



Facts and details

Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Practice

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The **main idea** of a story is what the whole story is *mostly about*.

**Facts and details** are *small pieces of information* that make the story more interesting.  
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As you read this story, think about what the whole story is *mostly about*.

The Woodcutter and his Axe

A Woodcutter was hard at work beside a river. He chopped down a tree and chopped off the branches, one by one. He stacked the small branches in one pile and the large branches in another pile. It was hard work, and he grew tired. By accident, he dropped his axe into the deep river. He sat down on the river bank, and put his head in his hands.

The Woodcutter heard a sound in the nearby bushes, He lifted his head and was amazed to see a strange little man dressed all in green. He thought perhaps it was one of the Wood Gnomes of the fairy tales, and he was quite correct. "Why are you so upset?" asked the Wood Gnome. The Woodcutter explained what had happened, and the Wood Gnome walked closer to the bank of the deep river and dived right in headfirst. In moments he climbed out, carrying a golden axe. "Is this your axe, sir?" asked the Wood Gnome. The Woodcutter shook his head with sorrow. The Wood Gnome dived back into the river, and came up with a silver axe. "Is this your axe?" he asked. Again, the woodcutter shook his head, and again the Wood Gnome dived into the river.

This time, he came out of the river with the Woodcutter's own axe, and the Woodcutter shouted out with joy. The Wood Gnome told the Woodcutter that he must keep the gold and silver axes as well as his own, as a reward for his honesty. The Woodcutter went home and told all of his friends what had happened. He showed them the gold and silver axes.

The next day, one of those friends went to the place by the river that the Woodcutter had described. He threw his axe into the river, and sat down on the riverbank and buried his head in his hands. The Wood Gnome appeared, and asked him why he was so upset. The Woodcutter's friend said that he had dropped his axe into the river by mistake, and the Wood Gnome quickly dived into the river, and came up with a golden axe. "Is this your axe?" the Wood Gnome asked, and the man reached for it greedily, saying that it was the very axe he had lost. The Wood Gnome kept the golden axe, and left without going back into the river for the axe that the dishonest man had thrown there on purpose.

1. What is this whole story *mostly about*?
 - A. The woodcutter was rewarded for his bravery.
 - B. The woodcutter was rewarded for his honesty.
 - C. The woodcutter dropped his axe into the river.

 2. Which of these is a *small piece of information* from the story that makes the story more interesting?
 - A. The woodcutter sat down by the river bank, his head in his hands, and began to cry.
 - B. The woodcutter got angry, and threw his axe into the deep waters of the river.
 - C. The woodcutter was frightened at the sight of a little man dress all in green.

 3. Which of these is a *small piece of information* from the story that makes the story more interesting?
 - A. The little man pointed to the river, and a golden axe rose up out of the water.
 - B. The little man waved his hand and a golden axe appeared.
 - C. The little man walked closer to the bank of the deep river and dived right in headfirst.

 4. Which of these is a *small piece of information* from the story that makes the story more interesting?
 - A. The woodcutter sold the gold and silver axes and bought a fine house for his family.
 - B. The woodcutter showed the gold and silver axes to all his friends.
 - C. The woodcutter hid the gold and silver axes away because he was afraid they would be stolen.
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5. What is another *small piece of information* from the story that makes the story more interesting?
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Answer Key

1. B
2. A
3. C
4. B
5. Accept any reasonable response, such as, the woodcutter stacked the small branches in one pile and the large branches in another pile.