

RD 115 **Week 3** Lecture Guide:
Finding the **Topic** and the **Stated Main Idea**

I. To find the **topic**, ask: **Who or What is this paragraph about?**

Topics can be

1. Single words
2. Short phrases
3. Proper names

Topic clues may be:

1. Headings or titles
2. Words in **bold**, *italics*, or **color**
3. Repeated words and phrases
4. Repeated pronouns or other referring words (see p. 212)

II. The **Stated Main Idea** consists of

The **topic** + the author's **single most important point** about the topic

So, to find the stated main idea:

1. Find out the **topic** (Who or What is this paragraph about?)
2. Ask: What's the **single most important thing** the author wants us to know about this topic?
3. Search for the **sentence** that answers that question.

You know you've *correctly identified* the **Stated Main Idea if the sentence**:

1. Contains the **topic**
2. States the **single most important point** about the topic
3. Is **general** enough to cover all of the info in the paragraph
4. Is **explained / supported by the other sentences** in the paragraph
5. Makes **complete sense by itself** (doesn't really need the rest of the paragraph)

In-class practice: Selection 4-2: "Latinos: An Emerging Influence in the United States," p. 239-244