The Missing Signal

Find the events that belong in an objective summary.

6.RL.2.b "Provide an objective summary of the text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the main problem, number three important attempts or changes that move the story forward, and circle the outcome. Use your marks to plan an objective summary.

The Starting Paddle

1. On the morning of the town's boat race, Mara found the wooden starting paddle wedged beneath the dock. The paddle had slipped from its hook during the night, and without it the race organizer could not signal the boats to begin. Mara reached down, but the rising river pulled the paddle beyond her fingers. Her younger brother Eli suggested using the long pole from their small fishing boat. While the racers gathered upstream, the two carried the pole to the dock and tried to draw the paddle closer.

2. The pole reached the paddle, but each time Mara pushed, the current turned it sideways. Eli noticed a rope tied to an empty bucket on the dock. He lowered the bucket into the water while Mara guided the paddle toward it with the pole. On their third try, the paddle slid into the bucket, and Eli began hauling it up. The wet rope scraped his hands. Halfway to the dock, the bucket tipped, and the paddle dropped back into the river.

3. Mara watched the paddle drift toward a bend where fallen branches crowded the bank. She and Eli ran along the shore, staying clear of the fast water. At the bend, the branches trapped the paddle within reach of the pole. Mara pulled it onto the grass, and they brought it to the organizer. He checked that the paddle was sound, then raised it to start the race. Mara and Eli stood on the bank as the boats moved downstream. The organizer hung the paddle on a higher hook afterward.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In one sentence, state the main problem a summary of this story must include.

2. Which belongs in a summary: the bucket attempt or the rope scraping Eli's hands? Explain what happened in the event you chose.

3. How did the bend in the river change Mara and Eli's effort to recover the paddle? State only what the text shows.

4. Which ending matters more in a summary: the organizer starts the race or Mara and Eli watch the boats? Explain your choice.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three- or four-sentence objective summary of the whole story. Include the problem, the key efforts to solve it, and the outcome without adding your opinion or minor details.

ANSWER KEY

The Missing Signal

GRADE 6 · 6.RL.2.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the main problem, number three important attempts or changes that move the story forward, and circle the outcome. Use your marks to plan an objective summary. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In one sentence, state the main problem a summary of this story must include.	**The starting paddle falls into the river, so the organizer cannot start the boat race.**
2	Which belongs in a summary: the bucket attempt or the rope scraping Eli's hands? Explain what happened in the event you chose.	**The bucket attempt belongs because the bucket tipped and the paddle fell back into the river.**
3	How did the bend in the river change Mara and Eli's effort to recover the paddle? State only what the text shows.	**Branches at the bend trapped the paddle within reach of the pole, allowing Mara to pull it onto the grass.**
4	Which ending matters more in a summary: the organizer starts the race or Mara and Eli watch the boats? Explain your choice.	**The organizer starts the race. This resolves the main problem, while watching the boats is a minor detail.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Before a town boat race, Mara finds that the starting paddle has fallen into the river, leaving the organizer unable to start the race. She and Eli try to retrieve it with a pole and a bucket, but the paddle slips away. When branches catch it downstream, Mara pulls it onto the bank, and the organizer uses it to start the race.

Accept summaries that accurately cover the problem, important retrieval efforts, and resolution in neutral language. Students may omit one failed attempt if the main sequence remains clear.