

## Concepts You Must Understand to Be a Good Reader

INFERENCE	a guess that readers make using the clues that an author gives them in a piece of writing	<p>Sometimes a writer tells you, "It was cold out."            But sometimes a writer DOESN'T tell you and instead gives you clues so you can figure it out for yourself. "Billy came into the room. His cheeks were bright red. He took off his mittens, scarf, and coat and asked his mom if he could please, please, please have some hot chocolate."</p>
MAIN IDEA	the most important point the author makes; it may be stated or unstated	<p>In a nonfiction piece, the writer often puts the main ideas in bold text.            In a fiction piece, you have to figure out the main idea. Look for the big point the author wants to get across. Look for the way the author gives details to support that main idea.            Think of the main idea as the monitor with the message on the screen. Think of the supporting details as the legs on the table that hold the monitor up.</p>
SUMMARY	a short retelling that includes only the most important ideas or events of a text	<p>What happened at the beginning to get the story started? (Writers call that the "inciting incident.")            What was the problem? (That usually is at the beginning.)            What was the solution? (That usually is near the end.)            How did the story end? (Is there anything else from the end of the story that you need to add to the summary?)</p>
SUPPORTING DETAIL	a detail that gives more information about a main idea	<p>Once the writer has the main idea down, then come the details to support—to add to—that main idea.            Think of the main idea as the monitor with the message on the screen. Think of the supporting details as the legs on the table that hold the monitor up.</p>
SUSPENSE	excitement and uncertainty about what will happen	<p>A writer won't say, "This is a suspenseful part." A writer builds the mood with descriptions and dramatic events.</p>