

Weekly Focus: Comprehension
Weekly Skill: Main
Idea/Supporting Details

Lesson Summary: Today students will begin to discuss this unit's essential question, "What does success look like?" by reading an opinion piece by Mike Rose that explores this topic. They will then work to comprehend this article by identifying its main idea and supporting details. Students will also explore how to make plural nouns and, finally, return to Rose's essay to present their own opinions in a discussion format.

Materials Needed: Projector, Computer, and Internet Access; Elmo; Brains vs. Brawns Reading, Plurals Handout, Main Idea Handout, Rules for Forming Plurals, Student Worksheet, Spider-web Discussion Rules

Objectives: Students will be able to...

- Define a "main idea" and "supporting details"
- Demonstrate their comprehension of these topics by identifying a "main idea" and "supporting details" in a paragraph and an essay
- Identify plural nouns
- Practice forming plural nouns
- Demonstrate mastery of plural nouns by correcting a paragraph with plural noun errors
- Articulate their opinion concerning this week's lesson in a formalized, student-led discussion

Common Core Standards Addressed:

Notes: This lesson requires you to either write or find a paragraph to cut into strips of separate sentences. The purpose of this exercise is to teach the concepts of main idea and supporting details with a hands-on activity. Also, note the extra work/homework section. If time allows, have everyone begin working on this writing assignment.

Activities:

Warm-Up/Review: Creative Writing

Time: 20 minutes

What does success mean to you? Imagine that you have accomplished all of your goals, and that you are exactly where you want to be in life. What would a typical day look like for you? Describe this day. Be as detailed as possible.

Reading and Writing Activity:

Time: 90 minutes

- **Grammar Warm-Up:** Choose one sentence from the text that uses a plural noun. Write this on the board and ask students to identify the nouns with you. Circle these. Ask students whether the nouns are singular or plural. How can they tell? Tell students that forming plural nouns will be our day's grammar focus.
- **Reading Introduction:** 1) Hand-out main idea worksheet. Read through together as a class. Have one of the students draw the cluster chart at the bottom of the paper on the board. 2) Cut-Up. Find or write a paragraph with a clear main idea and supporting details. Now, write a few extra sentences that are off topic. Cut sentences into strips. Divide students into groups and hand each group a "packet" of cut-up sentences. Have groups tape the sentences where they belong on the board's cluster chart.
- **Reading Practice:** Read through today's essay. In groups, have students try to identify the main idea (thesis/claim) of the essay. Next, have them identify supporting details and examples throughout the piece. In their groups, have students fill out the main idea cluster graph on the worksheet. Go over as a class.

Break: 10 minutes

Grammar Activity: Introductory Clauses

Time: 60 minutes

Review: Review what nouns are with students. Have students go back to today's creative writing and circle or highlight as many nouns as they can find. Have each student list at least one of these nouns on the board.

Introduction: How do you make nouns plural? Hand-out grammar worksheet and go over rules together. (Optional: Go over the rules on the board, using the student worksheet as a model.) Then, model the rules for students by coming up with sentences to demonstrate them as a class. Next, break the class into groups. Give each group 2 to 3 rules for forming plurals, and have them come up with a sentence that demonstrates these rules.

Practice: 1) Have students correct the grammar exercise paragraph from the reading. Go over together. 2) Have students identify any other plural nouns they can find in this week's reading. For advanced students, have them identify the rule that is used to make the nouns plural.

Wrap-Up: Spider-web Discussion

Time: 15 minutes

Discussion: 1) Have students think about the essay that they just read for today. Do they agree? On a sheet of notebook paper or a note-card, have students write down whether or not they agree with Rose's main idea. Next, have them provide one example that supports their opinion (for example, a job they know that does require brains as well as brawn. Perhaps they've even experienced such a job). **STRONGLY ENCOURAGE** students to use evidence from the reading to support their responses. Give students five minutes to do this brainstorming. 2) Have students form a circle and then have a 5

Week Twenty-Seven: Brains, Brawn, and Plurals

minute, student-led Spider-web discussion answering this question: "Do we need to honor the brains as well as the brawn of American workers?"

Extra Work/Homework:

Have students write a formal response (one paragraph for beginning students, a full extended response for advanced) to the Spider-web Discussion question. Instruct students to incorporate evidence from the class reading into their responses.

Differentiated Instruction/ELL Accommodation Suggestions	Activity
Have Advanced students write the rule for each correction they make to the grammar paragraph	Grammar
Have Advanced student lead discussion	Discussion

Online Resources:

- 1) [Count and Non-Count Nouns from the OWL at Purdue](#)

Suggested Teacher Readings: TBA

EXTOL BRAINS AS WELL AS BRAWN OF THE BLUE COLLAR

(TAKEN FROM THE *LOS ANGELES TIMES* ONLINE AT <[HTTP://ARTICLES.LATIMES.COM/PRINT/2004/SEP/06/OPINION/OE-ROSE6](http://articles.latimes.com/print/2004/sep/06/opinion/oe-rose6)>)

September 06, 2004 | Mike Rose | Mike Rose is a professor of education at UCLA and author of "The Mind at Work: Valuing the Intelligence of the American Worker" (Viking, 2004).

I am watching a carpenter install a set of sliding French doors in a tight wall space. He stands back, surveying the frame, imagining the pieces as he will assemble them.

What angle is required to create a threshold that will shed water? Where might the sliding panels catch or snag? How must the casings be remade to match the woodwork in the rest of the room? And how can he put it all together fast enough and smart enough to make his labor pay?

This isn't the usual stuff of a Labor Day tribute. Our typical tributes spotlight the economic contribution that the labor force has made to the country, the value of the work ethic. But what about the intelligence of the laborer -- the thought, the creativity, the craft it takes to do work, any work, well.

Over the last six years, I've been studying the thinking involved in what is often dismissed as manual labor, exploring the way knowledge is gained and used strategically on job sites, in trade schools and in businesses such as beauty salons and restaurants, auto factories and welding shops. And I've been struck by the intellectual demands of what I saw.

Consider what a good waitress or waiter has to do in a busy restaurant. Remember orders and monitor them, attend to an ever-changing environment, juggle the flow of work, make decisions on the fly. Or the carpenter: To build a cabinet, a staircase or a pitched roof requires complex mathematical calculations, a high level of precision. The hairstylist's practice is a mix of scissors technique, knowledge of biology, aesthetic judgment and communication skills. The mechanic, electrician and plumber are troubleshooters and problem-solvers. Even the routinized factory floor calls for working smart. Yet we persist in dividing labor into the work of the hand and the work of the mind.

Distinctions between blue collar and white collar do exist. White-collar work, for example, often requires a large investment of money and time in formal schooling. And, on average, white-collar work leads to higher occupational status and income, more autonomy and less physical risk. But these distinctions carry with them unfair assumptions about the intelligence of the people who do physical work. Those assumptions have a long history, from portrayals of 18th century mechanics as illiterate and incapable of participating in government to the autoworkers I heard labeled by one supervisor as "a bunch of dummies."

Such beliefs are intensified in our high-tech era. Listen to the language we use: Work involving electronic media and symbolic analysis is "neck up" while old-style manufacturing or service work is "neck down."

If society labels whole categories of people, identified by their occupations, as less intelligent, then social separations are reinforced and divisions constrict the kind of civic life we can create or imagine. And if society ignores the intelligence behind the craft, it mistakes prejudice for fact.

Many Labor Day tributes will render the muscled arm, sleeve rolled tight. How many also will celebrate the link between hand and brain? It would be fitting, on this day especially, to have a truer, richer sense of all that is involved in the wide range of work that surrounds and sustains us. We need to honor the brains as well as the brawn of American labor.

Grammar Exercise

Directions: The paragraph below contains **four** plural noun errors (nouns that are either plural when they should not be or nouns that are singular when they should be plural). Circle the nouns that are incorrect and then write the correct version of the nouns below.

Consider what a good waitress or waiters has to do in a busy restaurant. Remember order and monitor them, attend to an ever-changing environment, juggle the flow of work, make decision on the fly. Or the carpenter: To build a cabinet, a staircase or a pitched roof requires complex mathematical calculations, a high level of precision. The hairstylist's practice is a mix of scissors technique, knowledge of biology, aesthetic judgment and communication skills. The mechanic, electrician and plumber are troubleshooter and problem-solvers. Even the routinized factory floor calls for working smart. Yet we persist in dividing labor into the work of the hand and the work of the mind.

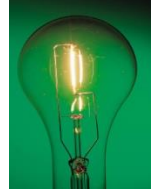
Plural noun errors:

1)

2)

3)

4)



MAIN IDEA AND SUPPORTING DETAILS

What is it?

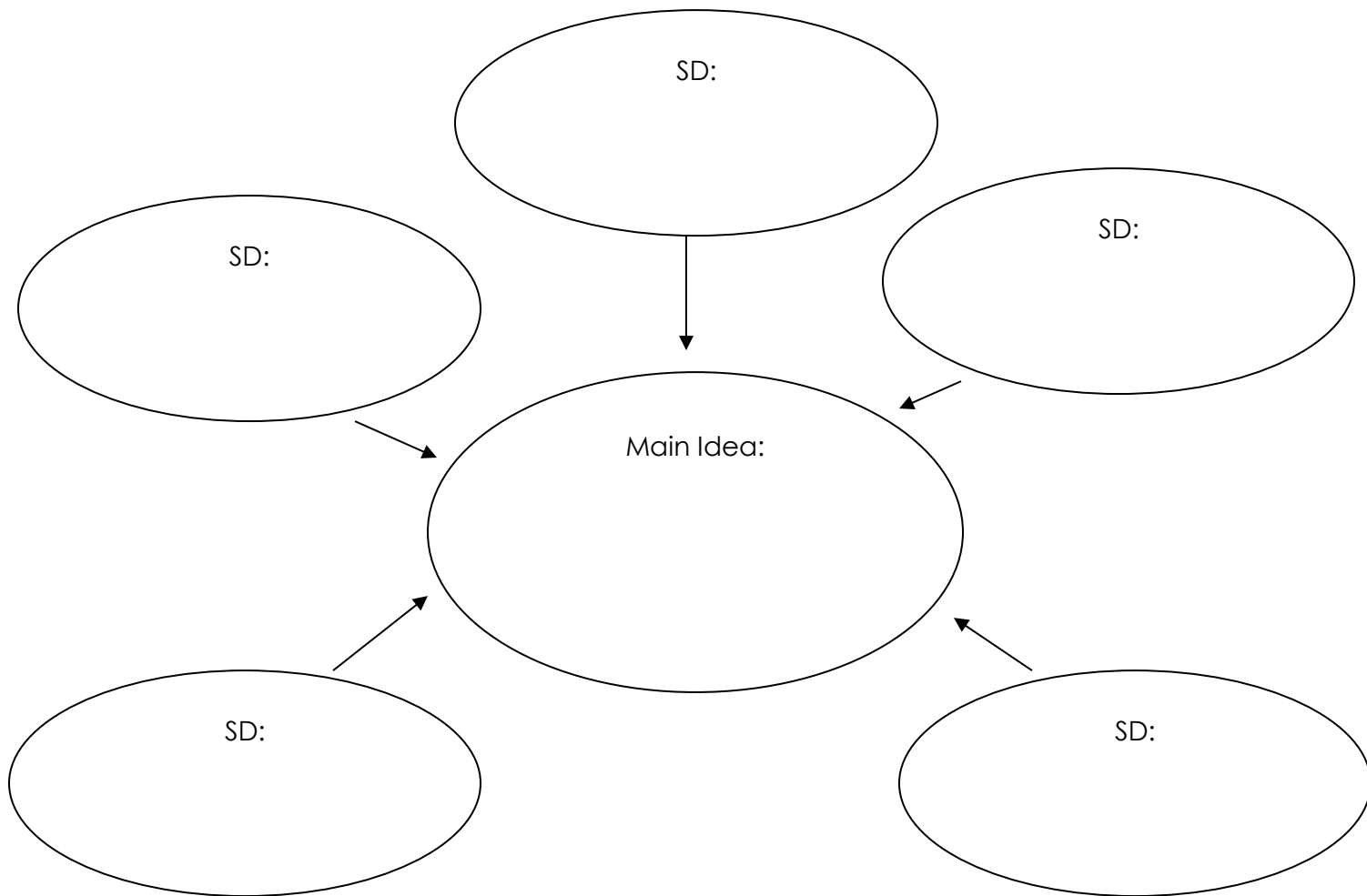
The MAIN IDEA is the most important point that the author makes. If it is the main idea of the *entire* piece of writing, it is often called a *thesis* or *claim*. If it is the main idea of a *paragraph*, it is often called a *topic sentence*.

Where is it?

The main idea can be found **anywhere** in a paragraph or essay: the beginning, middle, or end. *Sometimes, the main idea is not directly stated at all but must be **inferred***. This means that you will have to use the details that the author gives to come up with the main idea by yourself.

How is it supported?

The main idea is supported through SUPPORTING DETAILS. Supporting details clarify, explain, illuminate, expand, and describe the main idea.



Use the diagram above to help you practice identifying main ideas and supporting details.

RULES FOR FORMING PLURALS OF NOUNS

1. Most nouns are made plural by adding s. cat - cats dog - dogs
2. Nouns ending in sh, ch, s, or x are made plural by adding es. bush - bushes class - classes church - churches box - boxes (Exception is animal names, which may be the same in the singular and the plural: fish, fox.)
3. Nouns ending in y preceded by a vowel (a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes y and w) are made plural by adding s. monkey - monkeys key - keys
4. Nouns ending in y preceded by a consonant (any letter not a vowel) are made plural by changing the y to i and adding es. baby - babies lady - ladies
5. Many nouns ending in f or fe are made plural by changing f or fe to ves. knife - knives scarf - scarves wife - wives
6. Nouns ending in o preceded by a vowel are made plural by adding s. rodeo - rodeos radio - radios
7. Some nouns ending in o preceded by a consonant become plural by adding es. potato - potatoes tomato - tomatoes
8. Many two-word and three-word compound nouns are made plural by adding s to the more important noun. daughter-in-law - daughters-in-law passer-by - passers-by
9. Certain nouns change the vowel or add en. man - men foot - feet ox - oxen goose - geese
10. A few nouns are the same in both singular and plural. deer - deer sheep - sheep
11. Some nouns have no singular form. pants - pants scissors - scissors
12. Letters used as letters (as in "the letter b"), figures used as figures, signs, or words used as words (as in the word orange) are made plural by adding an apostrophe plus s. m - two m's in this word or - three or's in this sentence i; t - Dot your i's and cross your t's

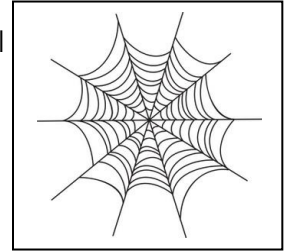
STUDENT WORKSHEET

Singular Ending(s)	Plural Ending	Examples

SPIDERWEB DISCUSSION RULES

About: The Spider-web discussion model is a great way to allow your class control of its learning process and to show whose voices are and aren't being heard.

Guidelines: The instructor should come to the table as a facilitator. He or she should be prepared with a list of guiding questions but otherwise, as much as possible, should remain as an observer and not a participant in the conversation



Rules for Discussion:

1. Have students brainstorm 1 to 2 questions about the reading or topic that you want them to discuss. Students should write these questions on a note-card.
2. Organize students into a large circle. Each student should bring her note-card to the circle with her.
3. Explain to students that they will be in charge of the conversation, and that your role will be only that as an observer and to help prod them along if they get stuck.
4. On a large piece of paper, draw a circle to represent the group (with plenty of room left to write in the margins). Along the circle, according to where they are sitting, write the names of each of the class-members. Include yourself.
5. Remind students that, as much as possible, everyone should speak. Encourages students to ask each other for input and, if the discussion lags, to bring their own questions to the group. Begin by having one person read his or her question aloud.
6. As each person speaks, draw a line to his or her name. For example, if participant A asks the question and participant B answers, draw a line from A's line on the circle to B's. Continue in this way, creating a "spider-web" pattern.
7. Whenever anyone asks a new question, make a star by the student's name and write the question above her name on the page. If someone makes an insightful comment, one, perhaps, that changes the direction of the conversation, star this and note the comment on the sheet near that student's name.
8. If the discussion lags, you may ask a question that you already have prepared.
9. When the discussion time is over, show the class the "spider-web" you've created and ask students what they notice. What did they do well? What would they like to see more of next time?