

What's the **Big** Idea?

This lesson plan works well with expository texts. Use it with ebooks that pose an argument or seek to explain an idea, system, problem, or issue.

Analysis and synthesis: students will read an expository text and determine the points that combine to pose a conclusion.

Select an ebook about the topic, theme, or unit you're teaching in class. Allow students time to read the book in class or at home. Tell students to keep the book they read in their VIA backpack.

When students have completed an initial read of the ebook, ask them to open it up again, along with the "What's the Big Idea?" graphic organizer. Have students flip through the ebook, looking for organizational tools like a table of contents, chapter headings, section headings, sidebar titles, etc. To get them thinking about the book's main idea and supporting details, ask them how these organizational tools might help them determine what the author's key points are. Students should fill out their graphic organizers and turn in the assignment.

Facilitate a discussion, asking students to share their thoughts about the author's big idea. Help the class come to consensus on the main idea of the book. Other key discussion questions could include the following:

- What were some of the details the author discussed that support the main idea?
- How did you determine what the supporting details are? Where did you find them? How do the details support the main idea?
- Did the author omit any details that would have backed up his or her big idea? Which is the strongest supporting detail? Which is the weakest?
- Do you agree or disagree with the author? How has this book changed or confirmed your views on the topic?
- How does this main idea relate to the topic, theme, or unit you are studying in class?

Using key words from the discussion, your class can make a word cloud using [Wordle™](#).