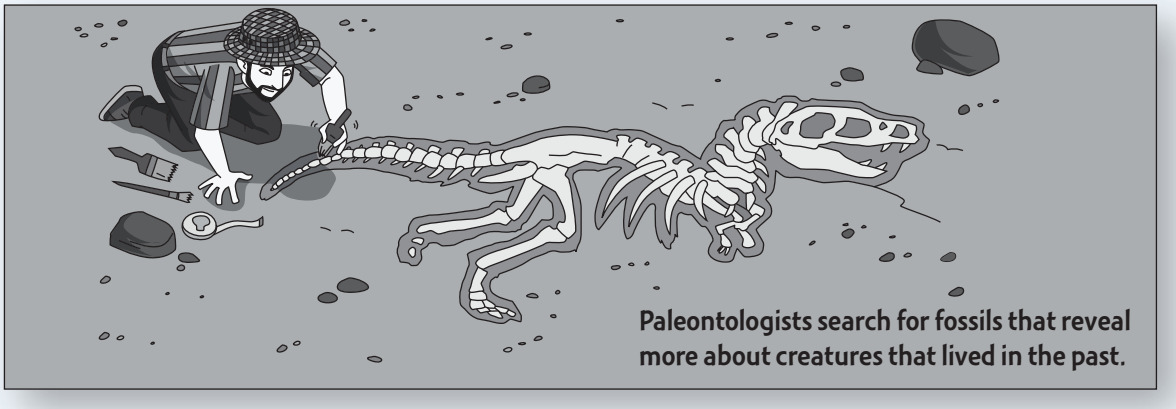
Lesson 1 Part 1: Introduction

Analyzing the Development of Central Ideas

Theme: *Careers*

As you read, do you wonder what the author is trying to tell you in the text? Try to figure out the **central idea**, or the most important point (or points) an author is trying to make about the topic. Sometimes a central idea may be stated directly, but more often it is implied. Then you must figure it out by analyzing the **supporting details**. These facts, examples, reasons, and other pieces of information are meant to explain and expand on the central idea.

Examine the cartoon below. Think about the central idea and its supporting details.



Paleontologists search for fossils that reveal more about creatures that lived in the past.

What central idea is shown? Circle parts of the picture and caption that support the central idea.

Study the web below that shows the central idea of the picture and details that support it.

Central Idea
Paleontologists help us learn about dinosaurs and our past.

Supporting Detail	Supporting Detail
The dinosaur bones show the shapes of creatures from the past.	Studying fossils reveals clues about creatures that lived in the past.

As a good reader, make sure you figure out how the supporting details work together to develop the central idea in the text. This will help you understand each important point the author wants to make.

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Read the first two paragraphs of an account about deep-sea divers.

Genre: **Social Studies Account**

Deep-Sea Treasure Hunters *by Ramona Rivera*

Deep-sea diving is a dangerous but fascinating activity. Some people dive for fun or sport, and some make a career out of hunting for sunken treasure. These types of career divers fall into one of two categories: those who want to study their discoveries and those who want to sell the treasures they find.

The divers who study sunken treasures are concerned with preservation of the sites. These divers often locate, map, and study shipwrecks. When they find a site, the divers are interested in using the information that the treasure provides to form a story about the ship that wrecked. By studying artifacts such coins or jewelry found at a site, these divers learn many things about the lives of the ship's passengers. They also learn more about the cargo and the daily lives of the sailors aboard the ship. Sometimes they even learn why the ship sank.

(continued)

Explore how to answer these questions: *"What is the central idea of paragraph 2? What details are given to support it?"*

The author describes two career paths: deep-sea treasure diving for money, and deep-sea treasure diving for gathering information. Which career path is described in paragraph 2? How do the details help you learn more about it?

Study the account to figure out the central idea and supporting details in paragraph 2. Then complete the idea web below. Add more supporting details if necessary.

Central Idea
The goal of some deep-sea divers is to . . .

Supporting Detail	Supporting Detail
The divers study artifacts, like jewelry and coins.	

Work in a group and compare your web with your classmates'. Are your supporting details similar? Discuss how you chose each detail. Revise your web as needed, but remember that your answers can vary from your classmates' and still be correct.

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Continue reading about deep-sea treasure hunters. Use the Close Reading and the Hint to help you answer the question.

Close Reading

The author mentions two central ideas in these paragraphs. **Circle** the first central idea and **underline** the second central idea.

(continued from page 4)

The deep-sea divers pursuing profit must carefully research their sites to make sure it is legal to take artifacts from the location. They must also take measures to preserve the artifacts so that they don't corrode and lose value once they are recovered. For these deep-sea divers, the measure of their success is the dollar value of the treasure they find.

Whether deep-sea divers wish to study treasure or collect it, divers must obey the laws, dive in teams, and be careful at all times. We must respect the power and mystery of our oceans if we hope to uncover their many hidden treasures.

Hint

Which choice explains more about the central idea you circled?

Circle the correct answer.

Which sentence provides a supporting detail for the idea that we must respect the oceans and their treasures?

A Some divers spend a lot of time searching for sunken treasures.

B Deep-sea diving involves a great deal of physical training.

C Divers must identify sites that are legal before they collect artifacts.

D Profit is the main motivation for some deep-sea divers.

Show Your Thinking

Explain how the supporting details given by the author develop the central idea about divers searching for profit.

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With a partner, discuss details about each of the two careers described in the account. Then analyze the author's statement in the concluding sentence of the account.

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Read the biography. Use the Study Buddy and Close Reading to guide your reading.

As I read, I'll think about the central ideas the author is telling me about Suni Williams. Why is she famous? What details about her life does the author want to share?

Close Reading

What does Suni say about why she hadn't yet become an astronaut? **Underline** the quote in paragraph 3.

Reread paragraph 1. Find and **star** (*) a sentence that gives a central idea about Suni Williams. Then **underline** sentences with details that support this idea.

Genre: **Biography**

Commander Suni Williams

by Margo Carlin

1 As 5-year-old Sunita "Suni" Williams watched Neil Armstrong's fascinating moon walk on television, she thought, "That's what I would like to do." While she never thought of moon walking as a realistic career goal, Williams' story proves that we can't always know where our path is going to lead us. If we believe in ourselves, though, we'll end up in the right place.

2 Williams' career path was far from predictable. She says she was just an "okay" high school student. Because her brother had gone to the U.S. Naval Academy, she was drawn there, too.

3 Williams graduated from the Naval Academy and trained to become a Navy helicopter test pilot. Listening to a former astronaut talk about flying a helicopter as preparation for flying a moon lander, a light bulb went on in Williams's head. It dawned on her that her helicopter training could be her ticket to space. She realized: "The only one who's telling me I'm not going to be an astronaut is me."

4 Williams eventually trained to become a member of the *International Space Station* crew, where she served as flight engineer and set a new record for women in space. Another first: She "ran" the Boston Marathon—on a space station treadmill.

5 Williams believes there is a message for young people in learning about the twists and turns that led to her space station adventure. "Maybe you want something, but you get something else. But if you make the best of it, things sorta work out."

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Hints

Which choice matches one of the central ideas from the previous page?

Which sentence tells something about Williams not believing in herself?

Which central idea did you choose in the second Close Reading activity?

Use the Hints on this page to help you answer the questions.

1 Which sentence best captures a central idea of the biography?

A Career paths are not always easy to identify and follow.

B Suni Williams did not face any difficult challenges in her career.

C The career path chosen by Suni Williams was very predictable.

D People should never change their career path.

2 Which sentence from the biography best captures a second central idea of the text?

A "She says she was just an "okay" high school student."

B "It dawned on her that her helicopter training could be her ticket to space."

C ""The only one who's telling me I'm not going to be an astronaut is me.""

D "Williams eventually trained to become a member of the *International Space Station* crew, where she served as flight engineer and set a new record for women in space."

3 Describe one central idea about Suni Williams' life. List at least three details from the text that support this idea.

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Read the biography about a famous dancer. Then answer the questions that follow.

Martha Graham: Modern Dance Innovator

by Eva Milner

1 In the world of dance, Martha Graham is a giant. A true innovator, it was she who led the way into the brave new world of modern dance, leaving behind the constraints of classical ballet. Through her work as a dancer, choreographer, and teacher, Martha has inspired both audiences and generations of dance students. Her institute, the Martha Graham Dance Company, has produced some of the finest dancers in the world today.

2 Martha Graham was born in 1894 in a small town near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Her father was a doctor who specialized in nervous disorders. He was interested in how illnesses and disorders could be revealed through the way a patient's body moved. Martha also believed in the body's ability to express what is inside. She would channel this belief through dance, not medicine, however.

3 Martha was an athletic child, but it wasn't until after seeing the ballet dancer Ruth St. Denis in her teens that she became interested in dance. Martha was so inspired by the performance that she enrolled at an arts college where she studied theater and dance. After graduating in 1916, she joined the Denishawn School, a dance company founded by Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn to teach both American dance and world dance.

4 Though Martha began her eight years at Denishawn as a student, it wasn't long before she became a teacher and one of the school's best-known performers. It was during this time that Martha costarred with Ted Shawn in "Xochital," a duet that Ted created specifically for Martha. In this ballet, Martha played the role of an Aztec maiden attacked by an Aztec emperor. Her wildly emotional performance brought her critical acclaim.

5 By 1923, however, Martha felt ready to try new things. She took a job dancing in a vaudeville show in New York City. Here Martha had the opportunity to create her own dances. While there was some room for creativity, she still had to please the audience. Soon she longed for someplace she could take her experimental dance techniques even further. Her search led her to a job teaching at the Eastman School of Music, where she had complete control over her classes and the dance program. This was her chance to truly experiment.

6 Martha felt that classical ballet focused too much on fluidity and grace and ignored deeper, darker emotions and themes. At Eastman, Martha began to use jerky, trembling movements and falls to express ideas and feelings. She developed a fresh, new method of muscle control she called "contraction and release." Through this method, a dancer creates movement by first contracting a muscle and then allowing the movement to flow as the muscle relaxes. This method of muscle control gives the dancer's motions a hard, angular look. This was a big change from the dance style found in classical ballet.

7 Audiences did not always appreciate Martha's style. They were used to the more graceful, flowing motions of ballet dancers, and Martha's choppy, angular style was shocking to them. Many reviewers criticized her for dancing in an "ugly" way. During her first performance in Paris, she and her dancers were booed by the audience.

8 In 1926, Martha formed her own dance company, the now-famous Martha Graham School for Contemporary Dance. She brought in several of her students from the Eastman school and also began

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working with Louis Horst, the musical director from her days at Denishawn. Under Horst's influence, Martha began to use music by modern composers, rather than music from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This was yet another way in which Martha's work departed from classical ballet.

9 Many of Martha's dances explored emotional and psychological themes. One example is her solo piece "Lamentation." In this dance, a grieving figure sits alone on a bench and moves to a mournful piano score. The dancer wears a tube of stretchy, purple fabric. Only the dancer's head, hands, and feet show. The movements of the dancer's body within the fabric create a sort of moving sculpture. The dancer represents the raw emotions of grief.

10 Martha was also interested in exploring social issues and political themes. Her dance "Deep Song" was a statement about the Civil War in Spain, and "Chronicle" looked at the menace of fascism and war in Europe. This second dance was created the same year Martha had turned down an invitation to the 1936 Olympic Games being held in Germany. Both the dance itself and her refusal to attend the games expressed Martha's integrity and desire to highlight important political issues.

11 Martha Graham's career spanned her entire life. Health issues forced her to quit dancing at the age of 76, but she continued teaching and creating works until her death in 1991. In her lifetime, she created 181 masterpieces of dance, which continue to inspire dancers and audiences alike.

Answer the questions. Mark your answers to questions 1–3 on the Answer Form to the right.

Answer Form

1 Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ
2 Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ
3 Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ

Number Correct ___/3

1 Study the idea web below.

Central Idea
?

Supporting Detail	Supporting Detail
Used music by modern composers	Incorporated jerky, angular movements

Which sentence completes the idea web?

A Classical ballet focused on flowing, graceful movements.

B Martha's dance style was very different from classical ballet.

C Martha was one of the best dancers in America.

D Louis Horst was the musical director at Denishawn.

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2 Which sentence **best** supports the central idea that Martha Graham was an innovator?

A "While there was some room for creativity, she still had to please the audience."

B "Her search led her to a job teaching at the Eastman School of Music, where she had complete control over her classes and the dance program."

C "She developed a fresh, new method of muscle control she called 'contraction and release.'"

D "In 1926, Martha formed her own dance company, the now-famous Martha Graham School for Contemporary Dance."

3 Which sentence could be added to **best** support the idea that Graham was an innovator?

A By 1927, Graham was working full-time as a dancer and choreographer.

B Graham was the first choreographer to fully collaborate with other modern artists.

C During the Depression in the 1930s, Graham sewed her dance costumes herself.

D Graham was given the title "Dancer of the Century" by *Time* magazine in 1998.

4 Describe the central idea of paragraphs 9 and 10. Identify at least **two** details the author used to develop that central idea.

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✓ Self Check ***Go back and see what you can check off on the Self Check on page 1.***

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