

# The Main Event

This activity is designed to help students determine the difference between the main idea and supporting details in nonfiction text. Focusing on the difference between these two concepts, as well as how the concepts are related, helps students build their analytical skills and ability to summarize important information.

<b>Overview:</b>	Students will learn to identify the main idea of a nonfiction text and the related supporting details.
<b>Standards addressed:</b>	<p><b>Common Core Standards</b></p> <p><b>Reading Standards for Informational Text 4.2</b> Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.</p> <p><b>Reading Standards for Informational Text 5.2</b> Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.</p>
<b>Activity works best with:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small groups</li> <li>• Whole class</li> </ul>
<b>Preparation time:</b>	Low
<b>Materials:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer with Internet access</li> <li>• LCD projector</li> <li>• Sticky notes in two different sizes and colors – one color will represent main ideas (so each student will only need one or two) and the other color will represent supporting details (so students will need more of this color)</li> </ul>
<b>Preparation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct your web browser to the <b>We Give Books</b> website at <a href="http://www.wegivebooks.org">www.wegivebooks.org</a>.</li> <li>• Log in to your account and select a campaign to support.</li> <li>• Choose two nonfiction books to read, and click the orange “Read Online” button to open them.</li> </ul>

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<b>Introduction:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a group, ask students to define main idea and supporting details.</li> <li>• Briefly discuss the class’s definition and add any important information.</li> <li>• Let students know that you will be reading two nonfiction books and discussing both the main idea(s) and supporting details.</li> </ul>
<b>Activity:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read the first book aloud, allowing plenty of discussion regarding main idea(s) and supporting details.</li> <li>• Record, or have a student record, the main idea(s) and supporting details so all students can read the list. Ensure that students begin to determine the difference between general details and supporting details.</li> <li>• Before starting the second book, explain that each student will receive two sets of sticky notes. One will represent the main idea(s) and the other will represent supporting details.</li> <li>• Let students know that the second book will be read slowly, twice, allowing them time to write. The notes do not need to be complete sentences.</li> <li>• If more than one main idea is being discussed, students will need to keep the groups of notes separate. Folding a piece of paper and using one half for one main idea, and the other half for the second main idea, makes an easy organizer.</li> <li>• After reading, encourage students to share their choices with the whole group or with a partner.</li> </ul>
<b>Tips for expansion:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have students use their sticky notes to organize their thoughts and write a paragraph to summarize the book.</li> <li>• Students can use the <a href="#">Chinese Scrolls</a> activity to build a fun display by placing the main idea at the top with the supporting details underneath. Text, artwork or both can be used. You can find instructions for this project online in the Craft Projects section, among many other resources, available to you to download for free on the <b>We Give Books</b> website at <a href="http://www.wegivebooks.org/resources">www.wegivebooks.org/resources</a>.</li> </ul>