

# Difference Between Main Idea and the Topic



## **Main Idea vs the Topic**

A story's topic and main idea are two of the most confusing elements in writing sentences and paragraphs. However, knowing the difference between the two is as easy as knowing the difference between day and night. The terms 'topic' and 'main idea' both mean the central idea of a sentence or a paragraph. Both may mean the same thing, but they are absolutely different. How so? Read on to find out.

The topic of a paragraph or a sentence is what the entirety of it is all about. The topic is supposed to be in the simplest form. It should only be composed of one word if possible. Examples of this are: dog, cat, my grandmother, your mistakes, her comb, and many others. Just bear in mind that topics are supposed to be stated in a simple single word or phrase

The main idea, on the other hand, is the most general idea that the writer wishes to convey. It is composed of an entire phrase or sentence

expressing the main thought of the sentence or paragraph. Examples of main ideas are, dogs can be trained, cats have nine lives, my grandmother is old, your mistakes cost the team's defeat, her comb was custom-made, and many others. Main ideas are stated using full statements.

To know the topic of a sentence, you must first understand what the sentence is all about. You must know what place, thing, animal, or person the sentence is talking about. In a paragraph, the topic is usually stated repeatedly. A topic is not too specific or too general as well.

After determining the topic, you will be able to tell what the main idea of the author is. The main idea is what makes the entire sentence in a paragraph come together. The sentences in a paragraph are always talking about the main idea. The entire paragraph must be trying to explain or make the main idea clearer. The writer may place the main idea in the beginning of the paragraph, in the middle, or in the last part of the paragraph. Another term for the main idea is 'topic sentence.'

Both of them are related, and both of these terms can be used to find either the topic or the main idea. If you are able to determine one, it will be easier to distinguish one from the other.

#### SUMMARY:

- 1.The topic is what the sentence or the paragraph is about while the main idea is what the writer is trying to convey in his entire message.

2. Topics are simpler and only use a word or a phrase; the main idea is stated as an entire sentence.

3. The topic must not be specific nor should it be general while the main idea must be complete.

4. The main idea may appear in the beginning, the middle, or the last part of the paragraph while the topic can be found in the sentence or in a paragraph

5. Another term for the main idea is 'topic sentence' while the topic is simply called 'topic.'