

Explicit Instruction: Main Idea

Step of Explicit Instruction	Plan
Focus Statement	<p>“Today we’re going to learn a strategy that will help you figure out the main idea of a piece of text. We’ve been working on summarizing what we read and in order to summarize we need to be able to pull out the most important parts of the text. Most paragraphs have a main idea that the author wants us to remember. Otherwise, why would the author include that paragraph in his/her writing if he/she didn’t want us to remember an important point from it? The main idea is the most important part that the author wants you to remember from a paragraph. By the end of this lesson, you will be able to tell me the main idea of several paragraphs.”</p>
“I do it.”	<p>“I’m going to read aloud this piece of text*. At the end of each paragraph, I’m going to stop and ask myself two questions, “Who or what is this paragraph about?” and “What’s the most important thing about the who or what in this paragraph?” If I can answer those two questions, I probably understand the main idea the author wanted me to get out of that paragraph.”</p> <p>*Note: The piece of text could be an excerpt from a story they’ve been reading, an article related to the content of a story they’ve been reading, informational text related to social studies or science, etc.)</p> <p>Read aloud the first two or three paragraphs, stopping at the end of each paragraph to verbally ask and answer the two questions. Write your responses for students to see (Elmo/chart paper/whiteboard, etc.).</p>
“We do it.”	<p>“Now, for the next couple of paragraphs, you’re going to help me figure out the who or what of each paragraph and the most important thing about the who or what of each paragraph.”</p> <p>Read aloud the next couple of paragraphs, stopping to get responses from students. Record their responses.</p>
“You do it together.”	<p>Distribute sticky notes to students. Let students work in pairs. Discuss their responses as a group.</p> <p>“For the rest of this piece of text*, you’re going to work with a partner and use sticky notes after each paragraph to record who or what is the paragraph about and what’s the most important thing about the who or what.”</p> <p>*Note: If the piece of text you are using is long enough, you can have them finish the piece as they work in pairs. If you’ve finished the piece during modeling and working together, maybe you have a related piece of text they could read together to practice or you could have them reread an important section from their story and practice finding main ideas.</p>
“You do it.”	<p>“When we start our next story, I’m going to ask you to use sticky notes to show me the main ideas you think the author wanted us to take away from the text.</p>