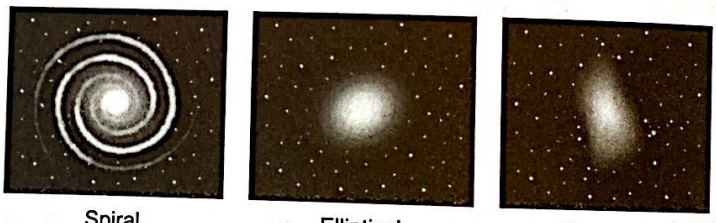
GALAXIES

When looking up at a clear night sky, people on Earth can see thousands of stars. Yet these are only a tiny fraction of the countless stars in the universe. Astronomers have found that the stars in the universe are organized into huge groups called galaxies. Groups of galaxies form clusters, and groups of clusters form superclusters. A typical galaxy, like our Milky Way, has billions of stars, as well as clouds of gas and dust, all held together by gravity. Scientists think many galaxies are surrounded by dark matter, an entity that we cannot see and that is not yet fully understood. The Milky Way is part of a small cluster called the Local Group. The Local Group contains the Milky Way, Andromeda, Messier 33, and about two dozen smaller dwarf galaxies. The largest clusters contain hundreds of galaxies.

a Summarizing means separating the most relevant information (main idea and supporting details) from less relevant information (extra details). This sentence has interesting details that do not belong in a summary.

b Visual elements often contain information that would be useful in a summary. The fact that there are three types of galaxies does not appear in the text but could be included in a summary.

THREE TYPES OF GALAXIES



Spiral	Elliptical	Irregular
Spiral galaxies have a central bulge with curved arms.	Elliptical galaxies have a round or oval shape.	Irregular galaxies have shapes that are not symmetrical.

USING LOGIC

The first sentence of a passage may not always contain its main idea. Here, the main idea appears later in the passage. You must carefully read the entire passage to identify the key information.

1. Which sentence **best** summarizes the information?

   A. Earth is located in the Milky Way galaxy.
   B. There are three types of galaxies: spiral, elliptical, and irregular.
   C. The universe is organized into three types of galaxies composed of stars, gas, dust, and dark matter.
   D. The Local Group contains the Milky Way and several other galaxies of varying sizes.