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Name: _____

Date: _____

INTRODUCTION

You may have already read the following passage, in which you practiced finding facts, finding the main idea, sequencing events, and noting details. Now let's read *Live or Die* to try **understanding paragraphs**.

New paragraphs indicate the introduction of something new in a piece of writing. New paragraphs usually show the introduction of the following:

- a change of ideas or action
- a change of character
- a change of place
- a change of speakers in conversation
- a change of time

Each new paragraph starts on a new line. In some writing, each new paragraph is indented. This means it starts about 1 centimeter in on the new line. Paragraphs usually contain the following:

- a topic sentence (see Finding the Main Idea)
- other sentences providing supporting detail
- two to ten sentences

Single sentence paragraphs are used for effect or in speech/conversations.

Now read the passage from *Live or Die* by Ross Latham and Peter Sloan.

A FISHING TRIP GOES WRONG

Rod Ansell was a 26-year-old stockman. He worked as a bull-catcher in the north of Western Australia and in the Northern Territory. (*introduction of the main character*)

In May 1977, Rod decided to go on a short fishing trip at the mouth of the lonely Victoria River. The river was about 160 kilometers from his home in Kununurra. (*introduction of a place*)

Early one morning, Rod packed his

vehicle with his equipment and supplies of food and water. As an experienced outdoorsman, he knew he had to be well prepared. He took two boats with him: one large one and one small one. He took blankets and knives and sharpening tools, all rolled up in his sleeping bag; also some matches, a small stove, and some basic food, packed in cans. (*change of time*)

He also took two little pups. They were bull terrier-boxer mixes, just eight weeks old. He hoped to train them while he was away. (*introduction of a new idea*)

1. Write the number of sentences in each paragraph

a) Paragraph 1: _____

b) Paragraph 2: _____

c) Paragraph 3: _____

d) Paragraph 4: _____

2. What words in paragraph 3 tell the reader that it is about a change in time?

3. What is the topic sentence in the last paragraph? _____

Answers:

1. (a. 2 b. 2 c. 4 d. 3) 2. Early one morning 3. He also took two little pups.

Name: _____

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DOG ON A DIET

by Joan Dalglish

You may have already read part of the following story, in which you practiced using context clues and drawing conclusions. Now, let's read *Dog on a Diet* to try **understanding paragraphs**.

When Mrs. James reached the checkout, she was surprised to find that the total was more than she had budgeted for. She held up the line while she removed one large can of crab and a box of chocolates to get a refund.

Strider welcomed them home as if they had been on a year-long expedition to the South Pole instead of an hour-long trip to the supermarket.

“Woof! Woof!”

“Down, Strider, down!”

“Rrrrowf! Huh-uh-huh-uh-huh!”

“Oof, off!” cried Wendylee, trying to grab one of Strider’s ears as he jumped up and down.

At half past five, Simon gave Strider his diet dinner. The big dog gulped it down.

He was surprised he finished it so quickly. He sniffed carefully

all around the floor near the bowl in case he had missed any. No. Not a smidgen. He looked hopefully up at Simon.



1. Write the number of sentences in the last paragraph. _____

2. The last paragraph introduces (*Note: There are two possible answers.*)

a new character.

someone speaking.

a change in time.

a change in place.

3. How are paragraphs 3, 4, and 5 similar?

4. Paragraph 6 is a new paragraph because there is

a change in place.

a change of speaker.

a change in time.

the introduction of a new idea.

5. Copy the shortest paragraph here. _____
