Tag It and Bag It
Tagging to Identify and Summarize Main Ideas

Critical Learning

- Improve reading speed and comprehension.
- Learn skim/scan method of reading quickly
- Identify ‘tags’
- Summarize main ideas in own words

Materials & Interactions

- Student Response Page: Tag It and Bag It
- Access to the Internet
- Andy Carvin’s article “It’s all About Tags”, available at http://www.pbs.org/teachers/learning.now/
  Select “Archives” and “September 2008”.
- Work with a partner
- Level 4 Memo from the Ontario College Writing Exemplars, page 39.

Minds On

1. Reading quickly to grasp meaning is an invaluable skill in college where new material is covered in a short period of time. Identifying the main idea is the first and most important step.

2. ‘Tagging’ is an internet term describing the process of labelling the main or key idea. A full explanation of tagging can be found at http://www.pbs.org/teachers/learning.now/
  See Andy Carvin’s September 2008 article in the archives.

3. Read the questions that follow, and then read Andy Carvin’s article entitled, “It’s All About Tags” See internet address above. Write out your answers on your Student Response page.

   1. What is the purpose of a tag?
   2. What are its advantages? What are its weaknesses?
   3. Locate YouTube online. Locate an example of an effective tag from the site.
   4. How can you be certain that your tags are reliable?
   5. With a partner, create a one-sentence definition of tagging.

Action!

1. Scanning and skimming are 2 ways of reading. Scanning refers to the movement of your eyes to locate a specific item, e.g., locating a name in the telephone directory. Skimming is zigzag pattern of reading to
identify the gist, or main idea in a text. You don’t read every word to do these. Chunk longer texts to skim and scan shorter sections. 

the tags for this memo. 

- Compare the tag words that you have highlighted with those of your partner or teacher. Reach an agreement about which words could be the tags and circle them.

Consolidation

① Plagiarism is defined by the Department of Journalism at Centennial College as follows:

Plagiarizing is presenting someone else’s words, images or other work as your own without credit or attribution. Plagiarism includes:

1. the verbatim presentation of someone else’s work without proper credit or attribution;

2. a paraphrased version of someone else’s work without proper credit or attribution;

3. a combination of (1) and (2) without proper credit or attribution.

The complete policy can be found at

http://www.centennialcollege.ca/thecentre/policy

Every college has a policy similar to this one. Check it out on your school’s web site.

② Locate the report “The Effects of Urban Lifestyle on the Environment” from the Ontario College Writing Exemplars (see internet address above). Print a hard copy.

Step One: To skim longer texts, read the introductory paragraph. Highlight three tags to predict what ideas will be described in the report that follows.

Step Two: Scan the rest of the report, in chunks if necessary. Highlight 1-2 examples for each of the tags you predicted.

Step Three: Using the highlighted words, compose sentences of your own that don’t copy the original, but do express the same ideas and intent. Read selected sections to verify your thinking.

Step Four: Avoid plagiarism. Have a partner check your work and circle any phrases that sound too much like the original before proceeding to the next task.

Step Five: In a paragraph of 150 words, write a summary of the report for someone who hasn’t read it. Submit your summary to your teacher with your Student Response page.

Connections and Next Steps

③ Challenge yourself to read longer and more complex texts. Remember: everyone finds some texts challenging. How challenging they are depends on how much the person knows about the topic, how familiar the type of text is, and how considerate the text is.

④ Use readings from your textbooks or research. For example, read Brian Martin’s essay on “Technological Vulnerability” (Available: http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/96tis.html ) This was actually the subject of a first-year assignment in which students were to summarize this essay in a page (approx. 250 words) to demonstrate their understanding of its ideas. The instructor
was also checking to make sure words and sentences weren’t copied. See Literacy Lesson 5.5 for a lesson on this essay.

Tag It and Bag It – Student Response
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-you can: (1) Work on this template online and print a completed copy. It will expand as you work or (2) print a blank copy after adjusting the spacing to leave room to write or (3) use this as a guide to structure responding in a notebook.

Minds On

Andy Carvin’s article entitled, “It’s All About Tags”

1. purpose of a tag?

2. advantages and weaknesses

3. example of an effective tag from You Tube online

4. how you know your tags are reliable?

5. a one-sentence definition of tagging.

Action!

Highlight the tags in the right-hand column.
Skimming
I want to know very quickly what the memo is about and what action is being recommended. I read the first sentence and the last paragraph.

I know that my employee has reviewed the video and is recommending it for the staff. I am pleased to see the employee’s initiative in obtaining the video for the session.

Scanning
I am searching the memo for two pieces of information:
1. the length of the video
2. the producer of the video
I let my eyes move quickly down the middle of the memo.

I see at once that the time is 16 minutes and the producer is Marlin Productions.

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 16, 2004
TO: [Contact’s Name], Department Manager
FROM: [Student’s Name], Medical Imaging Technologist
SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT SESSION VIDEO REVIEW: “LISTENING ACTIVELY”

I’m just giving you a quick update on the video you requested I review before the upcoming staff development session. The video was short, only 16 minutes, and to the point covering the basics of how to be a good listener. Produced by Marlin Productions, it did an excellent job comparing the characteristics of a good listener and a poor one. I think this video will most certainly aid in improving the staff’s interpersonal skills.

Some important points from the video suggest that active listeners should:

- Be willing to listen by making eye contact and using appropriate body language.
- Be conscious of the right time, and place, to bring up the subject and/or respond to the speaker.
- Be actively involved in the conversation so that one can interact with the speaker and provide feedback.

This video should provide the staff insight into improving their communication skills and so I have taken it upon myself to retrieve it from the IAHS Resource Center and will have it for you for the session. See you then!

Level 4 Memo from the Ontario College Writing Exemplars, page 39.

Consolidation

✦ “The Effects of Urban Lifestyle on the Environment” from Ontario College Writing Exemplars: Attach a summary of 150 words

Connections and Next Steps

✦ Literacy Lesson 5.5 Setting Your Cites
Teacher's Feedback:

- Successfully completed

- Still to do: ____________________________________________________

Comments:
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Literacy Learning Self-Assessment Checklist

➔ Check items you have completed confidently in this lesson. Highlight items about which you have questions or need to consolidate further.

Critical Learning

☐ Improve reading speed and comprehension.
☐ Learn skim/scan method of reading quickly
☐ Identify ‘tags’
☐ Summarize main ideas in my own words

Minds On

☐ I can identify appropriate tag words

Action!

☐ I can skim and scan a text
☐ I can understand and reword the main idea of a text without reading every word

Consolidation

☐ I can successfully use the skim/scan strategy on longer texts

Connections and Next Steps

☐ I have practised using tagging and skim/scan with college level texts