



## ***Using Direct Instruction of Main Idea to Teach Reading Comprehension***

**Objective:** To teach students a reading comprehension strategy

### **Setting and Materials:**

**Settings:** Middle school special education resources classrooms in small groups with 6-8 students

### **Materials:**

- Grade-level and reading-level appropriate [passages and questions](#) for main idea
- Prompt card for cuing main idea (see appendix A)

### **Content Taught**

Direct instruction of main idea has been defined as explicit, teacher-mediated instruction that can effectively promote main idea comprehension (Jitendra et al., 2000) that aims to increase student self-regulation during strategy transfer. Across eight lessons, students are supported through explicit instruction, teacher modeling, guided practice with corrective feedback, and independent practice.

### **Teaching Procedures**

- Lesson 1: students are taught to generate main idea sentences by applying the general rule, “name the person and tell the main thing they did”
  - use model, lead test
  - refer to the cue card throughout all lessons
- Lesson 2: students are guided in generating group names and classifying actions with the general rule, “name the group and the main thing the group did”
  - provide corrective and specific feedback
  - provide additional modeling/think aloud as needed
- Lesson 3: students independently practice with by reading passages then answered multiple choice questions to select the main idea of the passage
- Lesson 4: students independently practice with passages that contained distractors (sentences that do not pertain to the main idea) and then answered multiple choice questions to select the main idea of the passage

- Lesson 5 - 8: provide students with guided and independent practice with selecting or generating the main idea of passages that described where, why, and when something occurred, and how something looked or was done
  - Break down concepts across lessons with opportunities for corrective feedback

### Evaluation

Data collection during independence (multiple choice answer sheet) reflecting student mastery with selecting the main idea at 80% or better at various stages across the lesson.

In Lessons 5-8 student understanding of main idea is best pinpointed (determine student understanding of main idea in terms of specific questions related to where, why, and when something occurred, and how something looked or was done).

### Lesson Plan Based on:

- Jitendra, A. K., Cole, C. L., Hoppes, M. K., & Wilson, B. (1998). Effects of a direct instruction main idea summarization program and self-monitoring on reading comprehension of middle school students with learning disabilities. *Reading and Writing Quarterly*, 14, 379—396. doi: 10.1080/1057356980140403
- Jitendra, A. K., Hoppes, M. K., & Xin, Y. P. (2000). Enhancing main idea comprehension for students with learning problems: The role of a summarization strategy and self-monitoring instruction. *The Journal of Special Education*, 34, 127—139.

This Lesson Plan Starter was developed by The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT), Charlotte, NC, funded by Cooperative Agreement Number H326E140004 with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). This document has been reviewed and approved by the OSERS. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education. OSEP Project Officer: Dr. Selete Avoke. RSA Project Officer: Kristen Rhinehart-Fernandez. This product is public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. While permission to reprint this publication is not necessary, the citation should be: National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (2019). *Using Direct Instruction of Main Idea to Teach Reading Comprehension*.



## Appendix A: Prompt card for cueing main idea

### Finding the Main Idea

Does the paragraph tell:

1. What or who the subject is? (single or group)      action is? (category)
2. Why something happened?
3. Where something is or happened?
4. When something happened?
5. How something looks or is done?

*Note:* Some paragraphs may contain a sentence or two that don't tell about the main idea!

### Finding the Main Idea

Does the paragraph tell:

1. What or who the subject is? (single or group)      action is? (category)
2. Why something happened?
3. Where something is or happened?
4. When something happened?
5. How something looks or is done?

*Note:* Some paragraphs may contain a sentence or two that don't tell about the main idea!

### Finding the Main Idea

Does the paragraph tell:

1. What or who the subject is? (single or group)      action is? (category)
2. Why something happened?
3. Where something is or happened?
4. When something happened?
5. How something looks or is done?

*Note:* Some paragraphs may contain a sentence or two that don't tell about the main idea!

### Finding the Main Idea

Does the paragraph tell:

1. What or who the subject is? (single or group)      action is? (category)
2. Why something happened?
3. Where something is or happened?
4. When something happened?
5. How something looks or is done?

*Note:* Some paragraphs may contain a sentence or two that don't tell about the main idea!