

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Main Idea and Details

- The **main idea** is the most important idea in a selection or a paragraph.
- The small pieces of information that tell about the main idea are the supporting **details**.
- Look for keywords in the text, such as *who*, *what*, *where*, *why*, and *when*, to get **details** about the **main idea**.

**Directions** Read the following passage and complete the chart below.

I stood in line at Ellis Island for a long time. People were speaking different languages all around me. Finally, it was my turn. I told the man my name. Then he asked a question. I didn't know what to answer because I didn't understand English. Another man told me in my own

language that he wanted to know if I ever was in prison. I was only 13 years old! He asked me if I was sick, and I said "No." He tried to say my name, but couldn't. He wrote a new name next to mine. The other man told me my new name. "Welcome to America, young lady," he said.

**Directions** Write the main idea of the passage in box 1. Then write the details that support that idea in boxes 2–5.

|   |  |   |   |  |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <b>1. Main Idea</b><br>What is the passage about? |  |   |   |  |
| <b>2. Detail</b><br>Where was the girl?           | <b>3. Detail</b><br>What was one problem the girl had? | <b>4. Detail</b><br>What was one question the man asked the girl? | <b>5. Detail</b><br>What happened to the girl's name? |  |

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**Home Activity** Your child learned about finding the main idea and details in a piece of writing. Read a newspaper or magazine article with your child. Have him or her tell you what the article was about and give three details that support the main idea.