



WHAT'S THE POINT?

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

5+ MINUTES

- Lead this quick cognitive warm up to build attention, processing speed, nimbleness and other cognitive skills, as well as group connection.
- Read one of the “What’s the Point?” reading prompts below to your students.
- Give the students 1 minute to discuss and decide together the main point of the excerpt. Continue with as many rounds as time allows.
- When repeating this class, use a different reading prompt.
- Encourage distance learners to join in from home.

Hello! Research shows that working against the clock is an important way we can keep our thinking focused, fast and nimble. And these skills are essential to learning and remembering better! Let’s get started.

Today’s “Brain Play” is called “What’s the Point?” In a moment I will read you a short excerpt. We will then have 1 minute to decide together what is the main point of the reading. Ready?

“WHAT’S THE POINT?” READING PROMPTS (Choose 1)

“A man might find for a moment that he was unable to work, but that’s exactly the right time to remember his past accomplishments and to consider that later on, when the obstacles has been removed, he’s bound to work all the harder and more efficiently.” - Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*

“The more I see of the world, the more am I dissatisfied with it; and everyday confirms my belief of the inconsistencies of all human characters, and of the little dependence that can be placed on the appearance of merit or sense.” - Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

“If the study to which you apply yourself has a tendency to weaken your affections, and to destroy your taste for those simple pleasure in which no alloy can possibly mix, then that study is certainly unlawful, that is to say, not befitting of the human mind.” - Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*



WHAT'S THE POINT?

TAKE-HOME WORKSHEET

TOTAL BRAIN HEALTH BRAIN PLAYS

Almost all stories have a main point or central theme, important details, and incidental details that flesh out the story but are less critical.

Identifying these story parts is key to remembering what you've read or seen.

BUILD YOUR BRAIN

Practice your verbal fluency skills by identifying the main point or theme in the following famous book passages.

"The only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars." – *Jack Kerouac, On The Road*

MAIN IDEA: _____

There are many Beths in the world, shy and quiet, sitting in corners till needed, and living for others so cheerfully that no one sees the sacrifices till the little cricket on the hearth stops chirping, and the sweet, sunshiny presence vanishes, leaving silence and shadow behind. – *Louisa May Alcott, Little Women*

MAIN IDEA: _____

"Atticus said to Jem one day, "I'd rather you shot at tin cans in the backyard, but I know you'll go after birds. Shoot all the blue jays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird." That was the only time I ever heard Atticus say it was a sin to do something, and I asked Miss Maudie about it. "Your father's right," she said. "Mockingbirds don't do one thing except make music for us to enjoy. They don't eat up people's gardens, don't nest in corn cribs, they don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That's why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird." – *Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird*

MAIN IDEA: _____

"There's so much humanity in a love of trees, so much nostalgia for our first sense of wonder, so much power in just feeling our own insignificance when we are surrounded by nature ... yes, that's it: just thinking about trees and their indifferent majesty and our love for them teaches us how ridiculous we are..." – *Muriel Burberry, The Elegance of the Hedgehog*

MAIN IDEA: _____