

# Summarization Pyramids

**Summarization Pyramids are wonderfully versatile. It's a cinch to adapt the basic foundation of this technique to your curriculum and your student's needs.**

## **Basic Sequence**

Construct a pyramid of lines on a sheet of paper. When first playing with this format, begin with eight lines, as shown on the attached example. For each line, choose prompts that yield one-word or short answers for the shorter lines, longer responses for longer lines.

## **Suggested prompts include the following:**

- A synonym for the topic
- An analogy between the topic and a sport
- One question it sparks in you
- Three attributes or facts about the topic
- Three words that best describe the topic
- A book title or news headline that would capture the essence of the topic
- One or two other topics related to this topic
- Causes of the topic
- Effects of the topic
- Reasons we study the topic
- Arguments for the topic
- Ingredients of the topic
- Personal opinion on the topic
- Demonstration of the topic in action
- The larger category from which this topic comes
- A formula or sequence associated with the topic
- Insight gained from studying the topic
- Tools for using the topic
- Three moments in the history of the topic
- One thing we used to think about the topic that we've discovered to be incorrect
- Samples of the topic
- People who use the topic
- What the topic will be like in 25 years

This list could go on forever. As you decide on prompts and pyramid sizes, make sure to choose experiences that will allow students to interact with the intended topic in many ways. Five to eight lines is generally a good summarization length.

Are there other shapes that lend themselves to these types of prompts? Try it out!

# Summarization Pyramid

