

To write an essay, you want to start with your main idea, or main topic. The main idea is the most important part of the writing. It's supported by other points made throughout the writing. To be able to write a good main topic sentence, you need to be able to find the main idea of different kinds of writings. To find the main idea, ask yourself what the author is trying to say? Why does he/she say it?

Some tips to find the main idea:

- Identify key words in sentences and paragraphs
- Find explicitly stated topics
- Write a phrase about what each sentence says
- Identify the one idea that all of the sentences say
- Write the main idea in a complete sentence using your own words
- Find at least two statements that support this as the main idea

In the following passage, the main topic sentence is underlined.

Your blood is made up of many different things that help you live. From tiny red blood cells that float in the watery substance called plasma, to the white blood cells that fight infection, your blood is made up of many different things. Your blood contains less white blood cells than red blood cells. White blood cells are bigger than red blood cells. White blood cells protect you against germs and diseases. Your blood also contains little flat, round colorless things called platelets. Platelets help your blood clot when you're cut. Platelets help your blood clot into scabs. Your body makes new red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets each day to replace the ones that die.