Final Review:

1 Authors DO NOT ALWAYS state the controlling idea of a passage. Therefore, readers must infer the main idea.

2 Like single paragraphs, longer readings develop one main point or message called a thesis statement.

3 In a longer reading, the thesis statement provides a general idea of what the major supporting paragraphs will expand upon; therefore, the thesis is more general than major supporting paragraphs.

As they do in paragraphs, major and minor supporting details can fulfill any number of functions depending on the needs of the main idea. They can be examples, reasons, studies, statistics, definitions, exceptions, etc. Whatever form they take, they answer the questions readers might have about the main idea of the chapter section or reading.

Remember: Major and minor supporting details in paragraphs can fulfill several different functions.

4 In longer readings, the author will often develop the overall main idea using several sentences.

5 Review the meanings and functions of Transitional Words and Phrases. These can be found on pages: _________________________________________________________

b. How Short-Term Memory Works

1 Most psychologists refer to short-term memory as working memory, since information held in short-term memory is actively “worked on,” or processed, by the brain (Baddeley, 2001; Braver et al., 2001).

Working memory is a kind of mental workspace or blackboard for holding information long enough to process it and act on it (Stoltzfus, Hasher, & Zacks, 1999). For example, we engage working memory when we form an image of a person’s face and hold it in memory for the second or two it takes the brain to determine whether it is the face of someone we know. We also employ working memory whenever we perform arithmetical operations in our heads or engage in conversation. In a conversation, our working memory allows us to retain memory of sounds long enough to convert, or change, them into recognizable words.

2 In the 1950s, psychologist George Miller performed a series of groundbreaking studies in which he sought to determine the storage capacity of short-term memory. Just how much information can most people retain in short-term memory? The answer, Professor Miller determined, was about seven items, plus or minus two (Kareev, 2000). Miller referred to the limit of seven as the “magical number seven.”

3 The magic number seven appears in many forms in human experience, including the “seven ages of man” in Shakespeare’s As You Like It; the Seven Wonders of the World, the Seven Deadly Sins, and even the seven dwarfs of Disney fame (Logie, 1996). Investigators find that people can normally repeat a maximum of six or seven single-syllable words they have just heard (Huime et al., 1999). Think about the “magical number seven” in the context of your daily experiences. Telephone numbers are seven-digit numbers, which means you can probably retain a telephone number in short-term memory just long enough to dial it. (Adapted from Nevid, Psychology: Concepts and Applications, 3rd ed., p. 221.)
When underlining and marking a passage, use the following guidelines (p29-31):

1. As you do a first reading, underline in pencil key words in selected sentences that you think are essential to the author’s explanation.
2. When you do a second reading (or even a third one) for exam reviews, make final decisions about what’s essential and what’s not. This time, underline in pen.
3. Use boxes, circles, or stars to highlight key names, dates, and events.
4. If you have any personal knowledge about the subject matter, make personal comments in the margin.

**Examples:**

Between 1872 and 1878, William “Buffalo Bill” Cody alternated between his career as a scout for the U.S. Cavalry and his starring roles in a series of melodramas popular in the East. By 1882, he had founded the enterprise that brought him even greater fame and shaped the country’s view of itself “Buffalo Bill’s Wild West.”

5. Use numbers to itemize individual parts of a definition, process, or procedure.
6. Paraphrase, or restate, the author’s ideas in your own words.

**Examples:**

4 parts of emotions:
1. how you feel
2. how body responds
3. thoughts
4. purpose of

Camp Howard Zinn on role of Marshall Plan

**Examples:**

The Marshall Plan was a four-year program proposed by U.S. Secretary of State George C. Marshall on June 5, 1947. Its goal was to provide foreign assistance to seventeen western and southern European nations as part of post–World War II reconstruction. Between 1948 and 1951, over $13 billion was dispensed through the Marshall Plan.

10. Whenever you find yourself struggling to understand an author’s meaning for more than two or three sentences, mark the passage for a second and slower reading (e.g., RR, x2, ??).
11. Use arrows, labels, and abbreviations to make relationships between sentences clear.
12. Double underline, star, or otherwise highlight definitions.

**Examples:**

If you boil water on a stove, you can see a steamy mist above the kettle, and then higher still the mist seems to disappear into the air. Of course, the water molecules have not been lost.
Step 1: In the pan, water is in the liquid phase, and in the mist above the kettle, water exists as tiny droplets. These droplets then evaporate, and the water vapor mixes with air and becomes invisible. Air generally contains some water vapor. **Humidity** is a measure of the amount of water vapor in air. (Turk and Turk, *Physical Science*, p. 410.)

13. Put quotation marks or rectangles around statements you think are particularly significant.
14. Mark a statement or passage you think might be a test question (e.g., T.Q.).
15. Use double lines in the margins to identify any statements you think could be the jumping-off point for a paper. Try to comment on the statement in a way that suggests how the paper might be developed.

**Examples:**

**Effect of 1918 Influenza**

How lethal was the *1918 influenza*? It was twenty-five times more deadly than ordinary influenzas. This flu killed 2.5 percent of its victims. Normally just one-tenth of 1 percent of people who get the flu die. And since a fifth of the world’s population got the flu that year, including 28 percent of Americans, the number of deaths was stunning. So many died, in fact, that the average lifespan in the United States fell by twelve years in 1918. If such a plague came today, killing a similar fraction of the U.S. population, 1.5 million Americans would die. (Adapted from Kolata, *Flu*, p. 216.)
Making an Informal Outline

As you know from Chapter 1, informal outlines have no fixed format. You can mix phrases with sentences and leave an a without a b. The only test of an informal outline is how well it works for you. If your outline (1) records the main idea of the entire reading, (2) identifies and paraphrases the supporting details essential to understanding that main idea, and (3) shows the relationship between them, then it's perfect. Here, as another illustration, is a brief reading followed by an informal outline.

Each Species Plays a Unique Role in Its Ecosystem

1. An important principle of ecology* is that each species has a distinct role to play in the ecosystems where it is found, which is called an ecological niche, or simply niche (pronounced "nitch"). A species niche includes everything that affects its survival and reproduction, such as how much water and sunlight it needs, how much space it requires, and the temperatures it can tolerate. A species niche should not be confused with its habitat, which is the place where it lives.

2. Scientists use niches to classify species broadly as generalists or specialists. Generalist species have broad niches. They can live in many different places, eat a variety of foods, and often tolerate a wide range of environmental conditions. Flies, cockroaches, mice, rats, white-tailed deer, raccoons, and humans are generalist species.

3. Specialist species, on the other hand, occupy narrow niches. For example, tiger salamanders are specialists because they can breed only in fishless ponds where their larvae will not be eaten. Another specialist is the red-cockaded woodpecker, which carves nest holes almost exclusively in longleaf pines that are at least 75 years old. China's highly endangered giant pandas are also specialists. They feed almost exclusively on various types of bamboo.

4. Is it better to be a generalist than a specialist? It depends. When environmental conditions are fairly constant, as in a tropical rain forest, specialists have an advantage because they have fewer competitors. But under rapidly changing environmental conditions, the generalist usually is better off than the specialist. (Miller and Speedman, Sustaining the Earth, 7th ed., p. 68)

Look now at the informal outline used to take notes on the reading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title:</th>
<th>Each Species Plays a Unique Role in Its Ecosystem (p. 69)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Idea:</td>
<td>Each species has its own ecological niche.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Details:</td>
<td>1. Ecological niche refers to everything that sustains the species from drinking water to space and temperature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Based on their ecological niche, scientists classify species as generalists or specialists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Generalists survive almost anywhere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ex. flies, roaches, raccoons, and humans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Specialists need “special” conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ex. tiger salamanders thrive only in fishless ponds. red-cockaded woodpecker needs old pines and pandas have to have bamboo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. If there are rapid changes in the environment, generalists fare better than specialists.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ecology: branch of biology dealing with living things in nature and how they interact.

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To a large degree, how you organize an informal outline is up to you. Still, there are some definite guidelines to follow if you want to take notes that are brief, complete, and well organized.

1. Indent to show relationships. Even with a quick glance, your outline should clearly identify the main idea of the entire reading. Always start off by writing the main idea close to the left-hand margin. Underneath and indented, list the supporting details used to explain it.

2. Condense and abbreviate. Whenever you can, use phrases instead of sentences. If possible, make up your own shorthand for common words and use it consistently. If a name appears several times, spell it out once, and then use initials. For example, if you are reading about President Lyndon Baines Johnson's role in creating the Great Society, start using the initials L.B.J. and G.S. to refer to him and his most famous project.

3. Paraphrase the author's words. If you just copy the author's words into your outline, you can't be sure you've understood them.

4. Leave plenty of space. As you gather additional information from lectures or outside reading, you may want to add to it, so leave plenty of space in your initial outline both in the margins and between sentences.

5. Reorder the material if it helps you remember it. There's no law saying you have to re-create the author's original order. If you think combining facts or ideas that appeared in separate paragraphs will help you remember them more easily, then, by all means, do it.