**Understanding a text - how to identify key words and ideas**

Do you know how to identify key words and ideas in a document? Do you know what to look for?

Here are some tips:

* look for repeated words or numbers
* look for a topic sentence in a paragraph. Often this is the first sentence but it may not always be.
* highlight the main nouns and verbs in each sentence. Ignore the details and the little words such as *and, the, in*

***Example text***

**How to deal with bullying**

Bullying is a word that strikes fear into most parents’ hearts when their child starts school.

It (bullying) can start at any age and can come in different ways. Girls often leave each other out of groups. Boys are more physical and may fight.

If your child is being bullied at nursery or school they may exhibit signs. Is your child withdrawn and less responsive to you? Have they started wetting the bed regularly? Are they coming home with scratches and cuts?

**A. Try it yourself**

1. Look at the text: **Vincent van Gogh, the genius unrecognised in his own lifetime.**

Without reading the text, think about what sorts of words you expect to read in the text? List as many as you can think of.

2. Quickly skim the text. Are there any repeated words or numbers?

3. Next do the following:

1. underline the topic sentence in each paragraph
2. highlight the main nouns and verbs in each sentence in the whole text

4. Use the topic sentence and the highlighted words to create a summary in note form. The first paragraph has been done as an example for you.

**Vincent van Gogh, the genius unrecognised in his own lifetime.**

Paragraph 1

* Vincent Van Gogh – born Brabant – 1853
* young man - art dealer - London & Paris
* argued with customers – dismissed

Paragraph 2

Paragraph 3

Paragraph 4

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Paragraph 5

Paragraph 6

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Paragraph 7

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Paragraph 8

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