

Comprehension Activity Reintroduce: Main Idea

Activity Type: Reintroduce

Grade: K-3

Group Size: Small Group, Large Group, Whole Class

Length: 15 minutes

Materials: A nonfiction book to read out loud, chart paper or board, copies of the Main Idea/Detail graphic organizer for each student

Goal: Given a book, students will use its supporting details to determine its main idea.

Prepare:

Choose a book that appeals to early readers. Make copies of the Main Idea/Detail graphic organizer for each student. Make a large version of the Main Idea/Detail graphic organizer on the board or chart paper.

Model/Instruct:

1. Review how to determine a text's main idea.

Who can remember what determining the main idea is?

2. Record students' answers on the chart paper or board and clarify the meaning of a main idea as necessary.

Determining the main idea means finding the most important idea that tells what the book is all about.

3. Explain why finding the main idea is useful to readers.

Good readers are able to tell the main idea of what they have read. They think about what the book is about over all. They use important details from the book to help figure out the main idea. Sometimes we can confuse important details and the main idea. It's important to use important details to determine the main idea.

4. Show the cover of the book.

Today we will be reading _____ by _____. Without talking, think for a minute about what you think this book is about.

5. Direct students to the large copy of the Main Idea/Detail graphic organizer

We are going to write down three important details from the book. Then, we are going to use those details to figure out the main idea.

6. Read the book, stopping at an important detail.

In the first box on the graphic organizer, we will write down an important detail.

Call on students and record their answers on the chart you have drawn.

Practice:

7. Direct students to their copies of the Main Idea/Detail graphic organizer.

You are going to write down two more important details in the boxes on your sheets.

While I read the book, listen carefully for important details. By writing down important details, you are focusing on what the book is about. I will pause to give you time to write down the important details.

8. Read the book, pausing to allow students to write down important details on their graphic organizers.

9. Determine the main idea.

You can use the details to figure out what the book is about. Thinking about the book and the important details that you wrote down, write the main idea at the top of the page.

10. Ask students to turn to a partner to share their main ideas.

Now we will share with partners. Turn to a partner and take turns telling your partner the main idea and the details you used to determine it.

11. Hold a class discussion about how using important details helps readers find main ideas.

Adjust:

For advanced students:

Ask these students to use the same main idea and details that they identified on their graphic organizers to write a new story.

For struggling students:

Some students may struggle with using important details to help them determine the main idea. In this case focus their attention on the main idea of the book. Ask questions like:

What was this book about? What is the overall idea of this book? What is the most important information in this book? What did you learn from this book?

For ELL students:

Before reading the book, explain the meaning of any key vocabulary or concepts. Focus their attention on the three details they wrote on their graphic organizers. Use the questions above to guide them as they try to determine the main idea.