Summarize a Text

Grade 4 Reading Worksheet - Challenge Me

Name _____ Date _____

Read the text. Circle the detail that could be left out of a short summary.

READ THIS FIRST

Robots on Mars

Mars is a cold, dusty planet millions of miles from Earth. No person has ever stood on its surface. Yet for more than twenty-five years, scientists have explored Mars by sending robots called rovers. Each new rover has been bigger, smarter, and better at finding clues about the planet's past.

The first rover, Sojourner, landed in 1997. It was about the size of a microwave oven. It rolled only about a hundred yards in all, never leaving sight of its landing craft. Still, it proved that a robot could drive on Mars and study rocks.

In 2004, twin rovers named Spirit and Opportunity landed on opposite sides of the planet. Each was about the size of a golf cart. Scientists hoped they would last ninety days. Instead, Spirit worked for six years, and Opportunity kept rolling for almost fifteen. Opportunity found tiny round pebbles that form in water. The pebbles showed that Mars once had water on its surface.

Driving a rover is tricky. A radio signal takes up to about twenty-four minutes to travel between Earth and Mars. If a rover were steered like a toy car, it could tip over before anyone knew. So the team sends a list of instructions once a day. The rover follows them and uses its cameras to steer around rocks.

Curiosity, which landed in 2012, is as big as a car. It carries a laser that can heat a tiny spot on a rock from twenty feet away. A camera studies the light that glows, which shows what the rock is made of. Curiosity discovered that its landing area was once the bottom of a lake. Long ago, that lake held the kind of water tiny living things need.

The newest rover, Perseverance, landed in 2021 in a dry lake bed. Its job is to look for signs that tiny life once existed there. It drills into rocks and seals samples in small metal tubes. Scientists hope a future mission will bring the tubes back to Earth.

Perseverance did not travel alone. It carried a small helicopter named Ingenuity. Flying on Mars is difficult, because the air is very thin. Ingenuity was planned for five short test flights. It flew seventy-two times, becoming the first aircraft to fly under its own power on another planet.

Each rover built on the lessons of the one before it. Together, they have turned Mars from a red dot in the sky into a place scientists know well. Someday, their discoveries may help the first human explorers decide where to land.

1. Curiosity found the bottom of an ancient lake on Mars.
   Perseverance is looking for signs of past life on Mars.
   Opportunity found pebbles that only form in water.
   Sojourner was about the size of a microwave oven.

2. Spirit and Opportunity both lasted far longer than planned.
   A radio signal can take up to 24 minutes to reach a rover.
   Ingenuity became the first aircraft to fly on another planet.
   Curiosity learned that its landing area was once a lake.

3. Perseverance searches for signs of past life on Mars.
   Curiosity has a laser that heats a spot on rocks.
   Rovers have found signs that Mars once had water long ago.
   Each rover built on the lessons of the one before it.

4. Sojourner proved that a robot could drive on Mars.
   Ingenuity was the first aircraft to fly on another planet.
   Opportunity found pebbles that form in water.
   Spirit and Opportunity landed on opposite sides of Mars.

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Answer Key - Grade 4 Reading Worksheet - Challenge Me

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