

Lesson Skill: Developing a central idea in narrative writing

Strand Writing

SOL 3.9

Materials

- “The Central Idea” poem (attached)
- Sentence strips
- What’s the Point? Conveying a Central Idea handout (attached)
- T-shirt/bumper sticker template (attached)
- Examples of a book jacket narrative or an audience-appropriate movie trailer (optional)

Lesson

1. Before reading the attached poem, “The Central Idea,” have students brainstorm (whole group or in pairs) the meaning of *central idea*. Prepare students for reading the poem by explaining that they will use the poem to write/revise a definition for the term *central idea*. Read “The Central Idea” aloud.
2. In groups of two or three, have students attempt to create/revise a definition on a sentence strip for the term *central idea*, using what they learned from the poem. Post strips in the classroom.
3. Distribute copies of the attached What’s the Point? Conveying a Central Idea handout. The central idea for this graphic organizer is “The student should always do his/her best.” In groups of four—one person for each section of the graphic organizer—students will elaborate on the central idea. By organizing information to convey the central idea, they will also be brainstorming for the next activity. Students should provide examples of how they do their best at home and at school. Explain that the examples will be details that elaborate the central idea.
4. Using the central idea activity above, have students work in groups to create a narrative or story about doing their best. Have them create a book jacket blurb or movie trailer with the central idea of their narrative.
5. Once the story is completed, students (in groups or individually) should share their stories.
6. Students could also create a t-shirt and/or bumper sticker conveying the central idea of their narrative story. The template is also attached.

Strategies for Differentiation

- To introduce the meaning of *central idea*, provide short passages or stories as examples. Identify the central idea of the passages as a shared lesson.
- Present models and visuals of familiar book jackets and movie trailers. Discuss how advertisers use the central idea to entice the viewer.
- Use e-books or passages to show students how to identify the central idea.

The Central Idea

A central idea is not a word.
It is not pieces of things you've heard.

You take a topic such as fate...
or love or joy or sadness or hate,

And create a sentence with that clue,
That describes the whole story through and through.

It's the fundamental thought within your story.
Now go and create—in a hurry!

What's the Point? Conveying a Central Idea

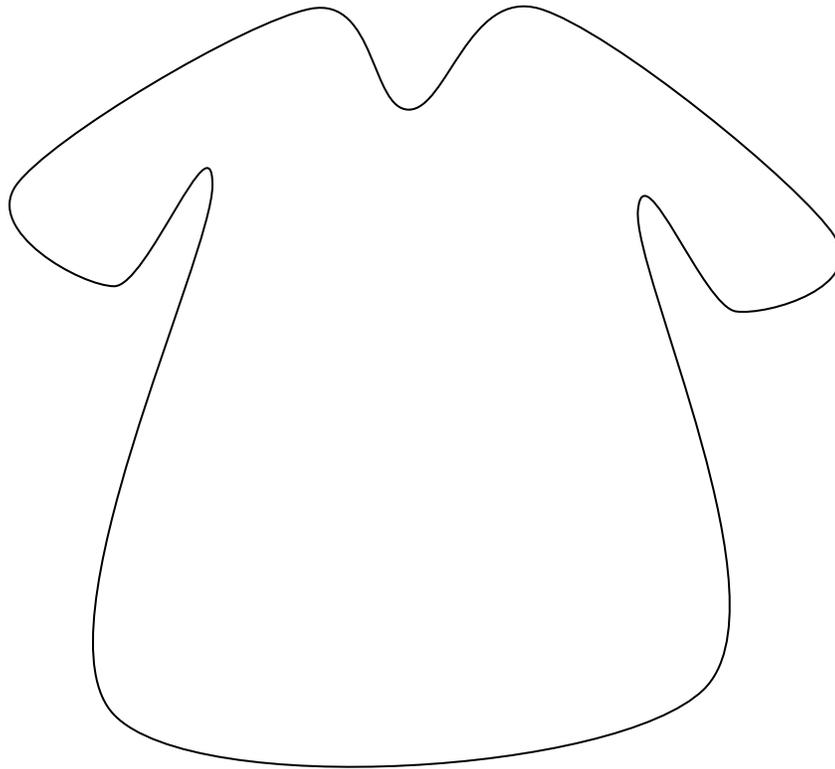
Group Members _____

Central Idea What's the point?	One should always do one's best.
Explain What does it mean?	
Development Tell me more.	
Examples Give me an example or two.	
Prove it How can I prove my point?	

Book or Movie Title _____

Writers _____

T-Shirt



Bumper Sticker

