

Two or More Central Ideas and Their Development

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 10



Quick Review

A Grade 7 nonfiction article often develops TWO or more central ideas at once — for example, a cause AND a response, or a benefit AND a cost. An objective summary names both ideas and the key supporting evidence, without inserting opinion words such as "sadly," "the best part," or "obviously."

PART 1 — READ

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

The Return of the American Bison

In the early 1800s, an estimated thirty to sixty million American bison roamed the grasslands between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains. By 1889, after a century of commercial hunting and government policies aimed at displacing Native nations who depended on the animal, fewer than 1,100 wild bison remained. The species came closer to extinction than almost any large mammal in North American history. The story of the bison's near-disappearance is, in part, a story about how quickly a keystone species can be removed from a landscape it has shaped for ten thousand years.

The story of the bison's recovery, however, is a different kind of story — one about how slowly such a species comes back, and about who is doing the work. Beginning in the 1880s, a small group of ranchers, conservationists, and Native leaders began protecting the last surviving herds. The American Bison Society, founded in 1905, helped move animals from private herds into the new Yellowstone and Wind Cave preserves. By 2024, the wild and herded population had grown to roughly 400,000 — a recovery in numbers, but only a fraction of what once existed and on less than one percent of the original range. More recently, the InterTribal Buffalo Council, which represents more than eighty Native nations, has led the return of bison to tribal lands, treating restoration as both an ecological project and a cultural one.

These two ideas — the speed of loss and the slowness of return — sit at the center of the bison's story, and biologists argue they should sit at the center of how the public understands conservation in general. A grassland can be emptied in a generation but takes many generations to refill, in part because a returning species is not just an animal: it is a relationship with soil, plant life, predators, and the people who manage the land. The bison are coming back. The bigger lesson is that no recovery is automatic, and the work of rebuilding what was lost rarely makes the same headlines as the loss itself.

PART 2 — PRACTICE

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



1. Which choice BEST states TWO central ideas the article develops together?
 - A. The bison is a large mammal AND grasslands cover much of North America.
 - B. A keystone species can be removed quickly, AND restoring it is a slow, ongoing project led in part by Native nations.
 - C. Yellowstone was founded in the 1880s, AND it is the most famous national park.
 - D. Bison are dangerous animals, AND tourists should keep their distance.
2. A student writes that the article's central idea is "that the bison almost went extinct." This summary is INCOMPLETE because it —
 - A. uses too many quotations from the text.
 - B. leaves out the second central idea about the slow, ongoing recovery and who leads it.
 - C. includes the writer's personal opinion.
 - D. focuses too much on Native nations.
3. Which sentence BEST states the central idea of paragraph 2 ALONE?
 - A. Bison populations were once in the tens of millions.
 - B. Recovery has been a long, multi-group effort that has restored numbers but not range.
 - C. The American Bison Society was founded in 1905.
 - D. Yellowstone is a national park in Wyoming.
4. Which sentence would NOT belong in an OBJECTIVE summary of the article?
 - A. By 1889, fewer than 1,100 wild bison remained.
 - B. By 2024, the population had grown to roughly 400,000, on less than one percent of the original range.
 - C. The InterTribal Buffalo Council has led restoration of bison to tribal lands.
 - D. Thankfully, this proves that Americans have finally learned to care about wildlife.
5. Which detail BEST supports the central idea that recovery is NOT just about animal numbers?
 - A. "By 2024, the wild and herded population had grown to roughly 400,000."
 - B. "A returning species is not just an animal: it is a relationship with soil, plant life, predators, and the people who manage the land."
 - C. "In the early 1800s, an estimated thirty to sixty million American bison roamed the grasslands."
 - D. "The American Bison Society was founded in 1905."
6. Which is the BEST one-sentence summary of the WHOLE article?
 - A. The American bison nearly went extinct in the 1800s but is now safe.
 - B. Bison numbers fell catastrophically by 1889, and a slow, multi-group recovery — including leadership from Native nations — has rebuilt the population but not the range it once filled.
 - C. The bison is North America's most important animal.
 - D. Yellowstone and Wind Cave are the most important parks for bison.



7. The author writes that the recovery story is "one about how slowly such a species comes back, AND about who is doing the work." This sentence MAINLY signals to the reader that —

- A. only government scientists do conservation work.
- B. the article will develop more than one idea inside the recovery story.
- C. the recovery is already complete.
- D. the author disagrees with conservation efforts.

8. Which detail BEST supports the central idea that the loss of bison was FAST?

- A. "By 1889, fewer than 1,100 wild bison remained."
- B. "The American Bison Society, founded in 1905, helped move animals from private herds."
- C. "The bison are coming back."
- D. "Restoration is both an ecological project and a cultural one."

9. In your own words, write a TWO-sentence OBJECTIVE summary of the article. The first sentence should name TWO central ideas; the second should give the strongest piece of evidence for each.

10. Explain how paragraph 3 develops the TWO central ideas introduced earlier. Use one detail from paragraph 3.



Answer Keys

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| Explanations | |
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| 1. B | B pairs the loss-speed idea with the recovery-slowness/leadership idea — the two ideas the article explicitly develops. A names two topic facts, not central ideas. C is one historical detail. D invents a safety claim the article never makes. |
| 2. B | The article develops TWO ideas; naming only the near-extinction half misses the recovery half. A is false (no quotations used). C invents an opinion not in the sample. D mis-describes the article's emphasis. |
| 3. B | B captures paragraph 2's actual point: a long, multi-group effort, numbers up, range still small. A belongs to paragraph 1. C is a single supporting fact. D is a geography fact never stated. |
| 4. D | "Thankfully" and "finally learned to care" insert opinion — exactly what objective summary avoids. A, B, and C are factual statements drawn from the article. |
| 5. B | B names the relationships beyond head count — directly the "not just numbers" idea. A IS a number. C is the historical baseline. D is a date-and-founding fact. |
| 6. B | B names both central ideas, the numbers, the multi-group recovery, and the range gap. A overstates safety ("now safe") and skips the leadership idea. C inserts an opinion ranking. D is a sub-detail blown up into the whole. |
| 7. B | The "and" structure announces a second central idea (leadership), the Grade 7 task this whole article performs. A contradicts the actual list (ranchers, Native leaders, conservationists). C reverses paragraph 3. D invents disagreement. |
| 8. A | Going from tens of millions to under 1,100 in less than a century is the article's headline fact for SPEED of loss. B, C, and D each address recovery, not loss. |
| 9. | Answer: Sample answer: Sentence 1 — The article develops two central ideas: that the American bison was nearly wiped out very quickly in the 1800s, and that the long recovery has been carried out by many groups, including Native nations. Sentence 2 — Numbers fell from tens of millions to fewer than 1,100 by 1889, while a multi-group effort, including the InterTribal Buffalo Council, has rebuilt the herd to about 400,000 today though on less than one percent of the original range. Acceptable variations: pairings that combine (a) speed-of-loss evidence (the 30-60 million-to-1,100 drop) with (b) recovery evidence (400,000 today, multi-group leadership, or the InterTribal Buffalo Council). NOT acceptable: summaries with opinion words ("thankfully," "sadly," "the best part"); summaries naming only one central idea; word-for-word copying from the article. A 2-point answer must (1) name BOTH central ideas and (2) be opinion-free. |



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| 10. | <p>Answer: Strong answer: Paragraph 3 places the two ideas — fast loss, slow recovery — side by side and generalizes them into a lesson about all conservation. The detail "A grassland can be emptied in a generation but takes many generations to refill" makes the loss-vs-recovery contrast explicit. Acceptable variations: any answer that names the loss-vs-recovery contrast AND uses a paragraph-3 detail (the "relationship with soil, plant life, predators, and the people" line; the "no recovery is automatic" line; or the headline contrast). NOT acceptable: answers that only restate paragraphs 1 or 2; answers without a paragraph-3 detail; answers that say paragraph 3 introduces a brand-new idea (it does not — it extends the two already developed).</p> <p>A 2-point answer must (1) name the two-idea relationship paragraph 3 develops AND (2) cite a specific paragraph-3 detail.</p> |
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