

# READING STRATEGY

**Title:** What's My Main Idea?

**Age:** 4<sup>th</sup> grade

**AASL Standards Addressed:**

**SKILL 3.1.2 Participate and collaborate as members of a social and intellectual network of learners. 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Grade Benchmark:** Participate in discussions on fiction and nonfiction related to curriculum.

**Procedure:**

- In my experience, students who understand the difference between main idea and the details of a paragraph are strong readers. I have found with a little direct instruction on how to pull out the main idea and details, even struggling readers can improve their comprehension.
- Choose ten nonfiction books that you would like to promote (Examples: Sneed Collard's *Lizard* and Seymour Simon's *Our Solar System*.) Find one paragraph in each that you can use for finding main idea and details. Type up each paragraph and cut each sentence out separately. Take out the sentence that indicates the main idea from each paragraph.
- Combine the detail sentences from two of the books and lay the sentences in a single mixed-up pile on the table. To challenge the stronger readers in the group you can combine two paragraphs that are on a similar main topic, but focus on two different things (two different lizard books, one focusing on their eating habits, one focusing on their defense)
- Students will work in groups to sort back out the sentences into two separate piles. Students should try to put the sentences back together in a reasonable order. Students can then work together to write a topic sentence for each paragraph. Have students discuss their choices and why the details support their main idea sentence.
- Display the ten actual topic sentences on an overhead projector or a smart board. Have students try to pick out the sentences that actually go with their paragraphs. Once everyone has had a chance to match their topics to their details, show them the original paragraphs in their entirety. Display the books from which you took the sentences and have the students try to find the books that go with their paragraphs.

**Assessment:**

First, the teacher will be able to see if students understand the sentences if they are able to separate them into two separate piles correctly. Second, the teacher will be able to see if the students understand the main idea of the paragraphs if they are able to come up with a reasonable main idea sentence for each one. Third, the teacher will be able to see if they understood the paragraph in its entirety if they are able to find the book with which it goes.

Paragraph from Seymour Simon's *Our Solar System* (main idea sentence highlighted in red):

**The sun is huge compared to Earth.** If the sun were hollow, it could hold 1.3 million Earths. If Earth were the size of a basketball, the sun would be as big as a basketball court. In fact, the sun is about six hundred times bigger than all the planets, moons, asteroids, comets, and meteoroids in the Solar System put together.

Paragraph from Sneed Collard's *Lizards* (main idea sentence highlighted in red):

**When push comes to shove, lizards can aggressively defend themselves.** Monitor lizards are armed with sharp teeth and can slash away at enemies with their long tails. Gila monsters won't hesitate to clamp down on an attacker's nose or other appendage. People who've been bitten have needed to have the Gila monsters pried off with pliers or screwdrivers.

**Benchmark:** SKILL 4.1.4 Seek information for personal learning in a variety of formats and genres.

Grade 8 Benchmarks: Read a variety of genres, including short stories, novels, poems, plays, myths, films, and electronic magazines and books.

**Background/Rationale:** In Middle School, the demand for reading informational texts increases by leaps and bounds. A strong vocabulary correlates with strong reading comprehension. The K.I.M. strategy is one way to help students build strong vocabulary skills. It can be especially effective if the students are getting practice with it in all of their classes.

The K.I.M. strategy helps students build up their vocabulary by giving them a visual representation of the word. Here are the steps:

1. Record the key word (K)
2. Write down the important information about the key word including a user-friendly definition (I)
3. Draw what the key word means, and link it to an unusual connection to create a memory device (M)
4. Write the key word in a context-rich sentence for application.

**Implementation:**

*Planning and Preparation:* Sixth graders in FCPS study Greek Myths as a part of the History curriculum. These ancient stories can be challenging for even the strongest of readers. The librarian and the history teacher can work together to teach students how to use the K.I.M. strategy during this unit. The librarian and history teacher should meet when possible to plan the lesson. They can select the Greek Myth reading passages and pick out the vocabulary words they want to focus on for the lesson. The librarian can also collect the various resources she has on Greek gods and goddesses to share with the class when they come.

*The Lesson:* The history teacher will bring her classes to the library for this lesson. The students will get a copy of “Zuess and His Brothers.” The librarian will display the chosen vocabulary words for this story on the Smart Board (eagle-eyed, thunderstruck, cornucopia, poppy, Underworld, wrathful, exemplary). The story will be read aloud and basic facts will be discussed. Once the story is read, the teacher will demonstrate how to fill out a K.I.M chart for the first vocabulary word “eagle-eyed” using feedback from students when possible. Students will then be broken up into small groups, each given a K.I.M. chart and one of the vocabulary words to fill out. They should use the context of the story to figure out the meaning, but if necessary, they can use any of the library resources to find out what it means. The librarian and teacher can circulate at this time to check for understanding of the concept. Each group can then be given the opportunity to bring their charts to the projector and share what they came up with.

*Assessment:* For further practice, students can be given another brief reading passage with pre-selected vocabulary words to try on their own. Students will turn in the second passage with their individual K.I.M charts filled out. The teacher and librarian look for accuracy and completeness to determine if the student understands the strategy. A rubric will be used to score the assignment: a score of 3 indicating the student has mastered the skill, a score of 2 indicating the student has a basic understanding but might need a little reinforcement, and a score of 1 being the student was unable to demonstrate an understanding of the skill.



## ZEUS AND HIS BROTHERS

From your introduction to him in Lesson 8, you know that Zeus was clever. Remember how he fed his unsuspecting father an herb so that Cronus would disgorge his children? Zeus was also aggressive and ambitious, a fighter who did not hesitate to depose his father and take over the throne. And he was also cruel and relentless, as you will see when you read about his treatment of the Titan Prometheus, who had been his ally.

But, for the Greeks, Zeus was the supreme god. We can assume that these qualities he displayed were ones they saw as necessary in a leader.

Zeus was also a father figure. The Greeks believed that he determined how human beings should behave and punished wrongdoers. They feared his wrath and the thunderbolts he could hurl from the sky.

But Zeus had human failings, too. He was often unfaithful to his wife and had love affairs with mortal maidens. Here is evidence that the Greeks endowed their gods with both the good and bad traits they themselves possessed.



Zeus's brother Poseidon was also a powerful and wrathful god, restless as the sea, which was his home. To the Greeks, whose land was nearly surrounded by water, he was important because in his good moods he protected navigation and

commerce. In his bad moods, however, he caused storms and earthquakes. Like Zeus, he was relentless toward those who offended him—as the hero Odysseus discovered. Having blinded Poseidon's one-eyed son, Polyphemos, Odysseus was doomed to roam the seas for ten years before he was allowed to return to his home on the island of Ithaca.



The third brother, Hades, guardian of the Underworld, was a shadowy figure. Black-cloaked and gloomy, he seemed as mysterious as the infernal regions where he dwelt and whose gates were guarded by the many-headed dog, Cerberus. But the Greeks believed that he protected the harvests, and they knew that his kingdom yielded great riches in minerals and metals.

Hades acted merely as the custodian of the dead; it was not his role to decide the fate of those who came into his domain. Three judges did that. Yet he was so feared that his name was seldom mentioned. Since he offered no threat of punishment and he almost never left the Underworld, the fear of him was just a reflection of the fear of death. For the Greeks, the afterlife offered little reward, even for those whose life on earth had been exemplary.

Name:

Date:

Homeroom:

## K.I.M Chart

<b>K</b> ey Idea (Vocabulary Word)	<b>I</b> nformation (Definition/Meaning)	<b>M</b> emory Clue (Picture)
Your Sentence:		

<b>K</b> ey Idea (Vocabulary Word)	<b>I</b> nformation (Definition/Meaning)	<b>M</b> emory Clue (Picture)
Your Sentence:		

<b>K</b> ey Idea (Vocabulary Word)	<b>I</b> nformation (Definition/Meaning)	<b>M</b> emory Clue (Picture)
Your Sentence:		

**Title:** Two-Column Notes

**Grade:** 9<sup>th</sup>

**Benchmark:** SKILL 4.1.4 Seek information for personal learning in a variety of formats and genres.

Grade 10 Benchmarks: Select resources for academic, personal, and real-world purposes.

**Background/Rationale:** There is an increasing demand for students in High School to have strong note taking skills. Being able to take good notes leads to better comprehension of the text as it helps them organize and process the information at the same time. The Two-Column note taking strategy gives students a clear and well-organized structure that is less complicated than outlining and less cumbersome than note cards. It can also be used for study purposes by folding one side back. Almost every class in high school requires some note taking; therefore the two-column note strategy should be taught and emphasized in each of the content areas. Here's how it works:

- The paper is folded in half vertically creating two columns.
- In the left column, students write the main ideas
- In the right column, students write the supporting details and subtopics

### **Implementation**

*Planning and Preparation:* Students in ninth grade are studying Environmental Sciences, focusing specifically on Global Warming. They have been asked to do a research project on the different aspects of Global Warming. The science teacher and librarian can work together to teach students how to use the Two-Column note taking method to help them in their research. The librarian and science teacher should meet to plan the lesson and pick out the article they plan to use to demonstrate the method. The librarian can also collect the various resources she has on Global Warming to share with the class when they come.

*The Lesson:* The science teacher will bring her classes to the library for this lesson. The students will get a printed copy of the "What is Global Warming" webpage from National Geographic: <http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/global-warming/gw-overview>. The article will be read aloud in its entirety once. The teacher will then direct the students' attention to the section titled "Greenhouse effect." On the overhead she will demonstrate how to fold the piece of loose leaf paper in half lengthwise. She will ask students what one main idea from that section is and write it on the left-hand side. Then, after some discussion, she will write down the supporting details for that main idea. She will ask for another main idea from that section and write it down on the left, putting the supporting details on the right. Students will be asked to work in small groups to complete a Two-Column chart for the second section in the article titled, "Aren't temperature changes natural?" The librarian and teacher can circulate during this time to observe student mastery. The groups can then discuss what they came up with as a whole group for further clarification of the strategy.

*Assessment:* Students will be asked to complete a Two-Column chart for the section titled, “Why is this a concern?” on their own. Their chart will be turned in and the teacher and librarian will look for main ideas on the left and supporting details on the right. A rubric will be used to score the assignment: a score of 3 indicating the student has mastered the skill, a score of 2 indicating the student has a basic understanding but might need a little reinforcement, and a score of 1 being the student was unable to demonstrate an understanding of the skill.

Name:

Date:

Homeroom:

## Two-Column Note Taking Chart

Main Idea	Sub-topic and/or Supporting Details

## Works Cited

Goodman, Amy. "The Middle School High Five: Strategies Can Triumph." *Voices from the Middle* 13.2 (2005): 12-19. Print.

*Zeuss and His Brothers*. Jefferson Township Public Schools, 2010. Web. 13 Jul 2015.  
<http://www.jefftwp.org/middleschool/coreteams/la/MYTHOLOGY/zeus%20and.pdf>