

Getting the Main Idea and Summarizing

Get the Gist is a strategy that assists students in finding the main idea by helping them to limit the number of words and focusing on important ideas rather than on details.

When using *Get the Gist*, place students in small heterogeneous groups or pairs. Students benefit from the discussions that arise when working with others.

When introducing *Get the Gist* to students, it is recommended that teachers model each step using think-alouds.

Students can use the *Get the Gist* card to assist them in remembering the steps in the strategy.

Get the Gist

- Who or what is the paragraph mostly about?
- What is the most important thing about the "who" or "what"?
- Put together the answers and tell the main idea in 10 words or less.

Using *Get the Gist* to Summarize a Chapter or Story

Once students have had several opportunities to practice *Get the Gist*, teach them how they can use the strategy to create a summary for a chapter in their content area texts or for a story.

Gist for first paragraph/section
Gist for second paragraph/section
Gist for third paragraph/section
Gist for fourth paragraph/section
Summary