

Find the Main Idea

Grade 4 • ELA • Main idea and supporting details • Standards: RI.4.2

Read each paragraph carefully. Then write the main idea in your own words and list two supporting details from the paragraph.

1. Our class pet is a hamster named Snowball. She has soft white fur and tiny pink paws. Snowball loves to run on her wheel at night. Everyone takes turns bringing her food and fresh water each day.

What is the main idea? List two supporting details.

2. Recess is the best part of the school day for many students. Kids get to run around and play games with their friends. The fresh air and exercise help everyone feel more awake. After recess, students are ready to focus on their afternoon lessons.

What is the main idea? List two supporting details.

3. Making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich is quick and easy. First, you lay out two slices of bread on a clean plate. Next, you spread peanut butter on one slice and jelly on the other slice. Finally, you press the two slices together and your sandwich is ready to eat!

What is the main idea? List two supporting details.

4. The school library has many resources to help students learn. There are thousands of books on shelves organized by topic and reading level. Students can also use computers to research information for their projects. Librarians are always available to answer questions and help students find exactly what they need.

What is the main idea? List two supporting details.

5. Playing soccer requires teamwork and communication. Players must pass the ball to teammates who are in good positions to score. The goalie needs to shout directions to defenders about where opponents are moving. When everyone works together and talks on the field, the whole team plays better and has more fun.

What is the main idea? List two supporting details.

6. Planning a birthday party takes careful organization and preparation. You need to decide on a guest list and send invitations at least two weeks early. The party also requires decorations, food, drinks, and fun activities or games for everyone. Parents often help with shopping and setting everything up the day before so the celebration goes smoothly.

What is the main idea? List two supporting details.

Answer Key — Find the Main Idea

For the teacher / parent. Do not distribute with the worksheet.

- 1.** Main idea: The class has a hamster as a pet (or similar). Supporting details: (any two) Snowball has white fur and pink paws; she runs on her wheel at night; students take turns caring for her.
- 2.** Main idea: Recess is an important and enjoyable part of the school day (or similar). Supporting details: (any two) Kids play games with friends; fresh air and exercise wake students up; students focus better after recess.
- 3.** Main idea: Making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich is simple (or similar). Supporting details: (any two) You need two slices of bread; you spread peanut butter on one slice and jelly on the other; you press the slices together.
- 4.** Main idea: The school library offers many helpful resources for students (or similar). Supporting details: (any two) There are thousands of organized books; computers are available for research; librarians help students find materials.
- 5.** Main idea: Teamwork and communication are essential in soccer (or similar). Supporting details: (any two) Players pass to teammates in good positions; goalies give directions to defenders; working together makes the team play better and have more fun.
- 6.** Main idea: Birthday parties require careful planning and preparation (or similar). Supporting details: (any two) Invitations should be sent two weeks early; parties need decorations, food, drinks, and activities; parents help with shopping and setup.