*English Instructional Plan – Using Details to Determine the Main Idea Grades 3-5*

**Primary Strand: Reading 3.6, 4.6, 5.6**

**Integrated Strand/s: Communication and Multimodal Literacies, Writing 3.8, 4.7, 5.7**

**Essential Understanding:**

All students should:

* understand that nonfiction texts provide information, explain a process, or persuade

**Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Processes:**

To be successful with this standard, students are expected to:

* identify details that support the main idea
* state the main idea in their own words
* identify the main idea and summarize supporting details
* determine the main idea of a text and summarize supporting key details

**Primary SOL:**

3.6g, 4.6c, 5.6c identify the main idea

**Reinforced (Related Standard) SOL:**

3.6c. Preview and use text features, including table of contents, headings, pictures, captions, maps, indices, and charts

 f. Summarize information found in nonfiction texts.

3.8e, 4.7g,5.7g Write a clear topic sentence focusing on main idea.

4.6a, 5.6 a,d Use text features such as type, headings, and graphics to predict and categorize information.

d. Summarize supporting details.

**Academic Background/Language:**

The main idea relates to the comprehension of nonfiction text. We use the term main idea when referring to finding the big picture in nonfiction text. The main idea is the topic of the text and what is important about that topic. Details are used to support and give information about the main idea. In earlier grades, students may have been exposed to using a bubble map when finding the main idea. Build off of this concept by referencing how all of the details support and give information about the main idea.

## Materials

* Nonfiction article or text to display and distribute such as, “They Need Fire!” <https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/they-need-fire?search_id=22377042>
* Main Idea & Supporting Details graphic organizer for each student (sample below)
* Highlighters & pencils

## Student/Teacher Actions: What should students be doing? What should teachers be doing?

1. Introduce the lesson by explaining that when authors write nonfiction they are writing about a topic and want us to know something important about the topic. This is called the main idea of the text. The author shares details about the topic to capture our interest and help us learn about the topic. Finding the main idea helps us to comprehend the text.
2. Ask for a student to come to the front of the class. Have the student hold a word or phrase on their forehead without looking at it. Ask the rest of the class to give the student clues to decide what the cards says. (You can continue to play this game or put students in groups to play further. The cards could be content specific.) (e.g. card says bird, some clues might be they fly, they build nests, eat worms, etc.)
3. Explain to the class that the card is the main idea or topic and the clues given were details.
4. Display and distribute a nonfiction article or text such as, “They Need Fire!” to the class as well as a graphic organizer to students like the Main Idea and Supporting Details graphic organizer.
5. Ask students to think, pair, and share the topic of the article and how they know. Students will discuss with a partner the topic of the article/text and then share with the teacher.
6. Explain that the title in nonfiction texts usually gives the topic of the article or a clue about the topic of the writing. (The topic is fire/forest fires.)
7. Encourage students to examine the nonfiction text features to look for clues and make a prediction about the topic (e.g. the photograph of fire). This is also the time to explore headings to make predictions. Remind students to revise predictions as necessary as more details are read.
8. Explain that it is important to know the topic of a nonfiction text because it is part of the main idea. Explain that the main idea is the topic of the text plus what is important about the topic. Or in other words, the main idea is the topic and what the author wants us to know about the topic. The details can help us find what is important about the topic. (You may want to make the connection to a bubble map. The main idea/topic is in the middle with supporting details around.) Explain that we are going to use the details to help us get to the main idea.
9. Explain that repeated words and ideas can also help find the main idea.
10. Read the article/text aloud to the class as they follow along. The teacher will think aloud and highlight any repeated words, phrases, or information.
11. Think aloud to find the first detail. Highlight the first detail. (Highlight the first sentence in the second paragraph about pine trees.) The teacher will read each paragraph and ask students to find and highlight a detail in each paragraph that supports the topic of fires.
12. The teacher and students will write/paraphrase each detail in the graphic organizer and list any repeated words, phrases, or information.
13. Discuss what is important about the topic, supporting details, and repeated information. What is the big picture? What does the author want us to know? Explain that the main idea is not always word for word in the text like the details. Guide students to find a main idea sentence. (Such as, some plants and animals need forest fires in order to grow and survive.)
14. Close the lesson by reviewing the graphic organizer and making an anchor chart to display in the room. Reinforce the connection between the topic, supporting details, and main idea of the text.

**Assessment (Diagnostic, Formative, Summative)**

* Monitor student responses (oral and written) during and after the lesson. Reteach as necessary.
* Students may use sticky notes to label the topic, main idea, and supporting details during small group reading.
* Students may use sticky notes to explain how the nonfiction text features support the main idea in a text.
* Students may complete a graphic organizer using another text at their independent level to state the topic, main idea, and supporting details.

**Writing Connections:**

* The teacher may highlight the topic sentence in the text. Explain the purpose of a topic sentence. Authors may decide where to put the topic sentence. In the article, “They Need Fire,” the teacher may show the students the last sentence in paragraph one. This is the topic sentence for the article. It gives us clues for the main idea. Students could find the topic sentences for each paragraph of a text. Discuss the text through the lens of an author. (e.g. Why would the author put the topic sentence here?)
* The teacher may have a list of topics or have students self-select a topic to research. Students will write a topic sentence (main idea sentence) and then include supporting details. The teacher may have students conduct research on their topic.
* The teacher may use a nonfiction mentor text to model how to focus a topic and create a main idea using supporting details. (e.g. *If You Lived Here: Houses of the World* by Giles Laroche, *Look at Me: How to Attract Attention in the Animal World* by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page, National Geographic Everything Series)
* Students may practice writing topic sentences in their expository, descriptive, opinion, and/or persuasive writings.
* Students may include the text feature of headings in their writings to show the topic and main idea. Students may go back to the article, “They Need Fire” and add headings above each paragraph.

**Extensions and Connections (for all students)**

* Students may practice the concept of finding the main idea by using a text on their independent level.
* Students may continue to play the game from the lesson where a student has a main idea/topic on their forehead while students give them details to name the card.
* Students may create another title for the text. Then as a class have a discussion to pick the most appropriate title.
* Students may practice summarizing the supporting details by stating the topic, main idea, and facts that support the main idea in their own words.
* Students may create headings for sections of text that represent the main idea.
* Using sticky notes, students may rename the headings of nonfiction text.
* Use a pair of nonfiction texts to find similar main ideas.
* Use a primary source to help learn more about the text and the main idea.

**Strategies for Differentiation**

* Provide prewritten main idea options on cards for students to see. One of the main idea cards is the correct one.
* When starting, use familiar and high interest topics on the student’s independent level.
* Use a bubble map for students to visualize the connection between the main idea and details.
* Students may name a main idea/topic for a group of details.
* Highlight repeated words or ideas and think if it tells what the text is mostly about.
* Preview the text first and make predictions about the text by looking at the nonfiction text features.
* Use sentence starters such as, “This text is about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I know this because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.” “The author wants me to know \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”
* You may prepare written or typed details and main ideas for students to glue on the graphic organizer.
* If students still have trouble identifying the main idea, use smaller samples of texts

*Note: The following pages are intended for classroom use for students as a visual aid to learning.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Main Idea and Supporting Details in Nonfiction Text**

**Title of the text:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Topic of the text**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Clues from nonfiction text features:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Repeated words, ideas, or information:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Details from the text:**

**Detail 1:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Detail 2:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Detail 3:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Main Idea:**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_