



Summarizing

Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Practice

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The **main idea** of a paragraph is what the whole paragraph is *mostly about*.

The **details** are *small pieces of information* that make the paragraph more interesting.

A **summary** includes the **main idea** of *each of the paragraphs* in a story. It does not include the **details** of the paragraphs.

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As you read this article, look for the **main idea** of each paragraph. These can be put together to make a **summary** of the whole story.

In ancient times, people tried to explain the world around them based on what they saw. People in ancient times saw that the sun came up from one side of the earth, moved across the sky, and went down on the other side. Based on this observation, they believed that the sun travels around the earth. Going directly from observation to conclusion is called non-scientific thinking.

Here is an example of non-scientific thinking. Maybe you had a sick stomach, and ate a candy bar. An hour later, you observed that you felt much better. You might conclude that it was the candy bar that made you feel better. But there are other possible explanations for the observation. Maybe you had taken some medicine an hour earlier, and it took a while to work. Maybe enough time had passed, and you would have felt better without eating the candy bar. Non-scientific thinking happens all the time.

The scientific method is a way of thinking that helps you to avoid drawing incorrect conclusions. It does this in three ways. First, it helps you to avoid non-scientific thinking. It also reminds you to treat your first conclusion as one of several possible conclusions. Finally, it reminds you to gather evidence to support your conclusion.

The five steps in the scientific method begin by questioning an observation, and end with a conclusion that is based on evidence. **Step 1** in the scientific method is to *ask a question* about your observation, such as, “What makes a sick stomach feel better?” **Step 2** is to state a possible answer to the question, or a *hypothesis*, such as, “A candy bar makes a sick stomach feel better.” **Step 3** is to *test the hypothesis*. This can be done in many different ways. You could wait until you have a sick stomach again, eat a candy bar, and see what happens. You could ask a lot of people if eating a candy bar had ever made a sick stomach feel better. Figuring out how to test a hypothesis is what makes science challenging. **Step 4** is to *think about the findings*—think about what happened when you tested the hypothesis. **Step 5** is to *draw a conclusion*—and share it with the rest of the world.

1. What is the main idea of the first paragraph?
 - A. People in ancient times saw that the sun came up from one side of the earth, moved across the sky, and went down on the other side.
 - B. People in ancient times believed that the sun travels around the earth.
 - C. Going directly from observation to conclusion is called non-scientific thinking.

2. What is the main idea of the second paragraph?
 - A. An hour after eating a candy bar, your sick stomach felt better.
 - B. Non-scientific thinking happens all the time.
 - C. Maybe you would have felt better without eating the candy bar.

3. What is the main idea of the third paragraph?
 - A. The scientific method is a way of thinking that helps you avoid drawing incorrect conclusions.
 - B. The scientific method reminds you to treat your first conclusion as one of several possible conclusions.
 - C. The scientific method reminds you to gather evidence to support your conclusion.

4. What is the main idea of the fourth paragraph?
 - A. The scientific method begins by questioning an observation, and ends with a conclusion that is based on evidence.
 - B. The first step in the scientific method is to ask a question about an observation.
 - C. The last step in the scientific method is to draw a conclusion, and share it.

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5. Write the numbers 1 through 4 in the boxes beside the events to show the sequence of what happened, from *first to last*. This creates a **summary**.

1-4?

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| Non-scientific thinking happens all the time.                                                                                     |  |
| The five steps in the scientific method begin by questioning an observation, and end with a conclusion that is based on evidence. |  |
| The scientific method is a way of thinking that helps you to avoid drawing incorrect conclusions.                                 |  |
| Going directly from observation to conclusion is called non-scientific thinking.                                                  |  |

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6. What would be a good title for this whole article?

Answer Key

1. B
2. C
3. A
4. A
5. 2, 4, 3, 1
6. Accept any reasonable response, such as, "Why the Scientific Method is Important."