

RD 115 **Week 5** Lecture Guide:  
Identifying **Supporting Details**

I. **Paragraphs Consist of Three Main Elements:**

1. **Topics:** Who or What is the paragraph about?
2. **Main Idea:** What is the single most important thing the author wants to say about the topic?
  - a. May be **stated** or **implied**
  - b. Is always a **full sentence**
  - c. Contains the **topic**
  - d. **Can stand alone**; doesn't *need* supporting details
3. **Supporting Details:** Help us *understand the main idea more completely*

II. **Identifying Supporting Details**

- Ask:  
**What additional information does the author provide to help us understand the main idea more completely?**
- And:  
**Turn the main idea into a question, asking**
  - Who**
  - What**
  - When**
  - Where**
  - Why**
  - How**

*... about the main idea*
- Look for:
  - Names, dates, places, statistics
  - Definitions and descriptions
  - Examples and illustrations
  - Details and specifics
- Signal words and phrases**
  - First, second, third . . .
  - Next, and, another. . .
  - Also, in addition, including, finally . . .
  - For example, for instance, to illustrate . . .
  - Such as, the following . . .
  - 1, 2, 3 . . . a, b, c . . .
  - There are three types / two ways / several kinds / four causes / three explanations . . .

