



Using Direct Instruction of Main Idea to Teach Reading Comprehension

What is the evidence base?

- This is a research-based practice for students with disabilities (SLD, ED, LD) based on one methodologically sound single case study across four students
 - 4 students with LD
- and one methodologically sound group experimental study across
 - 33 students (n=29 with LD; n=4 with SED)

Where is the best place to find out how to do this practice?

The best place to find out how to implement direct instruction of main idea is through the following research to practice lesson plan starter:

- [Using Direct Instruction of Main Idea to Teach Reading Comprehension \(Jitendra et al., 1998; Jitendra et al., 2000\)](#)

With whom was it implemented?

- Students with
 - Learning Disability (n=33)
 - Serious Emotional Disturbance (n = 4)
- Grades: 6th, 7th, 8th
- Males (n=25), females (n=12)
- Ethnicity
 - Caucasian (n=15)
 - Hispanic (n=15)
 - African American (n=7)

What is the practice?

Williams (1988) suggested the importance of identifying main ideas as critical for successful reading comprehension, drawing inferences, studying effectively, and reading critically. Direct instruction of main idea has been defined as explicit, teacher-mediated instruction that can effectively promote main idea comprehension (Jitendra et al., 2000). Furthermore, especially for students with learning disabilities who are often considered inactive learners, it is critical to

encourage student mindfulness to decrease teacher control and increase student self-regulation during strategy instruction to enhance strategy transfer.

In the studies used to establish the evidence base for using direct instruction to teach main idea to students with disabilities (Jitendra et al., 1998; Jitendra et al., 2000) was taught using the following through a series of eight lessons based on Carnine et al., (1997) and described in Jitendra et al. (1998) and Jitendra et al. (2000):

- Instructor presented a component of the main idea comprehension strategy (e.g., generating main idea sentences by naming the subject of a passage and categorizing the action; answer: “who did what”?)
- Instructor modeled application of the strategy and demonstrated how to use a prompt card to generate or choose main idea sentences.
- Students were provided with guided and independent practice where corrective feedback was provided during opportunities with practice exercises including passages directly related to the lesson’s strategy components and passages related to previously presented components.

Where has it been implemented?

- Special education resources classrooms in small groups with 6-8 students (2 studies)

How does this practice relate to Common Core Standards?

- Broad standard from www.corestandards.org ELA Grades
 - [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2](https://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/CCRA/R/2/): Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

How does this practice relate to the Common Career Technical Core?

- List Career Ready Skills addressed (broad) and/ or Specific Career Clusters at www.careertech.org/CCTC
 - 2. Apply appropriate academic and technical skills. Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications, and they make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.

References used to establish this evidence base:

Jitendra, A. K., Cole, C. L., Hoppes, M. K., & Wilson, B. (1998). Effects of a direct instruction main idea summarization program and self-monitoring on reading comprehension of middle school students with learning disabilities. *Reading and Writing Quarterly*, 14, 379—396. doi: 10.1080/1057356980140403

Jitendra, A. K., Hoppes, M. K., & Xin, Y. P. (2000). Enhancing main idea comprehension for students with learning problems: The role of a summarization strategy and self-monitoring instruction. *The Journal of Special Education, 34*, 127–139.

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