

Finding the Main Idea of Paragraphs 2

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Directions: Read the following paragraphs and compose a one-sentence main idea for each on a sheet of lined paper.

Finding the Main Idea Paragraph 1: Classrooms

The physical environment of a classroom is extremely important because it can influence the way teachers and students feel, think, and behave. If a student feels pressured, under stress, unhappy, or unsafe, it would be impossible for her or him to learn the lessons planned by the educator. Likewise, if a teacher feels unhappy or disorganized because of the classroom's lack of order or detail, the ability for her to teach is greatly diminished. The environment of a classroom serves four basic functions: security, social contact, pleasure, and growth. For real learning and teaching to take place, all four of those needs must be met by the class space.

What's the main idea?

Finding the Main Idea Paragraph 2: China Power

Given the European historical experience and the balance-of-power model, many believe China cannot rise peacefully to power, but there are a few people who offer refreshing, persuasive, and provocative views stating otherwise. These nay sayers emphasizes that from a realist perspective, China's rise should already be provoking balancing behavior by its neighbors; however, its rise has generated little of that response. East Asian states are not balancing China; they are accommodating it, because China has not sought to translate its dominant position into conquest of its neighbors. Whether China's emergence as a global power can peacefully find a place in East Asia and the world is a major issue in today's international political environment, one that warrants a responsible look.

What's the main idea?

Finding the Main Idea Paragraph 3: Rain

Often when it rains, a particular dreariness descends upon the earth. Most people hide out in their houses sending forlorn glances out the window. Animals scamper off to nooks and crannies, poking their heads out to timidly sniff the air for signs of dry weather. Despite the pellets of water cascading from the sky, an occasional brave soul will venture out for a jog in the drizzle or a bird will chirp merrily in a mud puddle, dismissing the downpour. Some people call these adventurers crazy, but others celebrate the willingness of these individuals to embrace negativity and turn it into something positive.

What's the main idea?

Finding the Main Idea Paragraph 4: Math

From adolescence, data show that males outperform females on math tests and tests of math reasoning, despite differences in IQ. The current data with college students and a simple test of arithmetic ability show that males still score higher than females even when performance is measured using a third grade arithmetic test. The cause for the variance in numbers is questionable because the intelligence quotient in the tested students ranged from below to above average in both sexes. The finding of a sex difference in math performance from adolescence is a finding that arouses curiosity as to the cause of the difference – is nature or nurture involved or a combination of both?

What's the main idea?

Finding the Main Idea Paragraph 5: Movies

Going to the movies has become a weekend activity that many people pay large amounts of money to do. Movies are pricey these days, but the medium never fails to draw crowds. And while some movies have excellent plots, characterization and cinematography, others are simply horrible in just about every way. Yet once in a while, a film will appear on the big screen that will earn itself a rightful place in history as a magnificent film, one that touches the lives of people. And really, isn't that all people are really looking for as they trek out to the show, weekend after weekend? A brief glimpse into a life where people express what the moviegoer is also feeling? It must be, otherwise people would spare their wallets and stay home.

What's the main idea?

Finding the Main Idea Paragraph 6: Troopathon

As troops fought their way throughout the desert during the war in Iraq, the narrative from the mainstream media was nearly synonymous with that of the anti-war left. The military mission was continuously undermined by media reports claiming that American troops were killers and that the war on terror was all but lost. Frustrated with the lies and exaggerations perpetuated by the media, Melanie Morgan decided to fight back. So Morgan joined forces with political strategists Sal Russo and Howard Kaloogian to create a pro-troop nonprofit organization that hosts Troopathon, a yearly web telethon fundraiser that raises money to send care packages to troops in Iraq, Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay. Since the first Troopathon was held three years ago, the organization has raised over \$2 million.

What's the main idea?

Finding the Main Idea Paragraph 7: Relationships

At one time or another, most adults have been in a romantic relationship. A guy walks up to a girl at a bar, gets her number, and the beginning of a relationship is formed. A guy and a girl meet in Physics class, get paired as study partners, and the rest is history. Two high school sweethearts rekindle an old flame on Facebook after years apart. These types of simple encounters may lead to relationships, and even though that first meeting is easy, the entire relationship is not. A lot of work goes into making a true bonded relationship, and when that work is bypassed, the relationship may not last.

What's the main idea?

Finding the Main Idea Paragraph 8: Educational Technology

Slowly, over the past several decades, technology, in all its various forms, has been creeping into the educational institutions of the United States and is now a pervasive presence. Computers are present in most classrooms; second grade students use digital cameras for science projects; teachers use document cameras for lectures; and students of all ages research on the Internet via smartphones, smartpads and laptops. While advocates have cheered and opponents have grumbled, technology has made its way into classrooms across the U. S. and knowledge of its applications has become a prerequisite for a modern education. Some people, however, do not accept this stance wholeheartedly. Opponents of the massive influx of technology into school systems state that the results of the technology have, thus far, not proven to be sufficient grounds for accepting it and its shortcomings. Despite their good intentions, these critics of technology integration are mistaken, and about twenty years behind the times.

What's the main idea?

Finding the Main Idea Paragraph 9: Fair Use

The recording industry has gone too far in its fight against file sharers in that Copyright Management Systems (CMS), used to enforce Copyright Management Information (CMI), can impinge on users "fair use" of digital information. According to U.S. code, Title 17, chapter 1, section 107, copying of copyrighted information is allowed "for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research".

Many proposed systems of copyright management, such as creating hardware with "anti-copying" devices already installed, can impinge on this fair use allotment in copyright law by preventing professionals with legitimate defense from exercising proper usages. It can also prevent the copying of non-copyrighted material by the average user. If a person wishes to make a copy of a non-copyrighted CD, so as to have a copy at home and one in the car, a copyright management system would prevent him or her from this fair use act.

What's the main idea?

Finding the Main Idea Paragraph 10: Mares

A recent study followed bands of feral horses in the Kaimanawa Mountains of New Zealand over the course of three years, has some interesting findings regarding foaling rates of social mares. Elissa Z. Cameron, now at the University of Pretoria in South Africa, and two colleagues computed sociality scores for fifty-six mares, based on parameters such as the proportion of time each animal spent near other mares and the amount of social grooming she did. The team found that the scores correlated well with foaling rate: more sociable mares had more foals. They also suffered slightly less harassment by the bands' few males.

What's the main idea?

Main Idea Worksheet 3

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Directions: Read the following paragraphs and answer the question that follows each one by circling the letter of the BEST answer choice.

Paragraph 1: The Environment

Almost everyone would agree that cleaning up the environment and keeping it that way is a good thing. The obvious negative impacts on human health and the ecosystems on Earth are well understood. Yet, there are underlying consequences to compliance to this most basic need that need to be studied, as well. The government of the U.S. has requested voluntary action from citizens and industry, and it has also legislated action in order to start the clean-up process. An example of this is the Clean Air Act. The good news is that this law requires that emissions into the air meet certain standards that will help clean up the environment. Under this act, cars have to reduce emissions of nitrous oxides by 60%, and "clean coal" technologies have to reduce harmful emissions by 20%. Industry is required to reduce emissions of over 200 compounds that are known to cause health problems. The bad news is the cost of compliance. Estimates of consumer costs for a cleaner environment go as high as \$50 billion a year, and that study does not even take into account the loss of jobs from reshaping industries to meet the new standards.

Which of the following statements best expresses the main idea of the paragraph?

- A. Industries in nations across the United States need to unite to maintain the standards created by the Clean Air Act despite the costs to the country.
- B. Industries are doing their part to reduce emissions that are known to have ill effects on the environment and human health.
- C. Although legislation that supports cleaning up the environment is a good idea, the costs of such efforts need to be evaluated.
- D. Cleaning up the environment is best accomplished through both legislation like the Clean Air Act and volunteerism from humans impacted by emissions.

Paragraph 2: Asperger's Syndrome

A child with Asperger's Syndrome may move into the personal space of others, failing to recognize body language and even verbal cues that he or she has transgressed. Friends and new acquaintances alike may be acknowledged with tight and enthusiastic hugs. Bypassing typical greetings like "Hi, how are you?" an older child with Asperger's may launch into discourse on the latest topic of concern. This narrow special interest (e.g., Civil War maritime strategies, accuracy of train schedules) may be age-inappropriate (e.g., "Power Rangers" cartoons at age 16) or boring, but a child with this disorder will often continue to clarify, oblivious to disinterest, "looks," or snickers from the people close by.

Which of the following statements best expresses the main idea of the paragraph?

- A. Asperger's Syndrome is a disorder that affects an afflicted child's social interactions.
- B. Asperger's Syndrome is a disorder that affects many different aspects of an afflicted child's life.
- C. Asperger's Syndrome is a disorder causing an afflicted child to have narrow special interests that are often age-inappropriate.
- D. Asperger's Syndrome is a disorder causing an afflicted child to act especially reserved around new experiences and people.

Paragraph 3: North Point School District

Recently, a \$114 million bond was approved which will be used in the upcoming year to renovate existing schools and build new schools in the North Point school district. Additions will also be built onto the three high schools, three new elementary schools will be built, and a Career Center will also be constructed for high school students on the campus of North Point Community College. In addition, technology in the district will be brought up to date, teacher's will receive bonuses denied last year, and two new vice principals will be hired for Smithson Middle School and Harry P. Shulte Middle School.

Which of the following statements best expresses the main idea of the paragraph?

- A. North Point School District is going to be going through major changes in the upcoming year.
- B. North Point School District has received bond money to build new schools and update technology in the upcoming year.
- C. North Point School District is going to be going through changes which will take place in the spring of next year.
- D. North Point School District has received bond money which will be used to upgrade the entire school district in many ways this upcoming year.

Paragraph 4: Students with Special Needs

Often, students are not capable of performing within a designated range of expectations in school. Those students who hover below the normative range due to physical or cognitive impairments must be evaluated to determine if special services or accommodations are needed. High schools are required to offer a wide array of special services to those students who are evaluated as incapable of staying within the normative range of performance standards in the classroom. The special services offered can help these students reach their maximum potential, but before they can be administered, a teacher has to identify that there is a problem.

Which of the following statements best expresses the main idea of the paragraph?

- A. High schools are required to help students with special needs achieve their maximum potential.
- B. High schools are required to help students who have been identified by a teacher as having special needs, achieve their maximum potential.
- C. High schools serve the needs of various types of students, including those who have been identified as having special needs.
- D. High schools serve the needs of various types of students, but only offer special services to those who have been identified as having cognitive impairments.

Paragraph 5: Legends

Legends make children dream of princesses riding bare back through fields of fragrant heather. They immortalize noble knights, champions for humanity, who fought tyranny as they raced through a village with sword brandished and banner waving in the afternoon breeze. Legends awaken imagination in the young and spur creativity in the old. The famous and trustworthy story of King Arthur is one of those great legends made famous through repeated telling. According to the stories about King Arthur, he was a man of valor, integrity, and honor in the face of challengers and opposition. He strove to lead all of England down the path of goodness and prosperity without any foolish moves or attacks of cowardice. He supposedly did all of these wonderful things, but as it seems, not one person knows how this legend came to be, and some even debate that he was once alive.

Which of the following statements best expresses the main idea of the paragraph?

- A. King Arthur's legends have been inspirational for both the old and the young.
- B. Legends, like that of King Arthur, can be inspirational despite their muddled beginnings or deficient proof.
- C. Legends can inspire both the young and the old.
- D. Legends, like that of King Arthur, are inspirational to those who want to believe in fairy tales.