

Finding the Main Idea Little Women

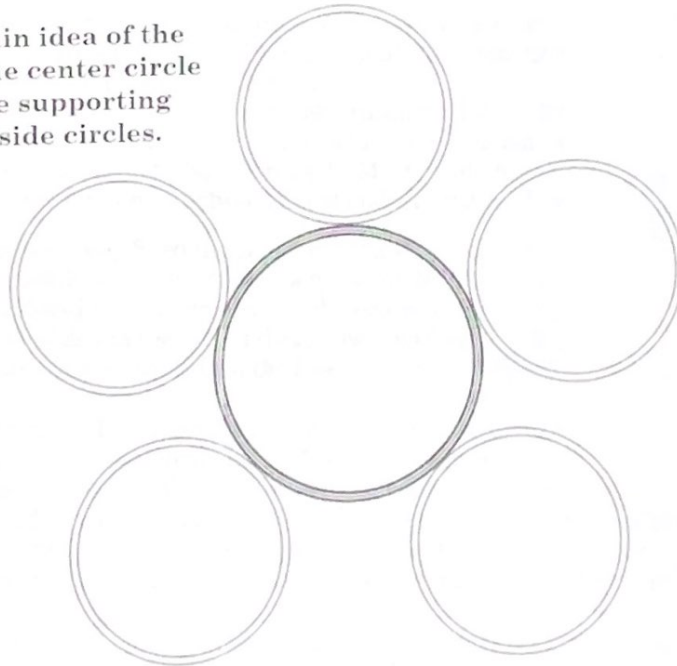
by Louisa May Alcott

Little Women tells the story of the four March sisters as they grow up during the Civil War. The sisters make friends with their neighbor, Laurie, a wealthy young man who lives with his grandfather.

Chapter 13 Castles in the Air

Laurie lay luxuriously swinging to and fro in his hammock one warm September afternoon, wondering what his neighbors were about, but too lazy to go and find out. He was in one of his moods, for the day had been both unprofitable and unsatisfactory, and he was wishing he could live it over again. The hot weather made him indolent, and he had shirked his studies, tried Mr. Brooke's patience to the utmost, displeased his grandfather by practicing half the afternoon, frightened the maidservants half out of their wits by mischievously hinting that one of his dogs was going mad, and, after high words with the stableman about some fancied neglect of his horse, he had flung himself into his hammock to fume over the stupidity of the world in general, till the peace of the lovely day quieted him in spite of himself. Staring up into the green gloom of the horse-chestnut trees above him, he dreamed dreams of all sorts, and was just imagining himself tossing on the ocean in a voyage round the world, when the sound of voices brought him ashore in a flash. Peeping through the meshes of the hammock, he saw the Marches coming out, as if bound on some expedition.

Write the main idea of the paragraph in the center circle below. Write the supporting ideas in the outside circles.



D2. 8th Grade Science

The Permian extinction: When life nearly came to an end



Image 1. Fin-back Lizards found in Texas. These type of specimens, *Dimetrodon incisivus* and the related genus, *Naosaurus claviger* (Cope), are from the Permian (Paleozoic age) of Texas. The skeletons found vary from three to ten feet in length, and are among the earliest forms of saurian life in the Triassic. Image from Bettmann/Getty

"Welcome to the Black Triangle," said paleobiologist Cindy Looy. Our van slowed to a stop in the gentle hills of the Czech Republic. The Black Triangle gets its name from the coal burned by nearby powerplants. Decades of acid rain from power-plant emissions have devastated the region's ecosystems.

For months I'd been on the trail of the greatest natural disaster in Earth's history. About 250 million years ago, at the end of the Permian period, something killed off 90 percent of the planet's species. Less than 5 percent of the animal species in the seas survived. On land nearly all the trees died. Looy had told me that the Black Triangle was the best place today to see what the world would have looked like after the Permian extinction.

We saw the first signs of death as we walked into the hills — hundreds of fallen logs lay hidden in the undergrowth. No birds called, no insects hummed. The only sound was the wind through the weeds.


"The forest that grew here a few decades ago contained dozens of species of plants," said Looy.

"Now there are only a few grassy species." Still, I was surprised by how healthy and green the hills appeared.


Looy believes that the Permian extinction was caused by acid rain following a massive release of volcanic gases. She is like a homicide detective studying pollen and pine cones for clues about what happened millions of years earlier. "You could say we're working on the greatest murder mystery of all time," she said.

Who dunnit? Looy is one of many scientists on the case. They are trying to identify the killer responsible for the largest mass extinction that has struck the planet. To understand this extinction, I wanted to get a sense of its scale — and for that, I had to go to South Africa.

I joined Roger Smith, a paleontologist at the South African Museum, and we drove across a treeless stretch of land known as the Karoo. If we had driven here before the Permian extinction, we would have seen animals as abundant and varied as in today's Serengeti. Most would have belonged to a group known as synapsids. They looked like a cross between a dog and a lizard, and for more than 60 million years they were

Earth's dominant land vertebrates. They filled the same ecological space as their successors, the dinosaurs.  Smith slowed, rolled down the window, and pointed to a horizontally banded cliff. "See that road cut?" he asked. He explains the fossil record here reveals the transition between the Permian and Triassic periods. The fossils embedded in the rock indicate that synapsids took a savage hit at the end of the Permian. Their remains are abundant on the lower layers, but higher up they dwindle and disappear.

Plants were also hit by the extinction. To see evidence of the destruction of the world's forests I travel to the Italian Alps. I joined a research team led by Henk Visscher of the University of Utrecht. We visited exposed fossil beds revealing the transition from the Permian to the Triassic. Here researchers showed me evidence of a great die-off of trees. The older, lower levels of the fossil record contain a great deal of pollen from conifers from before the extinction event. In rocks from the Permo-Triassic boundary, however, the pollen has disappeared, replaced by fossilized

 "We think it's a wood-decaying fungus," says Looy, who works with Visscher. "When a tree dies, it falls. As it decays, fungi grow into it from spores on the ground, decomposing it." Visscher's team has found elevated levels of fungal remains in Permo-Triassic rocks from all over the world. Their conclusion: Nearly all the world's trees died suddenly.

Evidence of the Permian catastrophe is abundant and clear, but what was the culprit? Researchers are looking for clues in the geology and chemistry of Earth and its oceans.

Prime Suspects Gregory Retallack is a geologist at the University of Oregon. His prime suspect for the Permian extinction is an asteroid smashing into the Earth. A team of researchers recently found what may be that impact's footprint below Australia: a 75-mile-wide crater. The impact would have sent billions of particles into the atmosphere, Retallack says, blocking out the sun for months. Temperatures would have dropped, killing plants and photosynthetic plankton, the base of the food chain. Herbivores would have starved, as would the carnivores that feed on plant-eaters.

Other Permian detectives suspect the killer oozed up from the sea. For years scientists have known that the deep ocean lacked oxygen in the late Permian. Most life is concentrated in shallow water, in places like reefs. In 1996, English geologists Paul Wignall and Richard Twitchett reported evidence of oxygen depletion, or anoxia, in rocks that formed under shallow water at the time of the extinction. For whatever reason, ocean currents may have stopped circulating. Anoxic water could have built up and smothered marine life.

Another leading suspect is a deadly period of volcanic activity. Eruptions would have spread a miles-deep layer of lava across Siberia. As volcanic gases poured into the skies, they would have generated acid rain. Particles would have blocked sunlight and cooled the planet. Glaciation would have reduced the volume of water in the ocean, storing it as ice. Sea level would have dropped, killing marine life and severely reducing diversity on sea and land.

The Truth May Be Untidy Each scientist I met left me thinking that he or she was a clue or two away from solving the crime. However, as Doug Erwin of the Smithsonian cautioned me, "the truth is sometimes untidy." Erwin suspects there may have been multiple killers at the end of the Permian. Maybe everything — volcanic eruptions, an asteroid impact and oxygen-starved oceans — went wrong at once.

Now humanity is creating a new mass extinction, wiping out countless species. Will life be as resilient this time? I think about what I have learned in my research. I conclude that if life can survive the Permian extinction, it can survive anything.

Quiz

1 Read the following paragraph from the introduction [paragraphs 1-5].

"Welcome to the Black Triangle," said paleobiologist Cindy Looy. Our van slowed to a stop in the gentle hills of the Czech Republic. The Black Triangle gets its name from the coal burned by nearby power plants. Decades of acid rain from power-plant emissions have devastated the region's ecosystems.

Which of the following words, if it replaced "devastated" in the paragraph above, would CHANGE the meaning of the paragraph?

- (A) ruined
- (B) wrecked
- (C) destroyed
- (D) reorganized

2 Read the following selection from the section "Whodunnit?"

Evidence of the Permian catastrophe is abundant and clear, but what was the culprit? Researchers are looking for clues in the geology and chemistry of Earth and its oceans.

What is the definition of "culprit" as it is used in the selection?

- (A) the person responsible for studying the Permian extinction
- (B) the way to have avoided the Permian extinction
- (C) the thing responsible for causing the Permian extinction
- (D) the long-term effect of the Permian extinction

3 How does the introduction [paragraphs 1-5] relate to the section "Prime Suspects"?

- (A) The introduction introduces a theory about an asteroid impact, and the section "Prime Suspects" elaborates on that theory.
- (B) The introduction introduces a theory about volcanic gases, and the section "Prime Suspects" elaborates on that theory.
- (C) Both sections summarize the various theories that scientists have about what led to the Permian extinction.
- (D) Both sections highlight the theory that multiple factors led to the Permian extinction.

4 Read the section "The Truth May Be Untidy."

What does this section show that other sections DO NOT?

- (A) an opinion of a Permian extinction expert
- (B) a description of the author's experience with studying mass extinction
- (C) a description of the Permian extinction's prime suspects
- (D) a prediction about the impact of a future extinction event

DAY 2

Return to Art, P.E., Computer
or Practical Living Teacher



Create a journal for today, documenting the time you spend online. See the example below: Add up your total time. Were you surprised at how much time you spent online? Why or why not? ***NOTE: If you do not have internet, document your time using technology (tv, apps, CD players, etc.)

Min(s) Activity (example below)

10	Checking messages on FB	

DAY 2



Lesson Practice

Choose the correct answer.

1. Which symbol makes this sentence true?

$$-\sqrt{7} \bigcirc -3.5$$

- A. $>$
 B. $<$
 C. $=$
 D. $+$

2. Which symbol makes this sentence true?

$$\sqrt{2} \bigcirc 1.7320508\dots$$

- A. $>$
 B. $<$
 C. $=$
 D. $+$

3. Which symbol makes this sentence true?

$$\pi \bigcirc \frac{28}{9}$$

- A. $>$
 B. $<$
 C. $=$
 D. $+$

4. Which number goes in the blank to make this sentence true?

$$\sqrt{10} > \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

- A. 3.5
 B. $3\frac{2}{5}$
 C. 31%
 D. $3\frac{1}{4}$

5. Which set of numbers is ordered from least to greatest?

- A. 27%, 2.75, $\sqrt{2}$, $2\frac{7}{9}$
 B. 27%, $\sqrt{2}$, 2.75, $2\frac{7}{9}$
 C. $\sqrt{2}$, $2\frac{7}{9}$, 2.75, 27%
 D. $2\frac{7}{9}$, 2.75, $\sqrt{2}$, 27%

6. Which set of numbers is ordered from greatest to least?

- A. π , $32\frac{2}{3}\%$, $\frac{7}{3}$, $\sqrt{6}$
 B. π , $\sqrt{6}$, $\frac{7}{3}$, $32\frac{2}{3}\%$
 C. $\sqrt{6}$, $32\frac{2}{3}\%$, $\frac{7}{3}$, π
 D. $\frac{7}{3}$, π , $32\frac{2}{3}\%$, $\sqrt{6}$

7. Which set of numbers is ordered from least to greatest?

- A. $\frac{9}{11}$, -0.9 , 95% , $-\sqrt{1}$
- B. -0.9 , $-\sqrt{1}$, $\frac{9}{11}$, 95%
- C. $-\sqrt{1}$, -0.9 , 95% , $\frac{9}{11}$
- D. $-\sqrt{1}$, -0.9 , $\frac{9}{11}$, 95%

8. Which number goes in the blank to make this sentence true?

$$\frac{5}{6} < \underline{\hspace{1cm}} < 85\%$$

- A. π
- B. $\sqrt{64}$
- C. 0.84
- D. 83%

9. Consider the three irrational numbers below.

$$\sqrt{11}, \pi, 3.741657\dots$$

A. Estimate the value of each number as a decimal to the nearest tenth, showing each step in the process.

B. Order the original numbers from least to greatest. Explain your reasoning.

Day 2: Grade 8 Social Studies NT1

Life in Sumerian Times in Mesopotamia

Ancient Sumer was a culture of many firsts. It invented the first writing system, the first plow and the first sailboat. Sumerians even created the first lunar calendar.

The city-states of Sumer began on the flood plains of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in what is now Iraq. The Sumerians began building their walled cities around 3500 B.C., about 5,500 years ago. They dominated the region for about 1,500 years until they were conquered by the Babylonians, another ancient people. Sumerian culture and technology did not disappear, but were adopted by the Babylonians.

Sumer was located in what the ancient Greeks called Mesopotamia, which literally means "the land between the rivers." It was a collection of independent cities in the southernmost portion of Mesopotamia, the land which lay between the Tigris and Euphrates. Most Sumerian cities were located on the banks of the two rivers.

The geographic environment has remained relatively the same for about 10,000 years. The landscape is flat and marshy. The ground is primarily made up of sand and silt, with no rock. The climate is very dry, with only about 17 centimeters of rain falling per year. Natural vegetation is sparse, and only palm trees grow there. The rivers overflow their banks in the spring, sometimes violently and destructively. During the flooding, they deposit a rich layer of silt on the surrounding floodplain.

The cradle of civilization

Considering the harsh environment, how did the first civilization arise in Sumer? Surprisingly, it was part of what made civilization possible.

The silt carried by the rivers provided rich fertilizer for growing crops. The constant sunshine was also good for crops. Without water, they would have easily dried up and died. The priest-kings of Sumer organized farmers in each city-state to build extensive irrigation systems of canals and dams. Before long, the desert was blooming with an abundance of barley, dates and other crops.

This surplus food allowed many people to work in occupations other than farming, while still being able to meet their basic needs. People became artisans, merchants and craftspeople. They helped build the cities and increase the wealth of the city-states through trade with neighboring societies. Sumerians also developed high-quality crafts. Evidence of this was found in the royal tombs of Ur. Trade also helped the Sumerians to secure vital items. They were able to import timber from Lebanon and luxury goods, such as the gemstone lapis lazuli from the Indus River Valley.

A writing system

Because of the extra grain, the government could grow large enough to employ many officials and priests. It could also pay thousands of workers with barley to build canals, city walls and ziggurats, large buildings with flat roofs used as religious temples. It also paid them to fight other city-states. The barley was collected as a tax from the farmers. Farmers were also required to give some time to the government to work on projects. Slaves and hired workers also were used.

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A drawing of the reconstruction of Great Ziggurat of Ur in 1938. [Click to enlarge]
As the government and economy grew larger and more complex, officials and merchants required a sophisticated writing system to record goods and purchases. First came number markings. Then simple pictograms began to incorporate pictures representing a physical object or idea. A picture of the sun, for instance, stood for the sun.

As trade and government became busier, the writing system began to incorporate more abstract pictograms and phonograms, or symbols representing sounds. These new forms were more flexible and quicker to write. They were used by other cultures who did not even speak Sumerian.

Sumerian wisdom

The Sumerians wrote on clay tablets using a reed pen called a stylus. Once dried, these tablets became hard. Fortunately for today's researchers, they endured for thousands of years in the hot, dry climate. A Sumerian tablet that is a bill of sale for a male slave and a building in Shuruppak, an ancient Sumerian city. [Click to enlarge]

Thousands of these tablets have been unearthed. Some libraries have even been discovered with more than 10,000 of these clay tablets. The vast majority of these tablets contain records of goods collected and distributed by the governments, and trade records. However, some contain myths, stories and letters. These documents have provided much information about the culture and history of the Sumerian people.

The Sumerian people also were the first people to use the plow to lift the silt-laden soil of their crop fields, and they invented the sailboat. They were the first people to design a calendar based on the phase of the moon. They also developed a numerical system based on the number 60 that is still used to measure seconds and minutes.

The Sumerians led the way for other societies that followed them.

Answer the following and return to either Mr. Maynard or Mr. Stamm

Day 2

1. Read the conclusion below.

As the Sumerian civilization grew, long-distance trade expanded.

Which sentence from the article provides the BEST support to the statement above?

- a. They helped build the cities and increase the wealth of the city-states through trade with neighboring societies.
- b. Trade also helped the Sumerians to secure vital items.
- c. They were able to import timber from Lebanon and luxury goods, such as the gemstone lapis lazuli from the Indus River Valley.
- d. The vast majority of these tablets contain records of goods collected and distributed by the governments, and trade records.

2. What are the factors that helped the Sumerian cities grow into a great civilization?

- a. the ability to communicate in writing; the development of an accurate calendar that could predict seasonal patterns and favorable planting conditions
- b. its targeted domination of other cultures and people in the region for 1,500 years; the development of a system of taxation that paid for government buildings and services
- c. the development of specialized occupations that increased wealth, trade, and the role of government; the development of cultural and technical inventions
- d. its location in a region that has many natural resources; the extensive floodplain that could be used for farming and building cities

3. Which of the following MOST influenced the development of a sophisticated writing system?

- a. the need to keep accurate records and communicate complex ideas
- b. the need to record myths and origin stories of the Sumerian people
- c. the need to trade with cultures who spoke other languages
- d. the need to empower priest-kings in Sumerian government

4. Significance: Why is the event described in the article taught in schools today? What are the lasting lessons that we can learn from studying this event? Support your response with evidence from the text.

NTI Day 2 - Writing - Grade 8, Enix

Practicing Writing Dialogue

Situation: Imagine two students, Margot and Elliot, both age 13, are angry with each other. What might they be upset about? What might they say to each other if they are forced to confront the other?

Read Elliot's opening line, "Why are you glaring at me?"

Directions: Read the situation above and write 7 lines of dialogue between Margot and Elliot where they talk about what is frustrating them. Make sure to use the punctuation rules in the NTI Day 1 assignment to correctly punctuate your exchange.

Elliot: "Why are you glaring at me?"

1. Margot: "
2. Elliot: "
3. Margot: "
4. Elliot: "
5. Margot: "
6. Elliot: "
7. Margot: "