Getting the Main Idea

Directions: Read the following passages and circle the sentence that best summarizes the passage.

Example: On his way home from the party, Jason realized he was lost. He had been circling the same street for 40 minutes. He had left the directions at the party and did not have a map. He was hoping to see a familiar landmark so he could figure out where he is.

 a) Jason went to a party
 b) Jason was lost
 c) Jason did not have a map
 d) Jason was on his way home

1. Janie’s dog wasn’t feeling well today. He did not want to go out for his walk and did not eat his food. She threw his toy across the yard hoping he would run to fetch it, but he just sat there.

 a) The dog doesn’t want to play
 b) The dog isn’t hungry
 c) The dog is sick
 d) The dog lives in the yard

2. Blair and Natalie are not speaking to each other today. It was weird sitting at their table during lunch while they were glaring at each other. I hope they make up soon; we are three best friends and I don’t want to choose sides.

 a) Blair and Natalie had a fight
 b) I ate lunch alone
 c) I didn’t do my homework
 d) Blair is glaring at Natalie

3. Julio decided to stay up and watch television instead of studying for his History exam. Today, when it was time to take the test, he looked at the paper and could not answer any of the questions. He swore that from this day forward he would always study for tests.

 a) Julio did not study for his history exam
 b) Julio had an exam
 c) Julio likes to watch TV
 d) Julio doesn’t like History

4. “If you want something done, give it to a busy person.” Initially that advice sounds strange, but people with energy and ambition often get things done. Throughout time, it has been proven that people with ambition accomplish things that others thought were impossible. Whether a person wants to set a world record or rise to the top, ambition is the one quality that is most needed.

 a) The ways in which ambition affects social life
 b) The negative effects of ambition
 c) How to have ambition
 d) The value of ambition
5. Cats are affectionate, cute, and independent. Unlike dogs, cats can stay alone if you go away on a trip. They do not need to be walked and are easy to potty train. Also, cats do not bark, so your neighbors will not have any noise to complain about. If someone wants to have a pet, a cat is great choice.

   a) Cats are independent
   b) Dogs are a lot of work
   c) Cats are great pets
   d) Pets are hard work

6. Exercise is crucial to our lives. Doctors recommend we exercise at least two times a week. Exercise does not necessarily need to be done in the gym; it can consist of an outdoor walk or bike ride. It not only controls weight, but it combats many health conditions and diseases. Another added benefit to exercise is its mood boosting qualities.

   a) Bike riding is good exercise
   b) The importance of exercise
   c) Exercise can be done anywhere
   d) Gyms are bad

7. Baseball has been a part of Americans’ lives for over 100 years. In 27 out of 50 American cities, there are 29 professional teams and thousands of minor league teams. Most Americans attend more baseball games than any other professional sport games. Baseball is not only part of American life but also part of slang, fashion, music, and movies.

   a) The importance of baseball stadiums
   b) The reasons why baseball slang is used
   c) Minor league baseball
   d) Baseball in America

8. Tea is the world’s second most popular drink after water. Tea is a big part of the Chinese culture. A Chinese saying identifies the seven basic daily necessities as fuel, rice, oil, salt, soy sauce, vinegar, and tea. According to Chinese legend, tea was invented accidentally by the Chinese Emperor Shen Nong in 2737 B.C. China is one of the main producers of tea, and tea remains China’s national drink.

   a) Why tea is so popular
   b) The importance of tea in the Chinese culture
   c) The health benefits of tea
   d) Drinking water is good for you