



Topic to Main Idea

Duration: 25-30 minutes | **Overview:** Students will identify prominent topics in a text and transform them into ranked main ideas.

Materials Needed

- One article for whole-class modeling
- One shorter article for small group practice
- Chart paper or whiteboard space for recording topics and main ideas
- Optional: student activity handout

Before the Activity:

1. Identify & share texts for students to read that relate to your curriculum & share them with students.
2. Tell students that today's strategy will help them identify and evaluate the main ideas in a text.

During the Activity:

1. Model the strategy for students using the whole class reading:
 - a. Read the complete text
 - b. List 3-4 biggest topics
 - c. Transform each topic into a main idea statement*
 - d. Rank main ideas by prominence in the text
2. Allow students time to read the second text.
3. Ask students to work in groups to practice the strategy using the student activity handout to guide their work.

**Tip: remind students: there is a difference between a topic and a main idea. Topics are what the text is about; main ideas are what the author is saying about those topics. For example:*

- *Topic: School uniforms*
- *Main idea: School uniforms reduce distractions and improve focus*

After the Activity:

1. Have groups share their main ideas with the class, and write each unique idea on the board.
2. As a class, consolidate and rank the main ideas of the passage.