

Main Idea
In a Nonfiction Selection
Grade 1
Explicit Comprehension Lesson
Dole, 2006

Introduction: Today we are going to learn how to think about the main idea. The main idea is the most important information that you read about. Good readers think about the most important things in the books they read.

Are you ready?

Modeling/Explanation: Before we begin reading our book, I want you to listen carefully as I read some short stories. After I read the stories, I want you to tell me the main thing the story is about. I'll do the first one for you.

John's birthday was coming up. John's Mom had promised him a birthday party on his birthday. The week before his birthday John's mom asked him who he wanted to invite to his birthday party. So John and Mom made a list of friends to invite to John's birthday party. John was sure he would have his best birthday ever.

Let's think about this little story. Most of the sentences and ideas are about John's birthday party. So we could say that John's birthday party is the main idea of the selection.

Let me do another one.

Sandy was my dog. Sandy was the best dog ever. She had sandy hair that shed all over the house. Sandy used to track mud over the house too. But when I was sad, Sandy made me happy. She always greeted me at the door every day. She would wag her tail and sometimes knock things over. But I loved Sandy so much.

Discuss this as Sandy the dog being main idea. Subordinate details being 2 sets of details 1) shed hair, track mud, knock things over and 2) that she made me happy, greeted me at the door, made me happy, loved her so much.

Guided Practice: Okay, now together you and I are going to read a story and we will see if we can find the main idea about this book. Let's look at the title and the picture and you may have an idea about the main idea of the book now. The title is "*Dinosaur Dinners.*" So, what do you think the main idea of this book is about?

Okay, now let me read some of it.

Okay, so this is about dinosaurs. Now what about dinosaurs? It's not just about dinosaurs, but about what? Yes, what they EAT. Good job. And the author talks about two kinds of dinosaurs. Meat eaters and plant eaters.

Put meat eaters and plant eaters on the board in a T chart.

Now what things to meat eaters eat?

Now what things do plant eaters eat?

Good job.

Now, I'd like you to look at these words,

Insects

Leaves

Dinosaurs

Trees

Berries

Snakes

Children place each under the appropriate category, meat or plant eaters.

Then,

Teacher models and children repeat summary of selection based on the cards.

This book is about dinosaur dinners. Some dinosaurs are meat eaters. Meat eaters eat insects, other dinosaurs and snakes. Some dinosaurs are plant eaters. Plant eaters eat trees, berries and leaves.

Have children repeat.

Paired Practice: Ask children to practice saying the summary to each other.

Independent Practice:

Draw a picture of what meat eaters eat and what plant eaters eat.