

me: \_\_\_\_\_ **Main Idea** \_\_\_\_\_

**Commented [AA1]:** Overall, good work!

**Directions:** Read each passage and ask yourself, "What is the author doing in this paragraph?" Write your answer in the summary box and then think of an appropriate title for the passage based on the main idea of the passage.

1. A penny for your thoughts? If it's a 1943 copper penny, it could be worth as much as fifty thousand dollars. In 1943, most pennies were made out of steel since copper was needed for World War II, so the 1943 copper penny is ultra-rare. Another rarity is the 1955 double die penny. These pennies were mistakenly double stamped, so they have overlapping dates and letters. If it's uncirculated, it'd easily fetch \$25,000 at an auction. Now that's a pretty penny.

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea. The author's main idea is how a copper penny is rare and worth so much money.**

An appropriate title: \_\_\_Worth of Copper Penny..

2. Before you put on that skeleton costume and rove door-to-door pandering for candy, take a minute to reflect on this tradition. Halloween is believed to have come from an ancient Celtic festival dating back some 2,000 years. November 1st was the Celtic New Year and marked the end of summer to the Celts. They celebrated on its eve by wearing costumes made of animal skins and dancing around bon fires. Over the next two millennia, this primitive celebration grew to be the candy fueled costume ball that we know today.

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea. The main idea is how halloween was celebrated in ancient times, and how it became just about costumes and candies after two millennia.**

An appropriate title: \_\_\_How Halloween Traditions changed Overtime.

3. When one hears the term "reality" applied to a show, one might expect that the events portrayed occurred naturally or, at the least, were not scripted. This is not always the case. Many reality shows occur in unreal environments, like rented mansions occupied by film crews. Such living environments do not reflect what most people understand to be "reality." Worse, there have been accusations that events not captured on film were later restaged by producers. Worse still, some involved in the production of "reality" television claim that the participants were urged to act out story lines premeditated by producers. With such accusations floating around, it's no wonder many people take reality TV to be about as real as the sitcom.

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea.**  
**The main idea is how reality tv shows are not reality. And it is just like any other tv sitcom.**

An appropriate title: How Real is Reality Tv?

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 the production of Tootsie Rolls. 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.**  
**The main idea is America produces ~~a lot~~ of candy as well as chocolate.**

An appropriate title: \_\_\_\_\_The Candy Production in America.

5. Screech! When a driver pushes on the brake pedal, it initiates a process that causes the vehicle to stop in motion. We literally trust braking systems with our lives every time we get into a vehicle or cross at a busy intersection. How does this life-critical process work? It begins when the pedal is pushed. At this moment brake fluid is released into the braking mechanisms. As the fluid collects, this creates a leverage, which causes a friction to be applied. This friction will create a force that will cause the wheels to stop and allow you to reach your destination safely. Beep! Beep!

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea.**  
**The main idea is how our lives are dependent on the brakes of our vehicles.**

An appropriate title: \_\_\_\_\_How the Car Brakes Work?

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. Male platypus carry a venom cocktail in their ankle spurs. This venom incapacitates victims with excruciating pain. Stranger still, the platypus is the only mammal that uses electroreception. That means that the platypus uses its bill to sense the electricity produced by the muscular movements of its prey. Electroreception is a sixth sense different from seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, or feeling. Perhaps most odd, the platypus is the only mammal that lays eggs rather than giving birth to live young. What an odd creature indeed.

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea.**  
**Perhaps the platypus is a very unique mammal.**

An appropriate title: \_\_\_\_\_ The Odd  
Platypus. \_\_\_\_\_

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.**  
**The main idea is how Yellowstone National park main location is in Wyoming, but it is still divided into different locations.**

An appropriate title: \_\_\_\_\_ The Location of Yellowstone National Park.  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Main Idea Worksheet 4

**Directions:** Read each passage and ask yourself, "What is the author doing in this paragraph?" Write your answer in the summary box and then think of an appropriate title for the passage based on the main idea of the passage.

1. It's hard to imagine what things were like before there was money, but such a time did exist. During these times people exchanged goods using the barter system. The word *barter* means to trade. People using the barter system traded things instead of buying and selling them. So if you were a rice farmer, you would trade your rice with many people to get all the things that you wanted or needed. Unfortunately, the people from whom you needed things might not want your rice. Isn't it nice to just go to the store and buy candy instead of having to trade rice for it?

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea.**  
**The main idea is how people used to live when there was no money. The trading that people used to do was called "barter".**

An appropriate title: \_\_\_\_\_ The Barter system.

2. Money is pretty old but nobody knows exactly how old it is. Perhaps the oldest evidence of people using money is in the Code of Ur-Nammu. The Code of Ur-Nammu is a system of laws written around 2050 BC. That's like 4,000 years ago! Many of Ur-Nammu's laws carry fines, such as one stating that if a man is proven innocent of sorcery, his accuser must pay 3

**Commented [2]:** You are correct in that the paragraph is discussing the concept of barter, but what is the author telling (or sharing with) you about the barter system? The author provides with you an example to convey his message also.

**Commented [3]:** Recheck this one. What is being talked about mainly in this paragraph?

shekels. This ancient document shows me two things: Ur-Nammu didn't tolerate false witch-hunts, and money is very old.

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea**  
**The author's main idea is that money is old , but how old is money? Is not known.**

An appropriate title: \_\_\_\_\_ How Old is Money.

3. One problem that the U.S. faced when rebelling against the British was currency. While under British control, colonists mainly used British paper money and foreign coins. But after forming a new nation, the Americans needed their own currency. They created Continental currency. Congress issued over 240 million Continental Dollars during the Revolution. Unfortunately, these dollars soon dropped in value. This gave rise to the popular expression, "not worth a Continental." By the end of 1778, Continentals were worth 1/5th of their face value. By 1780, they were worth 1/40th. In the 1790s, the U.S. bought back Continentals for 1% of their printed value. One reason for this decline was economic warfare. During the war the British hired artists to counterfeit Continental Dollars. Then they funneled large amounts of these counterfeit notes into the American economy. The value of the Continental Dollar crashed. When people complain about today's inflation rates, I tell them about Continentals.

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea.**  
**The author's main idea is how\_why Continental Dollars dropped in value because of economicof the economic warfare.**

An appropriate title: \_\_\_\_\_ The Continental Dollars.

4. *Hyperinflation* refers to when the value of money drops rapidly. During World War I, Germany paid for the war by borrowing. The German Mark steadily lost value as the war went on and German people could buy less and less. After losing the war, Germany was required to make large payments to the Allies. They paid all the debts that they could by printing more money. Soon the German Mark was worthless. When the war had started, the U.S. Dollar was worth around four German Marks. By November of 1923, one U.S. Dollar was worth 4,210,500,000,000 German Marks. At this point the money had more value as a fuel than as a currency, and people burned it to stay warm.

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea.**  
**The author's main idea is that because Germany borrowed money to fight World War 1. When they lost World War 1 German Mark lost value tremendously.**

An appropriate title: \_\_\_\_\_ The World War effect on German Mark.

5. Counterfeiting is the act of making phony money that looks official. It is a very old crime but recent advances in printing have made it possible for even amateurs to produce decent counterfeits. Fortunately, there are some ways that you can detect counterfeits. The first and most telling inspection is to pay attention to how the money feels. It is difficult to reproduce the texture of real money. If the money feels suspect, look carefully at the microprinting on the bill. Many features along the portrait and border of a genuine bill contain writing that is too small to reproduce in most printers. If you are still suspicious, hold the bill up to the light and look for the strip that says the value of the bill. With a little diligence, you can keep yourself from becoming a victim of this rising trend.

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea. The author's main idea is how you can be aware of counterfeits, and how you can check to tell the difference between the real money and counterfeits.**

An appropriate title: \_\_\_\_\_ Beware of Counterfeits.

6. Currencies have changed and developed over the course of history, but one of the newest forms of payment doesn't even exist in the physical world. Bitcoin is an entirely digital currency. Users of Bitcoin send payments to one another over computer networks. These payments are nonrefundable. In other words, once the money is sent, you can't get it back. The value of a Bitcoin has risen rapidly since its introduction in 2009, when each Bitcoin was worth around 30 cents. At the time of this writing, it would cost you around 7400 U.S. Dollars to get one Bitcoin. That's quite a jump. On the downside, if the value of Bitcoin ever crashes, you won't be able to heat your home by burning it.

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea. The main idea is how Bitcoin value has risen rapidly, but if Bitcoin value drops it won't be worth a penny.**

An appropriate title: \_\_\_\_\_ The Value of  
Bitcoin. \_\_\_\_\_

7. As young Americans mature into adults, they are tempted by the allure of easy credit. Credit card companies attempt to ensnare young people by giving away "free" headphones or sports towels in return for completing credit applications. Many of these young people go on to accumulate debt through undisciplined spending. They pay much more than the original loan because they are charged a high rate of interest and it takes them years to repay their debts. It is best to avoid this debt prison altogether.

Summarize this paragraph in one sentence. **Be specific and clearly explain the main idea. The author's main idea is how credit card companies attempt to trap young american adults into getting loans that are very hard for them to pay it back.**

An appropriate title: \_\_\_\_\_ How Young Americans get persuaded by  
Credit Card  
Companies. \_\_\_\_\_