

Eli and His Ideas

Reading: Main Idea and Key Details

Read the story. Complete the graphic organizer that follows.

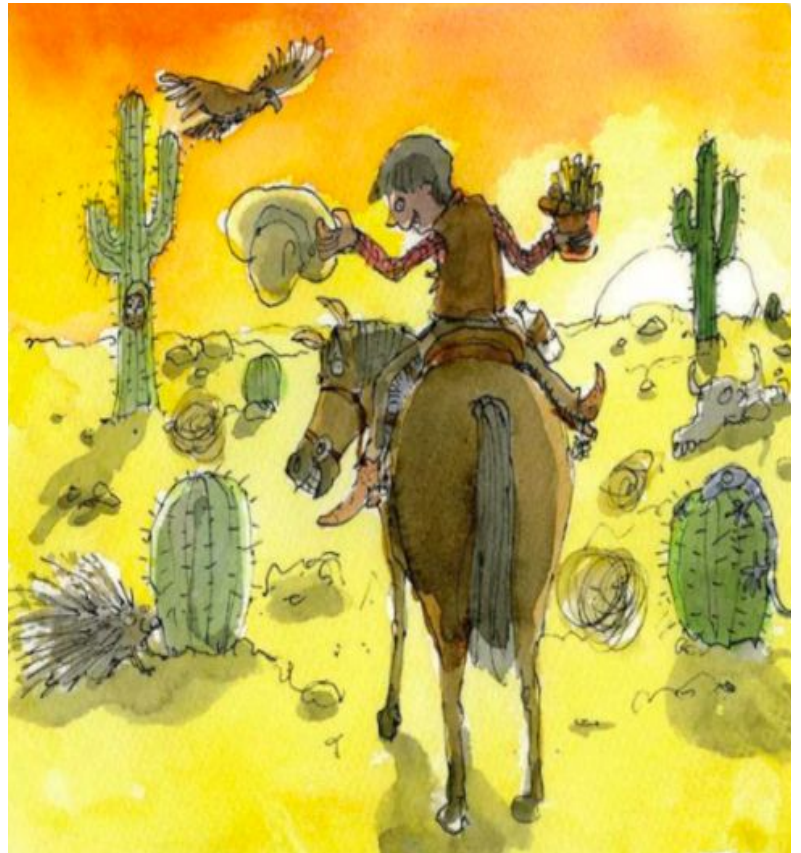
Eli Escapes by Suzanne W. Paynter

"Mom, why do we always have to wait in line?" asked Eli. He slumped against the grocery cart. "We're waiting our turn," said Mom. Eli rolled his head back to stare at the ceiling. An escaped pirate balloon bobbed up and down against the lights. If I were a pirate, I wouldn't have to wait in line, thought Eli. He flashed his jeweled saber and shouted to the trusty crew, "Aarr, maties! Clear the bloomin' decks!" A band of swashbuckling pirates danced a feisty jig and tossed gold doubloons in the air. While shoppers chased the rolling coins, Eli and Mom rushed to the front of the checkout line. They escaped in a magnificent pirate ship and sailed the seven seas home. Pirates never had to wait in line at the grocery store. "Let's go, Eli," said Mom as they left the checkout line.



"Eli," said Mom as they left the store, "want to pick up dinner at Burger Barn on the way home?" "We will get to wait in line again!" said Eli. They zoomed over to Burger Barn, where the line was longer than a clippety-cloppin' mule train. But Eli didn't mind. Cowboy sheriffs never have to wait in line at Burger Barn! "Please step aside everybody!" Sheriff Eli tipped his ten-gallon hat, gave his silver spurs a whirl, and swaggered to the front of the line. Sheriff Eli was the hero of Goldtown. "Have you caught any cattle rustlers today, Sheriff?" the pigtailed waitress asked. "Only 'bout twenty or thirty. Got 'em all locked up so Goldtown is safe once more. All in a day's work." Everyone in Burger Barn whooped and hollered. "Now my throat's full of trail dust, and my belly's growlin' somethin' fierce." "Thank ye kindly," he said to the Burger Barn waitress. She piled on extra fries. Sheriff Eli tipped his hat and rode off into the sunset eating his golden chicken nuggets, fries, and milk.

"O.K., Eli, let's go to the park. We're done with our errands for today," said Mom. "Bloomin' great idea!" said Eli. "You might have to wait in line for the slide, and maybe the swings, too." "Star command check!" "Always glad to step aside until my turn, ma'am," Eli drawled. Mom laughed as Eli hoisted himself into the car and swashbuckled his seatbelt. She fired up their sleek galactic starship and they followed the winding, dusty trail to the park.



Complete the graphic organizer with the main idea and supporting details from the story.

