

Writing Project

Write as a Recorder

Write a Summary

Write a summary of something you read about the balance of nature. Add your summary to a class nature magazine.

Study a Model

In a summary, you present the most important ideas about something you have read or learned in another way.

The title gives the focus of the summary.

Without Wolves

by Jessie Landon

Officials at Yellowstone Park once thought wolves were killing too many of the other animals. So they paid hunters to kill all the wolves.

Park officials quickly learned that this was a mistake. Without the wolves, animals like elk and coyotes grew in number. Soon they were out of control.

The elk destroyed trees and shrubs. As a result, many birds and beavers could not survive. Meanwhile, the coyotes ate food that smaller animals needed to live.

Scientists finally figured out what to do. They brought wolves back to Yellowstone, and the ecosystem got better.

The summary contains only the most important ideas. All the ideas in the article are about the same topic.

The summary has a beginning, a middle, and an end. The writing is complete.

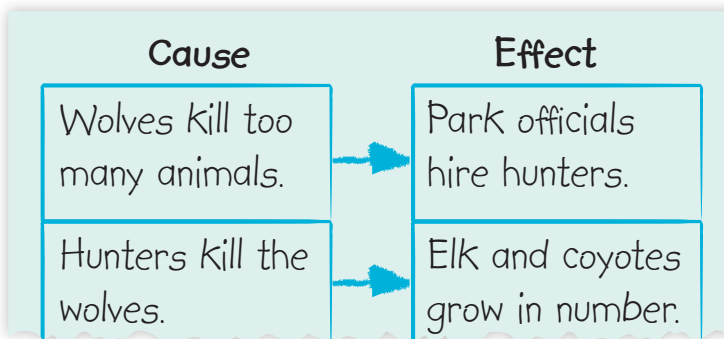
Prewrite

1. **Choose a Topic** What are the most interesting things you have learned about the balance of nature? Talk with a partner to choose one set of ideas to summarize.

Language Frames	
Tell Your Ideas • The most interesting thing I learned this week was _____. • I never knew _____ before. • I'd like to write about _____ because _____.	Respond to Ideas • Will you be able to summarize _____ in just a few sentences? • _____ doesn't sound very interesting. Maybe you should choose a different topic.

2. **Gather Information** Reread the information you want to summarize. What are the important ideas? Look at the title, headings, and topic sentences.
3. **Get Organized** Use a chart to help you list the most important ideas. For this article, a cause-and-effect diagram works well.

Cause-and-Effect Diagram



Draft

Use your cause-and-effect diagram to write your draft.

- Include only the most important ideas.
- Make sure all the ideas go together.

Writing Project, continued

Revise

1. **Read, Retell, Respond** Read your summary aloud to a partner. Your partner listens and then retells the important ideas. Next, talk about ways to improve your writing.

Language Frames

Retell

- You summarized _____.
- The most important ideas were _____.

Make Suggestions

- I think you should take out _____. It doesn't tell about the topic.
- The ending doesn't sound complete. Can you add _____?

2. **Make Changes** Think about your draft and your partner's suggestions. Then use revision marks to make your changes.

- Delete information that doesn't tell about the topic.

Without the wolves, animals like elk and coyotes grew in number, ~~and rangers sent many of them to other parks.~~

- Does your writing have a beginning, a middle, and an end? Make sure it is complete.

Scientists finally figured out what to do. They brought wolves back to Yellowstone, ~~and the ecosystem got better.~~

Punctuation Tip



Put a comma (,) before **and**, **but**, or **or** in a compound sentence.

Edit and Proofread

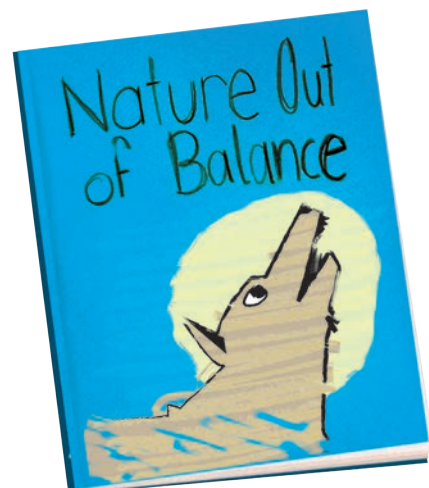
Work with a partner to edit and proofread your summary. Punctuate compound sentences correctly. Use revision marks to show your changes.

Present

1. **On Your Own** Make a final copy of your summary. Present it as a short oral report.

Presentation Tips	
If you are the speaker...	If you are the listener...
In a summary, every word is important. Be sure to speak slowly and clearly.	Think about whether the summary was clear to you. Did anything seem to be missing?
Repeat any parts of your summary that you say too fast or incorrectly.	Think about what you could learn about summarizing from the example you heard.

2. **With a Group** Illustrate your summary. Then work with your classmates to create a magazine called "Nature Out of Balance." You and your classmates may want to donate the magazine to your school library.





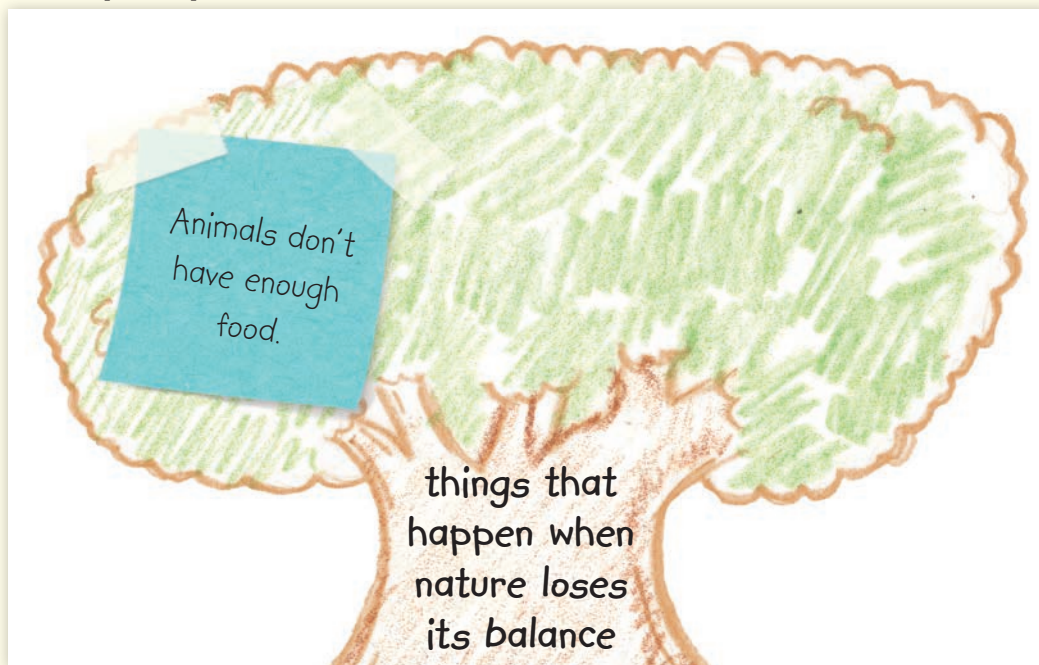
? **BIG** Question

What happens
when nature loses
its balance?

Talk Together

In this unit, you found lots of answers to the **Big Question**. Now, make a concept map to discuss the **Big Question** with the class.

Concept Map



Write a Description



Select one thing on your concept map that can happen when nature is not in balance. Write a description of it.

Share Your Ideas

Choose one of these ways to share your ideas about the **Big Question**.

Write It!



Trade Cards

On a slip of paper, write something that could make an ecosystem lose its balance. Trade slips with a partner. Draw an example of your partner's ecosystem. Share and discuss your drawings.

Talk About It!



Share Pictures

Find a picture of a forest, pond, or other ecosystem. Decide whether the place is in balance or out of balance. Explain your picture to the class.



Do It!



Create a Riddle

Create a riddle with a partner. Write about something in nature. Then find another pair of partners. Ask them your riddle. Try to guess theirs!

What did the dog
say to the wolves?
(Woof! Woof!)



Write It!



Perform a Skit

Write a skit about an ecosystem. The characters are the animals, plants, water, and so on. What do they say about their home? Do they use formal or informal language? Present your skit to the class.

RIVER: It rained. I am
full of fresh, clean water!