Main idea

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.

The **details** give *small pieces of information* about the **main idea**.

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As you read about sloths, think about the **main idea** of each paragraph.

Sloths

Sloths are the slowest mammals on earth. It takes a full minute for a sloth to move 6 feet across the ground. You probably couldn't move that slowly if you tried! The sloth's body is about 2 feet long. It has long legs, and curved claws that are 3 to 4 inches long. Their claws and their long legs help them climb trees and hang from tree branches. They spend almost their entire lives hanging from tree branches. The life of a sloth is not very exciting.

Sloths have a round head, small ears, a stubby tail, and sad-looking eyes set in a dark-colored "mask." The shape of a sloth's mouth makes it look like it is always smiling. It has extra bones in its neck that make it possible for it to turn its head almost all the way around. Sloths are very cute to look at, but they don't put on much of a show.

Sloths are home to other plants and creatures. Tiny plants grow on the sloth's fur, making the animals appear to be green. This green color makes the sloths almost invisible against the green leaves of the trees they live in. Moths and insects also live in the sloth's fur. Maybe the sloths move so little and so seldom that the small creatures that live on them don't even know they are animals.

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Giant sloths the size of elephants once lived in many places on earth, including North America. Today, sloths can be found in the tropical forests of Central and South America. They eat leaves and berries. A sloth can stick its tongue out 12 inches. Maybe they developed this skill so they wouldn't have to move to reach the tasty leaves and berries around their resting spot. Their main enemies are jaguars, eagles, and snakes. Many tropical forests are disappearing, along with the sloths that live there. It would be a sad thing if these fascinating little animals became extinct.

1. What is the main idea of the first paragraph?
   A. Sloths are the slowest mammals on earth.
   B. It takes a full minute for a sloth to move 6 feet across the ground.
   C. The sloth's body is about 2 feet long.
   D. The life of a sloth is not very exciting.

2. What is the main idea of the second paragraph?
   A. Sloths have a round head, small ears, and sad-looking eyes.
   B. The shape of a sloth's mouth make it look like it is always smiling.
   C. A sloth can turn its head almost all the way around.
   D. Sloths are very cute to look at.

3. What is the main idea of the third paragraph?
   A. Sloths are home to other plants and creatures.
   B. Tiny plants grow on the sloth's fur.
   C. The plants that grow on the sloth make the sloth green.
   D. Moths and insects live in the sloth's fur.

4. What is the main idea of the last paragraph?
   A. Sloths the size of elephants once lived on earth.
   B. Today, sloths live in the tropical forests of Central and South America.
   C. A sloth can stick its tongue out 12 inches.
   D. It would be sad if sloths became extinct.

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5. What is one interesting *detail* from the last paragraph?

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