



SCHOLASTIC ACTION Magazine Lesson

Main Idea and Details

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

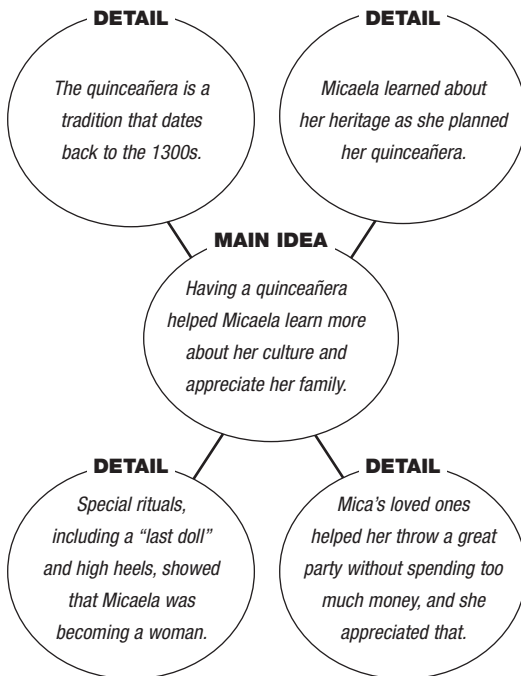
- Identify the main idea of an article or a paragraph.
- Identify details that support the main idea.

BUILD BACKGROUND

Ask students what they know about coming-of-age ceremonies. Share these facts:

- Many religions, including Catholicism and Judaism, have “coming of age” ceremonies for teenagers who are becoming adults.
- While parties are part of the event, important symbols and practices also play major roles.

Possible answers for Apply activity



See Graphic Organizer (download separately)

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READ 180 Reading Skills and Strategies

Teach

Tell students that the article “Fifteen Candles” is about the tradition of a quinceañera, which is a special celebration of a girl’s 15th birthday. Explain that all articles have a main idea. The main idea is the most important point in a text. Point out that the main idea is often found in the first or last paragraph. The other paragraphs include details that tell more about the main idea.

Guided Practice

Distribute “Fifteen Candles,” from the September 19, 2011, issue of *Scholastic Action*. Read the article with students. After reading each section, ask these questions to help students identify the main idea and details.

Section 1 What is the first section of the article mostly about? *(It informs us that Micaela Garcia had a quinceañera.)*

A Rich History The main idea in this section is that quinceañeras are an old tradition. Which details support this idea? *(The Aztecs held 15th-birthday ceremonies for girls as long ago as the 1300s. Today, many girls continue this tradition.)*

Not Just a Party Sometimes a main idea is “unstated.” That means that you have to add up the details to come up with the main idea. What are the important details in this section? *(Mica never planned to have a quinceañera. When Mica and her mom researched quinceañeras, they learned that this tradition is about taking on new responsibilities.)* Given these details, what do you think the main idea of this section is? *(Mica decided to have a quinceañera after she learned about the tradition’s deep meaning.)*

A Day to Remember What is this section mostly about? *(the special things that happened at Mica’s quinceañera)* Which details tell you that this was a special occasion? *(She had a service in church and a special dinner. She received a “last doll” and high heels.)*

Life Lessons What important details about Mica’s family budget are included here? *(They had to move into a smaller house last year. They used donated and inexpensive options for the party.)* What is the main idea of this section? *(Mica appreciated the contributions of her loved ones.)*

Apply

Download and distribute the graphic organizer. Guide small groups to review the most important idea in each of the sections with blue subheadings. Ask them to decide what these ideas have in common and write a sentence that expresses the main idea of the article. Have them complete the organizer by adding details that support the main idea.