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Main Idea and Supporting Details

1.E.3.f 1.E.4.a,h 2.A.3.g 2.A.4.b,c 3.A.2.a 3.A.6.a

The **main idea** is what the passage is mostly about. **Supporting details** are the other information the writer uses to tell about, or support, the main idea.

Sometimes the writer states the main idea. Sometimes the writer does not tell you the main idea. You have to figure it out.

Solve To find the main idea, ask yourself what the writer wants readers to remember most. Also, think about which details support the main idea and which ones do not.

Example

The writer of this story does not state the main idea. Look at how Tonya answered a question about it.

Tommy was really excited about his new bicycle. But he had not ridden a two-wheeler before. He fell down the first time he tried to ride it. His helmet and pads kept him from getting hurt. He got right back on the bike. He fell the second time, too. On his third try, he was able to ride without falling.

1 What is the main idea of this story? Describe a detail from the story that supports this idea.

Tonya's Answer

The main idea of the story is that Tommy kept trying to ride his bike until he could do it. His helmet and pads kept him safe.

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Tonya figured out that the story is mostly about continuing to try. She explained the main idea very well. Does her detail about the helmet and pads support the main idea, though? What detail from the story would you choose?

Practice It -----

Read this article. Look for a main idea and supporting details.

As you know, our class will be visiting Broken Arrow State Park. The trip is only a week away. It is time to go over our safety rules. Remember our saying: “Watch out or you will TRIP.” Watch for Temperature changes, Rain, Insects, and Poison Ivy.



We also need to make sure we have the right gear. We will be in the woods for two days. We cannot just run to the store! The clothing and gear checklist is attached. Go over it carefully. Make sure you have everything on the list. Do not forget anything!

2 What is the main idea of this article? Describe a detail from the article that supports this idea.

3 What question does the article answer?

- (A) What are some of the dangers of camping?
- (B) How many people are going on the trip?
- (C) What kind of weather is expected for the trip?
- (D) Where is the nearest store to the park?

4 Which of the following is the best title for this article?

- (A) Watch Out or You Will TRIP
- (B) Broken Arrow State Park
- (C) The Checklist
- (D) Get Ready to Camp



Hint—A good title should state the main idea in a clear and simple way.