fulfills her or his role by presenting the group's choices but certainly she or he may also be a part of the demonstration.)

You have synthesized the information in a Snapshot and developed an alternate depiction of those same facts. Now, your group will demonstrate your understanding of the Snapshot by presenting it to the class in a new way.

- 9. Present your group's findings to the rest of the class. As other groups share their presentations, give thoughtful feedback about what you liked and what could be improved.
- 10. **As a class**, discuss any questions you have about translating one type of visual representation into another. Discuss how today's lesson could help you in other content classes such as math, science or social studies.
- 11. Extension: For homework, write a paragraph about the presentation you thought was the most appealing. Explain why you liked it and how you could use that method of presenting information in a math, science or social studies class.

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Time Requirement:
55 minutes

In this lesson, students will comprehend and analyze information in a USA TODAY Snapshot. In small groups, they will synthesize the information in order to develop a fresh, innovative presentation of those same facts. Groups will then evaluate each other's work.

Standards:

- ▶ Identifying details/facts
- ▶ Identifying main idea/essential message
- ▶ Identifying author's purpose
- ▶ Analyzing and/or evaluating information
- ▶ Synthesizing information from a single text

To ensure student understanding, it is best to read aloud the italicized instructions embedded in the lesson

1. Distribute: Give each student a copy of the USA TODAY Snapshot, "Teens on the road."

2. Cooperative learning: Place students in pairs to review the Snapshot using the questions presented in the student edition of the lesson.

Activate: Build background knowledge about how to analyze a USA TODAY Snapshot and other visual representations of information. Allow 5 minutes.

3. Direct instruction: Ensure students know that "synthesis" refers to the collection and analysis of data that is then used to create a text in a different format.

Model: Think aloud about the different ways you could synthesize the facts in your chosen Snapshot (e. g., posters, songs, articles, skits, plays, raps, poems and/or any other creative ideas you might have).

4-8. Cooperative Learning: Place students into groups of four. You may want to use heterogeneous groups for this activity as group diversity and shared schema may add depth to the project.



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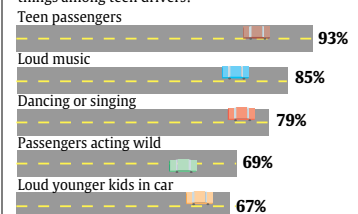
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Time Requirement:

55 minutes

Distribute: Give each group a USA TODAY from a different day (to ensure that all groups choose different Snapshots).

Monitor: Circulate. Ensure each group understands the factual information represented in their Snapshot and help individual groups brainstorm ideas for their presentation.

Initiate: When talking to groups, encourage ideas that will attract the attention of other students. Remind groups that they will be evaluated on their creativity and presentation of facts. Allow 25 minutes.

9. Teach back: After students present to the class, give them quick oral feedback about whether or not their essential facts and details were conveyed. Allow 10 minutes.

10. Reflect: As a class, discuss the different types of presentations and how they could be used in other classes. Allow 5 minutes.

11. Extension: This assignment can be used as a formative assessment of students' understanding.



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Kagan, Spencer. (1994). *Cooperative Learning*. San Clemente, CA. Resources For Teachers, Inc.