Main Idea and Summary

Grade 5 Reading Worksheet - Building Confidence

Name _____ Date _____

Circle the answer.

READ THIS FIRST

Fog Catchers in the Desert

Along the coast of Chile lies one of the driest places on Earth, the Atacama Desert. Some towns there get almost no rain for years at a time. The ground is so dry that scientists test machines for exploring Mars on its rocky land. Wells are deep, and trucks must carry in drinking water. For families in these villages, every bucket of water matters.

Yet the air above the desert is not completely dry. On many mornings, a thick fog rolls in from the Pacific Ocean. Local people call it camanchaca. The fog is made of millions of tiny water droplets. They are too small to fall as rain, so they simply drift past and disappear when the sun grows warm.

Scientists and villagers found a way to catch those drifting drops. They stretch large nets of fine plastic mesh between two tall poles. The nets face the ocean wind, like sails on a ship. As fog blows through the mesh, droplets stick to the threads. The droplets join together into bigger drops. Then they trickle down into a gutter at the bottom of the net. A pipe carries the water to a storage tank.

One large net can collect many liters of water on a foggy day. Villages use the water for drinking, washing, and small gardens. The nets are simple and cheap to build compared with trucking water across the desert.

Fog catchers are not perfect. They work only where fog is common, and the nets need repairs after strong winds. Still, people in Peru, Morocco, and other dry places now use them too. A simple net can turn passing fog into water a whole community can use.

1. Which sentence best states the main idea of the whole text?

   The Atacama Desert lies along the coast of Chile.

   Strong winds can damage the plastic fog nets.

   Nets can catch water from fog in very dry places.

2. The text has two main ideas. Which choice names them both?

   The desert badly needs water, and fog nets help collect it.

   Trucks carry water into town, and the wells in the desert are very deep.

   Fog comes from the ocean, and the sun warms the desert.

3. Which detail best supports the idea that water is scarce in the Atacama?

Local people call the morning fog camanchaca.

Some towns get almost no rain for years at a time.

The nets face the ocean wind like sails on a ship.

4. Which detail explains how the nets collect water?

A thick fog rolls in from the Pacific on many mornings.

Droplets stick to the threads and join into bigger drops.

People in Peru and Morocco now use the nets too.

5. Which detail is too minor to include in a short summary?

Local people call the fog camanchaca.

Some desert towns get almost no rain.

Fog nets turn drifting droplets into water.

6. Why does the fog not water the desert on its own?

The wind blows it back out to sea at once.

It comes only once or twice a year.

Its droplets are too small to fall as rain.

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Answer Key - Grade 5 Reading Worksheet - Building Confidence

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