LLRW2. Main Idea

Student Name: _____ Student ID Number: _____

Instructor: _____ Level: _____ Date: _____

For media links in this activity, visit the LLC ESL Tutoring website for Low Level SDLAs. Find your SDLA number to see all the resources to finish your SDLA.

Section 1: Understanding the Main Idea and Supporting Details

Did this happen to you? There was a new movie, and you asked your friend about it. Your friend took *one hour* to explain the movie. That was so long! Instead, your friend could tell you only the **main idea** of the movie. The main idea is all you need to decide if you want to see the movie. **Main ideas** are important in movies and reading.

The "main idea" is also called the "gist of the story." **The main point of a story is the most important piece of information an author wants you to know.** Actually, most native English speakers read to understand the main idea first because it helps them organize the information in a story. Also, you should be able to explain the main idea of a story in one or two sentences.

All of the other information that explains the main idea is called the **supporting details**. The supporting details are specific, and the main idea is general. Supporting details provide **more information** or **examples** that help the reader understand the main idea more clearly. The picture of the stool can help you understand how the supporting details in a story support the main idea.

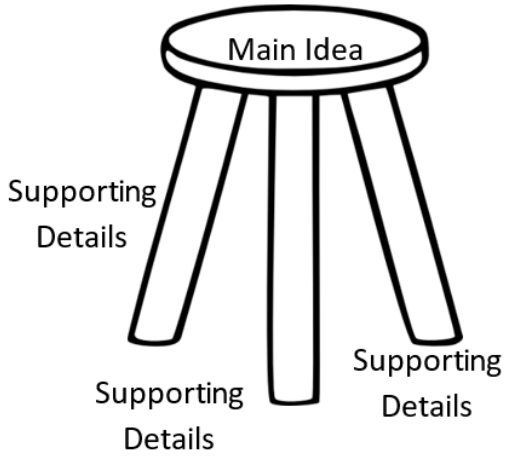


Image: www.clker.com

Section 2: Identifying the Main Idea and Supporting Details

Read the paragraph. Think about the main idea and supporting details.

A 1943 copper penny could be worth as much as fifty thousand dollars. In 1943, most pennies were made out of steel because copper was needed for World War II. As a result, the 1943 copper penny is very rare. Another rare penny is the 1955 double die penny. These pennies were stamped two times by mistake, so they have overlapping dates and letters. If it has not been used, it could be worth $25,000 at an auction. Now that's a pretty penny (ereadingworksheets.com).

Think of the Main Idea as an Umbrella Idea: *In this paragraph, there is 1 main idea and 2 supporting details. Below is a graphic organizer that shows the main idea and supporting details. Read the paragraph about pennies, and circle the best answer to make the statements in the graphic organizer correct.*

1. Main Idea:

- a) Rare pennies can be worth a lot of money.
- b) Rare pennies are not worth a lot of money.

2. First Supporting Detail

The 1943 copper penny could be worth:

- a) $50,000.
- b) $500,000.

3. More Information for First Supporting Detail

These pennies were made of:

- a) steel not copper.
- b) copper not steel.

4. Second Supporting Detail

The 1955 double die penny could be worth:

- a) Two thousand five hundred dollars
- b) Twenty-five thousand dollars

5. More Information for Second Supporting Detail

These pennies were stamped:

- a) once with dates and letters.
- b) twice with dates and letter.

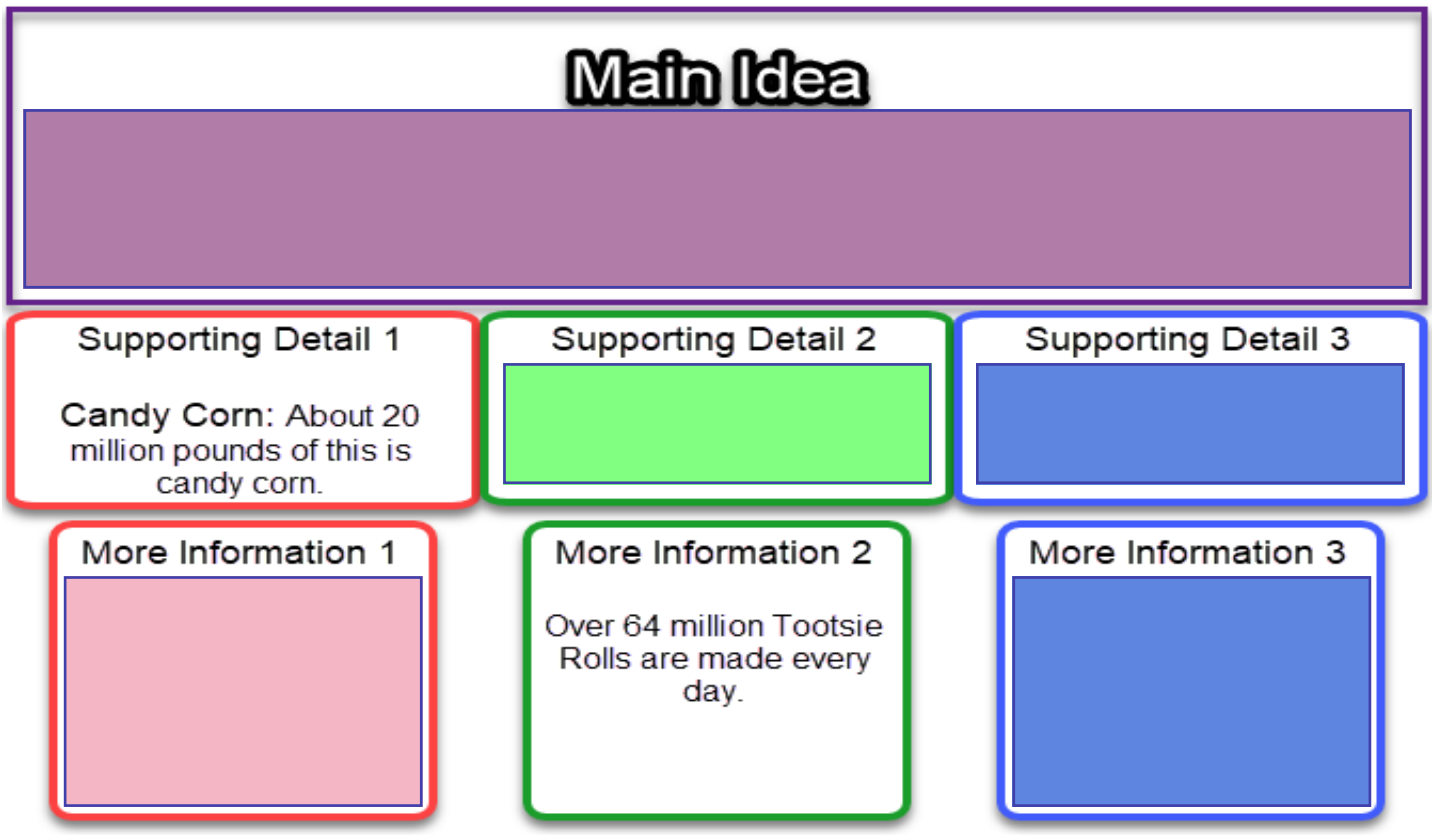
How did you do? Check your answers on the last page.

Section 3: Practice Finding the Main Idea and Supporting Details

Read the following paragraph. As you are reading, think about the main idea and supporting details. Fill out the graphic organizer below when you are finished.

There is more than 550 million pounds of candy sold in the U.S. each year. Three types of candy are candy corn, tootsie rolls, and chocolate. About 20 million pounds of the candy is candy corn. Brach's is the top manufacturer of candy corn. It sells enough candy corn to circle the Earth 4.25 times! That's a lot of candy corn, but Tootsie Roll makes more candy than Brach's. Over 64 million Tootsie Rolls are made every day! Chocolate is even more popular than Tootsie Rolls. Candy companies manufacture over 20 billion pounds of chocolate in the United States each year. That's a lot!

(*ereadingworksheets.com*)



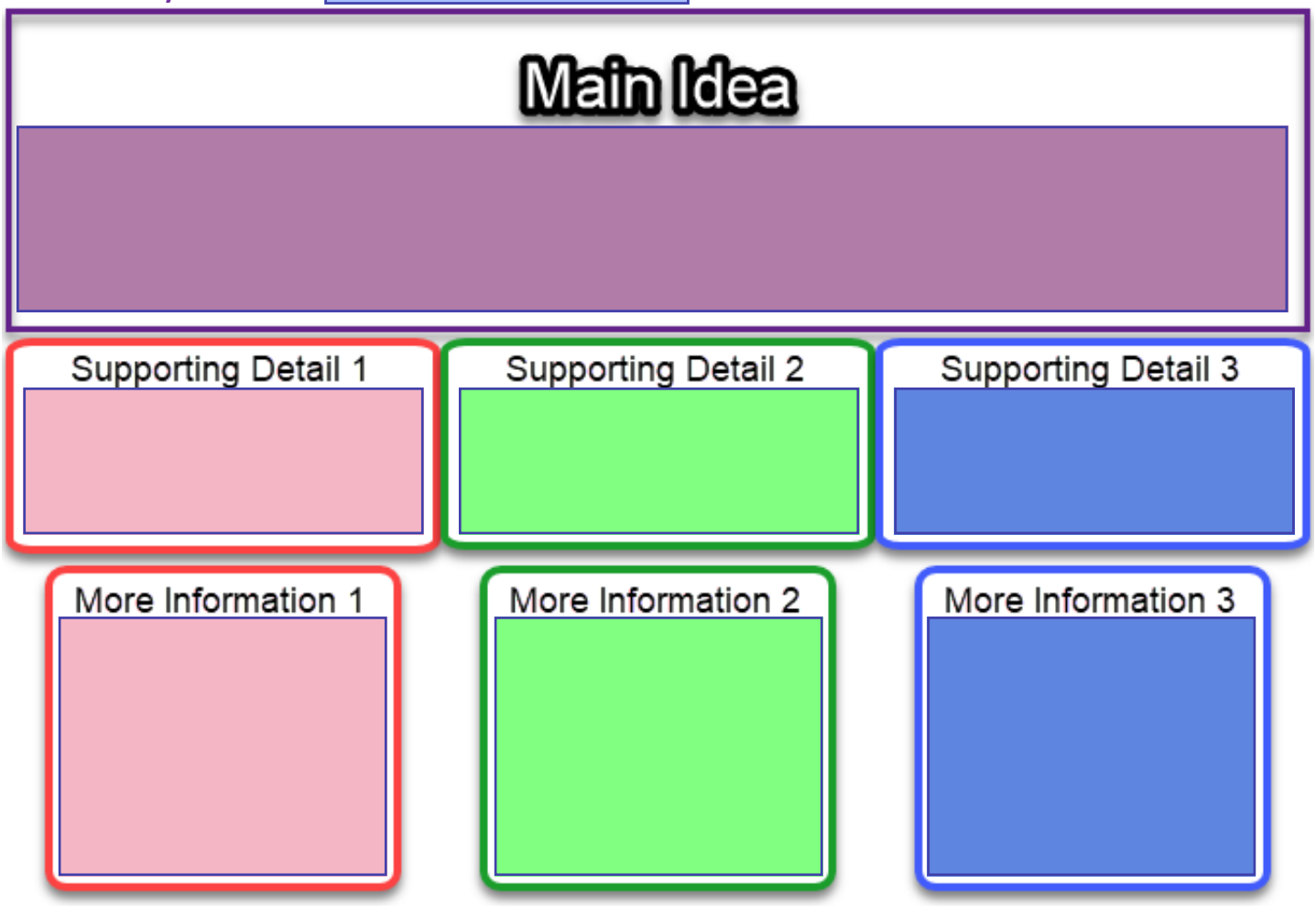
***Notice this paragraph has 1 main idea and 3 supporting details.**

Section 4: Reading and Organizing

Pick a story to read. Find the story you want to read and click on "reading comprehension." You will read the story and fill out the main idea and supporting details in the graphic organizer below. For extra practice, you can answer the questions about the story on the website. The stories below are recommended based on your ESL Level, but you may choose any story that interests you.

Recommended stories for:
Level 1: *A Special Christmas Present*
Level 2: *Two Sisters and the Cat*

Name of Story You Chose:



If you complete the chart above and want extra practice, you may choose another story to read.

Section 5: What Did I Learn?

Complete this table BEFORE meeting with a tutor.

Communication Skill	I can't do this yet.	I can do this with help.	I can do this without help.	I can teach this to a classmate.
I can identify the gist of a paragraph.				
I can find the supporting details in a paragraph.				
I can use a graphic organizer to organize the main idea and supporting details.				

Here are some words/phrases I need to practice.

Good job!

Now go to the LLC Tutoring Website and make an appointment with a tutor.

Section 6: Practice with a Tutor!

After completing the self-assessment, meet with a tutor and give this completed SDLA to the tutor. You will talk about the main idea and supporting details in the story you read. You may also ask the tutor any questions that you might have.

Grading Rubric

Possible Points	Need Practice (0-1 Point)	Good Job (2-3 Points)	Excellent Work (4-5 Points)
Content	More than 4 errors	3-4 errors	0-2 errors

Possible Points	Need Practice (0-1 Point)	Good Job (2-3 Points)	Excellent Work (4-5 Points)
Skill: Writing Correctly	More than 4 errors ☐	3-4 errors ☐	0-2 errors ☐
Fluency: Sentences long and smooth	Missing more than 4 words ☐	Misses 1-3 words ☐	0 words missing. ☐

***Students must receive at least 10 points to move on** **Possible Points: ☐ / 15**

Tutor Comments:

☐ **Congratulations! Keep going.**
You are successful! Choose another SDLA.

☐ **Work on this more.**
Not finished or needs more practice. Try this again.

Tutor Signature: ☐ Date: ☐

Answers Section 2
1. Main idea: A,
2. First Supporting detail: A,
3. More information about First Supporting Detail: B,
4. Second Supporting detail: B,
5. More information about Second Supporting Detail: B