

Main Idea and Supporting Details Lesson Plan

Grades 3-6

Objective Students will participate in a hands-on activity to recognize and understand the concepts of main ideas and supporting details, followed by an exploration of IXL language arts content.

Standards **CCSS ELA-LITERACY.CCRAR.1**
Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS ELA-LITERACY.CCRAR.2
Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

Supporting Resources

IXL skills

Skill Name	3 rd Grade	4 th Grade	5 th Grade	6 th Grade
Organize information by main idea	J.3	L.3	K.5	J.2
Determine the main idea	A.1	A.1	A.1	A.1
Identify supporting details in literary texts		N.4	L.4	K.4
Identify supporting details in informational texts		N.5	L.5	K.3

Materials Chart paper

Main Idea Bags

- Fill 6-8 different bags with items that describe one main idea. *Examples: A Day at the Beach (sunglasses, suntan lotion, a book, a shovel, a swimsuit), Math Class, Baking Cookies, Training for a Marathon, etc.* Create these bags ahead of time and number each bag.

Optional: [Determining the Main Idea Task Cards](#) (Create enough sets for partner use.)

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ANTICIPATORY SET

1. Create a chart titled “What Good Readers Do”. Have students brainstorm a list of reading strategies they already know.
 2. Tell students that today they are going to explore the concept of a main idea and how understanding the main idea of a text helps readers more clearly comprehend and summarize what the author is telling them.
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TEACHING STRATEGY

1. Tell students that the **main idea** is what the paragraph, or text, is mostly about; the big idea. **Details** are the part of the text that support the main idea. They are what makes the text more interesting.
2. Explain the **Main Idea Bags**: *Inside this bag are many items or details that support the main idea. As I remove each item, see if you can determine what the main idea of this bag is.*
3. Using one bag as a model, slowly take out each item and allow students to make guesses about the bag’s main idea. Once determined, have students turn and talk to a partner about their thought process:
 - How did you piece the items together to come up with the main idea?
 - Did you change your mind as different items were revealed? (This is a great opportunity to talk about making inferences!)
 - What other items (details) could have been added to the bag to make the main idea more interesting?
4. Put the remaining numbered bags in various spots around the room and divide students into groups of 4. Whoever has the closest upcoming birthday in the group will be the *leader*. The next closest will be the *recorder*.

5. Tell students they will rotate to each bag and work together to figure out the main idea of each bag. The *leader* will pull the items out of the bag, one item at a time. (Remind students they should do this quietly so as not to reveal the answer to other groups!) Once the group comes to a consensus, the *recorder* will write down the main idea on a blank sheet of paper, numbered 1-6, or as many bags as you have.
 6. Come back together as a big group and share the main idea of each bag. Discussion can include:
 - How did each item support the main idea?
 - Can you summarize each bag? (Model with example bag if necessary.)
 7. Optional: Have students work in partners using Main Idea Task Cards.
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CLOSING/SUMMARY

Discuss with students how understanding the main idea helps us as readers.

- Add to your Good Readers chart:
Good readers... identify the main idea in order to understand what the author wants us to know. Knowing the main idea helps us to summarize text in our own words.
- Review takeaways from the Main Idea Bags, with particular emphasis on how the main ideas were determined:
Sometimes the main idea is explicitly stated. Other times, it must be inferred by the details in the passage, similar to the items in our bags.

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IXL FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

For further support and exploration, students can practice the following IXL ELA skills and work toward a SmartScore goal of 80:

Grade 3: [J.3](#), [A.1](#)

Grade 4: [L.3](#), [A.1](#), [N.4](#), [N.5](#)

Grade 5: [K.5](#), [A.1](#), [L.4](#), [L.5](#)

OPTIONAL HOMEWORK

Have students create their own Main Idea Bag. Each student should put five items in a bag that support their main idea. Have students share bags with the whole class, or set the bags up as a station/center.