

What? And So What?

Using the “reporter’s formula” for getting at the heart of a non-fiction article

About the Reading Strategy: A main idea is more than a topic. To state the main idea, it’s important to know what the text is about (the topic) and then to be able to “say so what?” about it. The “so what” can be the angle, idea, or perspective that the author brings to the topic.

As you are reading the article, THINK ABOUT...

- What’s the topic of the article?
- What is each section about?
- What is the author’s angle or slant? What lens are they telling the story through?
- What do you think the author is trying to say about the topic?
- What do you think the author wants you to think about when you are finished reading the article?

The Reporter’s Formula <i>Below, compose key facts in <u>your own words</u>.</i>	
WHO:	Who or what is the most important subject matter in this article?
WHAT:	What is important to know about the article’s subject matter?
WHEN?	When does this take place or when is this information relevant?
WHERE?	Where does this take place? How does the “where” impact the importance of the subject matter, if at all?
WHY?	Why is the subject matter important?
HOW?	How does/did this occur?

MAIN IDEA

SO WHAT? – Write 4-6 sentences explaining the “so what”.

Consider...

- Why did the author write this article?
- What ideas stand out in your mind after reading the article?
- What unique perspective is the author bringing to the article?
- What makes the perspective presented in this article unique from others’ perspectives?

Now write 4-6 sentences explaining the main idea of this article. What is this article about and “so what”?
