

Reading Comprehension

The REDW Strategy for Finding Main Ideas

REDW is a good strategy to use to find the main idea in each paragraph of a reading assignment. Using this strategy will help you comprehend the information contained in your assignment. Each of the letters in REDW stands for a step in the strategy.

Read

Read the entire paragraph to get an idea of what the paragraph is about. You may find it helpful to whisper the words as you read or to form a picture in your mind of what you are reading. Once you have a general idea of what the paragraph is about, go on to the next step.

Examine

Examine each sentence in the paragraph to identify the important words that tell what the sentence is about. Ignore the words that are not needed to tell what the sentence is about. If you are allowed to, draw a line through the words to be ignored. For each sentence, write on a sheet of paper the words that tell what the sentence is about.

Decide

Reread the words you wrote for each sentence in the paragraph. Decide which sentence contains the words you wrote that best describe the main idea of the paragraph. These words are the main idea of the paragraph. The sentence that contains these words is the topic sentence. The other words you wrote are the supporting details for the main idea.

Write

Write the main idea for each paragraph in your notebook. This will provide you with a written record of the most important ideas you learned. This written record will be helpful if you have to take a test that covers the reading assignment.



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