Nathaniel Hawthorne

The House of the Seven Gables

Summary-based Activities
by Kenneth Brodey
Colonel Pyncheon wanted Matthew Maule's house. He accused Maule of witchcraft and Maule was hanged. Before Maule died he uttered a curse on Pyncheon: “God will give him blood to drink!” The Colonel obtained the house, knocked it down and then built his own house there. Many years later, one of the Colonel's descendants, an old lady named Hepzibah, lived in the house. She had one child, an artist. But she still needed money, so she decided to open a shop attached to the house. It did not remain very well. Fortunately, her young cousin Phoebe came to stay with her. Hepzibah tried to convince Phoebe to leave. But when Hepzibah saw how good Phoebe was at working in the shop, she changed her mind. One day after tea, Phoebe went out in the garden. She could see that somebody looked after it. As she was pondering, a young man appeared. It was Holgrave, the boarder. He took possession of the garden because he liked nature. But his job was taking daguerreotypes. He told Phoebe that you could see a person's true nature in a daguerreotype. He showed her one of a cruel man.
Colonel Pyncheon wanted Matthew Maule’s house. He (0) accused Maule of witchcraft and Maule was hanged. Before Maule died he (1) a curse on Pyncheon: “God will give him blood to drink!” The Colonel obtained the house, knocked it down and then built his own house there. Many years (2), one of the Colonel’s descendants old lady named Hepzibah, lived in the house. She had one (3), an artist. But she still needed money, (4) she decided to open again a shop attached to the house. It did not (5) very well. Fortunately, her young cousin Phoebe came to (6) with her. Hepzibah tried convince Phoebe to leave. But when Hepzibah saw (7) good Phoebe was at working in the shop she changed her mind. One day after tea, Phoebe went out in the garden. She could see that somebody looked (8) it. As she was (9) the garden, a young man appeared. It was Holgrave, the boarder. He took (10) of the garden because he liked nature. But his job was taking daguerreotypes. He told Phoebe that you could see a person’s true nature in a daguerreotype. He showed her one of a cruel man.
D  Open cloze

Complete the summary of Chapters 1-2 below. Write ONE word for each space. The first one has been done as an example.

Colonel Pyncheon wanted Matthew Maule’s house. He (0).................. Maule of witchcraft and Maule was hanged. Before Maule died he (1).................. a curse on Pyncheon: “God will give him blood to drink!” The Colonel obtained the house, knocked it down and then built his own house there. Many years (2).................., one of the Colonel’s descendants, an old lady named Hepzibah, lived in the house. She had one (3).................., an artist. But she still needed money, (4).................. she decided to open again a shop attached to the house. It did not (5).................. very well. Fortunately, her young cousin Phoebe came to (6).................. with her. Hepzibah tried convince Phoebe to leave. But when Hepzibah saw (7).................. good Phoebe was at working in the shop she changed her mind. One day after tea, Phoebe went out in the garden. She could see that somebody looked (8).................. it. As she was (9).................. the garden, a young man appeared. It was Holgrave, the boarder. He took care of the garden because he liked nature. But his job was taking daguerreotypes. He told Phoebe that you could see a person’s true nature in a daguerreotype. He showed her one of a cruel man.

6  Put the sentences in order

The sentences A-J of the summary of Chapters 1-2 are in the wrong order. Put them in the right order and number them 1-10.

A  It did not go very well. Fortunately, her young cousin Phoebe came to stay with her.
B  One day after tea, Phoebe went out in the garden. She could see that somebody looked after it.
C  As she was admiring the garden, a young man appeared. It was Holgrave, the boarder. He took care of the garden because he liked nature. But his job was taking daguerreotypes.
D  Colonel Pyncheon wanted Matthew Maule’s house. He accused Maule of witchcraft and Maule was hanged.
E  He told Phoebe that you could see a person’s true nature in a daguerreotype. He showed her one of a cruel man.
F  Before Maule died he put a curse on Pyncheon: “God will give him blood to drink!”
G  She had one boarder, an artist. Still, she needed money, and decided to open again a shop attached to the house.
H  Many years later, one of the Colonel’s descendants, an old lady named Hepzibah, lived in the house.
I  The Colonel obtained the house, knocked it down and built his own house there.
J  Hepzibah tried convince Phoebe to leave. But when Hepzibah saw how good Phoebe was at working in the shop she changed her mind.
7 **Correct the mistakes!**

This is an oral activity, so do not give the students any photocopies. Tell them the following instructions (or similar): “I am going to tell you a summary of Chapters 1-2 of *The House of the Seven Gables*, but I am going to make some mistakes in the summary. When you hear a mistake please call out the right word or words.”

As an example, in the version of the summary below there are 10 mistakes to read out, all written in *italics*. As a quick reminder to you, the correct version is given immediately afterwards in brackets.

Colonel Holgrave (Pyncheon) wanted Matthew Maule’s house. He accused Maule of *murder* (witchcraft) and Maule was hanged. Before Maule died he put a hat (curse) on Pyncheon: “God will give him *wine* (blood) to drink!” The Colonel obtained the house, knocked it down and then built his own house there. Many years later, one of the Colonel’s descendents, an old lady named Hepzibah, lived in the house. She had one boarder, a *policeman* (an artist). Still, she needed money, and decided to open again a *restaurant* (shop) attached to the house. It did not go very well. Fortunately, her young *sister* (cousin) Phoebe came to stay with her. Hepzibah tried convince Phoebe to leave. But when Hepzibah saw how good Phoebe was at working in the shop . . .

8 **Rub out**

On the board / the interactive whiteboard, copy a short paragraph from the summary.

Gradually, rub out individual words and even two- and three-word phrases. Begin by rubbing out some of the important content words. After each time you rub out some words get the whole class to read out the text, supplying the missing words from their memory.

Eventually, when all the words on the board have been rubbed out, the class will — amazingly! — remember all the text. The text used for the rub out activity need not taken from the summary. You could use a dramatic part of the story, for example.

9 **Dictogloss**

Sit the students in groups of two to five. Make sure that each student has pen and paper. Tell them that you are going to read out a summary of Chapters 1-2 of *The House of the Seven Gables*, and that they may note down key words or short phrases. Read the text once at normal speed, pause for a minute, then read it again.

Tell the students to work together in their groups and use their notes to write a text which is grammatically and lexically correct but which doesn’t have to be the same as the original: the aim of their writing is to produce a correct text, not to show they have perfect memories! Five minutes should be enough.

Then students compare their written texts with each others’. This can be done by reading aloud, but it is better if the texts are passed around or stuck on a wall (or compared in electronic form). Groups should try to point out any errors in the texts of other groups.

Finally, show or give the students the original text; ask them to identify any differences with their own texts, and ask them if they think the differences are important.

10 **Cut it down**

Put the students in groups of two to five. Make sure that each group has a copy of the summary and a red pen/highlighter or access to computer. Tell them that they must cut 15 words from the summary: their shortened version must still be grammatically correct. They can change punctuation, but they mustn’t add any words.

When they have finished, they should compare their shortened versions. It is better if the texts are stuck on a wall or passed around (or compared in electronic form). They should decide which are the best cuts, and why.
SUMMARY

Colonel Pyncheon wanted Matthew Maule’s house. He accused Maule of witchcraft and Maule was hanged. Before Maule died he put a curse on Pyncheon: “God will give him blood to drink!” The Colonel obtained the house, knocked it down and then built his own house there. Many years later, one of the Colonel’s descendants old lady named Hepzibah, lived in the house. She had one boarder, an artist. But she still needed money, so she decided to open again a shop attached to the house. It did not do very well. Fortunately, her young cousin Phoebe came to stay with her. Hepzibah tried convince Phoebe to leave. But when Hepzibah saw how good Phoebe was at working in the shop she changed her mind. One day after tea, Phoebe went out in the garden. She could see that somebody looked after it. As she was admiring the garden, a young man appeared. It was Holgrave, the boarder. He took care of the garden because he liked nature. But his job was taking daguerreotypes. He told Phoebe that you could see a person’s true nature in a daguerreotype. He showed her one of a cruel man.

KEY

1, 2, 3, 5: 1 put; 2 later; 3 boarder; 4 so; 5 do; 6 stay; 7 how; 8 after
9 admiring; 10 care
4: 1 D; 2 B; 3 D; 4 C; 5 C; 6 A; 7 B; 8 A; 9 D; 10 B
6: 1 D; 2 F; 3 I; 4 H; 5 G; 6 A; 7 J; 8 B; 9 C; 10 E

Next, ask students to cut another 15 words of the summary, and proceed as above.
As a final challenge, ask the students to cut yet another 15 words.

Build it up

Put the students in groups of two to five. Make sure that each group has a copy of the summary and a red pen or access to computer. Tell them that they must add two details, which they must choose themselves, to the summary. Tell them that the details they add can be words, phrases or even sentences. Tell them they shouldn’t write fewer than five words, and that there is no upper limit, but they probably won’t need more than about 25 words.
When they have finished, they should compare their versions. It is better if the texts are stuck on a wall or passed around (or compared in electronic form). They should decide which are the most interesting added details, and why.

Rewrite it

Tell the students to rewrite the summary changing some of the information. They should use their imagination to add details — which can be words, phrases or sentences — and change some of the words and phrases that are already there.
**The House of The Seven Gables  Chapters 3-5**

**1 Scrambled word cloze**

Read the summary of Chapters 3-5 below.
Choose one of the words from the box to write in each space. The first one has been done as an example.

- recognized
- noticed
- stayed
- got
- were
- became
- could
- in
- it
- next
- could
- about
- gentle

The (0)........next........... morning Phoebe’s cousin Clifford returned home. He had been (1)..................... prison for the past thirty years. His sister Hepzibah did everything she could to make her (2)..................... brother happy. After breakfast Phoebe went to the shop. A tall gentleman in a black suit (3)..................... in. (4)..................... Was Judge Pyncheon. He asked to see his cousin Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon. Phoebe immediately disliked him, and (5)..................... him as the man in Holgrave’s daguerreotype. He also looked like the cruel Colonel Pyncheon in the painting in the house. Hepzibah then appeared at the door. The Judge told her that Clifford (6)..................... come and live in his country house. She refused his offer. One Sunday, Clifford said that he would like to go to church. He and his sister (7)..................... dressed and opened the door. But when they were (8)..................... to walk outside they became frightened and could not move. As time went by, Phoebe (9)..................... more serious and sadder. She often talked to Holgrave. He disliked tradition. He told Phoebe that he was writing a story about the Pyncheon family. He also told her that the end of Clifford and Hepzibah was near. He (10)..................... that Judge Pyncheon kept an eye on Clifford.
3 Scrambled word cloze with distractors (ii)

Read the summary of Chapters 3-5 below.
Choose one of the words from the box to write in each space. There
are ten words you do not need to use. The first one has been done as
an example.

in     were came     knew     about     close noticed at next

The next morning Phoebe’s cousin Clifford returned home. He had been
by prison for the past thirty years. His sister Hepzibah did everything she could to
make brother happy. After breakfast Phoebe went to the shop. A tall gentleman in a black suit
was Judge Pyncheon. He asked to see his cousin Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon. Phoebe immediately disliked
him and recognized him as the man in Holgrave’s daguerreotype. He also
looked like the cruel Colonel Pyncheon in the painting in the house.
Hepzibah then appeared at the door. The Judge told her that Clifford
come and live in his country house. She refused his offer. One Sunday, Clifford said that he would like to
go to church. He and his sister dressed and opened the door. But when they were
to walk outside they became frightened and could not move. As time went by,
Phoebe more serious and sadder. She often talked to Holgrave. He disliked tradition. He told Phoebe that he was writing a
story about the Pyncheon family. He also told her that the end of
Clifford and Hepzibah was near. He that Judge Pyncheon kept an eye on Clifford.

4 Multiple choice cloze

Read the summary of Chapters 3-5 below.
Choose the best word (A, B, C or D) for each space. The first one has
been done as an example.

The next morning Phoebe’s cousin Clifford returned home. He had been
by prison for the past thirty years. His sister Hepzibah did everything she could to
make her brother happy. After breakfast Phoebe went to the shop. A tall gentleman in a black suit
was Judge Pyncheon. He asked to see his cousin Miss
Hepzibah Pyncheon. Phoebe immediately disliked him, and
him as the man in Holgrave’s daguerreotype. He also
looked like the cruel Colonel Pyncheon in the painting in the house.
Hepzibah then appeared at the door. The Judge told her that
Clifford come and live in his country house. She refused his offer. One Sunday, Clifford said that he would like to go to
church. He and his sister dressed and opened the door. But when they were
to walk outside they became frightened and could not move. As time went by,
Phoebe more serious and sadder. She often talked to Holgrave. He disliked tradition. He told Phoebe that he was writing a
story about the Pyncheon family. He also told her that the end of
Clifford and Hepzibah was near. He that Judge Pyncheon kept an eye on Clifford.

0 A after
1 A by B next
2 A make B get C into D in
3 A entered B went C came D arrived
4 A it B this C that D he
5 A recognized B realized C saw D knew
6 A may B would C must D could
7 A were B had C got D been
8 A near B about C close D there
9 A became B stayed C turned D developed
10 A noticed B watched C observed D studied
5 Open cloze
Complete the summary of Chapters 3-5 below.
Write ONE word for each space. The first one has been done as an example.

The (0).............. morning Phoebe's cousin Clifford returned home. He had been (1)............... prison for the past thirty years. His sister Hepzibah did everything she could to make her (2)............... brother happy. After breakfast Phoebe went to the shop. A tall gentleman in a black suit (3).............. in. (4)............... was Judge Pyncheon. He asked to see his cousin Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon. Phoebe immediately disliked him, and (5)............... him as the man in Holgrave's daguerreotype. He also looked like the cruel Colonel Pyncheon in the painting in the house. Hepzibah then appeared at the door. The Judge told her that Clifford (6)............... come and live in his country house. She refused his offer. One Sunday, Clifford said that he would like to go to church. He and his sister (7)............... dressed and opened the door. But when they were (8)............... to walk outside they became frightened and could not move. As time went by, Phoebe (9)............... more serious and sadder. She often talked to Holgrave. He disliked tradition. He told Phoebe that he was writing a story about the Pyncheon family. He also told her that the end of Clifford and Hepzibah was near. He (10)............... that Judge Pyncheon kept an eye on Clifford.

6 Put the sentences in order
The sentences A-J of the summary of Chapters 3-5 are in the wrong order. Put them in the right order and number them 1-10.

A  One Sunday, Clifford said that he would like to go to church. He and his sister got dressed and opened the door.
B  The next morning Phoebe's cousin Clifford returned home. He had been in prison for the past thirty years.
C  He asked to see his cousin Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon.
D  She refused his offer.
E  But when they were about to walk outside they became frightened and could not move.
F  Phoebe immediately disliked him, and recognized him as the man in Holgrave's daguerreotype. He also looked like the cruel Colonel Pyncheon in the painting in the house.
G  As time went by, Phoebe became more serious and sadder. She often talked to Holgrave. He disliked tradition. He told Phoebe that he was writing a story about the Pyncheon family. He also told her that the end of Clifford and Hepzibah was near. He noticed that Judge Pyncheon kept an eye on Clifford.
H  Hepzibah then appeared at the door. The Judge told her that Clifford could come and live in his country house.
I  A tall gentleman in a black suit came in. It was Judge Pyncheon.
J  His sister Hepzibah did everything she could to make her gentle brother happy. After breakfast Phoebe went to the shop.
Correct the mistakes!

This is an oral activity, so do not give the students any photocopies. Tell them the following instructions (or similar): “I am going to tell you a summary of Chapters 3-5 of *The House of the Seven Gables*, but I am going to make some mistakes in the summary. When you hear a mistake please call out the right word or words.”

As an example, in the version of the summary below there are 10 mistakes to read out, all written in italics. As a quick reminder to you, the correct version is given immediately afterwards in brackets.

The next morning Phoebe’s *brother* (cousin) Clifford returned home. He had been in *hospital* (prison) for the past thirty years. His *cousin* (sister) Hepzibah did everything she could to make her gentle brother happy. After breakfast Phoebe went to the shop. A tall gentleman in a *red* (black) suit came in. It was Judge Pyncheon. He asked to see his cousin Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon. Phoebe immediately *liked* (disliked) him, and recognized him as the man in Holgrave’s daguerreotype. He also looked like the cruel Colonel Pyncheon in the *daguerreotype* (painting) in the house. Hepzibah then appeared at the door. The Judge told her that Clifford could come and live in his *city* (country) house. She refused his offer.

One Sunday, Clifford said that he would like to go to the *park* (church). He and his sister got dressed and opened the door. But when they were about to walk outside they became *tired* (frightened) and could not move. As time went by, Phoebe became more serious and sadder. She often talked to Judge *Pyncheon* (Holgrave). He disliked tradition. He told Phoebe that he was writing a story about the Pyncheon family. He also told her that the end of Clifford and Hepzibah was near. He noticed that Judge Pyncheon kept an eye on *her* (Clifford).

Dictogloss

Sit the students in groups of two to five. Make sure that each student has pen and paper. Tell them that you are going to read out a summary of Chapters 3-5 of *The House of the Seven Gables* twice, and that they may note down key words or short phrases. Read the text once at normal speed, pause for a minute, then read it again.

Tell the students to work together in their groups and use their notes to write a text which is grammatically and lexically correct but which doesn’t have to be the same as the original: the aim of their writing is to produce a correct text, not to show they have perfect memories! Five minutes should be enough.

Then students compare their written texts with each others’. This can be done by reading aloud, but it is better if the texts are passed around or stuck on a wall (or compared in electronic form). Groups should try to point out any errors in the texts of other groups.

Finally, show or give the students the original text; ask them to identify any differences with their own texts, and ask them if they think the differences are important.

Cut it down

Put the students in groups of two to five. Make sure that each group has a copy of the summary and a red pen/highlighter or access to computer. Tell them that they must cut 15 words from the summary: their shortened version must still be grammatically correct. They can change punctuation, but they mustn’t add any words.

When they have finished, they should compare their shortened versions. It is better if the texts are stuck on a wall or passed around...
SUMMARY
The next morning Phoebe's cousin Clifford returned home. He had been in prison for the past thirty years. His sister Hepzibah did everything she could to make her gentle brother happy. After breakfast Phoebe went to the shop. A tall gentleman in a black suit came in. It was Judge Pyncheon. He asked to see his cousin Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon. Phoebe immediately disliked him, and recognized him as the man in Holgrave's daguerreotype. He also looked like the cruel Colonel Pyncheon in the painting in the house. Hepzibah then appeared at the door. The Judge told her that Clifford could come and live in his country house. She refused his offer. One Sunday, Clifford said that he would like to go to church. He and his sister got dressed and opened the door. But when they were about to walk outside they became frightened and could not move. As time went by, Phoebe became more serious and sadder. She often talked to Holgrave. He disliked tradition. He told Phoebe that he was writing a story about the Pyncheon family. He also told her that the end of Clifford and Hepzibah was near. He noticed that Judge Pyncheon kept an eye on Clifford.

KEY
1, 2, 3, 5: 1 in; 2 gentle; 3 came; 4 it; 5 recognized; 6 could; 7 got; 8 about; 9 became; 10 noticed
4: 2 A; 3 C; 4 A; 5 A; 6 D; 7 C; 8 B; 9 A; 10 A
6: 1 B; 2 J; 3 I; 4 C; 5 F; 6 H; 7 D; 8 A; 9 E; 10 G

SUMMARY - BASED ACTIVITIES
(or compared in electronic form). They should decide which are the best cuts, and why.
Next, ask students to cut another 15 words of the summary, and proceed as above.
As a final challenge, ask the students to cut yet another 15 words.

11 Build it up
Put the students in groups of two to five. Make sure that each group has a copy of the summary and a red pen or access to computer. Tell them that they must add two details, which they must choose themselves, to the summary. Tell them that the details they add can be words, phrases or even sentences. Tell them they shouldn’t write fewer than five words, and that there is no upper limit, but they probably won’t need more than about 25 words.
When they have finished, they should compare their versions. It is better if the texts are stuck on a wall or passed around (or compared in electronic form). They should decide which are the most interesting added details, and why.

12 Rewrite it
Tell the students to rewrite the summary changing some of the information. They should use their imagination to add details — which can be words, phrases or sentences — and change some of the words and phrases that are already there.
Phoebe returned to her mother’s house. Then, (0)……one… day Judge Pyncheon came. He offered to help Clifford. Hepzibah refused, and she finally had the (1)……to tell him that he was responsible for putting Clifford in prison for Colonel Pyncheon’s murder. The judge said he could (2)…… Clifford to a mental hospital. He (3)……to talk with Clifford about a secret map and deed. Clifford then came to the judge on his own. But the judge (4)……dead! Frightened, they went and got on board a train. The next morning Phoebe arrived at the house. There was (5)……strange. Then Holgrave appeared. He told her about Judge Pyncheon. People (6)……think Clifford had killed him, but both Clifford’s uncle and Judge Pyncheon had died from bad hearts. Then Holgrave (7)…… Phoebe that he loved her. Then they heard some people at the door. It was Hepzibah and Clifford. Fortunately, the police and doctors agreed that the judge had died of a heart (8)…… Later Holgrave (9)…… that Judge Pyncheon had been responsible for his uncle’s death. Holgrave and Clifford also found the map and the land deed. But all this did not (10)……anymore. Clifford and Hepzibah were now rich and decided to leave the old house to live in the country.
Phoebe returned to her mother’s house. Then, (0) day Judge Pyncheon came. He offered to help Clifford. Hepzibah refused, and she finally had the (1) to tell him that he was responsible for putting Clifford in prison for Colonel Pyncheon’s murder. The judge said he could (2) Clifford to a mental hospital. He (3) to talk with Clifford about a secret map and deed. Clifford then came to the judge on his own. But the judge (4) dead! Frightened, they went and got on board a train. The next morning Phoebe arrived at the house. There was (5) strange. Then Holgrave appeared. He told her about Judge Pyncheon. People (6) think Clifford had killed him, but both Clifford’s uncle and Judge Pyncheon had died from bad hearts. Then Holgrave (7) Phoebe that he loved her. Then they heard some people at the door. It was Hepzibah and Clifford. Fortunately, the police and doctors agreed that the judge had died of a heart (8). Later Holgrave (9) that Judge Pyncheon had been responsible for his uncle’s death. Holgrave and Clifford also found the map and the land deed. But all this did not (10) anymore. Clifford and Hepzibah were now rich and decided to leave the old house to live in the country.

0 A a
1 A power
2 A put
3 A should
4 A had
5 A thing
6 A would
7 A declared
8 A hit
9 A discovered
10 A count

B one
B bravery
B place
B have
B did
B should
B told
B strike
B located
B matter

C this
C initiative
C send
C must
C have
C something
C ought
C stated
C attack
C determined

D that
D courage
D take
D had
D was
D a
D may
D said
D beat
D found
D mean
Open cloze
Complete the summary of Chapters 6-8 below.
Write ONE word for each space. The first one has been done as an example.

Phoebe returned to her mother’s house. Then, (0).............. day Judge Pyncheon came. He offered to help Clifford. Hepzibah refused, and she finally had the (1).................. to tell him that he was responsible for putting Clifford in prison for Colonel Pyncheon’s murder. The judge said he could (2).................. Clifford to a mental hospital. He (3).................. to talk with Clifford about a secret map and deed. Clifford then came to the judge on his own. But the judge (4).................. dead! Frightened, they went and got on board a train. The next morning Phoebe arrived at the house. There was (5).................. strange. Then Holgrave appeared. He told her about Judge Pyncheon. People (6).................. think Clifford had killed him, but both Clifford’s uncle and Judge Pyncheon had died from bad hearts. Then Holgrave (7).................. Phoebe that he loved her. Then they heard some people at the door. It was Hepzibah and Clifford. Fortunately, the police and doctors agreed that the judge had died of a heart (8).................. Later Holgrave (9).................. that Judge Pyncheon had been responsible for his uncle’s death. Holgrave and Clifford also found the map and the land deed. But all this did not (10).................. anymore. Clifford and Hepzibah were now rich and decided to leave the old house to live in the country.

Put the sentences in order
The sentences A-J of the summary of Chapters 6-8 are in the wrong order. Put them in the right order and number them 1-10.

A ☐ Then Holgrave told Phoebe that he loved her. Then they heard some people at the door. It was Hepzibah and Clifford.
B ☐ Frightened, they went and got on board a train.
C ☐ Phoebe returned to her mother’s house. Then, one day Judge Pyncheon came. He offered Hepzibah to help Clifford.
D ☐ Later Holgrave discovered that Judge Pyncheon had been responsible for his uncle’s death. Holgrave and Clifford also found the map and the land deed. But all this did not matter anymore. Clifford and Hepzibah were now rich and decided to leave the old house to live in the country.
E ☐ She refused, and she finally had the courage to tell him that he was responsible for putting Clifford in prison for Colonel Pyncheon’s murder.
F ☐ The judge said he could send Clifford into a mental hospital. He had to talk with Clifford about a secret map and deed.
G ☐ The next morning at the house, Phoebe arrived. There was something strange.
H ☐ Clifford then came to the judge on his own. But the judge was dead!
I ☐ Fortunately, later the police and doctors agreed that the judge had died of a heart attack.
J ☐ Then Holgrave appeared. He told her about Judge Pyncheon. People would think Clifford had killed him, but both Clifford’s uncle and Judge Pyncheon had died from bad hearts.
Correct the mistakes!
This is an oral activity, so do not give the students any photocopies. Tell them the following instructions (or similar): “I am going to tell you a summary of Chapters 6-8 of The House of the Seven Gables, but I am going to make some mistakes in the summary. When you hear a mistake please call out the right word or words.”
As an example, in the version of the summary below there are 10 mistakes to read out, all written in italics. As a quick reminder to you, the correct version is given immediately afterwards in brackets.

Phoebe returned to her friend’s (mother’s) house. Then, one day Judge Pyncheon came. He offered to help Phoebe (Clifford). Hepzibah refused, and she finally had the courage to tell him that he was responsible for putting Clifford in prison for Holgrave’s (Colonel Pyncheon’s) murder. The judge said he could send Clifford to a mental hospital. He had to talk with Clifford about a secret box (map) and deed. Clifford then came to the judge on his own. But the judge was gone (dead)! Frightened, they went and got on board a ship (train). The next morning Phoebe arrived at the house. There was something strange. Then Holgrave appeared. He told her about Judge Pyncheon. People would think Hepzibah (Clifford) had killed him, but both Clifford’s uncle and Judge Pyncheon had died from bad backs (hearts). Then Holgrave told Phoebe that he hated (loved) her. Then they heard some people at the door. It was Hepzibah and Clifford. Fortunately, the police and doctors agreed that the judge had died of a heart attack. Later Holgrave discovered that Judge Pyncheon had been responsible for his uncle’s death. Holgrave and Clifford also found the map and the land deed. But all this did not matter anymore. Clifford and Hepzibah were now rich and decided to leave the old house to live in the city (country).

Rub out
On the board / the interactive whiteboard, copy a short paragraph from the summary.
Gradually, rub out individual words and even two- and three-word phrases. Begin by rubbing out some of the important content words. After each time you rub out some words get the whole class to read out the text, supplying the missing words from their memory. Eventually, when all the words on the board have been rubbed out, the class will — amazingly! — remember all the text.
The text used for the rub out activity need not taken from the summary. You could use a dramatic part of the story, for example.

Dictogloss
Sit the students in groups of two to five. Make sure that each student has pen and paper. Tell them that you are going to read out a summary Chapters 6-8 of The House of the Seven Gables twice, and that they may note down key words or short phrases. Read the text once at normal speed, pause for a minute, then read it again.
Tell the students to work together in their groups and use their notes to write a text which is grammatically and lexically correct but which doesn’t have to be the same as the original: the aim of their writing is to produce a correct text, not to show they have perfect memories! Five minutes should be enough.
Then students compare their written texts with each others’. This can be done by reading aloud, but it is better if the texts are passed around or stuck on a wall (or compared in electronic form). Groups should try to point out any errors in the texts of other groups. Finally, show or give the students the original text; ask them to identify any differences with their own texts, and ask them if they think the differences are important.

Cut it down
Put the students in groups of two to five. Make sure that each group has a copy of the summary and a red pen/highlighter or access to computer. Tell them that they must cut 15 words from the summary: their shortened version must still be grammatically correct. They can change punctuation, but they mustn’t add any words.
When they have finished, they should compare their shortened
versions. It is better if the texts are stuck on a wall or passed around (or compared in electronic form). They should decide which are the best cuts, and why.

Next, ask students to cut another 15 words of the summary, and proceed as above.

As a final challenge, ask the students to cut yet another 15 words.

**Build it up**

Put the students in groups of two to five. Make sure that each group has a copy of the summary and a red pen or access to computer. Tell them that they must add two details, which they must choose themselves, to the summary. Tell them that the details they add can be words, phrases or even sentences. Tell them they shouldn’t write fewer than five words, and that there is no upper limit, but they probably won’t need more than about 25 words.

When they have finished, they should compare their versions. It is better if the texts are stuck on a wall or passed around (or compared in electronic form). They should decide which are the most interesting added details, and why.

**Rewrite it**

Tell the students to rewrite the summary changing some of the information. They should use their imagination to add details — which can be words, phrases or sentences — and change some of the words and phrases that are already there.

**SUMMARY**

Phoebe returned to her mother’s house. Then, one day Judge Pyncheon came. He offered to help Clifford. Hepzibah refused, and she finally had the courage to tell him that he was responsible for putting Clifford in prison for Colonel Pyncheon’s murder. The judge said he could send Clifford to a mental hospital. He had to talk with Clifford about a secret map and deed. Clifford then came to the judge on his own. But the judge was dead! Frightened, they went and got on board a train. The next morning Phoebe arrived at the house. There was something strange. Then Holgrave appeared. He told her about Judge Pyncheon. People would think Clifford had killed him, but both Clifford’s uncle and Judge Pyncheon had died from bad hearts. Then Holgrave told Phoebe that he loved her. Then they heard some people at the door. It was Hepzibah and Clifford. Fortunately, the police and doctors agreed that the judge had died of a heart attack. Later Holgrave discovered that Judge Pyncheon had been responsible for his uncle’s death. Holgrave and Clifford also found the map and the land deed. But all this did not matter anymore. Clifford and Hepzibah were now rich and decided to leave the old house to live in the country.

**KEY**

1, 2, 3, 5: 1 courage; 2 send; 3 had; 4 was; 5 something; 6 would; 7 told; 8 attack; 9 discovered; 10 matter

4: 1 D; 2 C; 3 D; 4 D; 5 C; 6 A; 7 B; 8 C; 9 A; 10 B

6: C; 2 E; 3 F; 4 H; 5 B; 6 G; 7 J; 8 A; 9 I; 10 D

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