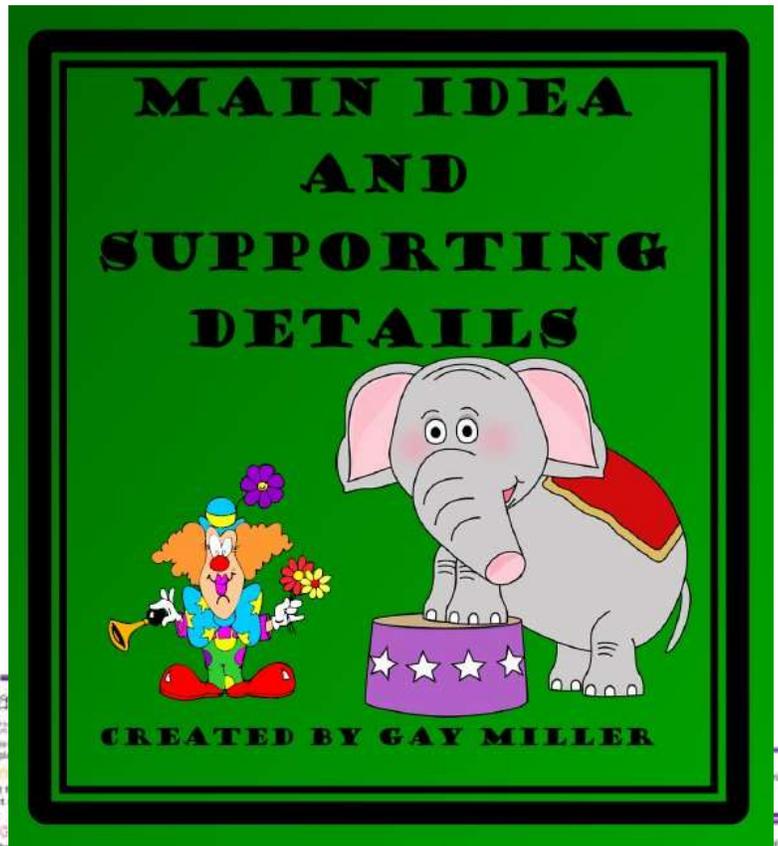


This is a free sample from the Main Idea and Supporting Details Unit found at Teachers Pay Teachers.



Main Idea → **Supporting Details**

The circus has many animal acts.

As a circus performer, you do these stunts.

The circus shows the animals through a series of rings.

The show makes the circus more exciting and entertaining than any other show.

Supporting details help the reader understand the topic.

Examples (help the reader understand the topic)

Steps (a series of directions)

Definitions (provide explanations for topics in the same way a dictionary does)

Comparisons (explain similarities in two or more topics)

Descriptions (tell who, what, how much, or how many so that a reader can picture the topic)

Contrasts (explain differences in two or more topics)

The Fox and the Grapes

and had someone else to blame for something through an animal. All the other animals were laughing and making fun of him. He was so angry that he decided to go to the top of the tree and get the grapes. He tried and tried, but he couldn't reach them. He was so hungry that he decided to eat the grapes that were hanging from the branches. He was so full that he fell back to the ground and was so happy that he had finally gotten the grapes.

The main idea of a passage tells you "the concept" being expressed.

The sentence that tells the main idea of a paragraph is called the **topic sentence**.

Topic sentences may be anywhere in a paragraph; however, are usually:

- at the beginning
- at the end
- in the middle

Earth's Plates

Bullet

Five

Atley of London.

Atley's original circus ring was 52 feet in diameter.

By riding in a circle audiences could see the performances better and trick riders were able to stay balanced more easily.

Because his audiences enjoyed the clown so much, Atley decided to add other entertainers including musicians, jugglers, tumblers, tightrope walkers, and dancing dogs.

Atley's horse riding trick shows were so popular that he added a clown to amuse the audience between the riding sequences.

The Lion and the Mouse

One day a lion was roaring and a mouse was running. The lion was so angry that he decided to eat the mouse. The mouse was so scared that he decided to run away. The lion was so angry that he decided to eat the mouse. The mouse was so scared that he decided to run away.

Topic Sentences 4 of 8	Topic Sentences 17	Topic Sentences 9	Topic Sentences 4 of 8	Topic Sentences 9
Supporting Details 11	Supporting Details 9	Supporting Details 11	Supporting Details 11 of 17	Supporting Details 11
1 of 11	1 of 11	1 of 11	1 of 11	1 of 11
1 of 11	1 of 11	1 of 11	1 of 11	1 of 11

Fighting back gives the bully what he is looking for.

Figurative language is used when a writer describes something using comparisons that go beyond literal meaning.

The words mean more than what they say on the surface.

This gives the writing a fresh look at a common subject.

Topic Sentences

Supporting Details

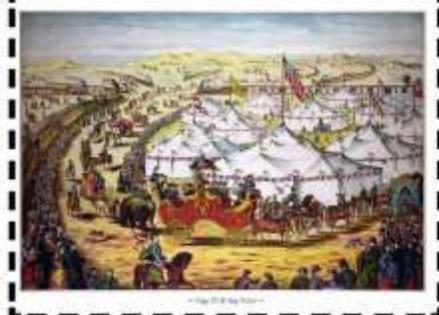
Supporting Details

Supporting Details

Supporting Details

Supporting Details

- The Fox and the Grapes
- The Lion and the Mouse
- The Goose With the Golden Eggs
- The Shepherd's Boy and the Wolf
- The Ant and the Grasshopper
- The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse



Figurative language is not meant to be word by word sense.

The objects that are being compared in enough ways so that their similarities are interesting, unique and/or surprising.

Figurative language is used in poetry in everyday speech.

Building a safe campfire is easy if you steps.

The Ballad of Casey Jones

Come all you rounders that want to hear
The story of a brave engineer.
Casey Jones was the rounder's name,
On a six eight wheeler, boys, he won his fame.
The caller called Casey at half past four,
He kissed his wife at the station door,
He mounted to the cabin with the orders in his hand,
And he took his farewell trip to that promised land.
Casey Jones mounted to the cabin,
Casey Jones with his orders in his hand
Casey Jones mounted to the cabin,
And he took his farewell trip to that promised land.

When he pulled up that Reno hill,
He whistled for the crossing with an awful shrill;
The switchman knew by the engine's moan
That the man at the throttle was Casey Jones.
He looked at his water and his water was low;
He looked at his watch and his watch was slow;
He turned to his fireman and this is what he said,
Boy, we're going to reach Frisco, but we'll all be dead.
Casey Jones - going to reach Frisco
Casey Jones - but we'll all be dead,
Casey Jones - going to reach Frisco,
We're going to reach Frisco, but we'll all be dead.

So turn on your water and shovel in your coal,
Stick your head out the window, watch those drivers roll;
I'll drive her till she leaves the rail,
For I'm eight hours late by that Western Mail.
When he was within six miles of the place,
There number four stared him straight in the face.
He turned to his fireman, said Jim you'd better jump,
For there're two locomotives that are going to bump.
Casey Jones - two locomotives,
Casey Jones - going to bump,
Casey Jones - two locomotives,
There're two locomotives that are going to bump.



Casey said just before he died,
There're two more roads I would like to ride.
The fireman said, Which ones can they be?
Oh the Northern Pacific and the Santa Fe
Mrs. Jones sat at her bed a-sighing
Just to hear the news that her Casey was dying.
Hush up children, and quit your cryin',
For you've got another poppa on the Salt Lake Line.
Casey Jones - got another poppa.
Casey Jones - on the Salt Lake Line.
Casey Jones - got another poppa.
For you've got another poppa on the Salt Lake Line.



Main Idea

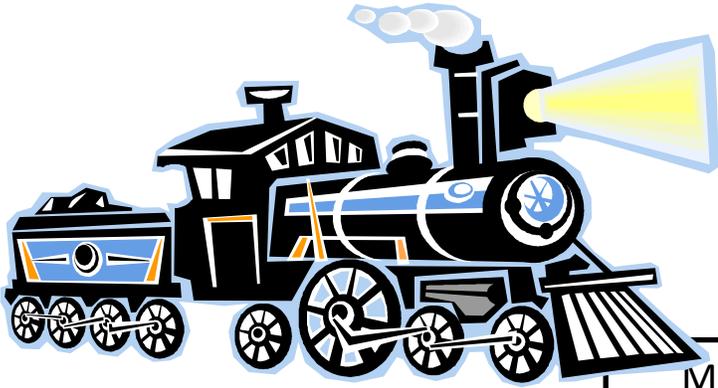
Main Idea of Verse 1

Main Idea of Verse 2

Main Idea of Verse 3

Main Idea of Verse 4

The Ballad of Cassie Jones



Find the Youtube video to go with this activity here:

http://bookunitsteacher.com/main_idea/main_idea.htm

Main Idea

This song tells the story of Casey Jones's fatal train accident.

Main Idea of Verse 1

Casey Jones tells his wife goodbye, gets orders on where he is going, and gets in his train.

Mention of the promised land is foreshadowing of what is to come.

Main Idea of Verse 2

Casey is behind schedule, but he must stop to get water and coal.

Main Idea of Verse 3

After making up some time, Casey and his fireman see a train on the tracks up ahead. Casey tells his fireman to jump off the train.

Main Idea of Verse 4

Casey Jones dies in the accident. Mrs. Jones tells her children not to worry because they will be getting a pension.

Notes for The Ballad of Casey Jones

- This ballad is based on a true person, Jonathan Luther "John" "Casey" Jones who was killed when his train, the Cannonball Express, collided with a stalled freight train in Vaughan, Mississippi.
- A rounder is a railroader.
- Jones was famous for his special train whistle (mentioned in Verse 2).
- Jones was able to slow the train from 75 mph to 35 mph before the impact saving many lives. Because of this he is considered a hero.
- Jones was the only person who died in the accident.
- Jones's wife was faithful; she wore black the rest of her life. The mention of a new poppa is referring to her pension.

Click on the cover image below to see the unit.

