



## Learning Project 4 Reading Business Documents

### Inquiry Activity 4-3: Recognizing Supporting Detail

Business documents require attention to detail and are often the most factual documents any of us read. Readers are guided in this IA to determine the important from the unimportant. On the GED, the question that titles the passage helps to direct the reader to what is important. Supporting details will be found directly in the passage. Finding supporting details helps the reader confirm both comprehension and understanding.

*(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to students.)*

#### 1. Identifying the Problem (Items #16 and 13 PA)

*Scan the test questions to find out what you are being asked to do.*

*Questions refer to the excerpt from a passage introduced in Inquiry Activity 3-1.*

16. If the College wanted to discipline an employee for a minor problem, what would be the first step?

- (1) warning in writing
- (2) excessive absenteeism
- (3) verbal warning
- (4) dismissal
- (5) loss of pay

13. According to the document, which one of the following is a “just cause” (lines 6-24)?

- (1) excused absences from work
- (2) following legitimate orders
- (3) making a mistake on a job application
- (4) getting a parking ticket
- (5) sexual harassment

#### 2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

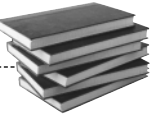
Four pre-reading strategies are introduced and used consistently to help learners develop the pre-reading skills for use with any reading they might do. These pre-reading strategies are:

- Preview the Passage
- Activate/Build from Prior Knowledge
- Consider/Build Interest
- Set a Purpose

*Remember, in this step, we are focusing on becoming familiar with the question through pre-reading strategies, not answering it from the passage.*

*Preview the Question:* What do you see? Is there anything in these questions you do not understand?

*Activate/Build from Prior Knowledge:* Have you ever had to discipline someone at work? Have you seen someone being disciplined?



**Consider/Build Interest:** Do you have an Employee Manual from your workplace? Does it list reasons for discipline or dismissal?

**Set a Purpose:** Look at the title of IA 4-3. What do you think **recognizing supporting detail** means?

### 3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

The strategy introduced here will further assist in identifying what is important from what may seem important but is just a distracter. Reading the questions carefully is also important. Learning to make these distinctions takes time and readers should allow themselves the opportunity to talk with and listen to others in the IA. Sharing with others will be particularly important to help think through why some information does not matter.

**Planning:** Determine if you want to work individually, with a partner, or in a small group.

**Doing the Work:** As you read the question and reread the passage, do the following:

**Clarify:**

Scan the passage, find and mark any words you might not know. See if the passage gives you enough information to **clarify** the meaning of those words. If not, find the meaning by asking somebody or looking it up.

The words in this passage are polysyllabic. The list from the learners is likely to be lengthy.

Were there any places in the passage where you did not understand what was going on?

Each of these causes for discipline is clear, but written in a difficult reading style. Many employees look at lists such as these but do not read them.

**Analyze:**

Read each question and the answer choices. Based on what each question is asking you to do, find the exact words in the passage that provide the answer. Continue doing this until you have completed reading the passage.

Read each answer choice and decide if the information in the answer is:

- not in the passage,
- the opposite of the information in the passage, or
- not accurate.

You may prefer to use the graphic organizer for this step.

**Determine Important from Unimportant:**

How does the question to be answered help you to **determine the important from the unimportant** in the passage?

What section or parts of the passage support your answer?

Determine which answer choice answers the question.

In question 13, only (5) sexual harassment is considered just cause. Absenteeism is a just cause only if unexcused. Following a legitimate order is what people do at work and is the opposite of insubordination. A mistake is not considered willful and is rather excusable. A parking ticket is not a felony.

In question 16, four of the choices can be found in the passage. The sentence immediately before the list establishes the process in its progressive order. Verbal warning (3) is given in this passage, as the first step. Written warning and dismissal are further steps. Excessive absenteeism (2) is a just cause for the process to begin, not a part of the process. The final choice, (5) loss of pay, is not mentioned in the passage.



#### 4. Sharing with Others

*Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge, but also to learn it more completely.*

**Small Groups:** Compare the answers you found with the others in the group. Discuss the methods you used to find the answers, the support for your answers in the passage, and the reasons why each learner thinks his/her answers and the support are correct.

Agree on the correct answers and a reading strategy you would use for answering questions that ask you to **recognize supporting detail** in business documents.

**Whole Class:** Report to the class the group's answers to the questions, the methods used to find the answers, the support for the answers chosen, and your group's strategy for answering questions that ask you to recognize **supporting detail** in business documents.

#### 5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

**Reflecting:** Think about how well you understood what you have done. Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

What would you say is a good approach for answering a question that asks for **supporting details**?

This document used many big words and technical terms. How did this affect your understanding? What strategies did you use to be successful?

How might the **summary** you did of the passage (in Inquiry Activity 4-1, Summarizing Business Documents) help you to answer these questions?

How did the pre-reading approaches in the activity **preview, prior knowledge, interest, purpose** work for you?

How do understanding test questions and answer choices help you take tests?

State and then evaluate the approaches you used to answer reading test questions that ask you to find **supporting detail**.

How important is it to know the difference between **important and unimportant detail** when answering test questions? Explain.

**Extending:** Extend what you learned to new situations.

**In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information presented in the Practice Test question to other information or situations.**

Give an example of one kind of reading you do at home or on the job where you might be looking for **supporting detail**.

What is the material?

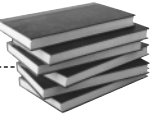
What is the detail you were looking for?

What approaches (strategies) might you use to read that material to find those **supporting details**?

How could you use the reading strategies discussed here **Clarify, Analyze, and Determine Important from Unimportant** to help you read that material more effectively?

Either your instructor will supply the class, or you can bring in, material to be used by the class for developing multiple-choice questions that ask for **supporting detail**. Make up two multiple-choice test questions that ask for **supporting detail**.

Pass your questions to other group members or the whole class and, using the strategies discussed in class to read the passage and the question and answer choices, answer the questions. Discuss.



*Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.*

*In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods presented in this IA.*

*What did you learn from this activity?*

*What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.*

*What parts did not work well for you? Explain.*

*What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when taking the GED test? Why?*

*How did reading this way make you feel?*

