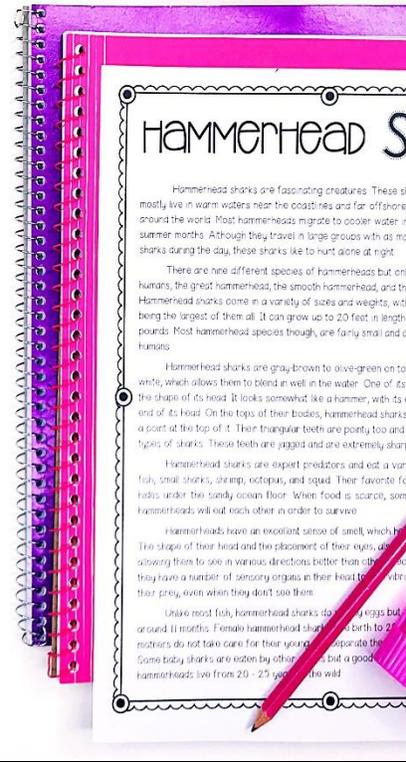


main Idea

FOR 4TH/5TH Grades



The TEACHER next Door

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Thanks!

Jenn



TEACHER NOTES: Main Idea

There are lots of ways to teach main idea and I'll share what I like to do here but of course, you may present the lessons in any order you'd like. I also wrote two blog posts about main idea if you're interested in reading more:

<http://the-teacher-next-door.com/index.php/blog/57-blog-reading/141-main-idea-using-informational-text>

<http://www.upperelementarysnapshots.com/2017/06/9-strategies-you-should-be-using-to.html>

1. Main Idea Bags

I start off the unit with these themed bags. You can use the suggestions provided and write word cards, make picture cards, or use "real" items and place each theme in a separate bag. Kids take each bag and look at the items. Then they name the common thread, which is the main idea. These are fun for a whole class scavenger hunt or do a smaller number of them as a center.

2. Main Idea Game

This is a great game for a center activity. To prepare the cards, I like to copy them on cardstock or glue them to construction paper and laminate to make the cards more durable. Cards #1 - 10 are the main ideas and students may place these as "headers" for the other cards. I like to place five main idea cards across the table/floor and leave lots of space below them (maybe one foot if you have room) before adding another row of 5 main idea cards. The cards A - EE are the supporting detail cards. Each supporting detail card will match one of the main idea cards. I like to have the kids line the supporting detail cards up below the main idea cards, so you can see all of them at a glance, rather than placing them in a stack under the main idea card. When students are finished, the cards may be checked by you, a parent helper (if you have one), or your students (if you feel comfortable doing this) by using the key provided.

3. Task Cards

I like to copy the task cards on cardstock or glue them to construction paper and laminate them so they'll last a long time. There are lots of ways to use task cards and I wrote a blog post about it if you'd like some ideas: <http://the-teacher-next-door.com/index.php/blog/65-blog-other/159-16-ways-to-use-task-cards>

The task cards could be used as a center (I would only use some of these at a time, maybe half of the set, depending upon your students), for a game of Scoot or as a scavenger hunt type game where you place the cards around the room and kids use clipboards with record sheets to answer each card. They may also be used for one on one tutoring, they could be copied and placed in interactive notebooks, used with old board games, and more!

4. Matching Worksheets

I like to use these to help kids practice matching supporting details (smaller ideas) to the main idea (bigger ideas) without the challenge of a great deal of text. These worksheets do not have a passage to read but merely are a different way to get kids to understand how the main idea and details are connected and work together.

5. Worksheets

Now that your students have had lots of opportunities to practice, the main idea worksheets are another step in the scaffolding process, to push them a bit to become more independent main idea finders and thinkers. The text here is short purposefully, to prevent students from being overwhelmed and to allow them to experience greater success. If students are able to be successful with these, hopefully they will be able to be successful as we increase the passage length.

6. Independent Practice

The templates included may be used over and over with different passages. You may use them with basal readers, Weekly Reader/Scholastic or other informational magazines, with a single page (chosen carefully so that there is a strong main idea to be found) or a chapter of a novel, or however you'd like to use them. When introducing this more challenging type of work, I like to pair students and have them complete the first and possibly the second activity together, to build confidence.

Hope this helps and that your students really grow while using this resource!

Jenn
The Teacher Next Door

Main Idea Teacher Notes: MAIN IDEA BAGS

Directions: Place each group of items (or pictures or words on cards) in separate bags. Have the students open the bags, look at the items and figure out the "main idea" of the bag. For example, if a bag had a small pot, packet of seeds, garden trowel, and baggie of soil, students would guess that the main idea was "planting" or "gardening".

Here are some suggested ideas for your main idea bags:

MAIN IDEA	ITEMS NEEDED
Snowman Making	Carrot, charcoal in a plastic baggie, scarf, hat, gloves
Board Games	Mancala marker, checker piece, chess piece, dice, Monopoly Money
Rocks	Several different kinds of rocks, magnifying glass, rock book
Studying insects	Plastic insects, butterfly net, magnifying glass
Sports Equipment	Hockey puck, golf ball, ping pong ball, tennis ball
Technology	CD, DVD, flash drive, old cell phone
Football Game	Football pennant, small football, football cards, fake tickets
Apple Pie	Apple, cinnamon, pie tin, plastic fork
Items Needed to Care for a Dog	Dog collar, leash, bone, chew toy, doggie shampoo
Items you Need When It's Cold	Thermos, scarf, mittens, hot chocolate package
Picnic Items	Checkered tablecloth (in package), plastic plate and cup, plastic fork
Movie Night	Popcorn package, M & M's in a box, DVD, Can of Coke
Beach Day	Sand bucket, plastic shovel, shells, sunscreen, child's
Making Cupcakes	Cake mix, cupcake wrappers, sprinkles and frosting container
Monet's Art/Painting	Watercolors, Monet paperback book, watercolor paper, paintbrush
Christmas	Ornament, nutcracker, stocking, Santa
Card Collecting	Pokémon cards, baseball cards, football cards, Yu-Gi-Oh Cards
Salty Foods	Potato chips in a bag, peanuts in a bag, popcorn, Nacho Cheese Chips in a bag

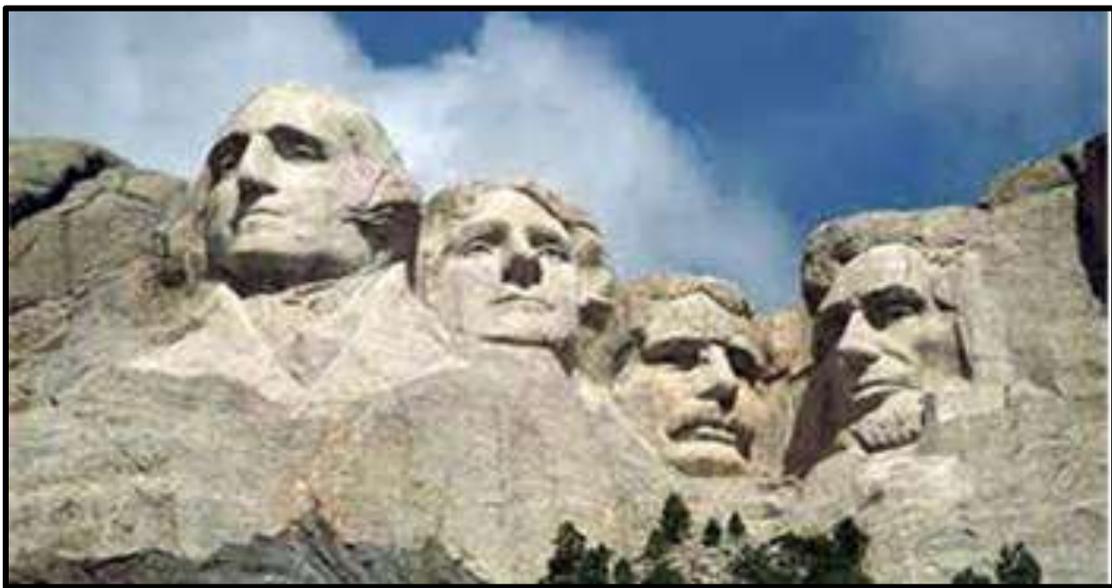
Mt. Rushmore



Name: _____

Directions: Read the paragraph and find the main idea. Write down three supporting details and then summarize the paragraph.

Almost three million visitors a year from all over the United States travel to South Dakota to see Mt. Rushmore. From 1927 to 1941, over 400 men and women worked to build the four faces out of granite. There were a variety of jobs including jackhammer operators, blacksmiths, housekeepers, call boys, sculptors, and more. Working on Mt. Rushmore was difficult for several reasons. The workers had to face severe weather conditions whether it was extremely cold, windy, or hot. Also, each day they had to climb 700 steps to the top of the mountain where they had to punch-in their time cards. From there, a *bosun chair* would lower many of them on cables over the front of the face of the mountain in order to work. The work was also dangerous as 90% of the mountain was carved using dynamite. Powdermen placed dynamite carefully, in order to remove specific pieces of rock. Surprisingly, not one fatality occurred in its fourteen years of construction. With much hard work, the faces of four important presidents, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln, are represented in this mountain which has become an American symbol.



Main Idea:

Supporting Details:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Summary:

DISNEYLAND'S FIRST DAY

Name: _____

Directions: Read the paragraph and find the main idea. Write down three supporting details and then summarize the paragraph.

Disneyland, in Anaheim California, is a popular tourist attraction with about 15 million visitors each year. The "Happiest Place on Earth" however, was not so happy on the first day it opened back in July of 1955. That day is still known as "Black Sunday" as it was perhaps the darkest day in Disneyland's history. A number of unexpected things happened to make it such an unsuccessful first showing. For example, the nearby freeway had a seven mile traffic jam and police declared it the worst mess they had ever seen. Fantasyland had to close temporarily due to a gas leak. Many of the rides and attractions broke down with the strain of so many guests. Main Street's asphalted streets softened from the heat, causing women's high heels to get stuck in the gooey tar. A local plumber's strike caused a shortage of plumbers and although the restrooms were finished, none of the drinking fountains were ready. Although Disneyland's opening day was disastrous, Walt Disney and his crew learned from the experience and eventually turned things around to make it a success.



Main Idea:

Supporting Details:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

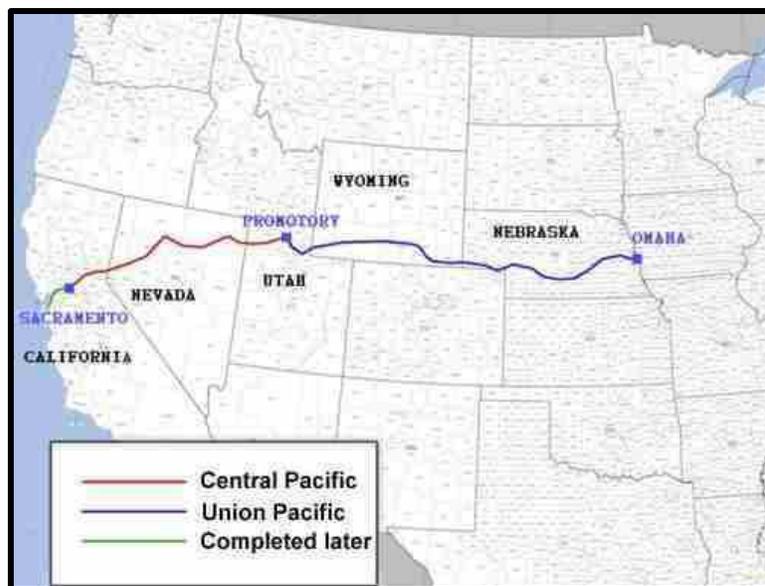
Summary:

The Transcontinental Railroad

Name: _____

Directions: Read the paragraph and find the main idea. Write down three supporting details and then summarize the paragraph.

When the Gold Rush caused hundreds of thousands of people to leave their homes in the east and travel across the United States in search of gold, they traveled in covered wagons or by ship around the south part of South America, called Cape Horn. This trip was a long, difficult, and even dangerous one. The transcontinental railroad provided a more efficient way to transport people, supplies, and mail across the country. After President Lincoln signed the Railroad Act into law, construction took place between 1863 and 1869, and started in Sacramento, California in the West and Omaha, Nebraska in the east. The Central Pacific Railroad, which started in Sacramento, California, was built mainly by Chinese immigrants who not only had to deal with snow, but had to use dynamite to blast a number of tunnels through the Sierra Nevada Mountains in order to lay down track. The Union Pacific Railroad was built mainly by Irish Immigrants. They were challenged by Native Americans who were angered that this "Iron Horse" was disrupting their way of life. The two railroads finally met at Promontory, Utah on May 10, 1869. Leland Stanford, California's governor, drove down the last spike which was called the "Golden Spike" and is on display today at Stanford University in California.



Main Idea:

Supporting Details:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Summary:

Main Idea Matching: Amelia Earhart

Directions: Match each supporting detail to its main idea by writing the letter of the main idea on the line.

Name: _____

Main Ideas

- A. Amelia Earhart had an interesting childhood.
- B. After taking a ten minute plane ride at an airshow in 1920, Amelia knew she wanted to learn to fly.
- C. Earhart was the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic.
- D. Earhart's final flight is an unsolved mystery.

Question #	Main Idea	Supporting Detail
1.	_____	On May 20, 1932, Earhart took off from Newfoundland but soon after, her plane experienced mechanical difficulties and she was forced to land in a field in Ireland.
2.	_____	In order to take flying lessons from Anita "Neta" Snook (a pioneer female aviator), Earhart worked a number of jobs. For example, she was a photographer and a truck driver.
3.	_____	After Charles Lindbergh's solo flight from New York to Paris in 1927, Earhart dreamed that she would one day make the same flight herself.
4.	_____	The search for Earhart's missing plane was extensive with 66 planes and nine ships.
5.	_____	Amelia Earhart was born on July 24, 1897 in Atchison, Kansas.
6.	_____	Earhart read everything she could about flying and even cut her hair in the popular style of other female pilots.
7.	_____	President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized four million dollars to search for Earhart's downed plane.
8.	_____	Earhart's 15 hour flight made her an international hero and she received many honors, including the Distinguished Flying Cross from the U.S. Congress.
9.	_____	As a young girl, Earhart was adventurous and even created her own roller coaster in backyard from pieces of wood and roller-skate wheels.
10.	_____	In June, 1937, Earhart and navigator James Noonan set off in an attempt to be the first to fly around the world but unfortunately, their plane vanished.

Main Idea Matching: Pandas



Directions: Match each supporting detail to its main idea by writing the letter of the main idea on the line.

Name: _____

main Ideas

- A. Panda babies are helpless creatures.
- B. A panda's diet consists mainly of bamboo.
- C. Adult pandas are interesting animals.
- D. Pandas are an endangered species.

Question #	main Idea	SUPPORTING detail
1.	_____	Pandas spend at least 12 hours a day eating and consume 20 - 45 pounds of bamboo each day.
2.	_____	Panda babies are born without any hair or teeth and with their eyes closed.
3.	_____	Although fully grown pandas seem quiet, they can bleat, roar, growl, and honk.
4.	_____	Pandas can live to be about 20 years in the wild but up to 30 years in captivity.
5.	_____	Pandas do not hibernate but simply move to lower elevations in the winter.
6.	_____	The forests in China where pandas live are becoming smaller, which makes it harder for pandas to find food.
7.	_____	To eat, pandas hold the bamboo with their hands and peel off the hard outer layers.
8.	_____	Pandas are about five feet in length and weigh between 200 - 300 pounds.
9.	_____	There are only about 2,000 pandas left in the wild.
10.	_____	When pandas are born, their mother takes care of them for 1 - 2 years.
11.	_____	Poachers, people who illegally kill animals for profit, have decreased the panda population.
12.	_____	Pandas are mostly solitary creatures and meet occasionally for social purposes.
13.	_____	Pandas have special front paws with five fingers and a thumb that they use to grasp bamboo stalks.

main Idea matching: THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

Directions: Match each supporting detail to its main idea by writing the letter of the main idea on the line.

Name: _____

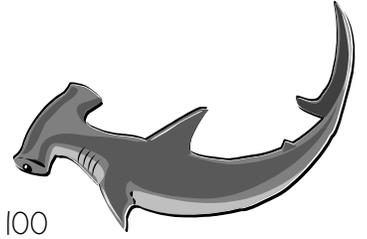
main Ideas

- A. A number of events led to the Revolutionary War.
- B. There were several key leaders who were instrumental during this time.
- C. Not all colonists wanted to separate themselves from England.
- D. The Revolutionary War may not have been won without help from other nations.

QUESTION #	main Idea	SUPPORTING detail
1.	_____	George Washington was the commander-in-chief of the Patriot Army and later became the first President.
2.	_____	In 1763, England defeated France in the French Indian War and decided to heavily tax colonists to help pay war debts.
3.	_____	With help from French troops, the American Army gained momentum.
4.	_____	Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, which was adopted by the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776.
5.	_____	About one fourth of the colonists remained loyal to England and fought for the British army.
6.	_____	The Boston Tea Party took place in 1773, when colonists protested the high taxes paid on tea, by boarding an English ship and dumping tea into the Boston Harbor.
7.	_____	The Boston Massacre took place when English soldiers were taunted by colonists and ended up firing into the crowd. Crispus Attucks was the first man shot in the war.
8.	_____	Benjamin Franklin served as America's ambassador to France.
9.	_____	Spain and the Netherlands, who were allies of France, also helped in the war against the British.

HAMMERHEAD Sharks

Hammerhead sharks are fascinating creatures. These sharks mostly live in warm waters near the coastlines and far offshore, all around the world. Most hammerheads migrate to cooler water in the summer months. Although they travel in large groups with as many as 100 sharks during the day, these sharks like to hunt alone at night.



There are nine different species of hammerheads but only three are dangerous to humans; the great hammerhead, the smooth hammerhead, and the scalloped sharks. Hammerhead sharks come in a variety of sizes and weights, with the great hammerhead being the largest of them all. It can grow up to 20 feet in length and weigh up to 1,000 pounds. Most hammerhead species though, are fairly small and are considered harmless to humans.

Hammerhead sharks are gray-brown to olive-green on top. Underneath, they are off-white, which allows them to blend in well in the water. One of its most recognized features is the shape of its head. It looks somewhat like a hammer, with its eyes set far apart at each end of its head. On the tops of their bodies, hammerhead sharks have a large dorsal fin with a point at the top of it. Their triangular teeth are pointy too and grow in rows, just like other types of sharks. These teeth are jagged and are extremely sharp.

Hammerhead sharks are expert predators and eat a variety of foods including small fish, small sharks, shrimp, octopus, and squid. Their favorite food is sting ray, which often hides under the sandy ocean floor. When food is scarce, some scientists believe that the hammerheads will eat each other in order to survive.

Hammerheads have an excellent sense of smell, which helps them locate food easily. The shape of their head and the placement of their eyes, also helps them locate prey by allowing them to see in various directions better than other species of sharks. In addition, they have a number of sensory organs in their head to feel vibrations and movements of their prey, even when they don't see them.

Unlike most fish, hammerhead sharks do not lay eggs but give birth to live young around 11 months. Female hammerhead sharks give birth to 20 - 40 pups at a time. The mothers do not take care for their young, but separate themselves from them immediately. Some baby sharks are eaten by other sharks but a good number still survive. Most hammerheads live from 20 - 25 years in the wild.

Name: _____

1. Look at the choices below. Write SD for supporting details or MI for the main idea of the hammerhead shark passage.

- A. _____ Hammerhead sharks eat a variety of foods.
- B. _____ Hammerhead sharks are unique animals.
- C. _____ A hammerhead shark's body features help it find prey.
- D. _____ Hammerhead sharks are born live.

2. The author stated that hammerhead sharks will eat other hammerhead sharks if food is scarce. What does "scarce" mean?

- A. Easily found
- B. Scary
- C. Not easily found

3. Look at the second paragraph. Which one is the best choice for its main idea?

- A. There are several different species of hammerhead sharks.
- B. Most hammerhead sharks are harmless to humans.
- C. The great hammerhead is the largest hammerhead shark.

4. Look at the last paragraph. Which one is the best choice for its main idea?

- A. Hammerhead sharks are born live.
- B. Hammerhead sharks may live up to 25 years in the wild.
- C. Hammerhead sharks have an interesting life cycle.

5. Which food is a hammerhead's favorite?

- A. Squid
- B. Sting ray
- C. Octopus

6. Which one is NOT a supporting detail from this passage?

- A. A hammerhead's eyes allow it to see in many directions.
- B. Just like bats and owls, hammerheads are nocturnal.
- C. Most hammerheads live 20 - 25 years in the wild.

Bald Eagles

A symbol of the United States since 1782, the bald eagle may look bald, but its head is actually covered in tiny white feathers. Actually, the name comes from an old English word, "balde," which means white.



Bald eagles are one of the largest raptors in the world. They have a seven foot wing span, a weight of 7 - 16 pounds, and an overall size of 28 - 38 inches. Female bald eagles are a bit bigger than males. Bald eagles use thermal convection currents to reach great heights when flying (up to 10,000 feet in the air) and they can reach speeds of up to 40 miles per hour.

Bald eagles like to eat fish, ducks, snakes, and turtles but they will also eat rabbits, muskrats, and even dead animals. Bald eagles attack their prey by using their keen sense of sight to swoop down and grab the prey with their sharp talons. Once they capture their prey, they use their hooked beak to eat the animal.

Preferring to live near a constant water source (either fresh or salt water) eagles make huge nests, called aeries (AIR-ees) at the top of tall trees. Most nests are about two feet deep and five feet across but some can be much bigger, weighing up to a ton. Some parents return to the same nest each year. Each time they return, they add more sticks, twigs, and grass.

A pair of eagles usually produces three eggs a year but it is unlikely that all of those will survive. Both parents take turns sitting on the eggs and while one is keeping the eggs warm, the other hunts and gathers more nesting materials. After a little over a month, the eggs hatch and the eaglet's entire body is covered in gray feathers. When they are three weeks old, their feathers turn brown and by four to five years old, they finally have the typical brown and white colored pattern. In the wild, eagles can live to be about 35 years old.

At one point, bald eagles were close to becoming extinct due to hunting and pollution, but laws to protect the eagle have helped them make a comeback.

Name: _____

1. Which one is the main idea of this passage?
 - A. The bald eagle is the national bird of the United States.
 - B. Eagles eat a variety of animals.
 - C. Eagles are interesting birds.

2. Which one is NOT a supporting detail of the main idea of this passage?
 - A. Although many were in favor of the bald eagle, Benjamin Franklin wanted the turkey to be the national bird.
 - B. Eagles make huge nests at the top of tall trees.
 - C. Eagles are one of the largest raptors in the world.

3. Which physical characteristics of eagles help them hunt and eat their prey?
 - A. Keen sense of sight
 - B. Sharp talons
 - C. Hooked beak
 - D. All of the above

4. Make an inference. Why do you think eagles build their nests in the tops of tall trees?
 - A. To protect their nest from predators
 - B. To be able to see prey and to see dangers below them
 - C. Both of the above

5. This passage has six paragraphs. Look at the fifth paragraph. What is the main idea of this paragraph?
 - A. The life cycle of the bald eagle
 - B. The diet of the bald eagle
 - C. The habitat of the bald eagle

6. Look at the third paragraph. What is the main idea of this paragraph?
 - A. The life cycle of the bald eagle
 - B. The diet of the bald eagle
 - C. An eagle's size

7. Look at the fourth paragraph. What is the main idea of this paragraph?
 - A. The life cycle of the bald eagle
 - B. The diet of the bald eagle
 - C. An eagle's nest

The Pyramids



In ancient Egypt, pyramids were built as royal tombs, where the ancient Egyptians buried their kings, called Pharaohs, and their royal families. The first pyramid was built about 5,000 years ago and is called the Djoser Pyramid. Today, about 130 pyramids have been discovered. Nearly all of the Egyptian Pyramids are located on the west bank of the Nile.

Archaeologists have tried to figure out how the pyramids were built without modern machines. They believe that thousands of workers cut large blocks of limestone and then slowly moved the blocks up the pyramid on ramps. The pyramid was built slowly in this way, one block at a time. For example, scientists estimate it took at least 20,000 workers over 23 years to build the Great Pyramid of Giza. Pharaohs, realized how long pyramids took to build and usually started the construction of their pyramids as soon as they became the ruler.

Pyramids were complex structures and had a number of unique features inside. For example, there were lots of rooms like store rooms, bedrooms, and even inside courtyards.

While a pyramid was under construction, cities grew up around its square base. These were called pyramid cities and housed the workers who built the pyramids. When the pyramid was finished, the pyramid city continued even without workers. Guards would then live there to protect the pyramid and its contents.

Why did the pyramids need guarding? The pyramids were filled with valuable treasures from the Pharaoh's collection. Egyptians believed that the Pharaoh needed certain things in the afterlife, so he would be buried with all sorts of items and treasures, ranging from everyday objects to expensive items like gold and jewels.

Grave robbers were tempted by the pyramid's treasures. Severe punishments for grave robbing didn't stop them, and robbers couldn't seem to resist the temptation of the great wealth inside. Sometimes traps, fake burial chambers, and secret passages were built inside the pyramid to trick grave robbers. Despite the Egyptian's efforts, by 1,000 B.C., almost all of the pyramids were robbed of their treasures.

One tomb that was mostly untouched was that of Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings. Tutankhamun (King Tut) was a pharaoh from 1332 BC to 1323 B.C. His tomb was rediscovered in 1922 by Howard Carter and has become famous.

After the time of the Old Kingdom (2150 B.C.), pyramids were no longer built. Besides being expensive to build and time consuming, they were difficult to guard from robbers.

Name: _____

1. Write SD for supporting details and MI for the main idea for this passage.

- A. _____ Scientists wonder how pyramids were built without modern machinery.
- B. _____ Grave robbers often stole treasures.
- C. _____ Egyptian Pyramids were used to bury pharaohs and their treasures.
- D. _____ Pyramids took a long time to build.

2. How do scientists think pyramids were built?

- A. Using ramps
- B. Using a bulldozer and cranes
- C. With several people working together to lift rocks over their heads
- D. Using pulleys

3. Look at the fourth paragraph. Which one is the best choice for the main idea for this paragraph?

- A. Pyramid cities housed workers.
- B. Pyramid cities grew around pyramids.
- C. Guards lived near the pyramids to protect them after they were built.

4. Which one was NOT a reason pyramids were no longer built after the Old Kingdom?

- A. Too expensive
- B. Took too much time to build
- C. Grave robbers
- D. Limestone rocks were no longer available

5. Look at the sixth paragraph. Which one is the best choice for the main idea for this paragraph?

- A. Regardless of risks, grave robbers were tempted to steal treasures.
- B. Grave robbers could face severe punishments.
- C. By 1,000 B.C., most pyramids were robbed of their treasures.

circle map: MAIN IDEA and SUPPORTING DETAILS

Name: _____

Supporting Detail 1:

Supporting Detail 2:

MAIN IDEA:

Supporting Detail 3:

Supporting Detail 4:

Main Idea *and* SUPPORTING DETAILS

Name: _____

Main Idea: _____

SUPPORTING DETAILS:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

main Idea and SUPPORTING DETAILS

Name: _____

Supporting Detail 1

Supporting Detail 2

Main Idea:

Supporting Detail 3

Supporting Detail 4

1. SHARKS ARE INTERESTING ANIMALS.

2. BALD EAGLES ARE SKILLED PREDATORS.

3. THE STATUE OF LIBERTY WAS A GIFT FROM FRANCE.

4. THE PONY EXPRESS DELIVERED MAIL TO AND FROM ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI AND SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA .

5. THE SUN IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

6. TORNADOES ARE POWERFUL STORMS.

7. ROCKS ARE CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO THE WAY THEY WERE FORMED.

8. EUROPEAN EXPLORERS TRAVELED GREAT DISTANCES FOR "GOD, GOLD, AND GLORY".

9. ANIMALS MAY BE GROUPED ACCORDING TO THE FOOD THEY CONSUME.

10. WALT DISNEY HAD AN INTERESTING LIFE.

A. THIS FISH SHARK
MAY GROW AND USE UP TO
20,000 TEETH IN ITS
LIFETIME.

B. IT IS THE CLOSEST
STAR TO THE EARTH.

C. THE PONY EXPRESS
ONLY LASTED 18 MONTHS,
FROM APRIL 1860 TO
OCTOBER 1861.

D. THESE BIRDS ARE AT
THE TOP OF THEIR FOOD
CHAIN DUE TO THEIR SIZE.

E. THIS WEATHER
PHENOMENON TYPICALLY
LASTS FOR A FEW
MINUTES.

F. HIS CAREER
STARTED IN KANSAS CITY,
MISSOURI AS A
CARTOONIST.

G. ANIMALS THAT EAT
ONLY PLANTS ARE CALLED
HERBIVORES.

H. THIS TALL STATUE IS
LOCATED ON A PEDESTAL
IN ELLIS ISLAND, NEW
YORK.

I. CHRISTOPHER
COLUMBUS SAILED TO THE
"NEW WORLD" IN 1492 FOR
SPAIN.

J. SEDIMENTARY ROCKS
ARE FORMED FROM BITS OF
WEATHERED ROCKS, SAND,
SOIL, AND SHELLS THAT
BECOME PRESSED
TOGETHER..

K. CARNIVORES ARE ANIMALS WHO ONLY FEED ON MEAT.

L. IGNEOUS ROCKS ARE MADE FROM MOLTEN MAGMA THAT COOLS AND CRYSTALIZES.

M. THESE POWERFUL BIRDS ARE ABLE TO LIFT UP TO FOUR POUNDS.

N. IN 1937, HE PRODUCED HIS FIRST FULL LENGTH ANIMATED FILM CALLED SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVENDWARFS.

O. DURING ITS 18 MONTHS, THERE WERE 186 MEN WHO RODE FOR THE PONY EXPRESS.

P. OVER ONE MILLION EARTHS COULD FIT INSIDE OF THE SUN.

Q. FRANCE GAVE THE UNITED STATES THIS IMPORTANT SYMBOL ON OCTOBER 28, 1886.

R. A SHARK MAY HAVE FROM 1 TO 100 BABIES, DEPENDING UPON THE TYPE OF SHARK.

S. MANY HOMES IN TORNADO ALLEY HAVE STRONG BASEMENT SHELTERS.

T. AMERIGO VESPUCCI SAILED FOR BOTH SPAIN AND PORTUGAL. AMERICA IS NAMED IN HIS HONOR.

U. THIS HOT BALL OF GAS IS MADE OF HYDROGEN AND HELIUM.

V. THIS FIERCE BIRD NOT ONLY EATS LIVING PREY, BUT WILL ALSO EAT DEAD ANIMALS.

W. OMNIVORES ARE ANIMALS THAT EAT BOTH PLANTS AND MEAT.

Y. THIS POPULAR NEW YORK TOURIST ATTRACTION WAS DESIGNED BY SCULPTOR FREDERIC AUGUSTE BARTOLDI..

Z. IN 1955, HE OPENED DISNEYLAND IN ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA.

AA. EVERY 10–15 MILES, NEW HORSES WERE RIDEN AND EVERY 75–100 MILES, RIDERS WERE CHANGED.

BB. METAMORPHIC ROCK IS ROCK THAT STARTED OUT AS SEDIMENTARY OR IGNEOUS BUT WAS CHANGED DUE TO HEAT AND PRESSURE.

CC. IN 1513, VASCO DE BALBOA, A SPANISH EXPLORER, LED AN EXPEDITION ACROSS PANAMA AND SAW THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

DD. THREE OUT OF EVERY FOUR TORNADOES OCCUR IN THE UNITED STATES.

EE. TWO THIRDS OF A SHARK'S BRAIN IS DEVOTED TO ITS KEEN SENSE OF SMELL.

KEY: A R EE
1. SHARKS ARE INTERESTING ANIMALS.

KEY: D M V
2. BALD EAGLES ARE SKILLED PREDATORS.

KEY: H Q Y
3. THE STATUE OF LIBERTY WAS A GIFT FROM FRANCE.

KEY: O C AA
4. THE PONY EXPRESS DELIVERED MAIL TO AND FROM ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI AND SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA .

KEY: B P U
5. THE SUN IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

KEY: E S DD
6. TORNADOES ARE POWERFUL STORMS.

KEY: J L BB
7. ROCKS ARE CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO THE WAY THEY WERE FORMED.

KEY: I T CC
8. EUROPEAN EXPLORERS TRAVELED GREAT DISTANCES FOR "GOD, GOLD, AND GLORY".

KEY: G K W
9. ANIMALS MAY BE GROUPED ACCORDING TO THE FOOD THEY CONSUME.

KEY: F N Z
10. WALT DISNEY HAD AN INTERESTING LIFE.

1. What's the main idea?

The potato chip was an invention that accidentally happened. George Crum was a chef, trying to please a customer who kept sending his French fries back to the kitchen with the complaint that he wanted them crispier and thinner. Crum kept slicing potatoes and cooking them until they became the crispy potato chips we know today.

© The Teacher Next Door

2. What's the main idea?

A rhinoceros is a large animal that lives in Southeast Asia and in Africa. Rhinos have either one or two horns on their snouts. These horns are made of keratin, which is what your fingernails and hair are made of. One interesting fact about rhinos is that they have three toes on their feet. Rhinos have keen senses of hearing and smell but very poor eyesight. They have been known to charge trees, mistaking them for other animals. Rhinos are an endangered species.

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3. What's the main idea?

Dr. Seuss (Theodore Geisel) was born on March 2, 1904 in Springfield, Massachusetts. After graduating from Dartmouth, he worked as a cartoonist for a newspaper. Many of his familiar characters such as elephants and turtles originated there. In World War II, he made animated training films for the army. When the war was over, he started his most famous career, that of a children's author and illustrator. His books have become beloved around the world. Theodore Seuss Geisel passed away on September 24, 1991.

© The Teacher Next Door

4. What's the main idea?

A habitat is a place where animals get what they need to survive. An animal's habitat is where an animal finds food, water and shelter. Different animals have different needs and so they live in different habitats. For example, a polar bear's requirements are very different than a monitor lizard and that is the reason they live in different habitats. Some of the many habitats include the forest, rainforest, wetlands, grasslands, desert, ocean, tundra, and even urban habitat.

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5. What's the main idea?

Rocks are named according to how they were created. Sedimentary rocks are formed when bits of soil, weathered rocks, sand and shells become pressed together over time. Igneous rocks are formed when volcanoes spew out molten magma and it cools and crystallizes. Metamorphic rocks start out as sedimentary or igneous rocks but are buried deep underground and change due to tremendous heat and pressure. Rocks can change from one kind to another under the right conditions.

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6. What's the main idea?

Dolphins may look like fish but they are actually mammals. These intelligent creatures breathe with their lungs and must come to the surface for air. Dolphins are also warm blooded creatures like humans. Dolphin mothers feed their babies milk and care for them until they are able to care for themselves. Like other mammals, dolphins have hair, even though it's just a tiny bit next to their blowhole. Dolphins are interesting creatures.

© The Teacher Next Door

7. What's the main idea?

Koalas may look like bears, but they're actually a member of the marsupial family. Like kangaroos, koala mothers have a special pouch in which to carry their babies. Koala babies are called joeys and are so tiny and helpless they must live in their mother's pouch for six to seven months until they're old enough to leave the pouch. The mother koala still cares for the young koala for another six months until it is able to survive on its own.

© The Teacher Next Door

8. What's the main idea?

During World War II, Richard Jones was a naval engineer who was working on a ship. One day Jones was trying to make a meter that monitored power on battleships. He started working with the tension springs, when one of them dropped to the ground. The spring kept bouncing from place to place and Jones realized that this could be a toy that children would love. Thus, the Slinky was created!

© The Teacher Next Door

9. What's the main idea?

Hammerhead Sharks have uniquely shaped heads which allow them to use their sense of sight much more fully than other sharks. Hammerhead sharks are fierce predators and hunt for a variety of sea animals, although stingrays are their favorite prey. Hammerheads live in most of the warm oceans of the world. Hammerheads are large sharks and can grow up to 20 feet long and weigh 500 – 1,000 pounds. Their average lifespan is 20 – 30 years in the wild.

© The Teacher Next Door

10. What's the main idea?

Mary Ludwig Hays McCaully was born in 1754, near Trenton, New Jersey. She later became known as Molly Pitcher because she carried pitchers of water to soldiers during the Revolutionary War. One time when Mary's husband collapsed during battle, she took his place at the cannon and served heroically. Another time Molly Pitcher was bringing water to the soldiers when a cannonball went right through her skirt. Luckily, she survived. Molly Pitcher lived to an old age and died in 1832.

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11. What's the main idea?

How were chocolate chip cookies invented? In 1937, Ruth Wakefield was trying to make her vanilla cookie recipe when she decided to add pieces of chocolate. Thinking they would melt into the batter, Wakefield was surprised when the chocolate kept its shape. These cookies were so popular with her Tollhouse Inn bed and breakfast customers, that Wakefield ended up making a deal with the Nestle Company to print her recipe on the back of the newly created chocolate chips package. In exchange, Wakefield received free chocolate chips for life.

© The Teacher Next Door

12. What's the main idea?

Meteorologists are scientists who study weather. Meteorologists use tools such as a barometer, a rain gauge, anemometers, weather balloons, satellites and computers to take weather measurements and record them. Meteorologists predict the weather using satellite pictures, which help them know what types of weather patterns are coming to their area. Since weather generally moves from West to East, meteorologists note the current conditions of places to the west of their city as a good indication of what weather their city will be experiencing next.

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13. What's the main idea?

Thunderstorms are storms which produce lightning and thunder. These storms are created by cumulonimbus clouds and usually have gusty winds, heavy rain and sometimes even hail. Thunderstorms need moisture to form clouds and rain. They also need unstable air that is warm and rises rapidly. Finally, they need lift. Lift can be created by fronts, sea breezes or mountains. Despite their small size, all thunderstorms are dangerous. Every thunderstorm produces lightning, which kills more people each year than tornadoes.

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14. What's the main idea?

Eels are unusual animals that live in both fresh water and salt water. Although eels look a lot like snakes, they are not snakes, but are actually a type of fish. There are more than 400 different kinds of eels. Eels can grow to be 5 – 13 feet and live to 85 years. Eels live in caves and rock crevices which allow them to hide. They use this surprise attack, along with their sharp teeth, to catch their prey, which is usually octopus, lobster, crab, or small fish.

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15. What's the main idea?

Jane Goodall was born in London, England in 1934. She loved animals since she was a tiny child and dreamed of going to Africa one day. Finally, she saved enough money. At the age of 23, she went to Africa with binoculars and a notepad as a primatologist to study chimpanzees. Goodall spent long hours working to gain the trust of chimpanzee groups and because of this she was able to make new discoveries about them. She learned that they were often loving parents, that they ate meat, and that they used tools. Goodall spent two decades studying chimpanzees in Africa.

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16. What's the main idea?

Magnets are objects that produce a magnetic field. Scientists believe that the Earth is a huge magnet, as its core is a mixture of iron and nickel. Magnets attract many objects that are metal. For example, iron, cobalt and nickel (the metal, not the coin) are attracted to magnets, while wood, glass, and plastic are not. Magnets have two poles, a north pole and a south pole. Poles that are different will attract each other, but poles that are the same will repel each other.

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17. What's the main idea?

Adélie penguins live farther south than any other penguin, on the continent of Antarctica. In September and October, which is springtime there, thousands of penguins gather on the rocky Antarctic shoreline. The huge gatherings are called colonies and this is where penguins breed and take care of their young. Both parents take turns caring for the eggs. One parent sits on the eggs to warm them, while the other parent makes the journey to sea to eat krill, fish and squid.

© The Teacher Next Door

18. What's the main idea?

During World War II, James Wright was working as an engineer for General Electric. At that time the government needed rubber airplane tires and boots for soldiers. Wright was trying to make a substitute for rubber using silicone. When Wright experimented and added boric acid, the result was a gooey mess that bounced. While the army couldn't use it, kids have enjoyed Silly Putty ever since.

© The Teacher Next Door

19. What's the main idea?

Volcanoes are an interesting Earth phenomenon. Currently, there are more than 1,500 active volcanoes on the Earth and there are at least 80 more under the oceans. In the United States, active volcanoes can be found in Hawaii, Alaska, California, Oregon and Washington. Volcanoes are created when magma inside the Earth's upper layer (the mantle) works its way to the surface. When a volcano erupts, lava flows down the mountain. Over time, if the volcano continues to erupt, it will get bigger and bigger.

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20. What's the main idea?

If you've ever seen a six inch tadpole, most likely you were looking at an American bullfrog. Bullfrogs are amphibians and spend their whole life near the water. The male bullfrogs are very territorial and guard their area fiercely, wrestling rivals to defend their turf. Bullfrogs have huge mouths and use these to lunge at their prey. These night hunters love to eat all kinds of insects, mice, snakes, and small fish. American bullfrogs can grow up to eight inches long and weigh up to three pounds.

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21. What's the main idea?

California may be known to most for its beautiful weather, sandy beaches and for movie making in Hollywood, but it is also the birthplace for many unique inventions. These include skateboarding, windsurfing, popsicles, peanut butter, Frisbees, the Candyland game, Bullwinkle the cartoon character and more!

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22. What's the main idea?

Mt. St. Helens is a volcano located in Washington State. This volcano erupted violently on the morning of May 18, 1980, with so much force that it literally blew its top! About 4 billion cubic yards of the mountain were blown away. The volcano's power was so intense that it stripped trees off of the hillsides six miles away.

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23. What's the main idea?

The brain is an extremely important part of the human body and is its control center. Making up about 85% of the brain, is the cerebrum, which is also called the gray matter. The cerebrum is divided into two halves or hemispheres and each half controls the opposite half of the body.

© The Teacher Next Door

24. What's the main idea?

Humans have two sets of teeth during their lifetime. The first set is referred to as "baby teeth". This first set contains 20 teeth. These baby teeth gradually loosen and fall out (or are pulled out) and are replaced with permanent teeth. A full adult set contains 16 teeth in each jaw for a total of 32 teeth.

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25. What's the main idea?

Benjamin Franklin was one of America's founding fathers who helped write the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Besides helping America get its start as a new country, he was also a very successful inventor. Franklin designed the first bifocals (glasses), wood stoves, rocking chairs, lightning rods, and public libraries.

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26. What's the main idea?

Mt. Rushmore is located in South Dakota. It has the four faces of some of our most famous presidents including George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson and Theodore Roosevelt. The faces are carved on the side of the mountain using dynamite, as well as jackhammers. Each of the heads on Mt. Rushmore is about 60 feet tall. That's larger than the Sphinx in Egypt or the Statue of Liberty!

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27. What's the main idea?

The first successful airplane was created by Wilbur and Orville Wright, who owned a bicycle shop. The Wright Brothers flew their homemade motor-powered airplane for 12 seconds at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina on December 7, 1903. Orville flew (he lost the toss) and Wilbur ran alongside the plane's wing.

© The Teacher Next Door

28. What's the main idea?

Sue is the name of the most complete Tyrannosaurus rex skeleton. This 41 foot long fossil was found in South Dakota in 1990 and was named after the scientist who found it, Susan Hendrickson. The large fossil was sold at auction by the Field Museum of Chicago for \$8.36 million.

© The Teacher Next Door

29. What's the main idea?

In the late 1500's Europeans craved spices like pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves. Today we still use all of these spices but the "king of spice" has to be pepper. Pepper is actually one of the most widely used spices in the world. Surprisingly, pepper is not always black but can be green, pink, and even white! All pepper grows from a vine that twists around trees near the equator.

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30. What's the main idea?

What's for breakfast? Chances are it might be cereal. Kids eat 15 pounds of cereal each year! Homes with kids usually eat about 47 boxes of cereal a year and homes without kids only eat about 28. Scientists have determined that most kitchens right now have four boxes. How many boxes of cereal are in your kitchen?

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31. What's the main idea?

In 1812, Samuel Wilson was a supplier for the U. S. Army and labeled his goods "U.S." Soldiers saw the initials many times and someone finally said the packages must be from Uncle Sam. That little comment spread like wildfire and soon everyone knew about Uncle Sam, who is now an American Symbol.

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32. What's the main idea?

Do all breakfasts look the same? In Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia, soup is the most popular choice. In the Philippines, people like garlic fried rice and pickles for breakfast. In Holland, most people love bread sprinkled with chocolate and in Ireland, flatbread cut into triangles, called farls, are the breakfast of choice.

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main Idea task cards: Record Sheet

Name: _____

Directions: Using a complete sentence, write the main idea of each task card.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

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27. _____

28. _____

29. _____

30. _____

31. _____

32. _____

Main Idea Task Cards: Key

Answers may vary

1. The potato chip was invented accidentally.
2. The rhinoceros is an unusual animal.
3. Dr. Seuss' life was interesting.
4. A habitat is an animal's home.
5. Rocks are named according to how they were created.
6. Dolphins are mammals.
7. A koala bear is a member of the marsupial family.
8. The Slinky was invented by accident by someone working on a navy ship.
9. Hammerhead sharks are unique animals.
10. Molly Pitcher was a brave woman in the Revolutionary War.
11. Chocolate chip cookies were invented by accident.
12. Meteorologists predict the weather.
13. Thunderstorms produce thunder and lightning.
14. Eels are fascinating fish.
15. Jane Goodall's life was devoted to chimpanzees.
16. Magnets attract many metals.
17. Adelie penguins breed and raise their young in Antarctica.
18. Silly Putty was invented by accident.
19. Volcanoes are interesting Earth phenomenon.
20. American bullfrogs are interesting amphibians
21. California has many inventions.
22. Mt. St. Helens was a strong volcano.
23. Your brain is very important.
24. You have two sets of teeth.
25. Ben Franklin was a founding father and an inventor.
26. Mt. Rushmore has faces of four famous presidents.
27. The Wright Brothers had the first successful airplane flight.
28. Sue the T-Rex was the most complete T-Rex fossil ever found.
29. Pepper is an important spice.
30. Cereal is a popular breakfast item.
31. Uncle Sam was created by accident.
32. Breakfast may vary depending upon where you live.

Mt. RUSHMORE KEY

Answers may vary:

Main Idea: Working on Mt. Rushmore was difficult and dangerous.

Supporting Detail 1: The weather was extreme.

Supporting Detail 2: Workers had to climb 700 steps up the mountain each day to punch time cards.

Supporting Detail 3: Dynamite was used to carve much of the mountain.

Summary: Many people worked to create the Mt. Rushmore memorial. It was dangerous and difficult work due to weather conditions, climbing the 700 steps up the mountain each day to punch time cards, and using dynamite to shape the rock. The mountain was completed in 1941 and has the faces of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln.

DISNEYLAND'S FIRST DAY KEY

Answers may vary:

Main Idea: Disneyland's first day was not a successful one.

Supporting Detail 1: Fantasyland had to close temporarily due to a gas leak.

Supporting Detail 2: Many of the rides and attractions broke down with the strain of so many guests.

Supporting Detail 3: Main Street's asphalted streets softened from the heat, causing women's high heels to get stuck in the gooey tar.

Other possible details: Traffic jam or none of the drinking fountains were ready.

Summary: Disneyland is a very popular tourist attraction now but its first day was disastrous. Many mishaps occurred from Fantasyland closing due to a gas leak to rides and attractions breaking down to drinking fountains which were not ready to use. Although Disneyland got off to a rough start, they were able to make improvements to make it a successful place.

The TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD KEY

Answers may vary:

Main Idea: The transcontinental railroad was built to provide train service across the country.

Supporting Detail 1: The Central Pacific Railroad was built.

Supporting Detail 2: The Union Pacific Railroad was built.

Supporting Detail 3: The railroads met in Promontory, Utah.

Summary: After so many people moved across the United States during the Gold Rush, the Transcontinental Railroad was built to connect people, supplies and mail from Sacramento, California to Omaha, Nebraska. The Central Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad connected at Promontory, Utah, where the California governor placed a golden spike.

Main Idea Matching: Amelia Earhart

Directions: Match each supporting detail to its main idea by writing the letter of the main idea on the line.

Key

Main Ideas	
A.	Amelia Earhart had an interesting childhood.
B.	After taking a ten minute plane ride at an airshow in 1920, Amelia knew she wanted to learn to fly.
C.	Earhart was the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic.
D.	Earhart's final flight is an unsolved mystery.

QUESTION #	MAIN IDEA	SUPPORTING DETAIL
1.	C	On May 20, 1932, Earhart took off from Newfoundland but soon after, her plane experienced mechanical difficulties and she was forced to land in a field in Ireland.
2.	B	In order to take flying lessons from Anita "Neta" Snook (a pioneer female aviator), Earhart worked a number of jobs. For example, she was a photographer and a truck driver.
3.	B	After Charles Lindbergh's solo flight from New York to Paris in 1927, Earhart dreamed that she would one day make the same flight herself.
4.	D	The search for Earhart's missing plane was extensive with 66 planes and nine ships.
5.	A	Amelia Earhart was born on July 24, 1897 in Atchison, Kansas.
6.	B	Earhart read everything she could about flying and even cut her hair in the popular style of other female pilots.
7.	D	President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized four million dollars to search for Earhart's downed plane.
8.	C	Earhart's 15 hour flight made her an international hero and she received many honors, including the Distinguished Flying Cross from the U.S. Congress.
9.	A	As a young girl, Earhart was adventurous and even created her own roller coaster in backyard from pieces of wood and roller-skate wheels.
10.	D	In June, 1937, Earhart and navigator James Noonan set off in an attempt to be the first to fly around the world but unfortunately, their plane vanished.

Main Idea Matching: Pandas



Directions: Match each supporting detail to its main idea by writing the letter of the main idea on the line.

Key

main Ideas

- A. Panda babies are helpless creatures.
- B. A panda's diet consists mainly of bamboo.
- C. Adult pandas are interesting animals.
- D. Pandas are an endangered species.

Question #	main Idea	SUPPORTING detail
1.	B	Pandas spend at least 12 hours a day eating and consume 20 - 45 pounds of bamboo each day.
2.	A	Panda babies are born without any hair or teeth and with their eyes closed.
3.	C	Although fully grown pandas seem quiet, they can bleat, roar, growl, and honk.
4.	C	Pandas can live to be about 20 years in the wild but up to 30 years in captivity.
5.	C	Pandas do not hibernate but simply move to lower elevations in the winter.
6.	D	The forests in China where pandas live are becoming smaller, which makes it harder for pandas to find food.
7.	C	To eat, pandas hold the bamboo with their hands and peel off the hard outer layers.
8.	C	Pandas are about five feet in length and weigh between 200 - 300 pounds.
9.	D	There are only about 2,000 pandas left in the wild.
10.	A	When pandas are born, their mother takes care of them for 1 - 2 years.
11.	D	Poachers, people who illegally kill animals for profit, have decreased the panda population.
12.	C	Pandas are mostly solitary creatures and meet occasionally for social purposes.
13.	C	Pandas have special front paws with five fingers and a thumb that they use to grasp bamboo stalks.

main Idea matching: THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

Directions: Match each supporting detail to its main idea by writing the letter of the main idea on the line.

Key

main Ideas

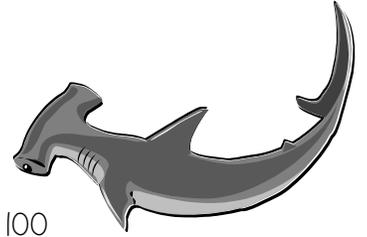
- A. A number of events led to the Revolutionary War.
- B. There were several key leaders who were instrumental during this time.
- C. Not all colonists wanted to separate themselves from England.
- D. The Revolutionary War may not have been won without help from other nations.

QUESTION #	main Idea	SUPPORTING detail
1.	B	George Washington was the commander-in-chief of the Patriot Army and later became the first President.
2.	A	In 1763, England defeated France in the French Indian War and decided to heavily tax colonists to help pay war debts.
3.	D	With help from French troops, the American Army gained momentum.
4.	B	Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, which was adopted by the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776.
5.	C	About one fourth of the colonists remained loyal to England and fought for the British army.
6.	A	The Boston Tea Party took place in 1773, when colonists protested the high taxes paid on tea, by boarding an English ship and dumping tea into the Boston Harbor.
7.	A	The Boston Massacre took place when English soldiers were taunted by colonists and ended up firing into the crowd. Crispus Attucks was the first man shot in the war.
8.	B	Benjamin Franklin served as America's ambassador to France.
9.	D	Spain and the Netherlands, who were allies of France, also helped in the war against the British.

HAMMERHEAD Sharks

Key

Hammerhead sharks are fascinating creatures. These sharks mostly live in warm waters near the coastlines and far offshore, all around the world. Most hammerheads migrate to cooler water in the summer months. Although they travel in large groups with as many as 100 sharks during the day, these sharks like to hunt alone at night.



There are nine different species of hammerheads but only three are dangerous to humans; the great hammerhead, the smooth hammerhead, and the scalloped sharks. Hammerhead sharks come in a variety of sizes and weights, with the great hammerhead being the largest of them all. It can grow up to 20 feet in length and weigh up to 1,000 pounds. Most hammerhead species though, are fairly small and are considered harmless to humans.

Hammerhead sharks are gray-brown to olive-green on top. Underneath, they are off-white, which allows them to blend in well in the water. One of its most recognized features is the shape of its head. It looks somewhat like a hammer, with its eyes set far apart at each end of its head. On the tops of their bodies, hammerhead sharks have a large dorsal fin with a point at the top of it. Their triangular teeth are pointy too and grow in rows, just like other types of sharks. These teeth are jagged and are extremely sharp.

Hammerhead sharks are expert predators and eat a variety of foods including small fish, small sharks, shrimp, octopus, and squid. Their favorite food is sting ray, which often hides under the sandy ocean floor. When food is scarce, some scientists believe that the hammerheads will eat each other in order to survive.

Hammerheads have an excellent sense of smell, which helps them locate food easily. The shape of their head and the placement of their eyes, also helps them locate prey by allowing them to see in various directions better than other species of sharks. In addition, they have a number of sensory organs in their head to feel vibrations and movements of their prey, even when they don't see them.

Unlike most fish, hammerhead sharks do not lay eggs but give birth to live young around 11 months. Female hammerhead sharks give birth to 20 - 40 pups at a time. The mothers do not take care for their young, but separate themselves from them immediately. Some baby sharks are eaten by other sharks but a good number still survive. Most hammerheads live from 20 - 25 years in the wild.

Key

1. Look at the choices below. Write SD for supporting details or MI for the main idea of the hammerhead shark passage.

- A. __SD__ Hammerhead sharks eat a variety of foods.
- B. __MI__ Hammerhead sharks are unique animals.
- C. __SD__ A hammerhead shark's body features help it find prey.
- D. __SD__ Hammerhead sharks are born live.

2. The author stated that hammerhead sharks will eat other hammerhead sharks if food is scarce. What does "scarce" mean?

- A. Easily found
- B. Scary
- C. Not easily found

3. Look at the second paragraph. Which one is the best choice for its main idea?

- A. There are several different species of hammerhead sharks.
- B. Most hammerhead sharks are harmless to humans.
- C. The great hammerhead is the largest hammerhead shark.

4. Look at the last paragraph. Which one is the best choice for its main idea?

- A. Hammerhead sharks are born live.
- B. Hammerhead sharks may live up to 25 years in the wild.
- C. Hammerhead sharks have an interesting life cycle.

5. Which food is a hammerhead's favorite?

- A. Squid
- B. Sting ray
- C. Octopus

6. Which one is NOT a supporting detail from this passage?

- A. A hammerhead's eyes allow it to see in many directions.
- B. Just like bats and owls, hammerheads are nocturnal.
- C. Most hammerheads live 20 - 25 years in the wild.

Bald Eagles

Key

A symbol of the United States since 1782, the bald eagle may look bald, but its head is actually covered in tiny white feathers. Actually, the name comes from an old English word, "balde," which means white.



Bald eagles are one of the largest raptors in the world. They have a seven foot wing span, a weight of 7 - 16 pounds, and an overall size of 28 - 38 inches. Female bald eagles are a bit bigger than males. Bald eagles use thermal convection currents to reach great heights when flying (up to 10,000 feet in the air) and they can reach speeds of up to 40 miles per hour.

Bald eagles like to eat fish, ducks, snakes, and turtles but they will also eat rabbits, muskrats, and even dead animals. Bald eagles attack their prey by using their keen sense of sight to swoop down and grab the prey with their sharp talons. Once they capture their prey, they use their hooked beak to eat the animal.

Preferring to live near a constant water source (either fresh or salt water) eagles make huge nests, called aeries (AIR-ees) at the top of tall trees. Most nests are about two feet deep and five feet across but some can be much bigger, weighing up to a ton. Some parents return to the same nest each year. Each time they return, they add more sticks, twigs, and grass.

A pair of eagles usually produces three eggs a year but it is unlikely that all of those will survive. Both parents take turns sitting on the eggs and while one is keeping the eggs warm, the other hunts and gathers more nesting materials. After a little over a month, the eggs hatch and the eaglet's entire body is covered in gray feathers. When they are three weeks old, their feathers turn brown and by four to five years old, they finally have the typical brown and white colored pattern. In the wild, eagles can live to be about 35 years old.

At one point, bald eagles were close to becoming extinct due to hunting and pollution, but laws to protect the eagle have helped them make a comeback.

Key

1. Which one is the main idea of this passage?

- A. The bald eagle is the national bird of the United States.
- B. Eagles eat a variety of animals.
- C. Eagles are interesting birds.

2. Which one is NOT a supporting detail of the main idea of this passage?

- A. Although many were in favor of the bald eagle, Benjamin Franklin wanted the turkey to be the national bird.
- B. Eagles make huge nests at the top of tall trees.
- C. Eagles are one of the largest raptors in the world.

3. Which physical characteristics of eagles help them hunt and eat their prey?

- A. Keen sense of sight
- B. Sharp talons
- C. Hooked beak
- D. All of the above

4. Make an inference. Why do you think eagles build their nests in the tops of tall trees?

- A. To protect their nest from predators
- B. To be able to see prey and to see dangers below them
- C. Both of the above

5. This passage has six paragraphs. Look at the fifth paragraph. What is the main idea of this paragraph?

- A. The life cycle of the bald eagle
- B. The diet of the bald eagle
- C. The habitat of the bald eagle

6. Look at the third paragraph. What is the main idea of this paragraph?

- A. The life cycle of the bald eagle
- B. The diet of the bald eagle
- C. An eagle's size

7. Look at the fourth paragraph. What is the main idea of this paragraph?

- A. The life cycle of the bald eagle
- B. The diet of the bald eagle
- C. An eagle's nest

The Pyramids



Key

In ancient Egypt, pyramids were built as royal tombs, where the ancient Egyptians buried their kings, called Pharaohs, and their royal families. The first pyramid was built about 5,000 years ago and is called the Djoser Pyramid. Today, about 130 pyramids have been discovered. Nearly all of the Egyptian Pyramids are located on the west bank of the Nile.

Archaeologists have tried to figure out how the pyramids were built without modern machines. They believe that thousands of workers cut large blocks of limestone and then slowly moved the blocks up the pyramid on ramps. The pyramid was built slowly in this way, one block at a time. For example, scientists estimate it took at least 20,000 workers over 23 years to build the Great Pyramid of Giza. Pharaohs, realized how long pyramids took to build and usually started the construction of their pyramids as soon as they became the ruler.

Pyramids were complex structures and had a number of unique features inside. For example, there were lots of rooms like store rooms, bedrooms, and even inside courtyards. While a pyramid was under construction, cities grew up around its square base. These were called pyramid cities and housed the workers who built the pyramids. When the pyramid was finished, the pyramid city continued even without workers. Guards would then live there to protect the pyramid and its contents.

Why did the pyramids need guarding? The pyramids were filled with valuable treasures from the Pharaoh's collection. Egyptians believed that the Pharaoh needed certain things in the afterlife, so he would be buried with all sorts of items and treasures, ranging from everyday objects to expensive items like gold and jewels.

Grave robbers were tempted by the pyramid's treasures. Severe punishments for grave robbing didn't stop them, and robbers couldn't seem to resist the temptation of the great wealth inside. Sometimes traps, fake burial chambers, and secret passages were built inside the pyramid to trick grave robbers. Despite the Egyptian's efforts, by 1,000 B.C., almost all of the pyramids were robbed of their treasures.

One tomb that was mostly untouched was that of Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings. Tutankhamun (King Tut) was a pharaoh from 1332 BC to 1323 B.C. His tomb was rediscovered in 1922 by Howard Carter and has become famous.

After the time of the Old Kingdom (2150 B.C.), pyramids were no longer built. Besides being expensive to build and time consuming, they were difficult to guard from robbers.

Key

1. Write SD for supporting details and MI for the main idea for this passage.

- A. ___SD___ Scientists wonder how pyramids were built without modern machinery.
- B. ___SD___ Grave robbers often stole treasures.
- C. ___MI___ Egyptian Pyramids were used to bury pharaohs and their treasures.
- D. ___SD___ Pyramids took a long time to build.

2. How do scientists think pyramids were built?

- A. Using ramps
- B. Using a bulldozer and cranes
- C. With several people working together to lift rocks over their heads
- D. Using pulleys

3. Look at the fourth paragraph. Which one is the best choice for the main idea for this paragraph?

- A. Pyramid cities housed workers.
- B. Pyramid cities grew around pyramids.
- C. Guards lived near the pyramids to protect them after they were built.

4. Which one was NOT a reason pyramids were no longer built after the Old Kingdom?

- A. Too expensive
- B. Took too much time to build
- C. Grave robbers
- D. Limestone rocks were no longer available

5. Look at the sixth paragraph. Which one is the best choice for the main idea for this paragraph?

- A. Regardless of risks, grave robbers were tempted to steal treasures.
- B. Grave robbers could face severe punishments.
- C. By 1,000 B.C., most pyramids were robbed of their treasures.