

Strategy Group Planning Form

Students:	Strategy: Main Idea in the Introduction(Informational Text)
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Introduction: Readers, you've been doing a lot of hard work learning from nonfiction texts and trying to figure out the main idea of what you have read. Remember the main idea is what the whole article or section is about. Today I want to teach you another strategy to help you figure out the main idea of a text, so you are able to figure out what the author is trying to tell you. Sometimes the main idea is hidden in the introduction.

Teach:

One way readers can figure out the main idea is if the book or article you are reading has an introduction, you want to read it carefully and maybe even twice. Consider if each sentence is giving you information about how the text will go, background information on the topic, or is presenting an idea about the topic.

Let me show you how I do with *Up From Slavery* by Lauren Tarshis. The author begins this article with a two paragraph summary. Let's read it closely to see what exactly she's introducing. In the beginning she seems to be setting up the topic by telling us about Booker's journey to Hampton Institute. Then she gives up background information by telling us how hard the journey was for Booker. That he slept curled up on the dank and dark ground with fear of snakes curling up next to him. This is letting us know it wasn't easy for Booker. The last part is telling us a little about how the article will go. It is saying that Booker seemed to be like any other freed slave but he's actually going to be very famous. Now that I have this information I'm going to think, "What's the main idea so far?" I'm starting to think it is how Booker went from slavery to become very famous. He must have accomplished something big and important.

Students Application:

Now it is your turn, you are going to read the introduction carefully and think about how the information sets up the topic, gives you background information and information about how the book will go. Then think, "What's the main idea so far?" When you have the answer to that question, jot it down in your notebook. You can revisit it later to add or change it after you've read the whole text.

Prompts:

- *Read the information carefully.*
- *What job does each part of the introduction have (set up, share an idea and so on)?*
- *What's the main idea so far, after reading this introduction?*
- *Point to the sentence that seems to be sharing an idea about the topic.*

Closure: While reading informational text it is important that we are able to determine the main idea so we know how the information all fits together. If the book or article you are reading has an introduction, you want to read it carefully and maybe even twice. Consider if each sentence is giving you information about how the text will go, background information on the topic, or is presenting an idea about the topic. Then ask yourself, "What's the main idea so far?" As you read on you might want to revisit the main idea and revise it.