

Finding Main Ideas

Exercise C

Read the following news article. Find the main ideas in the story and complete the exercise below.

Police Officer K-9 Knows Her Job

Boots is a four-year-old German Shepherd, often called a police dog. She weighs in at a sleek 90 pounds, all muscle, according to her handler, Sgt. Paul Rizzo of the Gailsburg Police Department. "Boots is a police officer who really knows her job," Rizzo said. "Nobody wants to argue with Bootsy when she shows her teeth."

To prove his point, Sgt. Rizzo ordered the dog to speak. Boots barked and growled deep in her throat. In the process she showed a gleaming set of canine teeth that you wouldn't want to tangle with.

"Her teeth are like my club," Sgt. Rizzo explained. "She won't use them unless she's ordered to or unless she has to in self-defense." At a word from her handler Boots was instantly quiet and lay down to relax at his feet.

Police Dogs Are Not Vicious

"Boots is not mean or vicious," Sgt. Rizzo said. "No trained K-9 officer is. Like other police officers, she was trained to earn



Boots shows her teeth Photo by Bob Laramie

respect by doing her job well and with a minimum of force.

"Boots can help control a crowd or hold a criminal just by showing her teeth. She can also find a missing child or sniff out illegal drugs."

Sgt. Rizzo scratched Boots behind the ear and she licked his hand. "On duty she's all business," Rizzo said. "But when she's off duty, she's a cream puff."

1. The main idea of the story is that
 a. Boots is a police dog. c. Boots is good at her job.
 b. Boots is really a cream puff. d. Boots can control crowds.

2. Another important idea in the story is that Boots is well trained. On the back of this paper, list at least two details that show this is true.

Finding Main Ideas

Practice Using Your Newspaper

1. Find three articles in your newspaper that interest you. Select three different kinds of articles—one may be news, one sports, one an information article, etc.
2. Write the main idea of each article in your own words.
3. Write down one other idea that you find in each article besides the main idea.

Article 1

Newspaper _____ Date _____ Page _____

Main Idea _____

Another Idea _____

Article 2

Newspaper _____ Date _____ Page _____

Main Idea _____

Another Idea _____

Article 3

Newspaper _____ Date _____ Page _____

Main Idea _____

Another Idea _____

Now Try Your Newspaper

Keep an idea file for at least one week.

Here is how:

1. Each day, clip one article from your newspaper which you find interesting.
2. Underline one or more important ideas in the article.
3. Attach the article to a sheet of paper.
4. Write your own feelings about the ideas on the sheet of paper. Write down an idea of your own about the subject.
5. Keep your clippings and comments together in a large folder or envelope. Or, you may prefer to start an Idea Scrapbook.