

Skill 4 Adding Details

You need to add supporting details to your discussion. These details will prove that you understand the reading and the lecture, and can write a coherent summary of the discussion.

Tip

Always look for the main idea in each paragraph. It is most often in the first sentence. The main idea is then followed by one or more details and/or examples.

Look at this example from the topic on solar energy:

Reading

Main Idea

Solar energy is abundant and cheap.

Supporting Details

free source of energy for heating water

free source of energy for generating electricity

Main Idea

Solar energy doesn't cause pollution.

Supporting Details

clean

quiet

doesn't ruin the landscape

Main Idea

Solar energy is available everywhere.

Supporting Details

advantage for people in rural areas

Lecture

Main Idea

It's expensive to install a solar energy system.

Supporting Details

many people can't afford

Main Idea

Solar energy cannot be used everywhere.

Supporting Details

useful in areas with a lot of sunshine

not useful in northern or rainy areas

Main Idea

Solar panels don't look nice to some people.

Supporting Details

panels on roof look better than in yard

many don't want panels on roof

Practice

Reread the passages and listen to the lectures again in Skill 1. Complete the notes below with Supporting Details. The numbered lines tell you how many details to look for.

1. Reading 1 and Lecture 1

Reading

Main Idea

Parental involvement in education is important.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Main Idea

Parents can be involved in different ways at school.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

Main Idea

Parents can be involved in different ways at home.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

Lecture

Main Idea

The attitude of teachers can discourage or encourage parental involvement.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

Main Idea

Parents might have difficulties that are barriers to involvement in education.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

Main Idea

Schools should work to encourage parental involvement because it is very important.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

2. Reading 2 and Lecture 2

Reading

Main Idea

Aromatherapy is an effective method for healing health conditions and improving mood.

Supporting Details

- 1. _____
- 2. _____

Main Idea

Essential oils can be used like medicines.

Supporting Details

- 1. _____
- 2. _____

Main Idea

Aromatherapy is used to enhance mood and relieve stress, anxiety, insomnia, and depression.

Supporting Details

- 1. _____
- 2. _____

Lecture

Main Idea

There is no evidence to prove that aromatherapy is effective.

Supporting Details

- 1. _____

Main Idea

A research study tested the effect of essential oils.

Supporting Details

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Main Idea

There was little or no effect.

Supporting Details

- 1. _____
- 2. _____

3. Reading 3 and Lecture 3

Reading

Main Idea

There are both natural and human causes of forest fires.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

Main Idea

Ground fires burn at or below ground level.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

Main Idea

Surface fires burn from the ground up to ten feet high.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

Main Idea

Crown fires burn at the tops of the trees.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Lecture

Main Idea

Forest fires caused by lightning are part of the balance of nature.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

Main Idea

Ground fires are usually controlled with trenches.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

Main Idea

Surface fires are controlled with water.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

Main Idea

Crown fires are controlled from the air.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

4. Reading 4 and Lecture 4

Reading

Main Idea

Industrial agriculture relies on monoculture for high crop yields.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

Main Idea

Planting the same crop in the same place every year attracts pests.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

Main Idea

Planting the same crop in the same place every year depletes the soil.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

Main Idea

In industrial farming, just a few varieties of a plant are grown.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Lecture

Main Idea

Organic farming works with natural resources, not chemicals.

Supporting Details

1. _____

Main Idea

Different methods are used for pest control.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____

Main Idea

Healthy soil is important for healthy crops.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Main Idea

Different methods are used for disease control.

Supporting Details

1. _____
2. _____