Topic Sentence Detectives

Find how a clear first sentence guides each paragraph.

3.W.2.A.i "Engage in writing as a process to compose a well-developed paragraph. This includes: Writing a clear topic sentence focusing on a main idea."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one sentence in each paragraph that tells what the whole paragraph is mostly about. This is the topic sentence, and it helps the reader know what details to expect.

Our School Garden

1. The school garden gives students fresh vegetables to taste and share. In spring, classes plant lettuce, beans, and tomatoes in raised beds. Students water the plants and pull weeds each week. When vegetables are ready, children pick them carefully. Some food goes to the cafeteria, and some is sent home with families. The garden turns a small patch of ground into helpful food.

2. The garden is also an outdoor classroom where students can study living things. A science group watches a bean seed split open and grow roots. Another group measures a sunflower each Friday and records its height. Students notice that plants need sunlight, water, air, and space. By working in the beds, they learn lessons that are hard to see in a book.

3. The garden gives small animals a safer place to live. Bees visit the flowers to gather nectar and pollen. Butterflies rest on warm leaves, and earthworms move through the soil. A shallow dish of water can help thirsty insects on hot days. Students must watch gently and leave the animals where they belong. These careful choices help the garden stay busy and healthy.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Write the topic sentence from paragraph 2.

2. What main idea does the topic sentence in paragraph 1 introduce?

3. Write two details from paragraph 2 that support its topic sentence.

4. How do the details in paragraph 3 support its topic sentence?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose one activity you do at school. Write a four-sentence paragraph about it. Start with a clear topic sentence, then add at least two detail sentences that explain your main idea.

ANSWER KEY

Topic Sentence Detectives

GRADE 3 · 3.W.2.A.i

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one sentence in each paragraph that tells what the whole paragraph is mostly about. This is the topic sentence, and it helps the reader know what details to expect. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Write the topic sentence from paragraph 2.	**The garden is also an outdoor classroom where students can study living things.**
2	What main idea does the topic sentence in paragraph 1 introduce?	**The school garden gives students fresh vegetables to taste and share.**
3	Write two details from paragraph 2 that support its topic sentence.	**Students watch a bean seed grow roots, and they measure a sunflower each Friday and record its height.**
4	How do the details in paragraph 3 support its topic sentence?	**They give examples of animals using the garden, including bees gathering nectar, butterflies resting, and earthworms moving through the soil.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Reading with a buddy can make a school day better. My buddy and I take turns reading a funny story. We help each other sound out tricky words. Sharing books makes reading time more enjoyable.

For the writing task, accept varied topics when the first sentence states one clear main idea and the following details support it.