

“Baseball” by Lionel G. García

Reading: Use Details to Identify the Main Idea

The **main idea** of a work of nonfiction is the central point that the author conveys. Sometimes the author states the main idea directly. More often, the author implies, or suggests, the main idea by giving you details to consider. To **identify the implied main idea**, connect the details that the author provides. The main idea you decide on should cover all the important details in the paragraph, section, or essay.

In “Baseball,” the author describes how, as children, he and his friends made up their own rules for playing baseball. He includes details about specific rules, neighborhood observers, and particularly memorable incidents.

Ask: What does the author want me to think or discover as I read these details?

DIRECTIONS: Read each excerpt from the selection, and summarize its details. The first one is done as an example. Then, add up all the details to identify the main idea of the selection.

1. The way we played baseball was to rotate positions after every out. First base, the only base we used, was located where one would normally find second base. . . . Aside from the pitcher, the batter and the first baseman, we had a catcher. All the rest of us would stand in the outfield. After an out, the catcher would come up to bat. The pitcher took the position of catcher, and the first baseman moved up to be the pitcher. Those in the outfield were left to their own devices. I don’t remember ever getting to bat.

Summary of details: The players used only one base. Most played in the outfield and never got to bat.

2. First base was wherever Matías or Juan or Cota tossed a stone. They were the law. The distance could be long or short depending on how soon we thought we were going to be called in to eat.

Summary of details: _____

3. To complicate matters, on the way to home plate the batter had the choice of running anywhere possible to avoid getting hit. . . . Many a time we would wind up . . . in front of the rectory half a block away.

Summary of details: _____

4. One time we wound up all the way across town before we cornered Juan against a fence, held him down, and hit him with the ball. Afterwards, we all fell laughing in a pile on top of each other, exhausted from the run through town.

Summary of details: _____

5. What a game! In what enormous stadium would it be played to allow such freedom over such an expanse of ground?

Summary of details: _____

Main idea of the selection: _____