

## Lesson Plan

### Identifying Structure

**Book:** *Exploring Hoover Dam*

**Series:** Travel America's Landmarks

**Level:** Beacon

### Objective

To help students practice identifying the structure and key ideas of a text and using that structure to write a clear summarizing paragraph.

### Supplies

- *Exploring Hoover Dam* book
- Pencils and paper

### Before the Activity

Read *Exploring Hoover Dam* out loud, or assign it to students to read on their own.

### Activity

Books are organized into chapters, each of which has a title and a main idea. All of the details in a chapter will support the chapter's main idea. By identifying the main idea of each chapter, students can better understand the structure of a book and the author's overarching argument.

First, students will create an outline of *Exploring Hoover Dam*. Students should identify the key topic or idea of each chapter in the book. The topic or idea should answer the question: What is this chapter about? Students should write these answers at the top of their paper. The topics or ideas can be written out as phrases.

Then, students will write a five-sentence paragraph summarizing the *Exploring Hoover Dam* book. Students should have one sentence summarizing and identifying the main idea of each of the four chapters. Students should end their paragraph with a concluding sentence that summarizes the book as a whole. Collect students' papers at the end of class.

### Evaluation

Use the following sample outline and paragraph to award 1 point for students correctly identifying the main topic of each chapter. Award 1 point for each sentence in the paragraph, for a total of 9 points.

## Sample Outline and Paragraph

Chapter 1: Soaring High—what is the Hoover Dam?

Chapter 2: The Big Build—history of the dam

Chapter 3: Powerful Water—uses for the reservoir water

Chapter 4: Visiting Hoover Dam—what visitors can do at the dam

The Hoover Dam is a massive dam that holds back the Colorado River between Nevada and Arizona. It was built between 1931 and 1936 to keep the Colorado River from flooding crops. Now, that water is used for fishing, boating, growing crops, and producing electricity. People can visit the dam to explore the power plant, learn about the dam's history, and marvel at the dam's size. The Hoover Dam is an important US landmark.

### **Standards**

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational texts, grade 4 (RI 4.5).