Main idea and supporting details

In a paragraph, the sentences tell about one **theme** or main idea. In many cases, this is stated in a **topic sentence**. All of the sentences that tell more about the main idea are called **supporting** details.

Example

Read the following paragraph.

At the Conch Cracking Contest in Grand Bahama, we ate conch cooked in many different ways. At breakfast, we had a hot bowl of stewed conch with potato bread. Later in the day, we enjoyed some delicious conch salad. The best dish of all was a tender cracked conch served with crab and rice.



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The main idea of the paragraph is:

At the Conch Cracking Contest in Grand Bahama, we ate conch cooked in many different ways.

The **supporting details** are all of the sentences that tell about eating conch cooked in different ways. These are:

• At breakfast, we had a hot bowl of stewed conch with potato bread.

• Later in the day, we enjoyed some delicious conch salad.

• The best dish of all was the tender cracked conch served with crab and rice.

The diagram below shows this in another way.

We ate conch cooked in many different ways. (Main idea)

Stewed conch (Detail)	Conch salad (Detail)	Cracked conch (Detail)

Try it out!

• Read the paragraph below.

• Write the sentence that tells you the main idea of the paragraph.

• Find two supporting details and write them below the main idea.

Homecoming on Crooked Island is full of activities and fun. On the first day, there is always a big fair in the park. Everyone tries out the delicious food from the island. The children like trying to climb the greasy pole and plaiting the maypole. Everyone has a great time at the festival. When it is over, they look forward to doing the same types of activities next year.

Main Idea _____

_____

Supporting details: _____

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