

RL2./RI2. Writing a Central Idea Statement/WHOWHATWHY Sentence

1. This week we are learning **how to determine the central idea of a short reading.**
2. A short reading is the following:
 3. **Short Story (Fiction)**
 4. **Narrative Essay (True Story)**
 5. **Logical Essay (Op-Ed Piece, Persuasive Essay)**
 6. **Informational Reading (Article, Textbook Section)**
3. You **write a sentence with the “WHO+WHAT+WHY” - that’s the central idea.**
4. **First, you have to decide which kind of reading it is.**
5. **Look at the context** - is it on a newspaper website, in a paperback book, in a unit on short stories.
6. **Read the first paragraph and decide what kind of short reading it is.**
7. **After the first third of the thing, you should know the “Who.”**

The WHO is the answer to the question **“WHO is the person or group that this reading is about?”**
8. **When you are done reading, you should know the “What.”**

The WHAT answers **“WHAT is the WHO doing?”** or **“WHAT is happening TO the WHO?”**
9. **After thinking about it, or maybe rereading it, you should know the “Why.”**

The WHY answers **“WHY should a smart American (like you) know this information?”** It’s the hardest one to figure out.
10. **For a story (true or fiction), the Who+What+Why = Main Character + Conflict/Climax + Theme.**
11. **For an essay (informational or logical essay), the Who+What+Why = Person/Group + What You Found Out about Them + Why a Thoughtful Student/Adult Would Care.**
12. You **write the Central Idea as a single, polished sentence.**
13. On multiple choice reading tests, this is the most commonly asked question, though they change the words to mix it up.
 14. “This passage is mostly about . . . “
 15. “Which of these expresses the main idea of the passage?”

