

ETEC 603: INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN FINAL PROJECT

Main Ideas and Supporting Details

Module Prototype

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Directions: Read the following paragraph and use it to answer pretest questions 1-4. When you are done, you may use page 9 to check your answers.

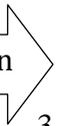
Robots are being used in sumo wrestling contests. Sumo wrestling is a sport that started in Japan. It takes place in a ring. Two players try to score points by holding each other down or pushing each other out of the ring. Robot sumo uses robots instead of humans. The robot that scores the most points wins.

1. **What is the main idea of this paragraph?**
 - a. Sumo wrestling is a sport that started in Japan.
 - b. Sumo wrestling takes place in a ring.
 - c. The robot that scores the most points wins.
 - d. Robots are being used in sumo wrestling contests.

2. **Which term best describes the main idea of a piece of writing?**
 - a. A detail
 - b. A central point
 - c. A broad topic
 - d. An aspect

3. **Which term best describes the supporting details of a piece of writing?**
 - a. Structure
 - b. Substance
 - c. Majority
 - d. Descriptive

4. **Which of the following is a supporting detail of this paragraph?**
 - a. Robots are being used in sumo wrestling contests.
 - b. Robot sumo contests are better than human sumo contests.
 - c. Robot sumo uses robots instead of humans.
 - d. Watching robot sumo is boring.

Move On 

Main Idea & Supporting Details

- ✓ The **main idea** in a paragraph is the most important idea. It is the central point that an author is trying to get across to the reader.
- ✓ The **supporting details** describe the main idea. They make the main idea stronger and clearer.
- ✓ Keep in mind that the main idea is often the first or last sentence of a paragraph.
- ✓ To find the main idea, answer two questions:

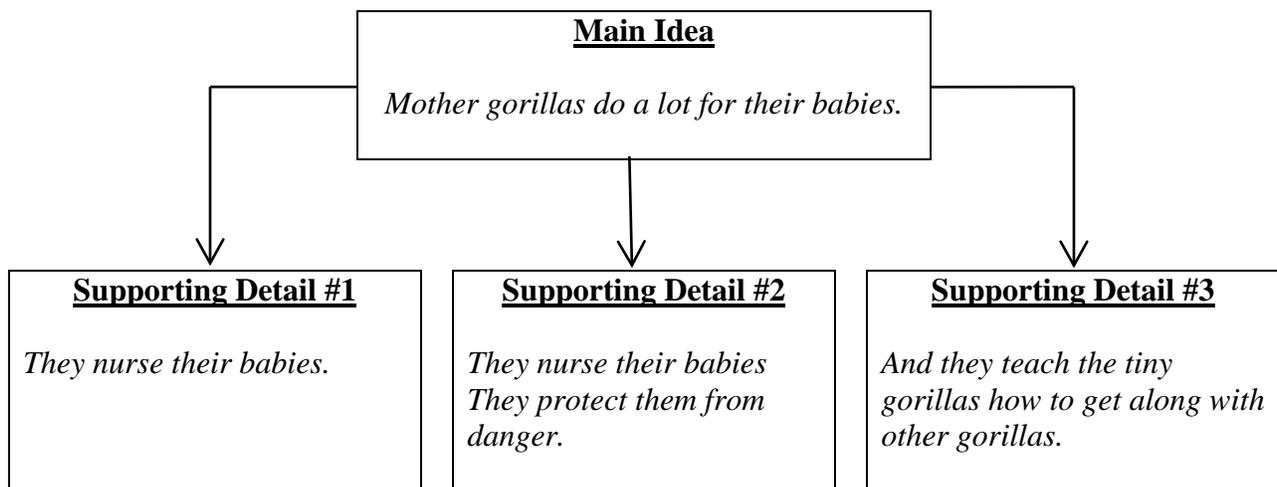
(1) What is the paragraph mostly about?
(2) Which sentence best tells what the paragraph is about?

Example:

Mother gorillas do a lot for their babies. They nurse their babies. They protect them from danger. And they teach the tiny gorillas how to get along with other gorillas.

(1) *The paragraph is mostly about what mother gorillas do.*

(2) *The first sentence tells what the paragraph is about. It is the main idea.*



Move On

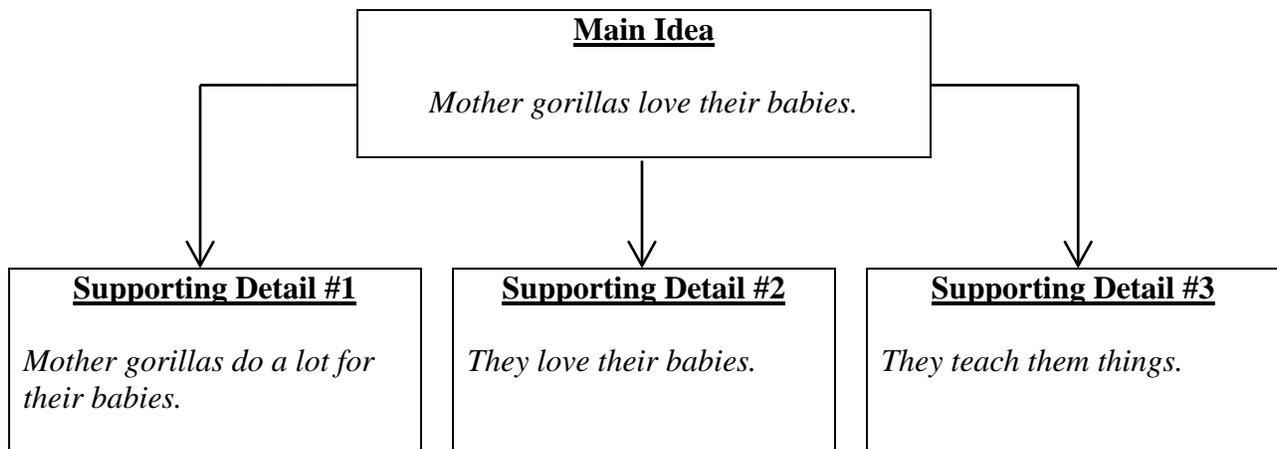
Main Idea & Supporting Details

Non-Example:

Mother gorillas do a lot for their babies. They nurse their babies. They protect them from danger. And they teach the tiny gorillas how to get along with other gorillas.

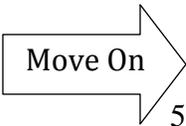
(1) The paragraph is mostly about mother gorillas.

(2) Not sure which sentence best tells what the paragraph is about.



- ✓ In this case, the main idea that is stated in the box is a broad and generalized statement about mother gorillas. It is not the main idea. This statement also cannot be found within the paragraph.
- ✓ The supporting details do not support the main idea. They are made up and cannot be found within the paragraph. Lastly, the supporting details neither make the main idea stronger nor does it make it any clearer.

**Now it's time to show what you have learned!
Please move on to the practice test section of the module.**



Directions: Read the following paragraph and use it to answer pretest questions 1-4. When you are done, you may use page 10 to check your answers.

Robots are being used in sumo wrestling contests. Sumo wrestling is a sport that started in Japan. It takes place in a ring. Two players try to score points by holding each other down or pushing each other out of the ring. Robot sumo uses robots instead of humans. The robot that scores the most points wins.

1. Which of the following is a supporting detail of this paragraph?

- a. Robots are being used in sumo wrestling contests.
- b. Robot sumo contests are better than human sumo contests.
- c. Robot sumo uses robots instead of humans.
- d. Watching robot sumo is boring.

2. Which term best describes the supporting details of a piece of writing?

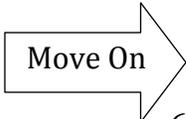
- a. Structure
- b. Substance
- c. Majority
- d. Descriptive

3. Which term best describes the main idea of a piece of writing?

- a. A detail
- b. A central point
- c. A broad topic
- d. An aspect

4. What is the main idea of this paragraph?

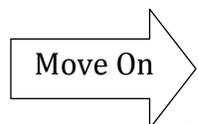
- a. Sumo wrestling is a sport that started in Japan.
- b. Sumo wrestling takes place in a ring.
- c. The robot that scores the most points wins.
- d. Robots are being used in sumo wrestling contests.

Move On 

Main Idea & Supporting Details

- ✓ The **main idea** in a paragraph is the most important idea. It is the central point that an author is trying to get across to the reader.
- ✓ The **supporting details** describe the main idea. They make the main idea stronger and clearer.
- ✓ Keep in mind that the main idea is often the first or last sentence of a paragraph.
- ✓ To find the main idea, answer two questions:
 - (1) What is the paragraph mostly about?
 - (2) Which sentence best tells what the paragraph is about?

**Now it's time to show what you have learned!
Please move on to the post test section of the module.**



Directions: Read the following paragraph and use it to answer questions 1-4. When you are done, you may use page 11 to check your answers.

Students compete in robot sumo contests. They learn how to build their own robots. They compete against their classmates and students from other schools. To win, students must be creative. They must have a good plan for defeating other robots.

1. What is the main idea of this paragraph?

- a. Students need a good plan for defeating other robots.
- b. Students compete against their classmates and students from other schools.
- c. Students compete in robot sumo contests.
- d. Students must be creative to win.

2. The best definition of supporting details would be...

- a. Important information that tells more about the overall idea of a piece of writing.
- b. Sentences that make the main idea stronger and clearer.
- c. The sentences that make up the bulk of a paragraph in a piece of writing.
- d. Details that support other details.

3. Which of the following is a supporting detail of this paragraph?

- a. Students like building sumo robots.
- b. Students compete in robot sumo contests.
- c. They use excellent strategies to defeat other robots.
- d. They must have a good plan for defeating other robots.

4. The best definition of main idea would be...

- a. Important information that tells more about the overall idea of a piece of writing.
- b. What a piece of writing is mostly about.
- c. What someone is primarily talking about.
- d. A vague idea that is supported by very specific details.



Question #1

- a. Incorrect. This supporting detail gives more information about sumo wrestling's starting place.
- b. Incorrect. This supporting detail gives more information about where a sumo wrestling match takes place.
- c. Incorrect. This supporting detail gives more information about the scoring rules of sumo.
- d. **Correct! This paragraph is mainly about robots being used in sumo wrestling contests.**

Question #2

- a. Incorrect. Details support the main idea in a piece of writing.
- b. **Correct! The main idea is the central point of a piece of writing.**
- c. Incorrect. The main idea is not broad; it is specific and has a point.
- d. Incorrect. The main idea encompasses the whole subject not just an aspect of it.

Question #3

- a. Incorrect. Metaphorically, main ideas are the structure and supporting detail hold it up.
- b. Incorrect. They do give a piece of writing substance, but this answer is too vague.
- c. Incorrect. They do make up the majority of a paragraph, but this answer is too vague.
- d. **Correct! Supporting details describe the main idea and give more information about it.**

Question #4

- a. Incorrect. This is the main idea of the paragraph.
- b. Incorrect. This is an opinion about robot sumo contests and not a supporting detail.
- c. **Correct! This supporting detail gives more information about what robot sumo entails.**
- d. Incorrect. This is an opinion about robot sumo contests and not a supporting detail.

Back to Pg. 3

Question #1

- a. Incorrect. This is the main idea of the paragraph.
- b. Incorrect. This is an opinion about robot sumo contests and not a supporting detail.
- c. **Correct! This supporting detail gives more information about what robot sumo entails.**
- d. Incorrect. This is an opinion about robot sumo contests and not a supporting detail.

Question #2

- a. Incorrect. Metaphorically, main ideas are the structure and supporting detail hold it up.
- b. Incorrect. They do give a piece of writing substance, but this answer is too vague.
- c. Incorrect. They do make up the majority of a paragraph, but this answer is too vague.
- d. **Correct! Supporting details describe the main idea and give more information about it.**

Question #3

- a. Incorrect. Details support the main idea in a piece of writing.
- b. **Correct! The main idea is the central point of a piece of writing.**
- c. Incorrect. The main idea is not broad; it is specific and has a point.
- d. Incorrect. The main idea encompasses the whole subject not just an aspect of it.

Question #4

- a. Incorrect. This supporting detail gives more information about sumo wrestling's starting place.
- b. Incorrect. This supporting detail gives more information about where a sumo wrestling match takes place.
- c. Incorrect. This supporting detail gives more information about the scoring rules of sumo.
- d. **Correct! This paragraph is mainly about robots being used in sumo wrestling contests.**

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Question #1

- a. Incorrect. This supporting detail gives more information on how a student could win in a robot sumo contest.
- b. Incorrect. This supporting detail gives more information about who the students compete against in robot sumo contests.
- c. **Correct! This paragraph is mainly about students competing in robot sumo contests.**
- d. Incorrect. This supporting detail gives more information about what a student needs to be in order to win a robot sumo contest.

Question #2

- a. Incorrect. This definition is better suited for the main idea.
- b. **Correct! They make the main idea stronger and clearer.**
- c. Incorrect. They do make up the bulk of the paragraph, but this is not the best definition.
- d. Incorrect. Supporting details support the main idea not other details.

Question #3

- a. Incorrect. This is an opinion about the students and not a supporting detail.
- b. Incorrect. This is the main idea of the paragraph.
- c. Incorrect. This is an opinion about the students' strategies and not a supporting detail.
- d. **Correct! This supporting detail gives more information about competing in robot sumo contests.**

Question #4

- a. **Correct! The main idea is important information and it will tell more about the overall idea of a piece of writing.**
- b. Incorrect. This would be the subject/topic of a piece of writing.
- c. Incorrect. This is not the best definition because it is a very vague explanation.
- d. Incorrect. Although main ideas are supported by specific details, they are not vague.

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