# Implied Main Ideas

## In a Nutshell: Finding Implied Main Ideas

✓ Mark up the text, whether it is a single paragraph or a longer passage, by highlighting:

  1. the recurring topic
  2. transition words that signal supporting details
  3. biased words that indicate the author's stance

✓ After studying the supporting details, determine what you think the main idea or central is.

✓ Once you have determined the main idea, summarize it in one sentence—this is just like a topic sentence (if you are looking at a single paragraph) or a thesis statement (if you are looking at a longer passage).

## Give it a try!

*When you're with your friends, it's okay to be loud and use slang. They'll expect it and they aren't grading you on your grammar. When you're standing in a boardroom or sitting for an interview, you should use very professional language, and keep your tone suitable to the working environment. Try to understand the personality of the interviewer and the setting of the workplace before cracking jokes or speaking out of turn. If you're ever in a position to speak publicly, always ask about your audience, and modify your language, tone, and topic based on what you think the audience's preferences would be. You'd never give a lecture about atoms to a group of first-graders!*

What is the main idea of this paragraph? Write your topic sentence here:

_____

_____

_____

## Works Cited

"How to Find the Implied Main Idea." *About Education.* About.com, 21 Oct 2015. Web. 23 May 2016.

Henry, D. J. *The Effective Reader.* 3rd ed. New York: Longman, 2011. Print.

Example answer: Different situations require different kinds of speech.

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# Implied Main Ideas & Implied Central Ideas

Sometimes main ideas are not explicitly stated by the author of a passage, but we can still determine what they are by looking at the supporting details. These are called **implied main ideas**.

To effectively find implied main ideas, you should do two things:

1. Read the supporting details carefully.

2. Identify the author's thought pattern.

## Quick Questions for Finding Implied Main Ideas

1. What is the topic (subject) of the paragraph?

2. What are the major supporting details?

3. Based on the details, what point is the author trying make? (The answer is the main idea.)

**\*Remember! The author's *thought pattern* is the way that s/he presents her/his ideas. For example, presenting supporting details as a list of reasons.**

## Implied Central Ideas

Just like paragraphs, longer passages (such as essays, articles, and chapters) can have a main (central) idea that is not directly stated but rather implied.

Just as with a main idea, **an implied central idea can be found by examining the supporting details** in the paragraphs that make up a longer passage.

## Helpful Hints

While reading through a paragraph or longer passage, circle or underline:

✓ The **topic** each time it recurs

✓ **Transition words** used to introduce details (which can be reasons, examples, etc.)

✓ **Biased words** that indicate the author's opinion/stance (many times these are *adjectives*, like excellent, impressive, reliable, etc.)

## What next?

After determining what the main idea of a paragraph or the central idea of a longer passage is, your next step will be to state that idea in your own words.

You are essentially **creating a *topic sentence*** or ***thesis statement*** for the passage. You can also think of this as a one-sentence summary of the passage.

## Things to Remember

✓ Often, longer texts like textbook chapters and articles will have **headings** and/or **graphics** (charts, graphs, diagrams) that can also help you determine main and central ideas.

✓ It is possible for readers to come up with slightly different conclusions about what implied main and central ideas are—this is due to the different understandings, experiences, and perspectives that readers bring to each text.

✓ The most important thing to remember is that the main/central idea you decide on **MUST** be **strongly supported** by the supporting details.

## Main Idea "Formula"

**Topic** ➕

**Author's Point/Stance** ＝

**MAIN IDEA**