



Books for Determining Importance and Synthesizing

Picture Books

Koala Lou, Mem Fox

Red Leaf, Yellow Leaf, Lois Ehlert

Wild Horse Winter, Tetsuya Honda

Monarch Butterfly, Gail Gibbons

Three Brave Women, C. L. G. Martin

El Chino, Allen Say

And So They Build, Bert Kitchen

Encounter, Jane Yolen

Passage to Freedom, Ken Mochizuki

Rachel's Journal, Marissa Moss

Longer Books

Sarah, Plain and Tall, Patricia MacLachlan (58 pages)

Missing May, Cynthia Rylant (89 pages)

Lewis and Clark: Explorers of the American West,
Steven Kroll (32 pages)

Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes, Eleanor Coerr (79 pages)

Dear Mr. Henshaw, Beverly Cleary (134 pages)

A Boy at War: A Novel of Pearl Harbor, Harry Mazer (104 pages)

Matilda, Roald Dahl (240 pages)

My Louisiana Sky, Kimberly Willis Holt (200 pages)

Hatchet, Gary Paulsen (195 pages)

Tuck Everlasting, Natalie Babbitt (139 pages)

Tips

- Determining importance has to do with knowing why you're reading and then making decisions about what information or ideas are most critical to understanding the overall meaning of the piece.
- Knowing your purpose for reading is a big factor in determining what's important when you read. It affects how carefully you read and has an impact on what you determine to be important.
- Noting text features helps you lift important information from the text. Often the format of nonfiction text—for example, boxing information, boldfacing ideas, labeling pictures—alerts you to importance.
- To determine importance, you consciously prioritize information to make decisions about what's essential and what is less essential.
- Reading to add to background knowledge directs your search for important information.
- Launching a search to determine important information often starts with the generation of a question.
- Authors leave clues as to what they think is important to remember. Phrases like "as a result" and "in summary" alert you to watch for essential information.
- Summarize important information and then add your thinking as you synthesize to formulate new meaning.
- Synthesize as you use the 7 Keys. Take in the essential facts and ask, What does it all mean to me?