The **main idea** is the **most important idea of a text**.

- The **main idea** is often **found in a sentence at the beginning** or at the **end of a paragraph**.
- **Key details** are sentences that **provide more information to support the main idea**.



John Marshall

[1]**John Marshall was an important person in United States history**. [2]He **fought as a captain** in the Revolutionary War. [3]The Revolutionary War was the war for American independence from Britain. [4]Marshall was the **Secretary of State** under President John Adams. [5]He also **served as Chief Justice** of the Supreme Court. [6]Marshall was the fourth chief justice.

CFU

Which sentence supports the main idea that John Marshall was an important person in the United States history? Explain.

A **John Marshall served in the House of Representatives.**

B **John Marshall became a lawyer in 1781.**

What is the difference between main idea and key details?

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1. Read the text.
2. Identify key details. (underline)
3. Discern the main idea. (box)

Parks

[1]Parks are visited by many people every day. [2]There are many fun activities to do at the park. [3]Skating is one thing that can be exciting. [4]On the weekends is when the most skaters come out. [5]Bicycling is another thing that can be enjoyed. [6]Many parks even have a special path for bicycles. [7]Playing volleyball is also very enjoyable. [8]Many teams are always competing with each other.

Stems

[1]Plants have many parts. [2]Stems do several things for plants. [3]Stems hold the plant and leaves up so that they will be in the sunlight. [4]Without light, the plants cannot survive.

[5]Stems carry water and food to other parts of the plant. [6]The water and food has to be transported from the roots up. [7]Stems can also store food for the plant. [8]The stored food is the part of the plant that we sometimes eat.

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1. Read the text.
2. Identify key details. (underline)
3. Discern the main idea. (box)

Honeybees

[1]Honeybees are important for nature and people. [2]They help plants grow by carrying pollen from flower to flower. [3]Without bees, many fruits and vegetables would not grow. [4]Bees also make honey, which people use for food and medicine. [5]A bee works hard all day, visiting hundreds of flowers. [6]Each bee has a special job, like guarding the hive or feeding young bees.

Volcanoes

[1]Volcanoe eruptions are powerful forces of nature. [2]A volcano forms when melted rock called magma pushes through the Earth's surface. [3]When a volcano erupts, it can shoot out lava, ash, and gas. [4]Some eruptions are small and slow, but others are big and fast. [5]Other eruptions explode suddenly, sending rocks flying for miles. [6]After an eruption, the cooled lava and ash can create new land, like islands and mountains.

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Skill Closure

1. Read the text.
2. Identify key details. (underline)
3. Discern the main idea. (box)

Basketball

Basketball is a very popular sport. Basketball players learn many skills when playing basketball. They learn how to dribble and pass the ball. Dribbling is one of the most important skills to learn. Basketball players also learn how to control the ball. Without control, they cannot score. Most importantly, basketball players learn how to work together with their teammates.

Concept Closure

Write an explanation.

Lamar would like to add the following sentence below to the passage about *basketball* as supporting evidence.
Does the sentence support the main idea? Explain.

Basketball players learn to shoot the ball from different places on the court.

Summary Closure

What did you learn today about discerning the main idea?

Word Bank
main idea
discern
key details
support

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1 Read the text.
2 Identify key details. (underline)
3 Discern the main idea. (box)

Rainforests

[1]A rainforest has smaller plants that grow on the ground and lower level of the forest. [2]The plants thrive beneath the larger plants and trees. [3]Animals such as the poison dart frog and the capybara also live there. [4]Most of the animals in the rainforest live in the canopy. [5]The rainforest also has insects and colorful birds, such as toucans. [6]These animals live among the trees of the rainforest. [7]A rainforest is full of many kinds of plants and animals.

Exercising

[1]Exercise can improve how you feel and help you sleep better. [2]We all have experienced how tired we are after we exercise. [3]Exercise helps make your heart and lungs strong. [4]Doctors always recommend exercise to people with heart problems. [5]It also helps control your weight or lose weight. [6]Without exercise it is more difficult to keep your weight down. [7]Exercising can help you in many ways.

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Listening

Listen to the text.
Answer the questions about the text.

1 What is the main idea of the passage?

A People from all over the world have many celebrations.

B American Indians had celebrations for a variety of purposes.

C The wanted to ensure a good harvest.

2 What would be another detail that supports the main idea?

A Some American Indians wore clothing made from leather.

B Some American Indians lived in a traditional home called the tepee.

C American Indians had many festivities for salmon fishing.

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Reading

Which three sentences belong in a paragraph that has the main idea of "Seeds are dispersed in a number of ways."

Some seeds are light or have wings to help them float in the air.	Yes	No
Some plants, like ferns, don't produce seeds.	Yes	No
Some seeds have barbs or hooks to catch on fur and feathers of animals.	Yes	No
Some seeds need light to grow.	Yes	No
Some seeds can float on the water and are carried by rivers and streams.	Yes	No

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Writing

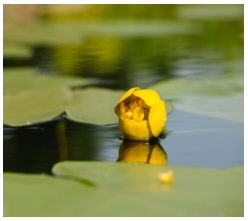
Write a paragraph with key details.
Use the pictures to add additional details to the key details. Read the passage.



Dandelion seeds are dispersed by air



Cocklebur seeds are dispersed by fur



Yellow waterlily seeds are dispersed by water

Seeds are dispersed in a number of ways.



roller coaster



popcorn



show

There are many exciting things to do at an amusement park.

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