



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

There are bits of rock and dust, called meteoroids, everywhere in space. When meteoroids enter the earth's atmosphere they get very hot, and burn. Most of them burn up completely before they hit the earth.

When meteoroids enter the earth's atmosphere and start to burn, they are called meteors. You can see them from the ground. They look like they are shooting across the sky. We call them shooting stars. Shooting stars are not stars at all. They are meteors!

If you look hard enough and long enough on a clear night, you can usually see a meteor. But on some nights, hundreds or even thousands can be seen. This happens when the earth passes through the tail of a comet. Comets, as well as planets, orbit the sun in our Solar System. Comets have "vapor tails" of gasses and small meteoroids. These vapor tails can be millions of miles long. When the earth passes through a comet's vapor tail, the resulting light show is called a "meteor shower."

The number of shooting stars that are visible during a meteor shower depends upon the size of the comet's vapor trail. Sometimes during a meteor shower there can be hundreds of shooting stars per hour. There have been times when a meteor shower lit up the entire sky.

1. What is the main idea of the first paragraph?
 - A. There are meteoroids everywhere in space.
 - B. When meteoroids enter the earth's atmosphere they begin to burn.
 - C. Most meteoroids burn up completely before they hit the earth.

2. What is the main idea of the second paragraph?
 - A. When meteoroids enter the earth's atmosphere, they are called meteors.
 - B. Meteors are visible from the ground.
 - C. Shooting stars are not stars: they are meteors.

3. What is the main idea of the third paragraph?
 - A. You can see a meteor on most clear nights.
 - B. Hundreds or thousands of meteors can be seen when the earth passes through the tail of a comet.
 - C. Comets have vapor tails made of gasses and bits of rock and dust.

4. What is the main idea of the fourth paragraph?
 - A. The number of shooting stars that are visible during a meteor shower depends upon the size of the comet vapor trail.
 - B. Sometimes during a meteor shower there can be hundreds of shooting stars per hour.
 - C. There have been times when a meteor shower lit up the entire sky.

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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*.

1-4?

|                                                                                                                      |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Shooting stars are not stars: they are meteors.                                                                      |  |
| The number of shooting stars that are visible during a meteor shower depends upon the size of the comet vapor trail. |  |
| Hundreds or thousands of meteors can be seen when the earth passes through the tail of a comet.                      |  |
| There are meteoroids everywhere in space.                                                                            |  |

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

Answer Key

1. A
2. C
3. B
4. A
5. 2, 4, 3, 1
6. Accept any reasonable response, such as, "What is a Shooting Star?"