

Reading Skills Terminology

Topic – the subject matter of a paragraph or longer reading (expressed as a word or phrase)

Main Idea – the author’s point about a topic (also known as the main point)

Stated Main Idea – the sentence that states the author’s main idea/point (expressed as a complete sentence)

Topic Sentence – the sentence in a paragraph that expresses the main idea (usually 1st or last one)

Thesis Statement – the sentence in a longer reading that expresses the overall main idea

Implied Main Idea – the suggested main idea of a reading; not explicitly stated in a sentence

Supporting Details – the specific information/ideas/examples that explain the general main point

Major Details – directly relate to the main idea

Minor Details – tell more about the major details (indirectly relate to main idea)

Pattern of Organization – the way the author arranges the ideas in a paragraph or longer reading (also known as rhetorical patterns or rhetorical strategies)

Point of View – author’s opinion or position on the subject (for, against, or unbiased)

Purpose – author’s reason for writing (to inform, instruct, evoke a feeling/image, persuade)

Audience – intended readers (particular person, specific group, or general audience)

Tone – author’s attitude about subject conveyed through language (neutral, serious, emotional, supportive, critical, authoritative, or humorous)