*The central idea may be* ***stated*** *or it may be* ***implied****.*

A **stated central idea** is **written** in the paragraph. You are able to highlight or circle the actual sentence! The author stated it for the reader. The stated main idea is usually (not always) found in the first or second sentence of the paragraph.

If you have to figure out the central idea, then it is called an **implied central idea.**

**Guiding Questions for Determining the Implied Central Idea:**

* What is the topic? What is the passage about?
* What does the writer want you to know about the topic?
* How do the details connect?
* What larger idea do the details explain?

**Practice Passages:**

There is a common belief that while the dog is man’s best friend, the coyote is his worst enemy. The bad reputation of the coyote traces back to his fondness for small animals; he hunts at night and is particularly destructive to sheep, young pigs, and poultry. Yet it is sometimes wise to encourage coyotes. Provided valuable farm animals are protected, the coyote will often free the property of other animals, like rabbits, which are ruinous to crops and certain trees. He is especially beneficial in keeping down the rodent population. Where coyotes have been allowed to do their work without molestation, ranchers and fruit growers have found them so valuable that they would no more shoot them than they would shoot their dogs.

Birds that roost in communities keep warmer and save more energy than those who roost separately. Another advantage to staying in flocks is that many birds are more likely to find food and detect danger than a solitary bird—several pairs of eyes are better than one. In addition, birds that eat on the ground with their flock can more easily escape attack because at least one member of the flock will alert the others. Then, when all the birds fly upward to escape together, they cause confusion, turning a predator’s interest away from any one individual. Several small birds may even act together to “mob” a larger intruder and drive it away.

Once the most popular and affordable form of public transportation in America, streetcars in the early part of this century carried a record 11 billion passengers on 45,000 miles of track. By 1960, however, trolley systems were virtually extinct. Companies backed by General Motors, Firestone Tire and Rubber, Standard Oil, and others with a financial interest in cars and buses had bought and closed up almost every trolley in America. Now, however, public officials are concerned with finding cheaper, more convenient alternatives to subway systems. San Diego was the first to construct a major new trolley line. As ridership soared, second and third lines were added, with more planned for the future. Portland and Sacramento then started theirs, and more than twenty other cities have proposed new trolley lines.