

Central Idea: the most important or central thought of a paragraph or larger section of text, which tells the reader what the text is about

To understand how to answer questions about central ideas in a text, fill in the following notes.

Vocabulary

1. _____: decide, figure out
2. **analyze:** _____; break down into key parts
3. **development:** the building of an idea/ideas _____ a text
4. _____: a connection between two or more ideas, events, individuals, etc.
5. **supporting ideas:** _____, statements, specifics, and _____ that _____, explain, and describe the _____.

Tips on Determining a Central Idea

1. Examine the _____.
2. Pay close attention to the _____ and _____ paragraphs.
3. What is the _____?
4. Why has the author written about the topic (_____ : persuade, inform, entertain)?
5. What point or points has the _____ made about the topic?

Tips on Writing a Summary to Support the Central Idea

1. Determine the _____.
2. Find _____ that the author uses to develop the central idea and communicate them in your _____.
3. Be _____, concise, and brief (not too long).
4. Leave out _____ details and your own personal _____.

4. It is estimated that over twenty million pounds of candy corn are sold in the US each year. Brach's, the top manufacturer, sells enough candy corn to circle the earth 4.25 times if each piece were laid end to end. That's a lot of candy corn, but that's nothing compared to Tootsie Roll production. Over 64 million Tootsie Rolls are produced every day! But even Tootsie Rolls have got nothing on the candy industry's staple product, chocolate. Confectioners manufacture over twenty billion pounds of chocolate in the United States each year. Now that's a mouthful!

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea.**

An appropriate title: _____

5. Screech! When a driver pushes on the brake pedal, it initiates a process that causes the vehicle to stop in motion. You literally trust automotive braking systems with your life every time you get into a vehicle or cross at a busy intersection, but how does this process work? It begins when the pedal is pushed. At this moment brake fluid is released into the area where the braking mechanisms are. As the fluid collects, this creates a leverage, which causes a friction to be applied. If the braking system is functioning properly, this friction will create a force that will cause the wheels to stop and allow you to reach your destination safely.

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea.**

An appropriate title: _____

6. There are many types of lethal venom in the animal kingdom, but perhaps no stranger carrier than the platypus. The platypus is one of few venomous mammals. Males carry a venom cocktail in their ankle spurs that incapacitates victims with excruciating pain. Stranger still, the platypus is the only mammal that uses electroreception. What this means is that the platypus uses its bill to sense the electricity produced by the muscular movements of its prey. The platypus neither sees, hears, nor smells its prey while hunting but, rather, pursues it through electroreception. Perhaps most odd, the platypus is the only mammal that lays eggs rather than giving birth to live young. The platypus is an odd creature indeed.

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea.**

An appropriate title: _____

7. Yellowstone National Park is mainly located in Wyoming, although three percent is located in the state of Montana. The Continental Divide of North America runs diagonally through the southwestern part of the park. The park sits on the Yellowstone Plateau, which is an average elevation of 8,000 feet above sea level. This plateau is bounded on nearly all sides by mountain ranges. There are 290 waterfalls that are at least fifteen feet in the park, the highest being the Lower Falls of the Yellowstone River, which falls 308 feet.

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea.**

An appropriate title: _____