

Central Idea and Objective Summary in Nonfiction

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 10



Quick Review

The central idea is the big point the **WHOLE** article makes — not a topic word like "sleep" and not one supporting detail. An objective summary names the central idea and key details without adding your opinion ("sadly," "the most exciting part," "obviously").

PART 1 — READ

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

Why Teenagers Are Wired to Stay Up Late

For decades, parents have argued with their teenage children about bedtime, often assuming that staying up late is simply a bad habit. Recent research from sleep scientists tells a more complicated story. Around the start of puberty, the human brain begins to release a hormone called melatonin about two hours later in the evening than it does in younger children or adults. Melatonin is the body's signal to feel sleepy. Because the signal arrives late, a healthy thirteen-year-old often cannot fall asleep before about eleven o'clock — even if she goes to bed at nine and turns off her phone.

Sleep itself, meanwhile, becomes more important during the teenage years, not less. The brain rewires rapidly between ages eleven and seventeen, strengthening connections used during the day and pruning the ones that go unused. Most of that work happens during deep sleep. Sleep researchers at the University of Minnesota studied more than 9,000 students and found that those who slept fewer than seven hours per night earned significantly lower grades, reported more sadness, and were more than twice as likely to be in a car crash within six months of getting their license.

These findings have led a small but growing number of school districts to push first-period classes later in the morning. When the Edina, Minnesota, district moved its high-school start time from 7:25 to 8:30 in 1996, attendance improved, grades rose modestly, and the rate of reported teenage car crashes in the district dropped. Other districts have reported similar results. Changing start times is not simple — it affects bus schedules, parents' work hours, and after-school sports — but the science behind the change is clear. Teenagers are not lazy. Their bodies are running on a different clock than the school bell, and when schools adjust, students benefit.

PART 2 — PRACTICE

Read the article. Then choose the best answer for each question.



1. Which sentence BEST states the central idea of the whole article?
 - A. Teenagers should always try to go to bed earlier than they do.
 - B. Melatonin is a hormone that makes people feel sleepy.
 - C. Biological changes shift teenagers' sleep schedules later, so later school start times help students learn, stay healthy, and stay safer.
 - D. The Edina, Minnesota, school district was the first to change its start time.
2. Which idea is a SUPPORTING detail, NOT the central idea?
 - A. Most brain rewiring during adolescence happens during deep sleep.
 - B. Biology, not laziness, is the main reason teenagers cannot fall asleep early.
 - C. Aligning school schedules with teenage biology measurably helps students.
 - D. Teenagers need enough sleep to learn, feel well, and drive safely.
3. Which sentence BEST states the central idea of paragraph 2 only?
 - A. Sleep researchers at the University of Minnesota studied 9,000 students.
 - B. Teenagers who do not sleep enough do worse in school, feel sadder, and crash cars more often.
 - C. Sleep is not as important during the teenage years as it is in childhood.
 - D. Pruning unused brain connections happens mostly during the day.
4. Which detail BEST supports the claim that later start times can improve student safety?
 - A. "Attendance improved, grades rose modestly, and the rate of reported teenage car crashes in the district dropped."
 - B. "Most of that work happens during deep sleep."
 - C. "Melatonin is the body's signal to feel sleepy."
 - D. "It affects bus schedules, parents' work hours, and after-school sports."
5. Which sentence would NOT belong in an OBJECTIVE summary of the article?
 - A. Teenagers' brains release melatonin about two hours later than children's and adults' do.
 - B. Studies link short sleep in teens to lower grades and higher crash rates.
 - C. Some school districts have moved start times later, and outcomes improved.
 - D. Luckily, this finally proves that exhausted teenagers were right all along.
6. Which is the BEST one-sentence summary of the WHOLE article?
 - A. Edina, Minnesota, changed its high-school start time in 1996.
 - B. Teenagers stay up late because their brains release melatonin later, and they learn, feel, and drive better when schools adjust to that biology.
 - C. Sleep is important because the brain rewires connections at night.
 - D. Most teenagers go to bed too late and should put their phones away.



7. The author mentions the Edina, Minnesota, change MAINLY to —
- A. prove that one district is more important than the rest.
 - B. show a real example of the science being applied with measurable results.
 - C. argue that all schools should start at exactly 8:30 a.m.
 - D. describe how confusing it is to change bus schedules.
8. Which detail BEST belongs in a summary because it represents MULTIPLE key points at once?
- A. Melatonin is a hormone.
 - B. Edina is in Minnesota.
 - C. Teenagers' biology runs on a later clock than the school bell, and changing start times improves real student outcomes.
 - D. After-school sports are sometimes affected by start-time changes.
9. In your own words, write a TWO-sentence OBJECTIVE summary of the article. The first sentence should name the central idea; the second should add the strongest supporting evidence.

10. Which sentence is the BEST evidence that teenagers' late bedtimes are NOT simply a bad habit?
- A. "Parents have argued with their teenage children about bedtime."
 - B. "Around the start of puberty, the human brain begins to release melatonin about two hours later in the evening than it does in younger children or adults."
 - C. "Changing start times is not simple."
 - D. "The Edina, Minnesota, district moved its start time from 7:25 to 8:30 in 1996."



Answer Keys

- 1 A B C D
- 2 A B C D
- 3 A B C D
- 4 A B C D
- 5 A B C D


- 6 A B C D
- 7 A B C D
- 8 A B C D
- 9
- 10 A B C D

Explanations

1. C	C names the science (shifted schedule), the response (later starts), and the outcomes (learning, health, safety) — the article's full point. A is the OPPOSITE of the science the article presents. B is a single fact, not the central idea. D is one historical example mistaken for the main point.
2. A	A is a specific scientific fact that supports a bigger point — exactly what a detail is. B, C, and D each state one of the article's broad claims. A student who picks B, C, or D is confusing big claims with the support that proves them.
3. B	B captures the three measurable harms paragraph 2 lists. A is a research detail, not the paragraph's point. C contradicts the passage. D reverses a fact (pruning happens during deep sleep, not the day).
4. A	A names the crash-rate drop — direct safety evidence. B is about brain rewiring; not safety. C defines a hormone. D lists obstacles, the opposite of a benefit.
5. D	"Luckily" and "right all along" insert the writer's feelings — exactly what objective means to avoid. A, B, and C are factual summary sentences.
6. B	B names cause (late melatonin) and consequence (academic, emotional, safety improvements when schools adjust). A is one example. C is one paragraph only. D imposes an opinion the article does not make.
7. B	Edina is offered as evidence — the science worked in a real case. A overstates the example. C reads a specific recommendation into the text. D mistakes a side mention for the purpose.
8. C	C links the cause (biology) AND the effect (improved outcomes) — covering two of the article's main claims. A is a single definition. B is a location. D is one obstacle, not a key claim.
9.	Answer: Sample answer: Sentence 1 — Teenagers stay up late because of biology, not laziness, and adjusting school schedules to match that biology helps them. Sentence 2 — Research links short teen sleep to lower grades, more sadness, and higher car-crash rates, and districts that have moved start times later have seen attendance, grades, and safety improve. Acceptable variations: any pairing that combines the biology cause with the school-schedule outcome. NOT acceptable: summaries that include opinion words ("luckily," "finally," "sadly," "the best part"); summaries that name only the melatonin fact; summaries that copy sentences from the article word for word. A 2-point answer (1) names the cause (biology) and the effect (later schedules help) AND (2) is opinion-free.
10. B	B names a measured biological cause — a habit-vs-biology distinction the question asks about. A describes arguments, not biology. C names a logistical problem. D is one historical event.



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