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Sincerely,
Karen Haag

Visualize Main Idea

ENGAGE

Tell students that they get to sketch today when you're reading aloud. Students can sketch on white paper with a pencil or on whiteboards with a marker.

TEACHER EXPLAINS LEARNING TARGET

I can determine the main idea by sketching.

EXPLORE

Tell students that they can sketch in many ways:

They may want to sketch one picture the whole time.

They may want to sketch little pictures all over the front and back of their paper.

The good news is they can't be wrong. The idea is to sketch what comes to mind when they hear you reading.

Read aloud the book you've selected.

THINK-PAIR-SHARE

Ask students to share their drawings with a partner or in small groups.

Ask them to let each child explain what is in the sketches by pointing to each part.

STUDENTS EXPLAIN

Ask students to compare their sketches and explain how they're the same and how they're different with the people in their group or as partners. (See examples next page.)

EXPLORE

Ask students to stand in a whole-class circle.

They should show their picture to everyone by holding it in front of them and facing it so everyone in the circle can see the sketch.

Give students some more time to analyze what's the same and what's different about the pictures.

If students do not notice, ask them:

1. What drawing is in every picture? For example, when I read the chapter in *Hatchet* where the plane goes down into the lake, everyone had a picture of the plane in the lake.
2. Then ask about details. Again, with *Hatchet* I asked, who has the L-shaped lake in their picture? Who has the moose? Who has the trees? Only a few will have these details.
3. Why does everyone have the plane in the lake in their picture, but only a few people have the other ideas I mentioned?

Lead students to see that the main event will be the main idea - or the most important idea.

The other details are just that - details in the story, too.

NOTE: Once students "see" the main idea in everyone's picture, it's so much easier to talk about main idea. i.e.; What would most people draw after they read this selection? = What's the main idea?

EVALUATE LEARNING TARGET

Revisit the learning target: I can determine the main idea by sketching.

Ask students to explain to one another what the I-Can statement means.

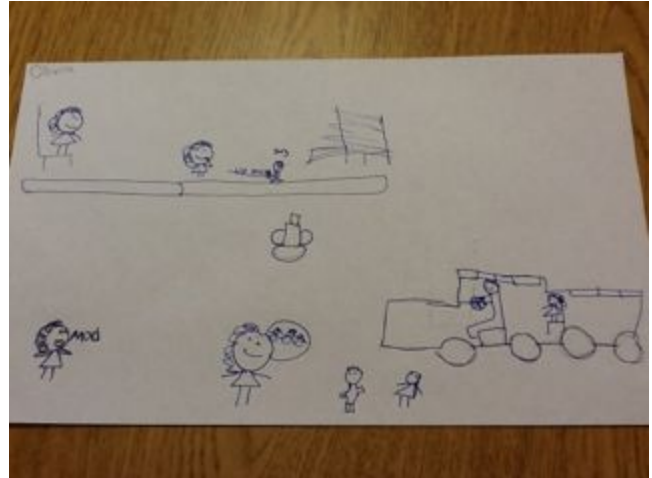
Take questions. Clarify misconceptions.

→ **EXIT SLIP** What's the main idea of this lesson?

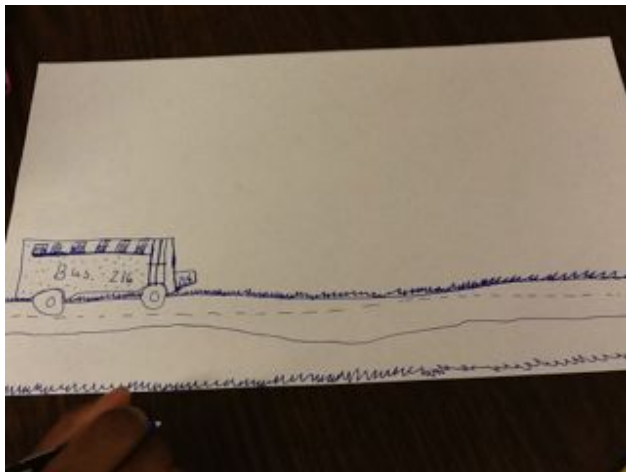
Chapter book *Top Secret* photos of students' sketches. Look at the difference between 4 students' sketches. All students captured the main idea even though they're struggling readers. However, their details are not clear. In this chapter, 2 students are riding the school bus with Ivan, the bus driver. Barry pulls out lipstick to smear on the main character's neck. Thanks to quick thinking and the bus driver's mirror, he stands up and sits down right back down. Barry smears Ivan, the bus driver, instead. As punishment, Barry gets thrown off the bus.



The student drew boxes and drew the events in order. Notice the school bus is prominently in the middle of the picture. In the last box, his character is apologizing to his teacher. I would have to check to see if he comprehends since that doesn't happen in the chapter.



The student drew several scenes all over the paper. He concentrated on sketching all the characters. The bus is in his picture. He has several characters off the bus. We have to check to see if he comprehends.



The student did not draw a sketch. She put some time into her drawing. Notice riding on the bus is still the main event in her picture. No characters are drawn in the windows and Barry is not off the bus.



This student drew pictures and words, explaining what happens in the chapter. He draws arrows to show the action of the characters. He clearly drew Barry off the bus.