

Central Idea

Standard: RI.2 - Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgements.

Learning Target: I can determine the central idea of a text.



Central Idea

- Central idea is the same as main idea.
- The central idea is the “big point” or the most important idea that the writer is communicating to the reader.
- Often the reader can find the main idea just by looking at the title.
- For example, a passage titled: “Why Students Should Have Less Homework” will include reasons for that idea.



What's the Point?



- *Read this short paragraph:*

Engineers create wealth for society. So, tennis is a game and the resources of the earth are scarce. Have you gone mad? Thus the only solution is to educate the public on being socially responsible.

DID THIS MAKE SENSE?????

OF COURSE NOT!!!



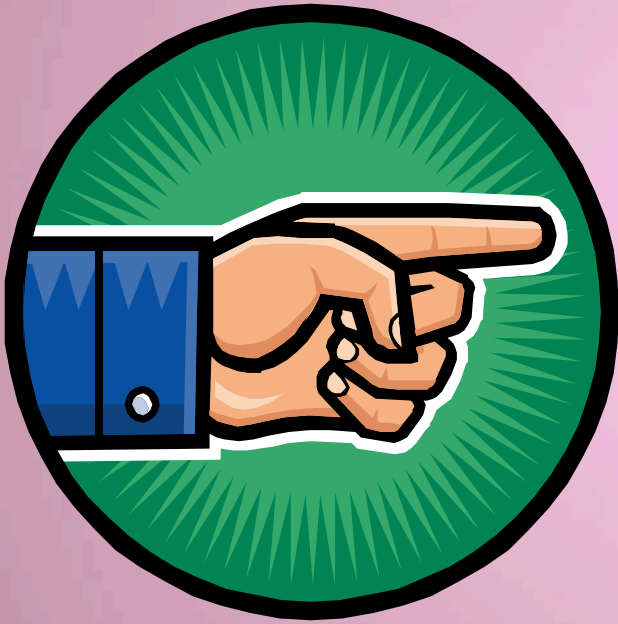
- It didn't have a MAIN IDEA!
- It was difficult to understand because it was made of different ideas that did not link. There was no common thread.

Central Idea



- **Central Idea** - is like the heart of the text or a paragraph.
- It is the controlling idea.
- All the other supporting details in the text or within a paragraph should tell us more about the central idea.

TIP: Ask Yourself....



WHO or WHAT
is this passage
about?”

Stated Main Idea

- Sometimes, a paragraph has a stated main idea usually in the topic sentence.
- This means the paragraph “says” what the main idea is.

The Topic Sentence

- Many paragraphs have topic sentences that indicate the main idea.
- Find the topic sentence in this paragraph:

Homeless people have many problems. In winter, it's hard to stay warm and it gets too hot in summer. It's also hard to keep things safe without a home. Worst is the lack of privacy.



Supporting Details

- Supporting details prove the value of the main idea. What are they here?

Homeless people have many problems. In winter, it's hard to stay warm and it gets too hot in summer. It's also hard to keep things safe without a home. Worst is the lack of privacy.



Implied Main Idea

- Sometimes, a paragraph doesn't have a stated main idea, but has an "implied" main idea.
- This means that you need to state the main idea in your own words because it doesn't actually "say" it in the paragraph.

“Swimming is one thing that can be done at the beach. Snorkeling is another thing that can be enjoyed. Playing beach volleyball can be a lot of fun. It is also fun to look for shells. Some people simply like to sunbathe.”

What is the **implied** main idea?



Too much information...

- All of the sentences in a paragraph should support the main idea of that paragraph.
- Information that does not support the main idea does not belong in the same paragraph.



“Maria offered to help her mother clean the house. She vacuumed the living room and dusted the furniture. She picked up the toys in the playroom. She ate a ham sandwich for lunch. Then, she mopped the kitchen floor.”

Which sentence does not support the main idea?



*Which sentence does not support
the underlined main idea...*

“Winter provides the opportunity for many outdoor activities. Many people enjoy ice skating on a pond. Swimming in the pond in summer can also be fun. Skiing can be a thrilling experience too. After a new snowfall, you can even build a snowman!”

