

“Main Idea”



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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This program is designed to target reading comprehension, specifically focusing on increasing students' skills for identifying and stating the main idea of a grade level passage. In order to accomplish this goal, a variety of strategies were planned and integrated into instruction. Though the program was designed to be used with fifth grade Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students in an ESE resource room, the skills are applicable to many grade levels and the materials are easily adaptable and can be utilized with nearly any type of reading material. Lesson plan one, "Think It Through!" should be introduced and then repeated daily over the course of a week, followed by lesson plan two. Lesson plan two, "Write It Right!" is designed to reinforce and build upon skills introduced during week one and should also be introduced and repeated for a week before formally assessing students.

Cooperative learning groups and Kagan structures are utilized to make the atmosphere within the classroom more positive and enjoyable for the students. Each day, students are given the opportunity to participate in a brief activity that was selected from Silly Sports and Goofy Games. The strategy behind incorporating these activities is to increase student engagement by providing something fun for them to look forward to.

Several original artifacts were created specifically for this project. The **Main Idea** Checklist, **Main Idea** Bookmark, and the **Main Idea** Rubric were used to foster metacognitive reflection before, during and after the reading process. They also serve to support students in their efforts to understand complex concepts and acquire new skills. The artifacts are

designed to be displayed via liquid crystal display (LCD) or overhead projectors to present and enhance daily lessons. Utilizing the projectors is an effective way to focus a group's attention and generate discussion among the students; however, individual paper copies can be used as an alternative. The artifacts serve as teaching tools, and also as student support tools during group activities and during individual assignments.

OVERALL VALUE

Students are excited to come to class each day because they look forward to participating in the opening, fun activity. When students value their "fun" time, they are typically respectful of the rules that go along with keeping the privilege. Participation in a brief, fun activity increases their motivation to participate in the daily lesson that follows. Student levels of engagement are higher when they have a positive attitude about coming to class.

The program's primary academic focus is on summarizing a given passage through the use of the "5 W's" (who, what, when, where and why). Introducing skills at a slower pace, and scaffolding the learning through the use of the **Main Idea** (MI) tools is beneficial to students. The MI Checklist, MI Bookmark, and the MI Rubric are all designed to support student learning as the level of difficulty increases with each lesson. The real value of this program is revealed as students begin to use the skills independently to guide their thought processes during reading.

It is important to note that all curriculums require some level of reading comprehension skills. Academic performance in math, science, and social studies are all negatively affected when a student struggles with reading. Improving

reading comprehension skills can lead to improved performance in students' overall academic ability.

LESSON PLAN TITLES

- Think It Through!
- Write It Right!

MATERIALS

- Grade-appropriate book set or other teacher selected reading passage
- Overhead projector and transparencies, LCD projector, or ELMO
- Copy paper for Main Idea Checklists, Main Idea Bookmarks and Main Idea Rubrics
- Dry Erase Boards, Markers and Erasers
- *Cooperative Learning Structures for Teambuilding* by Laurie, Miguel and Spencer Kagan
- *Silly Sports and Goofy Games* by Spencer Kagan

Materials are listed with each lesson plan. Overall materials budget including pricing and vendors follows the lesson plans.

ABOUT THE DEVELOPER

Laura Wells has a B.A. in Psychology from University of South Florida, and has recently earned a M.A. in Teaching and Learning with specialization in Technology Integration through Nova Southeastern University. She has been an Exceptional Student Education resource teacher at Zolfo Springs Elementary during the previous five school years and is currently teaching in a fifth grade, regular education classroom.



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Lesson Plan No 1: Think It Through!



■ SUBJECTS COVERED

Reading

■ GRADES

Three – Five

■ OBJECTIVES

GOAL: Teach students “Before Reading” strategies.

✓ **Objective:** Students will effectively utilize the Main Idea Checklist to guide classroom discussion to answer the following “Before Reading” questions: What clues are in the title? What clues are in the pictures? What do I already know about these clues?

GOAL: Teach students “During Reading” Strategies.

✓ **Objective:** Students will effectively utilize the Main Idea Checklist to guide classroom discussion to answer the following “During Reading” questions: Does this make sense? What words are confusing? What have I learned so far? What questions do I still have?

GOAL: Teach students “After Reading” Strategies.

✓ **Objective:** Students will effectively utilize the Main Idea Checklist to guide classroom discussion to answer the following “After Reading” questions: Who is this about? What has happened?

GOAL: Students will utilize the “5 W’s” to identify main idea elements.

✓ **Objective:** Students will identify and write down key words that appropriately describe the “who, what, when, where and why” contained within the selected passage.

GOAL: Teach students to summarize the selected passage by composing a main idea sentence.

✓ **Objective:** Students will arrange the identified “5 W’s” key words into a simple sentence that correctly states the main idea of the selected passage.

■ SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS

LA.A.1.2.1: student uses table of contents, index, headings, captions, illustrations and major words to anticipate or predict content and purpose of a reading selection.

LA.A.1.2.2: student selects from a variety of simple strategies, including the use of phonics, word structure, context clues, self-questioning, confirming simple predictions, retelling, and using visual clues to identify words and construct meaning from various text, illustrations, graphics and charts.

LA.A.1.2.4: student clarifies understanding by re-reading, self-correction, summarizing, checking other sources, and class or group discussion.

LA.A.2.2.1: student reads text and determines the main idea or essential message, identifies relevant supporting details and facts, and arranges events in chronological order.

LA.B.1.2.1: student prepares for writing by recording thoughts, focusing on a central idea, grouping related ideas and identifying the purpose for writing.

■ MATERIALS

- Silly Sports and Goofy Games or alternate resources for quick, fun activities
- Teacher-selected reading passage (class set of *Shiloh* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor was used by developer)
- Main Idea Checklist (can be displayed via projector or copied for individual student use)
- Dry Erase Boards, Markers and Erasers (or pencil and paper)

■ DIRECTIONS

Select a fun activity that is appropriate for your classroom. Allow students to participate in activity for approximately five minutes. Praise students for displaying good behavior, reinforcing the idea that bad negative behavior during “fun time” will result in the loss of the privilege.

Present students with the reading selection then introduce the Main Idea Checklist (MIC) and explain its different parts. Students will refer to the checklist before, during and after reading. Before reading, have students answer the first series of questions. This process should be modeled so that students understand the appropriate way to respond to the “Before Reading” questions listed on the MIC.

Begin teacher directed read-aloud. As opportunities arise, have students refer to the “During Reading” questions. Encourage students to quickly jot down their thoughts and ideas, and confusing words or concepts. Allow students to ask or answer some of the questions listed on the MIC. Pause often to prompt students to reflect on what has been read. Utilize this reflection time to model self-questioning techniques. Encourage students to analyze and predict what may happen next.

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Lesson Plan No 1: Think It Through! (cont.)



Completing one chapter is appropriate for students reading on grade level. For lower level students, it may be more effective to read only one paragraph at a time. Allowing students to write their answers directly onto the MIC is helpful, especially for students that have difficulty remembering details. Referring back to their answers reinforces understanding of the content.

After completing the passage, ask students to recall some of the most important details. Prompt student responses by asking them to name the “5 W’s.” Write down key words that students identify to represent the “5 W’s.” Instruct students to utilize key words to form a main idea sentence. Model proper sentence formation and assist students as they work. Building student success is very important at this stage.

■ ***EVALUATION/ ASSESSMENT***

Student work should be assessed informally as teacher guides students through the basic processes of identifying and understanding main idea concepts. A rubric for formal assessment of main idea sentences is included in lesson plan two, “Write It Right!”

It is suggested that students be given a “cold” assessment of their ability to summarize a grade level passage before the strategies are taught. A brief passage taken from released FCAT test items would be ideal for this purpose. The cold assessment can be used as a pre/post test to measure improvement at the end of the two-week period.



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Lesson Plan No 2: Write It Right!



■ **SUBJECTS COVERED**

Reading

■ **GRADES**

Three – Five

■ **OBJECTIVES**

GOAL: Teach students how to use the Main Idea Rubric to compose a well-written summary sentence.

- ✓ **Objective:** Students will effectively utilize the Main Idea Rubric to check for and improve; main idea content, neatness, capitalization and punctuation in their summary sentences.

■ **SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS**

LA.A.1.2.1: student uses table of contents, index, headings, captions, illustrations and major words to anticipate or predict content and purpose of a reading selection.

LA.A.1.2.2: student selects from a variety of simple strategies, including the use of phonics, word structure, context clues, self-questioning, confirming simple predictions, retelling, and using visual clues to identify words and construct meaning from various text, illustrations, graphics and charts.

LA.A.1.2.4: student clarifies understanding by re-reading, self-correction, summarizing, checking other sources, and class or group discussion.

LA.A.2.2.1: student reads text and determines the main idea or essential message, identifies relevant supporting details and facts, and arranges events in chronological order.

LA.B.1.2.1: student prepares for writing by recording thoughts, focusing on a central idea, grouping related ideas and identifying the purpose for writing.

LA.B.1.2.3: student produces final documents that have been edited for spelling, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure and correct formatting.

■ **MATERIALS**

- Silly Sports and Goofy Games or alternate resources for quick, fun activities
- Teacher-selected reading passage (class set of *Shiloh* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor was used by developer)
- Main Idea Checklist (can be displayed via projector or copied for individual student use)
- Main Idea Rubric (can be laminated and used with dry erase markers)
- Dry Erase Boards, Markers and Erasers (or pencil and paper)

■ **DIRECTIONS**

The focus of “Write It Right!” is an emphasis on the quality of summary sentences produced. Students will be instructed on how to use the Main Idea Rubric (MIR) as an instrument for improving their written responses. Students will learn how to effectively compare their written work samples to the rubric requirements. Teacher should continue to utilize all strategies outlined in lesson plan one, “Think It Through!”

Select a fun activity that is appropriate for your classroom. Allow students to participate in activity for approximately five minutes. Praise students for displaying good behavior, reinforcing the idea that bad negative behavior during “fun time” will result in the loss of the privilege.

Before reading the passage, distribute the rubrics, or display it via projector. Explain the basics of how students can use the MIR to determine the quality of, and make improvements to their summary sentences. Present students with the reading selection then review the role of the Main Idea Checklist as a tool to be used during reading. Begin teacher directed read-aloud. Model self-questioning techniques during the reading process and prompt students to interject their thoughts at appropriate times.

After reading the passage, direct students to write down key words that best represent the “5 W’s.” Instruct students to utilize these key words to form a main idea sentence. As students begin working, remind them to refer to the rubric as they form their responses. Ask for a student to volunteer their summary sentence for use as a model for whole-group instruction on how to use the rubric to score and improve the sentence. Provide plenty of informal practice as students learn how to effectively utilize the rubric.

■ **EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT**

Students and teacher will informally assess their work using the Main Idea Rubric (MIR) during the week. It is important to note that students should be using the MIR as a guide for composing their main idea sentences, not just as a tool for scoring their final product. Teacher should utilize the MIR to formally assess student performance at the end of the two week period. Students’ pre and post tests (see EVALUATION in lesson plan one) should be scored with the MIR to show gains.





Main Idea Checklist

BEFORE READING

What clues are in the title?

What clues are in the pictures?

What do I already know about these clues?

MAIN IDEA  LIST

DURING READING

Does this make sense?

What words are confusing?

What have I learned so far?

What questions do I still have?

AFTER READING

Who is this about?

What has happened?

SUMMARIZE!

Use the W's to choose words to form a short summary sentence.

- ✓ Who?
- ✓ What?
- ✓ When?
- ✓ Where?

Subject / Verb / Predicate











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Additional Information



Main Idea Bookmark

 MAIN IDEA LIST	 MAIN IDEA LIST	 MAIN IDEA LIST	 MAIN IDEA LIST
<p><u>BEFORE READING</u> What clues are in the title? What clues are in the pictures? What do I already know about these clues?</p>	<p><u>BEFORE READING</u> What clues are in the title? What clues are in the pictures? What do I already know about these clues?</p>	<p><u>BEFORE READING</u> What clues are in the title? What clues are in the pictures? What do I already know about these clues?</p>	<p><u>BEFORE READING</u> What clues are in the title? What clues are in the pictures? What do I already know about these clues?</p>
<p><u>DURING READING</u> Does this make sense? What words are confusing? What have I learned so far? What questions do I still have?</p>	<p><u>DURING READING</u> Does this make sense? What words are confusing? What have I learned so far? What questions do I still have?</p>	<p><u>DURING READING</u> Does this make sense? What words are confusing? What have I learned so far? What questions do I still have?</p>	<p><u>DURING READING</u> Does this make sense? What words are confusing? What have I learned so far? What questions do I still have?</p>
<p><u>AFTER READING</u> Who is this about? What has happened?</p>	<p><u>AFTER READING</u> Who is this about? What has happened?</p>	<p><u>AFTER READING</u> Who is this about? What has happened?</p>	<p><u>AFTER READING</u> Who is this about? What has happened?</p>
<p><u>SUMMARIZE!</u> Use the W's to choose words for a short summary sentence.</p>	<p><u>SUMMARIZE!</u> Use the W's to choose words for a short summary sentence.</p>	<p><u>SUMMARIZE!</u> Use the W's to choose words for a short summary sentence.</p>	<p><u>SUMMARIZE!</u> Use the W's to choose words for a short summary sentence.</p>
<p> Who? What? When? Where? Why?</p>	<p> Who? What? When? Where? Why?</p>	<p> Who? What? When? Where? Why?</p>	<p> Who? What? When? Where? Why?</p>
<p>Subject / Verb / Predicate</p>	<p>Subject / Verb / Predicate</p>	<p>Subject / Verb / Predicate</p>	<p>Subject / Verb / Predicate</p>

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Rubric



	0	5	10	15	20	
Main Idea	Sentence does not tell the main idea and has no supporting detail from the passage.	Sentence but does not tell the main idea, but does have some detail from the passage.	Sentence tells the main idea, but uses no detail from passage.	Sentence tells main idea and uses one detail from the passage.	Sentence tells main idea and uses more than one supporting detail from the passage.	(double the points earned in Main Idea category)
Neatness	Most of the words cannot be read.	Some words cannot be read.	Several words are hard to read.	One word cannot be read.	All words can be read.	
Capitalization	Capitals are used incorrectly in every time.	Capitals are used incorrectly three or more times.	Capitals are used incorrectly two times.	Capitals are used incorrectly one time.	Capitals are used correctly every time.	
Punctuation	Punctuation is used incorrectly every time.	Punctuation is used incorrectly three or more times.	Punctuation is used incorrectly two times.	Punctuation is used incorrectly one time.	Punctuation is used correctly.	
					Total:	

Rubric Instructions

1. Check each of the four categories to see how your sentence compares. When you find the box that best describes your sentence. Write the number of points in the “Total” column. (Double the points earned for Main Idea.)
2. After comparing each category, add up the total points.
3. Review your work to target areas that need improvement.

		<u>5 W's</u> 		
Who?	What?	When?	Where?	Why?

