

Identifying the main idea - 1

If you know what the main idea of a text is, you will have a much better chance of understanding it.

Read the discussion text.

Planting trees

1. We are lucky that our school is a very pleasant place. We have good teachers, big classrooms, lots of computers and books, some good playground equipment and lots of space to play. The only thing that I don't like is that we don't have many trees! We should plant more trees in our playground.
2. Sometimes it gets very hot in the playground, especially when we run around a lot. If we had more trees we could sit in the shade and cool down when we get hot.
3. Our playground has lots of things made by people, such as climbing equipment, a sandpit and seats. We really like to use these, but if we had more natural things like trees and flowers to go with the grass, it would look much nicer.
4. Trees are good for the environment too. They take in carbon dioxide and give out oxygen. This helps to keep the air clean.
5. Dad lets me plant seedlings and water the plants at home. If we planted some trees at school, I would look after them. I think every class could plant and look after a tree of its own.
6. I think we should plant more trees in our playground because they would keep us cool, make our playground look nice and keep the air clean.



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Practice page



Use strategies like those on page 17 to practise finding the main idea. (Clues are given to help you.)

1. *What is the main idea in paragraph 2?*

- (a) Trees give shade to keep us cool when we get hot.
- (b) Trees have a trunk, branches and leaves.
- (c) We run around a lot at school.
- (d) Trees look nice.

The best answer is

Think!

What are all the ideas in this paragraph about?

2. *Explain what paragraph 4 is mainly about.*

Think!

The writer has stated the main idea at the beginning.

3. *Which paragraph's main idea is that every class should plant a tree and take care of it?*

- (a) Paragraph 1
- (b) Paragraph 3
- (c) Paragraph 4
- (d) Paragraph 5

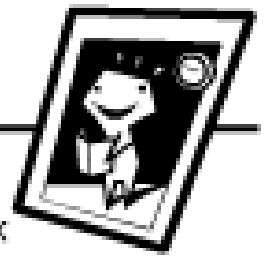
The best answer is

4. (a) Does the title of this text give information about the main idea?

Yes No

(b) Explain. _____

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On your own

Think about the strategies you have been practising and work out these answers.

1. *What is the main idea of paragraph 3?*

- (a) The school playground is perfect as it is.
- (b) Trees help keep the air clean.
- (c) The school playground needs more equipment.
- (d) It is good to have some natural things in a playground.

The best answer is

2. *What is the main idea of paragraph 1?*

- (a) The school has some very good teachers.
- (b) They need to plant more trees at school.
- (c) The school is a good place.
- (d) Trees are very messy.

The best answer is

3. *In paragraph 6, the writer retells three important ideas that are connected to the main idea of the paragraph.*

(a) What is the main idea?

(b) Write the three important ideas.

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