



Main Idea and Summarizing

Name: _____

Date: _____

Grade: Grade 4

Part A: Multiple Choice

Circle the best answer for each question.

1. Fossils show that dinosaurs lived millions of years ago. Scientists study fossils to learn about ancient climates and ecosystems. What is the main idea?

- A) Dinosaurs were very large reptiles.
- B) Fossils help scientists understand life and conditions on Earth long ago.
- C) Some fossils are found in rocks.
- D) Scientists work in museums.

2. Which is the best one-sentence summary of a passage about how earthquakes happen?

- A) Earthquakes are scary and cause damage.
- B) The ground shakes sometimes.
- C) Earthquakes occur when tectonic plates shift suddenly, releasing energy that shakes the ground.
- D) Scientists use seismographs to record vibrations.

3. A passage explains that Benjamin Franklin was an inventor, a writer, and a leader during the American Revolution. Which is the main idea?

- A) Benjamin Franklin invented bifocal glasses.
- B) Benjamin Franklin was a talented person who contributed to many fields.
- C) The American Revolution happened in the 1770s.
- D) Writers publish books and newspapers.

4. A classmate's summary reads: "Wolves are cool because they howl at the moon and run really fast." What should be improved?

- A) The summary should include the author's name.
- B) The summary should replace personal opinions with factual main points from the passage.
- C) The summary is already perfect.
- D) The summary needs more adjectives.

Part B: Fill in the Blank

Write the correct answer on each line.

1. Paraphrasing means restating information in _____ words while keeping the same meaning.
2. An author may state the main idea _____ or leave it for the reader to figure out.
3. Before summarizing, it helps to _____ the passage more than once to make sure you understand it.

Part A: Multiple Choice

Circle the best answer for each question.

1. Fossils show that dinosaurs lived millions of years ago. Scientists study fossils to learn about ancient climates and ecosystems. What is the main idea?

- A) Dinosaurs were very large reptiles.
- B) Fossils help scientists understand life and conditions on Earth long ago.
- C) Some fossils are found in rocks.
- D) Scientists work in museums.

2. Which is the best one-sentence summary of a passage about how earthquakes happen?

- A) Earthquakes are scary and cause damage.
- B) The ground shakes sometimes.
- C) Earthquakes occur when tectonic plates shift suddenly, releasing energy that shakes the ground.
- D) Scientists use seismographs to record vibrations.

3. A passage explains that Benjamin Franklin was an inventor, a writer, and a leader during the American Revolution. Which is the main idea?

- A) Benjamin Franklin invented bifocal glasses.
- B) Benjamin Franklin was a talented person who contributed to many fields.
- C) The American Revolution happened in the 1770s.
- D) Writers publish books and newspapers.

4. A classmate's summary reads: "Wolves are cool because they howl at the moon and run really fast." What should be improved?

- A) The summary should include the author's name.
- B) The summary should replace personal opinions with factual main points from the passage.
- C) The summary is already perfect.
- D) The summary needs more adjectives.

Part B: Fill in the Blank

Write the correct answer on each line.

1. Paraphrasing means restating information in different words while keeping the same meaning.
2. An author may state the main idea directly or leave it for the reader to figure out.
3. Before summarizing, it helps to read the passage more than once to make sure you understand it.
4. A summary that changes the author's meaning is called an inaccurate summary.