

Inside Reading Level 1
Unit 8 Skill Review: Finding the Main Idea

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Unit 8 Review Skill asks you to identify the main idea of the paragraphs from Reading 1 that describe a typical behavior of autistic children (the ones that are not specifically about Shawn).

Let's take a look at how to find the main idea. Read the paragraphs below from the Reading. The first paragraph in italics tells about Shawn's life. Think about what the example shows. This can help you to understand what the main idea of the second paragraph is.

Shawn's family goes to visit Grandma and Grandpa. Shawn, now eight, rings the doorbell, opens the door, and walks in. "Hi, Shawn," says Grandma. He ignores her and turns on the TV. "Did you get wet in the rain?" Grandpa asks. "Yes. Rain," Shawn answers.

Like most autistic children, Shawn doesn't understand how to behave appropriately in social situations, and prefers to be alone. He answers questions that people ask, but doesn't understand the give-and-take of conversation.

1. The first paragraph above shows a conversation Shawn had with his grandparents. The second paragraph describes typical behavior of autistic children. What do you think the main idea is?
 - a. Autistic children don't understand how to behave appropriately in social situations.
 - b. Autistic children prefer to be alone.

Shawn's school textbook asks this question: Which of these smells good? (a) a window (b) a flower (c) a lamp. Shawn lifts the book to his nose and sniffs. None of them smells at all, so he leaves the answer blank.

Schools usually fail to accurately assess the abilities of autistic children because classroom tasks are not appropriate for them. For instance, many autistic children are not able to link a printed word with something that is not real.

2. The first paragraph shows how Shawn tries to answer a question in his textbook at school. The second paragraph describes typical behavior of autistic children. What do you think the main idea is?
 - a. Autistic children can't link a printed word with something that isn't real.
 - b. Classroom tasks are often not appropriate for autistic children.

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Answer Key

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