

Name: _____

Date: _____

Main Idea—Middle Grades

As you know, the **main idea** of a passage is what the passage is about—the **main** focus. The facts and details in a passage help to support the **main idea**.

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

Have you ever seen a frog eat a fly? Have you ever watched a cat catch a mouse? While it might be hard to watch, all animals have to eat. Nature, and the survival of each different species of animal, rests on the links in the food web. Each plant and animal plays a part in the food web, and it is this web of connection between the different species that allows us all to survive.

The food web is made up of many different food chains. A food chain is a way to show how each living thing gets its food. Most food chains start with plants, which make their own food. So, one food chain could be grass, rabbit, cheetah. The rabbit eats the grass to get energy, and the cheetah eats the rabbit to get energy. Another food chain could be grass, cow, human. The cow eats the grass to get energy, and the cow is eaten by the human for energy.

Food chains are part of a circle of life. Eventually, the animal at the “top” of the chain dies, and its body is decomposed. Nutrients from the body return to the soil, and other plants use those nutrients. What is cool about the food chain is that the “energy” that is passed from each living thing never completely disappears.

The food web is made up of all of the food chains. So, in a given area, there may be plants that could be eaten by many different rodents. These rodents could be eaten by many different predators. We are all dependent on the chains and links in the food web because if there is trouble in one part of the food chain, it affects the rest of the web. For example, if there is a drought and plants die, the rodents cannot get enough to eat, and then there might not be enough food for the larger predators. Or, if something happens to larger predators, there may be too many small rodents. It is all a very delicate balance.

1. What is the main idea of the entire passage?

2. What is the main idea of paragraph 2?

3. What is the main idea of paragraph 3?

4. What is the main idea of paragraph 4?

5. Look at what you wrote for the main idea of the entire passage. Write down two details from the passage that support the main idea.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Main Idea—Middle Grades

As you know, the **main idea** of a passage is what the passage is about—the **main** focus. The facts and details in a passage help to support the **main idea**.

Wording of answers may be slightly different, but general ideas should be the same.

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

Have you ever seen a frog eat a fly? Have you ever watched a cat catch a mouse? While it might be hard to watch, all animals have to eat. Nature, and the survival of each different species of animal, rests on the links in the food web. Each plant and animal plays a part in the food web, and it is this web of connection between the different species that allows us all to survive.

The food web is made up of many different food chains. A food chain is a way to show how each living thing gets its food. Most food chains start with plants, which make their own food. So, one food chain could be grass, rabbit, cheetah. The rabbit eats the grass to get energy, and the cheetah eats the rabbit to get energy. Another food chain could be grass, cow, human. The cow eats the grass to get energy, and the cow is eaten by the human for energy.

Food chains are part of a circle of life. Eventually, the animal at the “top” of the chain dies, and its body is decomposed. Nutrients from the body return to the soil, and other plants use those nutrients. What is cool about the food chain is that the “energy” that is passed from each living thing never completely disappears.

The food web is made up of all of the food chains. So, in a given area, there may be plants that could be eaten by many different rodents. These rodents could be eaten by many different predators. We are all dependent on the chains and links in the food web because if there is trouble in one part of the food chain, it affects the rest of the web. For example, if there is a drought and plants die, the rodents cannot get enough to eat, and then there might not be enough food for the larger predators. Or, if something happens to larger predators, there may be too many small rodents. It is all a very delicate balance.

1. What is the main idea of the entire passage?

The food web is important to the survival of all species.

2. What is the main idea of paragraph 2?

A food chain is a way to show how living things get their energy/food.

3. What is the main idea of paragraph 3?

Food chains are circles of life.

4. What is the main idea of paragraph 4?

The food web is dependent on the chains and links in the web.

5. Look at what you wrote for the main idea of the entire passage. Write down two details from the passage that support the main idea.

Answers will vary. Two possible details are as follows: *Nutrients from the body return to the soil and other plants use those nutrients. If something happens to larger predators, there may be too many small rodents.*
