Summarizing

Nonfiction

Read the passage below. Come up with an appropriate title for the passage. Then, use the information from the passage to complete the activities on the next page.

Title: _____

Liquidambar styraciflua (more commonly known as the Sweetgum Tree) can be found in many yards across the southern United States. This tree is called a "Sweetgum" Tree because it's dried sap can be used to make chewing gum. It's not a gum you would want, though – it has a very bitter taste.



This tree produces a very special kind of "fruit" – a hard, spiky ball sometimes called a sweetgum ball. Humans don't eat this "fruit," but animals like chipmunks, squirrels, and birds fight through the prickly spines to eat the seeds inside.

Many people don't like Sweetgum Trees because of the prickly fruit it produces. The trees produce a LOT of these sweetgum balls, which fall to the ground and litter yards. Stepping on this prickly fruit can be extremely painful. Raking up the sweetgum balls is difficult, though, so people who own this tree have to pick the sweetgum balls up one by one if they don't want them in their yards.

There are some advantages to these trees, however. The Sweetgum Tree is beautiful in the fall, with leaves that turn red and yellow. It also grows fairly quickly (some can to be almost 100 feet tall) and provides good shade during the summer. Also, the spiky fruit can keep animals like rabbits away from plants and gardens.

Before planting a Sweetgum Tree in your yard, be sure to think through all of the pros and cons. Although this tree is very beautiful, its prickly fruit can be very annoying.

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Summarizing

Nonfiction

A summary is NOT copying the important sentences word for word. Instead, use your own words to restate the most important ideas.

A summary also needs to include only the most important parts. If your summary has too many details, then you are probably including ideas that are not very important. If your summary has too few details, then you are probably missing some important parts.

Cut out the summaries below, and then glue them in the correct spot on the next page.

The Sweetgum Tree produces a prickly fruit. This fruit can be very annoying to the owners of the tree.	The Sweetgum Tree gets its name from its sap, which can be used as chewing gum. It produces a hard, spiky fruit that can be annoying and painful to step on. Despite the spiky fruit, some people like the tree because of the shade it can provide and the color of its leaves in the fall.
The Sweetgum Tree has sap that can be used as chewing gum. It also has fruit that is prickly. Animals like birds and squirrels eat the seeds from this fruit. Stepping on the fruit can hurt your feet. The fruit is also hard to rake up. People have to pick up the sweetgum balls one by one. This tree can be very beautiful in the fall. It can grow up to 100 feet. Before planting a Sweetgum Tree, think very carefully about it.	*Liquidambar styraciflua* (more commonly known as the Sweetgum Tree) can be found in many yards across the southern United States. This tree produces a very special kind of "fruit" – a hard, spiky ball sometimes called a sweetgum ball. Although this tree is very beautiful, its prickly fruit can be very annoying.

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Summarizing

Nonfiction

Read each of the summaries you cut out carefully. Think about which summary is best and what is wrong with the other 3 summaries. Glue each of the summaries in the correct spot below.

The BEST Summary

The Summary That Just Copied Sentences From the Passage

The Summary With Too Many Unimportant Details

The Summary With Too Few Details

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Summarizing

Nonfiction

Read each of the summaries you cut out carefully. Think about which summary is best and what is wrong with the other 3 summaries. Glue each of the summaries in the correct spot below.

The BEST Summary

The Sweetgum Tree gets its name from its sap, which can be used as chewing gum. It produces a hard, spiky fruit that can be annoying and painful to step on. Despite the spiky fruit, some people like the tree because of the shade it can provide and the color of its leaves in the fall.

The Summary That Just Copied Sentences From the Passage

Liquidambar styraciflua (more commonly known as the Sweetgum Tree) can be found in many yards across the southern United States. This tree produces a very special kind of "fruit" – a hard, spiky ball sometimes called a sweetgum ball. Although this tree is very beautiful, its prickly fruit can be very annoying.

The Summary With Too Many Details

The Sweetgum Tree has sap that can be used as chewing gum. It also has fruit that is prickly. Animals like birds and squirrels eat the seeds from this fruit. Stepping on the fruit can hurt your feet. The fruit is also hard to rake up. People have to pick up the sweetgum balls one by one. This tree can be very beautiful in the fall. It can grow up to 100 feet. Before planting a Sweetgum Tree, think very carefully about it.

The Summary With Too Few Details

The Sweetgum Tree produces a prickly fruit. This fruit can be very annoying to the owners of the tree.

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Summarizing Nonfiction:
Grading Rubric

Student Name:_____

	3 points	2 points	1 point
Completeness	All of the required activities are completed.	Most of the required activities are completed.	Few of the required activities are completed.
Accuracy of Content	All of the information regarding summarizing is accurate. The student demonstrated a thorough knowledge of what makes a good summary.	Most of the information regarding summarizing is accurate. The student demonstrated an average knowledge of what makes a good summary.	Very little of the information regarding summarizing is accurate. The student demonstrated a limited knowledge of what makes a good summary.
Conventions	There are very few errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar.	There are several errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, or grammar.	There are many errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar. Because of these errors, the answers are very difficult to read.

Total Points out of 9:

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