

GED 2002 Teachers' Handbook of Lesson Plans

Area/Skill - LA, Reading	Cognitive Skill Level—Analysis	Correlation to Framework - 04.01/04.04	Lesson Number - 03
<p>Activity Title - Where's My Funny Paper?</p> <p>Goal/Objective</p> <p>To identify the main idea of a passage or reading selection.</p> <p>Lesson Outline</p> <p>Introduction</p> <p>Cartoons can be used as a resource to help students learn how to identify the main idea of a passage. Each cartoon has a main idea that the cartoonist is trying to get across. Sometimes it can be very subtle and the student must think about what the cartoonist is trying to say. Sometimes it is very blatant. The same is true with many passages that students read. Sometimes the main idea is very obvious and sometimes it is unstated. An unstated main idea is one that the writer expresses through other key points. To understand an unstated main idea, the student must see how all of the key points are related to determine the “real” main idea.</p> <p>Activity</p> <p>Distribute copies of the cartoon page (s) from the local newspaper. Use the expanded editions that are normally available with the Sunday Edition of the paper. This will give you a greater variety of cartoons. Divide group into teams and have teams find the main idea for each cartoon. The first team to identify the main idea of each cartoon within the newspaper wins. Have a bell or buzzer available for students to signal they have finished.</p> <p>Debriefing/Evaluation Activity</p> <p>As the team gives its main idea, check to see if the other teams agree or disagree with the teams determination. If there is disagreement about the main idea, stop and discuss the cartoon and its main idea with the entire group.</p>			<p>Materials/Texts/Realia/Handouts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cartoons from the local newspaper • Paper and pencils • Bell or buzzer • Prizes if desired
<p>Real-Life Connection</p> <p>Provide students with business letters, editorials or other documents that they may encounter in real-life. Have the students identify the main idea or purpose of each document. This will provide students with an opportunity to use the types of documents they will encounter when taking the GED Tests.</p>			<p>Extension Activity</p> <p>Have students identify the main idea in political cartoons. This will give them an opportunity to increase their visual processing skills. Political cartoons will be included on the GED Social Studies Test.</p> <p>ESE/ESOL Accommodations</p> <p>Highlight key words in the cartoons.</p> <p>Have a peer tutor read the cartoons to the student.</p> <p>Provide an enlarged print edition for a visually impaired student.</p>

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Activity Title— Where's My Funny Paper?

Introduction

Ask: Do you ever ready the cartoon page of the local newspaper? Do you read the cartoons on Sunday? *Say:* Cartoons are great fun to read and can actually get your day started with a laugh. But even more than that cartoons can be used as a tool to help you learn how to identify the main idea of a passage. Each cartoon has a main idea that the cartoonist is trying to get across. Sometimes it can be very subtle and you have to think a minute about what the cartoonist is trying to say. Sometimes it is so obvious that you can't miss it.

Say: The same is true with many passages that you read—sometimes the main idea stands out like a sore thumb—sometimes it is almost impossible to find. In fact it may be what we call an unstated main idea. An unstated main idea is one that the writer expresses through other key points. To understand an unstated main idea, you have to see how all of the key points are related to determine the “real” main idea.

Main Activity

Divide the students into teams of two (2). Distribute copies of the cartoon page (s) from the local newspaper. It is best if you use the expanded editions that are normally available with the Sunday Edition of the paper, this will give you a greater variety of cartoons. However, the weekday cartoons will work as well. (Please note: Each team should receive the same set of cartoons).

Say: Your job is to find the main idea for each cartoon. You may write the main idea beside the cartoon on the newspaper or on a separate sheet of paper. Just remember that you will need to share this information with the class—so don't forget the main idea. The first team to identify the main idea of each cartoon within the newspaper wins. Have a bell or buzzer available for students to signal they have finished.

Debriefing/Evaluation Activity

Say: Okay, the team who finished first is going to start the process. Tell us the main idea for each cartoon. As the team gives its main idea, check to see if the other teams agree or disagree with the teams determination. If there is disagreement about the main idea, stop and discuss the cartoon and its main idea with the entire group. If the first team is correct, that team will continue presenting main ideas. If the first team is incorrect, the second place finisher should take over. Continue until all cartoons have been reviewed and main ideas presented.

Say: Finding main ideas is an important skill whether you are preparing for the GED Tests or just in real-life. Just think if you don't find the main idea in a cartoon—you won't get the joke!