



# COM-23

Intervention Activities Guide (IAG)  
Blackline Masters



Comprehension | Story Elements

## COM-23 **Get the Gist**

Blackline Master available  
www.tpri.org

This cooperative learning activity teaches students how to identify the main idea of a paragraph. Scaffolding helps students determine what is and what is not important by stating the main idea in 10 words or less.

**MATERIALS:** *Picture cards, simple paragraphs and texts, get the gist cue cards*

- 1 Begin by modeling the activity at the picture level. Provide multiple opportunities to practice the process using picture cards as a class.
- 2 When students understand the process at the picture level, model the activity with simple paragraphs, followed by simple text with multiple paragraphs.
- 3 Place students in pairs. Provide each a copy of the same text and one get the gist cue card.
- 4 Students take turns reading the selection, one paragraph at a time.
- 5 After each paragraph, students name the main idea by identifying the *who* or *what*, using a get the gist cue card to guide them. Students make a statement of 10 words or less using their fingers to help them count. The first thumb is the *who* or *what*; the remaining fingers count as the *most important information* about the *who* or *what*.
- 6 If students are unable to make a statement in 10 words or less, they move on to the next paragraph.

### Get the Gist Cue Card

1. Name the *who* or *what*.
2. Tell the *most important information* about the *who* or *what*.
3. State the main idea in 10 words or less.



**PREPARATION OF MATERIALS:** Print cue cards on page 2. Cut the cards apart. Provide each student pair a copy of the same text and one Get the Gist Cue Card. Follow the activity directions.



**More Challenging:** Students identify the main idea as they “get the gist” for each paragraph or section of text. Then, students combine the main idea statements into a concise summary using the Get the Gist: Summarizing Chart on page 3.

# Get the Gist Cue Card



1. Name the who or what  
(the main person, place or thing).
2. Tell the most important information  
about the who or what.
3. State the main idea in 10 words or  
less.

# Get the Gist Cue Card



1. Name the who or what  
(the main person, place or thing).
2. Tell the most important information  
about the who or what.
3. State the main idea in 10 words or  
less.

# Get the Gist: Summarizing Chart

Main Idea:
Main Idea:
Main Idea:
Main Idea:
Main Idea:
Summary: