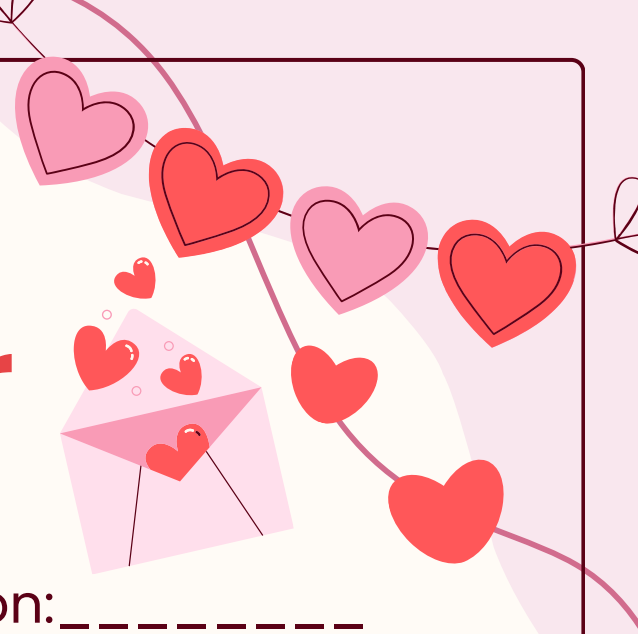


February 2-6, 2026

3RD GRADE ELA NEWSLETTER



Name: _____

Section: _____

Homework:

Monday

1. Read: **Groundhog or Woodchuck** three times
2. Fill out the "Close Reading" notes page. (#1 after first read, #2 after second read, and #3 after third read)
(Reading and SS HW grade.)

Tuesday

1. Read: **Groundhog or Woodchuck**
2. Answer questions #1-4
3. **Highlight** text evidence.
(Reading and SS HW grade.)

Wednesday

1. Read: **Groundhog or Woodchuck**
2. Write a paragraph (5-8 sentences) about groundhogs. Four statements about groundhogs should be true and one should be FALSE. We will share in class to see if classmates can figure out the false fact.
(Writing and SS HW grade.)

Thursday

1. Write a story to match the picture of the groundhog.
(Writing and SS HW grade.)

Reminders

Portfolio every Wednesday!

Complete 45 minutes of I-ready by Sunday at 11:59 PM.

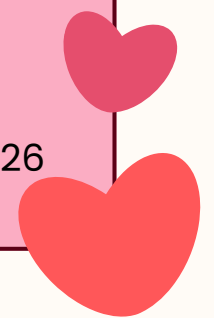
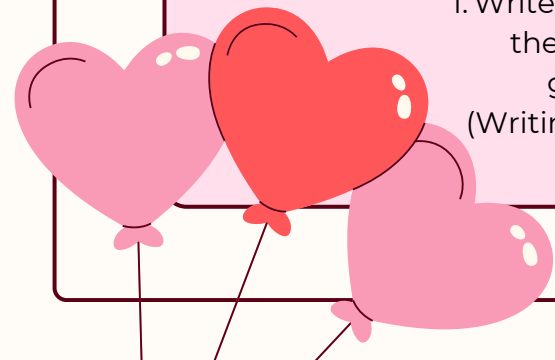
Complete the attached worksheets and turn in entire packet on Friday.

Assessments

- iReady PM 2 : 2/2-3/2026
- Portfolio #2: 2/4/2026

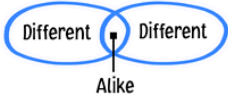
Upcoming:

- No School 2/16/2026
- 3-5 Fun Day 2/24/2026



Weekly Reading Skills

Comparison/Contrast



Author's Purpose: The Comparison/Contrast text structure helps authors describe how things are alike and different.

Transition Words: *but, both, however, and*

Cause/Effect



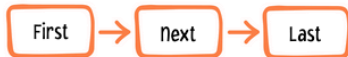
Author's Purpose: The Cause/Effect text structure helps authors explain what happened and why it happened.

Transition Words: *because, so, in order to, as a result*

TEXT STRUCTURE

Authors choose text structures that best fit their purposes for writing a text.

Sequence



Author's Purpose: The Sequence text structure helps authors explain events in order.

Transition Words: *before, first, next, then, last, after*

Problem/Solution



Author's Purpose: The Problem/Solution text structure helps authors explain how a problem is solved.

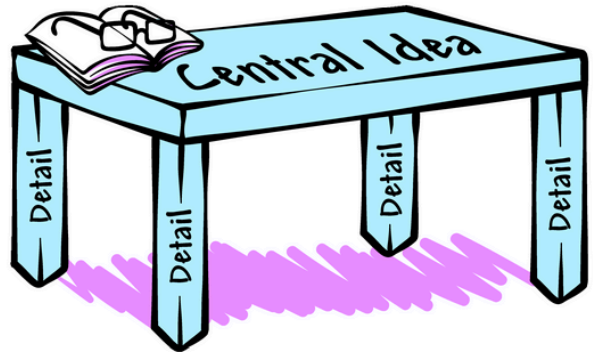
Transition Words: *problem, solution, difficulty, the answer is*

Central Idea

The **Central Idea** is what the text is mostly about.

Look for **text clues.**

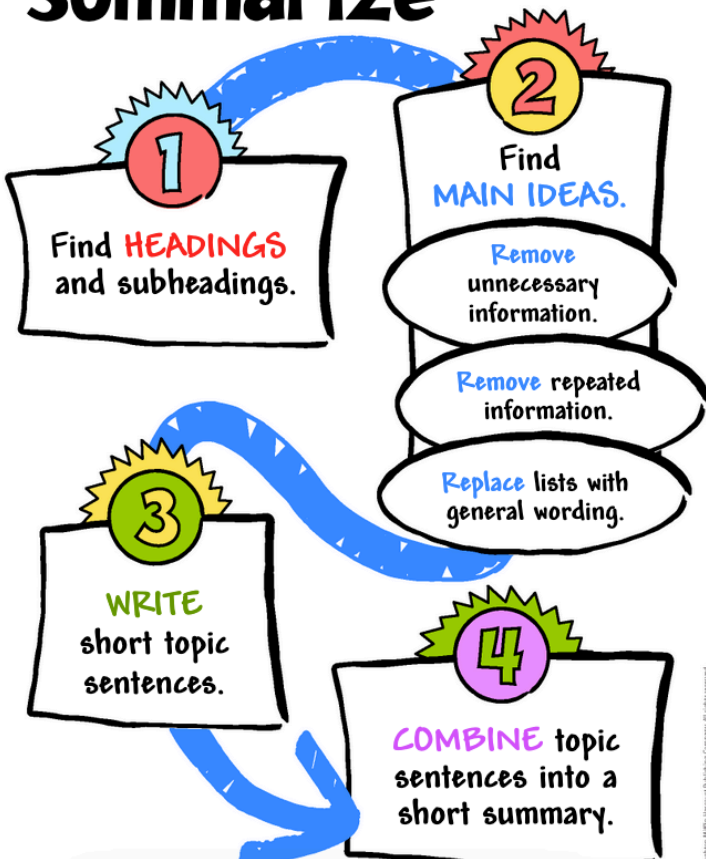
- Headings
- Visuals
- First or Last Sentence
- Repeated Words



Evaluate **details** to determine **key ideas** that support the central idea.

- Examples
- Facts
- Evidence
- Description

Summarize



Author's Purpose

An author's purpose is his or her reason for writing a text. Knowing the purpose helps you recognize the author's message.

If the author's purpose is to . . .

Persuade



then the author wants readers to think or act in a certain way.

Inform



then the author wants to share **information** about a topic.

Entertain



then the author wants readers to enjoy a story.

How can you figure out the author's purpose?

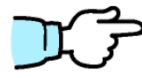
FIRST...

think about the genre.

THEN...

ask questions about what you read and find answers.

IDENTIFY CLAIM



When you read an argumentative text, look for the claim.



- The claim is the position the author takes on a subject.
- The claim is the author's opinion.
- The claim is a statement the author tries to prove.
- The claim will come at the beginning of the text.
- The claim will solve a problem or answer a question.
- The author will include facts and evidence to prove the claim.



Weekly Reading Skills Continued



The best way to keep your cat from destroying furniture with her claws is to have a scratch post.



After we bought a scratch post, Fluffy sharpened her claws on it instead of the couch.

Cats have the most interesting eyes of all the animals.



Cats' pupils are vertical slits instead of circles, like most animals' pupils.

Context Clues



Good readers use **clues in the text and visuals** to find the **meanings** of unfamiliar words.

Word Parts

Lumin = light

We stared at the **luminous** stars in the sky.

Examples

Crustaceans, such as shrimp, lobster, and crabs, live in salt water.

Definitions

The **calyx**, the leaf-like parts that cover a flower bud, are green.

Visuals with Labels

Visuals show pictures of the word's meaning.



Vocabulary



Synonyms

= **same** Luke wanted to **rectify** his mistake. If he could correct it, he would.

Antonyms

= **opposite** Ana would rather be **industrious** than lazy.

MONDAY

Groundhog or Woodchuck?

by Kelly Hashway

What's the difference between a groundhog and a woodchuck? Actually, they are the same animal. Groundhogs are also known as woodchucks and even marmots.

Groundhogs are the largest members of the squirrel family. They are a member of a special group of ground squirrels called



marmots. Groundhogs may not look like they would be good climbers, but they are. Even with their heavy looking bodies, they can climb trees to escape predators or check out their surroundings. Groundhogs like to stay alert, which is why you'll often see them standing on their hind legs and being very still. If a groundhog senses danger, it will give a loud whistle to warn other groundhogs. Besides whistling, groundhogs will grind their teeth together and make low barking sounds.

Climbing trees isn't a groundhog's only talent. They are also good swimmers. But groundhogs prefer to be in burrows under the ground, which is where they make their homes. A burrow usually has anywhere from two to five exits to help the groundhog escape predators. Luckily, groundhogs have very strong limbs and curved claws that make digging easy. Once a burrow is made, the groundhog will stay close to it. This is why they make their burrows near

MONDAY

sources of food. Groundhogs eat mostly wild grass and other vegetation. But they do eat small animals like grasshoppers, snails, and grubs, too.

While groundhogs will eat nuts like squirrels do, they do not store food the same way. Groundhogs will eat and eat all summer long to build up fat in their bodies. Once the weather starts getting cold, they hibernate like bears in underground burrows.



These are called "winter burrows" and are different from the burrows groundhogs use during the summer months. They'll sleep until spring, living off the body fat they have stored up all summer.

Whether you call them groundhogs, woodchucks, or marmots, these creatures have become quite famous among humans. They even have a day named after them.

Name: _____

CLOSE READING

Nonfiction



1ST
READING

MAIN IDEA

Supporting Details

2ND
READING

TEXT STRUCTURE

How I Know:

TEXT FEATURES

VOCABULARY

3RD
READING

ANALYZE THE AUTHOR

Author's Purpose:

Author's Point of View:

ASK QUESTIONS



CONNECTION

Name: _____

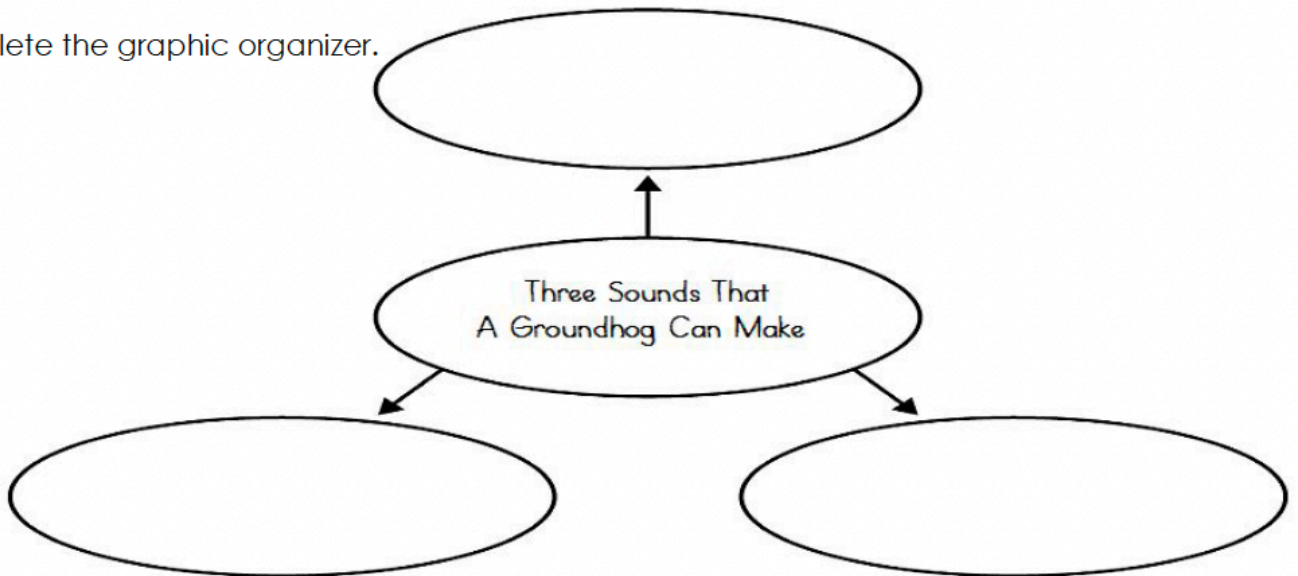


Groundhog or Woodchuck?

by Kelly Hashway

1. What is the difference between a groundhog and a woodchuck?
 - a. Groundhogs are larger than woodchucks.
 - b. Woodchucks climb trees, but groundhogs do not.
 - c. Groundhogs are marmots, but woodchucks are not.
 - d. Woodchucks and groundhogs are the same animal.

2. Complete the graphic organizer.



3. Explain how a groundhog's burrow is designed to keep the groundhog safe from predators.

4. Do you think a groundhog is likely to weigh more in early spring or late autumn? Explain.

THURSDAY

Directions: Write a story to go along with the picture.

(title)

Written by: _____

(your name)