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| Reading InterventionSkill: Comprehension |
| **Main-Idea Maps** |
| This simple strategy teaches students to generate a graphic organizer containing the main ideas of an expository passage.Reserve at least a full instructional session to introduce this comprehension strategy.**Materials*** Overhead transparencies of practice expository passages, transparency markers
* Student copies of practice expository passages (optional) or reading/text books
* Main Idea Graphic Organizer Sheet (see attachment at the bottom of this page) or blank paper

**Preparation:*** Prepare overheads of sample passages

**Steps to Implementing This Intervention****Step 1:**Introduce the strategy by telling students that we can draw pictures, or Main Idea Maps, that help us to understand how the ideas of a multi-paragraph passage fit together. Present these three steps for mapping out the main ideas of an expository:Locating the Main Ideas of Paragraphs. Read through a short (2-6 paragraph) practice expository passage with students.On a blank overhead transparency or chart paper, begin building a graphic organizer by writing the title of the passage in the center. Draw a box around the title. (If the passage has no title, query the class and make up a suitable title based on their suggestions.) NOTE: Instead of drawing your own map, you can use the pre-formatted Main Idea Graphic Organizer that is included with this strategy.Tell students that some paragraphs have summary sentences that state the main idea or "gist" of the paragraph or passage. Other paragraphs have implied main ideas, which the reader must figure out, based on key facts or ideas that they contain.Go through each paragraph in the practice passage and identify the paragraph's main idea. Demonstrate how to summarize that main idea as a single, succinct phrase.Building the Main Idea Graphic Organizer. As you summarize each paragraph's main idea, write the number of the paragraph and main-idea summary phrase on the graphic organizer. (Start writing at the upper left corner of the organizer sheet and continue clockwise around the page. Space the summary phrases to allow space to write under each. See the sample "Main Idea Graphic Organizer.").Adding Key Facts. When you have written the main idea for all of the paragraphs onto the graphic organizer, return to the passage. For each paragraph, pull out 2-3 important facts, ideas, or supporting details. On the graphic organizer, write these key pieces of additional information under the main-idea phrase for that paragraph. Then draw a box around the main-idea and supporting details and move on to the next paragraph.**Step 2:** Practice Using the Graphic Organizer as a Study Tool. Demonstrate how the completed Main Idea Graphic Organizer can be a useful method to summarize and review the content of expository passages. Give students new practice passages and have them create their own graphic organizers. Provide feedback and encouragement as needed. |
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