

FCAT READING SKILL
Determine the Main Idea, Stated or Implied

1. **What to do and what to watch for:** The main idea tells what the whole passage is about. The main idea is the main or most important point the writer wants to make.
2. **Read the title of the passage.** The title is written in **BOLD** at the top of the passage. Find the title before you read the passage. Read it and think about it by asking:
 - What is this reading all about?*
 - What's the main point?*
 - Why did the writer write this?*
 - What information will I get from this reading?*
 - What is the BIG picture here?*
 - Why would someone want to read this?*
3. **Read the introduction.** The introduction is right under the title. It is one or two sentences written in *ITALICS*. Just like the title, the introduction gives important information about what you are going to read. Sometimes, the introduction tells you the main idea before you read. After you read the introduction, think about it by asking yourself the same questions you asked about the title.
4. **Read the passage. Is there a topic sentence?** This is a sentence that explains in a few words what the whole passage is all about. This sentence tells the main idea or topic of the passage. Often, the topic sentence is the first sentence, but sometimes you will find it in the middle or at the end. When you find a topic sentence, you have found the **stated main idea**.

TOPIC SENTENCE + DETAILS = STATED MAIN IDEA
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With Stated main idea, you can prove your answer by going directly to the passage to check it. Your answer is clearly stated in the passage, and should be easy to find. Questions on stated main idea are based on what is written exactly or stated in the passage itself. For these questions, you go directly to the reading and look for the information. In other words, prove it!

Example:

There are many different ways to make a friend. One way to make a friend is to be a friend. If someone needs you, be there. Second, remember that everyone is a different person. Respect the way other people are, and get to know them. They will respect you, and want to get to know you too. Another thing you can do is always to be kind to everyone. You'd be surprised how many great friends are waiting for you.