

## Part 2: Finding the Main Idea



### Finding the Main Idea

Identifying the main idea involves the reader determining the main idea in the text. This is also referred to as the big idea, the theme, or the key message.

It allows readers to connect ideas at a sentence, paragraph or text level and adds coherence to the text.

This comprehension skill requires the reader to determine the main idea in the text. It involves the reader knowing what is important to remember and what is irrelevant to the overall understanding of the text.

Effective readers constantly ask themselves what is the main idea of what they are reading. They need to learn to distinguish between the topic and the main idea. If children are able to identify the main idea of a text they are more likely to comprehend it.

### **Tips to help at home!**

- ✓ *Commercial Catch-All: Determine and record on a post-it the 3 most important words from a television commercial.*
- ✓ *Topic Pictures: Write and justify the main idea of a photograph.*
- ✓ *Give Me Five: Record the main idea and 5 supporting details on a hand template.*
- ✓ *Two-Word-Summary: Challenge your child to tell you what they did during a school day in just 2 words.*
- ✓ *10 Words or Less: Use an interesting illustration to challenge your child to state what is happening in the picture in 10*

### **Focus Questions**

- *Is this important, or just interesting?*
- *Should I make a note of that detail?*
- *What is the most important idea of this section?*
- *What is the main idea of what you are reading and what are your reasons for thinking it is the main idea?*
- *What are the two most important ideas from what you've been reading?*
- *What is the main idea of the paragraph? What are some supporting details?*
- *Why do you think the author chose to include these details?*