Name & Surname: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Main Idea Detectives

Find the big idea and show the proof!

About 60 minutes Level ★★★☆☆

Main Idea in a Nutshell

Every text is mostly about one big thing. That big thing is the **main idea**. Small facts that tell more are **key details**.

- Say the topic in one or two words, like bees or teeth.
- Ask what the author tells about the **topic**. That is the main idea.
- Recount key details and show how they **support** it.



Key Words

main idea: what a text is mostly about

recount: tell again in your own words

topic: what a text is about in one or two words

key details: important facts that tell more

support: help show or prove an idea

Task A

/2

Read what Student A and B say. Find the mistake and write the correct idea.



Student A

The main idea is every little fact and picture in the text.

What mistake did Student A make? Write the correct fact.

.....

.....



Student B

Key details are fun facts that do not connect to the main idea.

What mistake did Student B make? Write the correct fact.

.....

.....

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What Do You Know?

Think about finding big ideas in reading.

Task B

Think about finding the main idea. Fill the Know and Want parts now, and Learnt later.

Think about: What is a main idea? · How can key details help you find it? · What do you want to learn to do better?

K	W	L
What I know	What I want to know	What I learnt

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Follow the Steps

Use steps to find the main idea of a text.

Busy Honeybees

1. Honeybees live and work together in a **hive**. Every bee has a job. Together they make sweet honey for food. They need the honey in cold months when flowers are gone.
2. Worker bees fly out to find flowers. They sip a sweet juice called **nectar**. They carry the nectar back to the hive in their bodies. Each trip adds a tiny drop to the store.
3. Inside the hive, bees work to thicken the nectar. They fan it with their wings to dry it. The nectar turns thick and sweet. Then they seal it in wax rooms for later.
4. Honeybees show teamwork. They share jobs, gather food, and save it for winter. Without each job, there would be no honey. Their work keeps the whole hive alive.

Task C

Read Busy Honeybees. Follow the steps to find the main idea.

1



Read the title and paragraph 1 for the topic

2



Ask what paragraphs 2 and 3 are mostly about

3



List two key details about nectar and honey

4

Check how paragraph 4 shows teamwork

5



Say the main idea in one sentence

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Write to Explain

Explain a main idea in a short letter.

Clean Teeth, Strong Smile

1. Taking care of teeth keeps your smile **strong**. Teeth help you bite food and talk clearly. If teeth get sick, eating can hurt. Clean teeth help your whole body stay healthy.
2. Brush your teeth two times each day, in the morning and at night. Use a soft **brush** and a pea-size bit of toothpaste. Brush front, back, and tops for two minutes. Spit out the foam.
3. Healthy habits also protect teeth. Drink water and eat crunchy fruits and vegetables. Try not to sip sweet drinks all day. Visit the dentist two times a year for a check.
4. Floss once a day to clean between teeth. Get plenty of sleep so your body can heal. Small steps each day keep teeth strong for years.

Task D

Read Clean Teeth, Strong Smile. Use paragraphs 1-4 to write a letter with proof.

Date: _____

Dear Buddy,

Paragraph 1 starter: The main idea is ... Tell what the text is mostly about.

Recount two key details from paragraphs 2 and 3. Use facts from the text.

Explain how the details support the main idea. End with one tip to try.

Your friend, _____

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Ask the Five Ws

Break a recycling text into Ws and H.

Recycling in Our School

1. Our class started a **recycling** project to cut down trash. We put paper, cans, and plastic bottles in blue bins. Each Friday we sort and count what we saved. We want less trash to go to the dump.
2. The project helps in many ways. Recycling paper saves trees for new paper. Melting old cans makes new cans with less **energy**. Reusing plastic keeps bottles out of rivers and fields.
3. Everyone has a job in the project. One group empties the blue bins. Another group makes posters to remind others. Our teacher weighs the bins and charts our progress.
4. In three months we saved a truckload of trash. Our halls are cleaner and students feel proud. Small actions by many people can make a big change.

Task E

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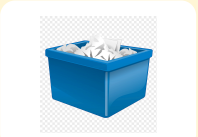
Read Recycling in Our School. Answer the five Ws and how.

Who?
Who took part in the project?

What?
What was the main idea?

Where?
Where did sorting happen?



our school recycling project

When?
When did the class sort and count?

Why?
Why did recycling help?

How?
How did each job support the idea?

How did I do?

Circle a face for each line.

I can find the main idea of a text. ☹ 😐 ☺

I can recount key details from the text. ☹ 😐 ☺

I can explain how details support the main idea. ☹ 😐 ☺

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Answer sheet: Main Idea Detectives

Task A

1. Student A: Wrong: it is not every fact. The main idea is what the text is mostly about.
2. Student B: Wrong: they must connect. Key details tell more about the main idea and support it.

Task B

Answers will vary.

Task C

1. Read the title and paragraph 1 for the topic 2. Ask what paragraphs 2 and 3 are mostly about 3. List two key details about nectar and honey 4. Check how paragraph 4 shows teamwork 5. Say the main idea in one sentence

Task D

Answers will vary.

Task E

Who: Students and the teacher in our class.
What: Recycling to cut down trash.
Where: In blue bins at school.
When: Each Friday, for three months.
Why: To save trees, use less energy, and keep trash out.
How: Sorting, posters, and weighing saved a truckload.

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