



Identifying main ideas and supporting details



The main idea:

- is the argument being made in the paragraph or text

To identify the main idea:

- Read the paragraph or text to find out the writer's main point.

Supporting details:

- are the evidence that proves the argument that is made in the main idea
- use examples, reasons, facts, etc. to illustrate that the argument is true

To look for supporting details:

- Identify the main idea. Then find out what evidence is given to prove it right.

Let's look closer!

Main idea

Supporting detail (i)

Wearing helmets while riding bicycles is crucial to prevent serious life-changing injuries. According to a study conducted in the US, wearing helmets reduces the risk of head injury by as much as 60%. Additionally, most bicycle helmets are now covered with reflective materials, which greatly enhances riders' visibility to other road users. So, the next time you get on a bicycle without wearing a helmet, think twice.

Supporting detail (ii)

DSE 2022 Part A Q4 Extended response

- e.g. Give TWO pieces of evidence the writer provides in the paragraph to support the claim that 'wearing helmets while riding bicycles is crucial to prevent serious life-changing injuries'.
- Wearing helmets reduces / has been shown to reduce the risk of head injury by 60%.
 - Reflective materials on helmets enhance riders' visibility to other road users.

Main idea

Today, Greg Thomson is a world-famous basketball player, playing for NBA teams like Los Angeles Lakers and Houston Spaceship. However, do you know that he was almost expelled from his high school basketball team? His coach thought he did not run fast enough and could not jump high enough. Thomson realised that he had to do something if he wanted to stay in the team. Whenever he had spare time, he would practise running and jumping. After a few weeks, he made an encouraging discovery between the amount of time he spent practising and the results he witnessed. His coach gradually saw the progress too. Thomson got to stay in his team and was eventually called up to play in the NBA.

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DSE 2023 Part B2 Q54 Extended response

- e.g. Explain what made the discovery 'encouraging' (line 5) for Thomson.

Thomson realised that the more he practised, the better his results were.

Thomson practised *whenever he had spare time*, so the more time he spent practising, the better his results were.

Let's practise!

Insomnia, the persistent inability to sleep, can be hugely harmful to our well-being. Imagine getting through your day without any sleep. It would be very difficult for you to focus on your lessons and schoolwork. You will get sick very easily as well. Last but not least, insomnia can negatively affect your mood and damage your mental health. Given all of these negative effects, you should seek medical help as soon as possible if you think that you are suffering from insomnia.

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DSE 2021 Part A Q20 Extended response

1 According to the text, what are **THREE** harmful effects of insomnia?

- (i) _____
- (ii) _____
- (iii) _____

In the Ice Bucket Challenge, participants poured a bucket of ice water over their heads. They would record the challenge and share the video online, aiming to raise awareness about ALS, a serious disease. The result of the challenge surpassed all expectations. Millions of people, including celebrities, took part. As a result, widespread media attention was generated, not to mention the millions of dollars raised in the process. Although fewer people are performing the challenge now, it has inspired numerous similar challenges to raise funds for other causes.

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DSE 2020 Part A Q13 Extended response (changed to Multiple choice)

2 The Ice Bucket Challenge 'surpassed all expectations' (line 3). Which of the following is the reason?

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| A. the amount of ice water used | C. the challenge videos shared online | A | B | C | D |
| B. the endurance of participants | D. the extensive media reports | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Exam Booster

Agnes Kwok says that it is impossible for Hong Kong's professional athletes to make a living, pointing out her personal experience as an example. 'I have to retire from being a professional figure skater this year. The salary I have earned as a skater is just too little! I don't receive any financial aid unless I win a competition, but without the aid, how can I buy my equipment and train for these competitions?'

DSE 2022 Part A Q20 Extended response

1 What does Kwok want to show with the example of 'her personal experience' (line 2)?
