

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Finding Main Idea

The most important idea in a story is called the **main idea**.
The main idea tells what a story is mostly or mainly about.

- ★ The main idea is sometimes found in the first sentence of a story.
 - ★ The main idea is sometimes found in the last sentence of a story.
 - ★ The main idea is sometimes not found in the story. You can figure out the main idea by thinking about what the story is mostly about. Ask yourself, 'What is the story telling me?'
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Recalling Facts and Details

Sentences that tell more about the main idea are called **facts and details**.
Facts and details help explain the main idea.

- ★ Facts and details tell more about the main idea.
 - ★ Facts and details often answer *who, what, where, when* and *why* questions. Some of these questions might be 'Who is the story about? What happens in the story? Where does the story take place? When does the story take place? Why do these things happen?'
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Understanding Sequence

The order in which things happen in a story is called **sequence**.
Sequence tells what happened first, what happened second and so on.

- ★ Clue words such as *first, next, then, last, finally, before* and *after* often tell the order in which things happen.
- ★ Clues about time tell the order in which things happen. Clues about time are times of day, days of the week, months of the year and dates.
- ★ Sometimes, there are no clue words in a story. Think about the beginning, the middle and the ending of the story. This will help you understand the order in which things happen.



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Recognising Cause and Effect

Why something happens is the **cause**.

What happens because of the cause is the **effect**.

- ★ A cause is the reason that something happens.
 - ★ An effect is what happens because of the cause.
 - ★ Clue words such as *so*, *so that*, *since* and *because* often tell about cause and effect. Other clue words are *if* and *reason*.
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Comparing and Contrasting

Finding how two or more things are alike and how they are different is called **comparing and contrasting**. Comparing is finding how things are alike. Contrasting is finding how things are different.

- ★ Clue words that tell how things are alike are *same*, *like* and *alike*.
 - ★ Clue words that tell how things are different are *but*, *unlike*, *different* and *however*.
 - ★ People, places, objects and events can all be compared and contrasted.
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Making Predictions

When you think about what might happen next in a story, you are **making a prediction**. Making a prediction is a way of using clues from a story, as well as things you already know, to make a good guess about what might happen next.

- ★ Clues are often in the title of a story. Read the title, and then make a guess about what you will be reading.
- ★ Clues are often in the facts and details in a story. Details about the things characters do and say often help you make a prediction about what they might do or say later in the story.
- ★ Clues are often in any pictures included with a story. Pictures often show something that is happening or will happen soon.

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Identifying Author's Purpose

All authors write for a reason. The reason an author writes something is called the author's purpose. When you figure out why a story was written, you are **identifying the author's purpose**. Authors write for one of four reasons – to describe, to entertain, to explain or to persuade.

- ★ Some stories mainly describe something, such as a person, place or thing. The author's reason for writing is to **describe**.
 - ★ Some stories mainly tell about something funny or something enjoyable. Some stories also teach a lesson. The author's reason for writing is to **entertain**.
 - ★ Some stories mainly tell how to do something. Some stories give lots of information about a person, place or thing. The author's reason for writing is to **explain**.
 - ★ Some stories are mainly written to try to get readers to do something, buy something or believe something. The author's reason for writing is to **persuade**.
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Interpreting Figurative Language

Authors use figurative language to help readers create pictures in their mind. When you understand what the author is telling you, you are **interpreting figurative language**.

- ★ Look for things that are compared in a story. Think about why these two things are being compared.
 - ★ Look for words that have a meaning different from their usual meaning. Find word meaning in context to help you understand the meaning of these words.
 - ★ Think about any pictures that come to mind as you read. Use the pictures to help you understand what the author means.
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Distinguishing Between Real and Make-believe

Things you read that could happen in real life are **real**. Things you read that could not happen in real life are **make-believe**. When you figure out which parts of a story are real and which parts are make-believe, you are **distinguishing between real and make-believe**.

- ★ Real stories are about things that could really happen.
- ★ Make-believe stories are about things that could not really happen. There are many clues that help you figure out if a story is make-believe. Some of these clues are animals that can talk, characters who can do things that people cannot do and places where unusual things happen.
- ★ Often, some parts of a story are real and other parts are make-believe.

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Finding Word Meaning in Context

When you use clues in a story to figure out the meaning of a new word, you are **finding word meaning in context**. The words and phrases around a new word often give clues to the word's meaning.

- ★ Clues are often in the sentence where the new word appears. Clues can also be in the sentences before and after the word.
- ★ Clues about the meaning of a new word are often found by thinking about the way the word is used in the sentence.
- ★ Clues about the meaning of a new word can be found by thinking about the facts and details in the part of the story where the new word is found.

Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences

Some things in a story are not clearly told to the reader. Sometimes, you must figure out information on your own. Whenever you figure out something on your own, you are **drawing a conclusion** or **making an inference**.

- ★ Pay attention to the details in a story. Use the details to figure out information that is not told to you.
- ★ Use the details in a story and what you know from your own life to draw a conclusion or make an inference.

Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion

If a statement is true and can be proved, it is a **fact**. If a statement tells what someone thinks or feels, it is an **opinion**. Facts can be proved. Opinions cannot. When you figure out if a statement is a fact or an opinion, you are **distinguishing between fact and opinion**.

- ★ Facts are statements that can be checked or proved.
- ★ Opinions are statements that cannot be proved. They tell what someone thinks or feels.
- ★ Opinions often contain clue words. Some clue words are *think, feel, believe* and *seem*. Other clue words are *always, never, all, none, most, least, greatest, best* and *worst*.

