

Name _____

Date _____

Focus Trait: Organization

Main Ideas and Supporting Details

Rachel's Journal: The Story of a Pioneer Girl
Writing: Opinion Writing

In a response essay, each paragraph has a main idea that relates to the topic of the essay. The other sentences provide supporting details.

A. Read the main ideas and the supporting details below. Decide which supporting details belong with each main idea. Write A or B next to each detail.

Main Ideas

- A.** Traveling the Oregon Trail was a challenging experience.
- B.** The Oregon Trail became less popular when trains could cross the country.

Supporting Details

- ___ The trip that once took six months took just days by train.
- ___ The trip usually took between five and six months.
- ___ The train was not only faster, it was also much safer.
- ___ The first transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869.
- ___ Travelers faced many dangers, including extreme heat or cold.
- ___ Supplies were scarce along the way.
- ___ The dust on the trail was often blinding.
- ___ Soon, the railroad replaced the Oregon Trail for long– distance travel.

B. Read the supporting details. Write a sentence that tells the main idea.

Supporting Details

The Oregon Trail starts near the Missouri River. Then it goes along the Platte River. It crosses through the Green River Valley and the Snake River area. Finally, it travels down the Columbia River to end in the Willamette Valley.

Main Idea