

Connections Writing Module Student Booklet

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SB#1: Engage Prior Knowledge—Main Idea Silent Warm-up

Directions: Read the two paragraphs below and write the main idea for each.

The earliest stages of learning for young children are the most important. The basics of learning are instilled into a child at a very young age and how much importance is placed on these fundamentals can have dramatic effects on the future of the child’s learning. Music, when applied in a constructive way, can have positive effects on children’s learning and help them in many ways.

One way that music can make learning easier for a young child is by implementing music lessons into a child’s regular activities. Researchers have taught children about music while they were playing, for example, which is something that all children do every day.

1. Write the main idea of the first paragraph by answering two questions:

a. What is the most important *who* or *what*?

b. What is the most important information about the *who* or *what*?

2. Write the main idea of the second paragraph by answering two questions:

a. What is the most important *who* or *what*?

b. What is the most important information about the *who* or *what*?

SB#2: Engage Prior Knowledge—Get the Gist Silent Warm-up

Directions: Read the two paragraphs below and write a 10-word gist statement for each.

The earliest stages of learning for young children are the most important. The basics of learning are instilled into a child at a very young age and how much importance is placed on these fundamentals can have dramatic affects on the future of the child's learning. Music, when applied in a constructive way, can have positive effects on children's learning and help them in many ways.

One way that music can make learning easier for a young child is by implementing music lessons into a child's regular activities. Researchers have taught children about music while they were playing, for example, which is something that all children do every day.

1. Write a 10-word gist statement for the first paragraph:

2. Write a 10-word gist statement for the second paragraph:

SB#3: Practice—Transition Sentences (Part 1)

Directions:

1. Read and find the main idea (gist) of each paragraph, and write it in the first column.

Hint: Remember that a good main idea tells us the "who" or "what," and the most important information about the "who" or "what."

2. Reread the last sentences of the first paragraph and the first sentence of the second paragraph.

Hint: Think about which sentence contains words that connect the main idea of one paragraph to the other paragraph.

3. Circle the words that connect to the main idea (gist) of the other paragraph, and underline the transition sentence.

Main idea (gist) of each paragraph

Nicki is 19 years old, well-spoken and self-possessed. But like many young people in Britain, she could not afford to remain at her university, making it impossible to find a job. London's youth riots last summer have closed even more doors to people like her.

"A person who is not working, in training or in college, might as well be a thief — employers just do not take you seriously," Ms. Edwards said. "At some point, you just say, 'I'm stuck and I will never find a job.' "

Thomas, Jr., Landon. "For London Youth, Down and Out Is Way of Life." *The New York Times*. 15 Feb. 2012.

SB#4: Practice—Transition Sentences (Part 2)

Directions:

1. Read and find the main idea (gist) of each paragraph, and write it in the first column.

Hint: Remember that a good main idea tells us the “who” or “what,” and the most important information about the “who” or “what.”

2. Reread the last sentences of the first paragraph and the first sentence of the second paragraph.

Hint: Think about which sentence contains words that connect the main idea of one paragraph to the other paragraph.

3. Circle the words that connect to the main idea (gist) of the other paragraph, and underline the transition sentence.

Main idea (gist) of each paragraph

In the music video for her hit song “Telephone,” Lady Gaga checks for missed calls on her Virgin Mobile phone and smears Miracle Whip salad dressing onto sandwiches... And in the movie *Up in the Air*, George Clooney faithfully stays at Hilton Hotels and flies only on American Airlines.

None of this advertising happened by accident; the makers of each of these products worked hard to secure their on-screen appearances... And these kinds of product placements are becoming a lot more common as advertisers look for new ways to get their messages across to consumers.

Majerol, Veronica. “That’s Advertainment...” *The New York Times Upfront*. Vol. 143. 10 Jan. 2011.

Scoring:	
	Points earned (circle one):
Transition sentence definition	0 1
Correct transition sentence circled	0 2
Appropriate connecting words circled	0 2
Total points (out of 6):	

Name: _____

Date: _____

SB#5: Practice—Independent Practice

Review the Strategy

What is a transition sentence?

Directions:

- 1. Read and find the main idea (gist) of each paragraph, and write it in the first column.**
Hint: Remember that a good main idea tells us the "who" or "what," and the most important information about the "who" or "what."
- 2. Reread the last sentences of the first paragraph and the first sentence of the second paragraph.**
Hint: Think about which sentence contains words that connect the main idea of one paragraph to the other paragraph.
- 3. Circle the words that connect to the main idea (gist) of the other paragraph, and underline the transition sentence.**

Main idea (gist) of each paragraph

Rachel, a senior at the Hackley School in Tarrytown, N.Y., came down with a painful intestinal illness that forced her to miss the entire 2006–2007 school year. So she decided that even if she couldn't go to school, she could still help other kids who wanted to.

From her sickbed, Rachel sold T-shirts and solicited contributions to build a 316-student elementary school in the rural village of Srah Khvav, Cambodia. Borrowing an idea from university fund-raising, she offered naming opportunities: For \$25, donors could buy chairs to be named for them. All told, she raised \$57,000, which was channeled through an aid group, American Assistance for Cambodia.

Kristof, Nicholas D. "Saving the World in Study Hall." *The New York Times*. 11 May. 2008.