

# Main Ideas and Supporting Details



## Introduction

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## Using the following sheets

- ❖ If your children/pupils are at the pre-written language stage they can still use these ideas/activities.. just do them orally with them.
- ❖ Dictionaries may be helpful in some cases
- ❖ Pick activities that suit your level

## Strategies for Main Ideas & Supporting Details

- ❖ Use the handouts we have on the following pages
- ❖ Use photocopy sheets. Highlight/underline main ideas one colour, supporting details another
- ❖ Write on separate sheet of paper
- ❖ Practise as a class, small group, pair, individual

## Other Ideas for Practising Main Ideas/Supporting Details

### Verbal/Linguistic

- ❖ Read a sentence/paragraph from your class story... what is the main iead/supporting detail? Make up activities like we have with simpler/harder ideas/words.
- ❖ Oral make up lists of words like the following activities. Read a sentence.
- ❖ Use a thesaurus to get kids to make up their own activities like the one's we have given.

### Spatial

- ❖ Get art posters, posters... what is the main idea of this painting, art or picture book cover? Supporting details that prove this?
- ❖ Stage a series of frozen scenes ... what is the main idea of these scenes. What are the supporting details?

### Musical

- ❖ Listen to music... identify themes, types of music genre, is the tempo mostly fast, slow etc.
- ❖ Is the texture mostly thick/thin. What instruments are mostly playing this? etc

### Math-Logic

- ❖ Bring in Geometry/Patterning... what is the main idea of the pattern, set of shapes etc
- ❖ Organise keywords into Mind Maps

### Bodily - Kinesthetic

- ❖ Put people into different groups depending on what they look like, what they are wearing, what they think about thins, their favourite show etc.

# Main Ideas and Supporting Details



- ❖ Classify objects by how they feel (Relate to main ideas – what supporting details enable you to classify them this way?)

## Naturalist

- ❖ Put animals/pictures/landmark types into sets. Main ideas... supporting details... what do you see that makes them fit with the main idea?
- ❖ Classify rock types, leaves

## Interpersonal

- ❖ Look at the way people sell in adverts... what is the main idea of what they trying to make you feel? What is the main idea of what they are selling?

## ICT

- ❖ Type keywords into a www search pg. Can the search results be summarised into different main ideas?
- ❖ Look at the clipart collection.. what are the main ideas...
- ❖ Look at a WWW page. What are the main ideas of this page (purpose) Supporting details? 5 most important words on the page?
- ❖ Use computer to make up their own activities like the one's we have given.

# Main Ideas and Supporting Details



## IDENTIFYING MAIN IDEAS IN PARAGRAPHS

We write to transmit a message from the writer to the reader. One way to organise ideas is to put them into paragraphs paragraphs. A paragraph consists of two or more sentences which relates to a main idea. This main idea is the general message or thought that is present from the beginning of the paragraph to its end. All the sentences in a paragraph relate to the main idea in some way; ie. they explain, support, or describe it. The main idea might be contained in a single sentence within the paragraph called a topic sentence. However, sometimes, the main idea is not clearly stated in a topic sentence but rather is implied or hinted at throughout the paragraph.

How to...

1. Skim the article/passage quickly to get a general idea of what it is about. Notice where the article is taken from since difference types of articles contain different kinds of paragraph structures (eg. a newspaper article very often contains paragraphs of only a single sentence in length.)

2. Now go back and read carefully any paragraph in the article. Try to determine the main ideas of each paragraph by answering these two questions:

a) Who or What is this paragraph about? (any words, phrases, or ideas that are mentioned over and over are clues to answering this question. Usually the answer to this question can be summed up in one or two words.)  
Write the answer here:

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b) What does the writer really want me to know about the Who or What? To answer this question you will need to analyse all the sentences in the paragraph to see what the writer specifically wants you to know. This specific information e. represents the main idea of the paragraph and can usually be summed up in a full sentence. Write the answer to (b) here:

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3. Did you find that the main idea of the paragraph was clearly stated in a topic sentence? If so, write that sentence below.

TOPIC SENTENCE: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Was the main idea of the paragraph only implied rather than explicitly stated? If so, use your own words to summarize the main idea.

IMPLIED MAIN IDEA \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Main Ideas and Supporting Details



## Main Ideas Investigator

Your Mission is to Identify the Main Ideas in Paragraphs  
Information on chosen article:

Title:.....Source: .....  
Author:.....Date: .....

Paragraph #1:

a) Who or What is this paragraph about? Where did it happen?

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b) What does the writer really want me to know about the Who or What?

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3. Did you find that the main idea of the paragraph was clearly stated in a topic sentence? If so, write that sentence below.

TOPIC SENTENCE: \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Was the main idea of the paragraph only implied rather than explicitly stated? If so, use your own words to summarize the main idea.

IMPLIED MAIN IDEA \_\_\_\_\_

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5. How can you be sure that you have correctly identified the main idea implied in the paragraph?

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Paragraph #2: (use the same outline above)

# Main Ideas and Supporting Details



<h2>Topic</h2>				
Main Headings				
Sub-Headings				
 <b>KEY WORDS</b>	<b>NOTES:</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____			

# Main Ideas and Supporting Details



Write here a summary of what this research is about

Answer the 'why?' questions: 'So?', 'So what?' and 'So what do you think and suggest?'

Write here some thoughts about what your group think should be done or actions others should take.

**CONCLUSION**

Names of pupils who did the presentation

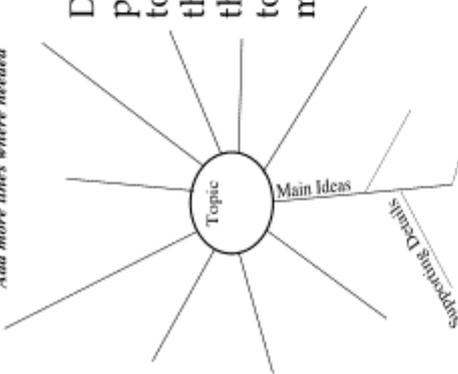
**SUPPORTING DETAILS**  
Extra information about the main idea

[Empty box for supporting details]

[Empty box for supporting details]

 Do a group planning web to help you think about the topic and to find the main ideas.

**PLANNING MAP**  
*Add more lines where needed*



**KEY WORDS**  
 Words that will help you find information in a library, book, contents and index.

**MAIN IDEA**

[Empty box for main idea]

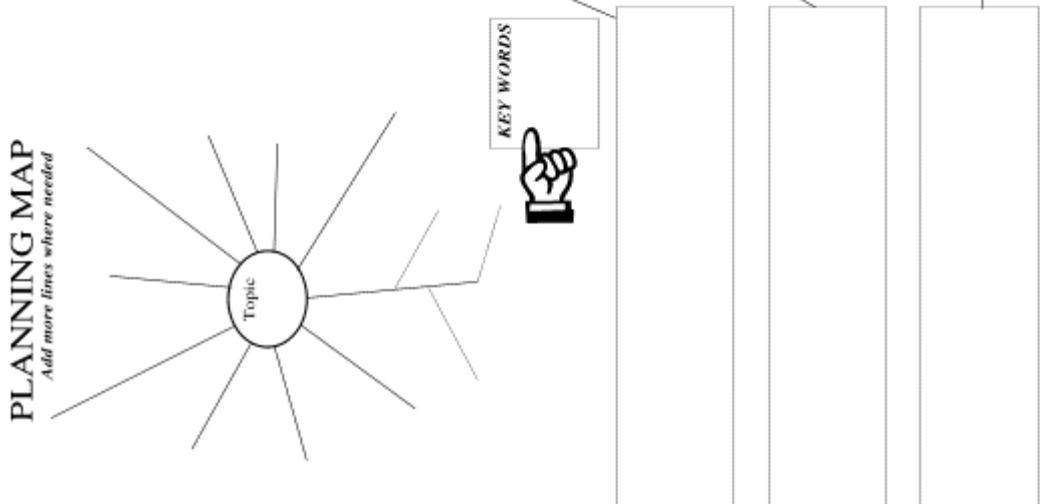
 Set out your groups chart like this. Give out a main idea for pairs or individuals to find supporting details.

# Main Ideas and Supporting Details



<h2>CONCLUSION</h2>	
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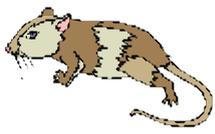
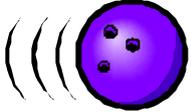
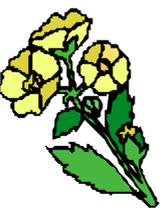
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# Main Ideas and Supporting Details



*What word best describes these all of these pictures*

1.				<p>A. Dogs                      B. Birds                      C. People</p>
2.				<p>A. Dogs                      B. Cats                      C. People</p>
3.				<p>A. Cats                      B. Mice                      C. Animals</p>
4.				<p>A. Sport                      B. Ball                      C. Circle</p>
5.				<p>A. Plants                      B. Flowers                      C. Colours</p>
6.				<p>A. Boats                      B. Cars                      C. People</p>
7.				<p>A. Summer                      B. Spring                      C. Winter</p>

# Main Ideas and Supporting Details



Choose the best main idea from the answers given

8.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. In the sun</li> <li>B. At the beach</li> <li>C. Playing at the beach</li> </ul>	9.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Hammer</li> <li>B. Building</li> <li>C. Sore Thumb</li> </ul>
10.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Birthday Party</li> <li>B. Party</li> <li>C. Food</li> </ul>	11.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Trees</li> <li>B. Felling Trees</li> <li>C. A bad man</li> </ul>
12.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Fishing</li> <li>B. Child showing caught fish</li> <li>C. The boy fishing</li> </ul>	13.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. In the woods</li> <li>B. Family in woods</li> <li>C. Family hiking in woods</li> </ul>
14.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Swimming</li> <li>B. Start of swimming race</li> <li>C. People in a pool</li> </ul>	15.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Joggers</li> <li>B. Race on the road</li> <li>C. Running race on mountain road</li> </ul>
16.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Tracks in the snow</li> <li>B. Fun in the snow</li> <li>C. Winter</li> </ul>	17.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Firemen</li> <li>B. Looking at a map</li> <li>C. Firemen looking at map</li> </ul>

# Main Ideas and Supporting Details



Write down the main idea of each list of words. Choose the best main idea from the answers given.

18.	Red Blue Green Yellow	A. Bright B. Colours (colors) C. Things I like	19.	Boot Slipper Sandal Sneaker	A. Things on feet B. Footwear C. Things I wear
20.	Screen Mouse CDRom Monitor	A. Technology B. Computer C. Computer items	21.	Baseball Soccer Rugby Squash	A. Ball sports B. Sports C.
22.	Drums Guitar Saxophone Violin	A. Music B. Sounds C. Instruments	23.	Cat Mouse Turtle Tiger	A. Four legs B. Animals C. Wild
24.	Walk Run Stroll Sprint	A. Movements B. Legs C. Leg Movements	25.	Summer Winter Autumn (Fall)	A. Times B. The Year C. Seasons
26.	Happy Sad Angry Cheerful	A. Feelings B. A good mood C. Different things	27.	Blaze Gleam Ray Flash	A. Fire B. Light C. Shine D. Torch
28.	Edmund Hillary Ludwig Beethoven Martin Luther King Mother Teresa	A. People B. Musicians C. Famous People	28.	Slip away Get off Break loose Getaway	A. Give up B. Escape C. Run D. Robber
29.	Europe Australasia Asia North America	A. Places B. Capitals C. Countries D. Continents	30.	New York London Sydney Wellington	A. Countries B. Capitals C. Europe D. Places

*Soon to be produced – sentences and paragraphs with main ideas & supporting details activities*