



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# **Grade 3: Module 4: Unit 3: Lesson 3**

## **Determining the Main Idea and Key Details:**

### **“Tackling the Trash”**



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**Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)**

I can answer questions using specific details from informational texts. (RI.3.1)

I can determine the main idea of an informational text. (RI.3.2)

I can retell key ideas from an informational text. (RI.3.2)

I can tell the difference between related words and synonyms (e.g., knew, believed, suspected, heard, wondered). (L.3.5c)

**Supporting Learning Targets**

- I can determine the main idea of “Tackling the Trash.”
- I can determine the key details from “Tackling the Trash.”

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Students’ annotated text “Tackling the Trash”
- Commitment cards (from Lesson 2 homework)



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opening               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Engaging the Reader: Sharing Conservation Commitments (5 minutes)</li> <li>B. Unpacking Learning Targets (5 minutes)</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Work Time               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Determining the Main Idea of “Tackling the Trash” (15 minutes)</li> <li>B. Answering Questions about “Tackling the Trash” (10 minutes)</li> <li>C. Finding Key Details and Revising the Main Idea Statement (15 minutes)</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Closing and Assessment               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Sharing Ways to Be Well Aware (10 minutes)</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Homework               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Share three things Chad did to make a difference.</li> <li>B. Continue reading your independent reading book.</li> <li>C. Begin completing your Independent Reading recording form</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In this lesson, students share their commitment cards with partners using the Back-to-Back, Face-to-Face protocol. Their ideas should be added to the Being Well Aware anchor chart and taken into consideration for use in their VoiceThreads. Continue to prompt students to think about what their VoiceThreads might include.</li> <li>• Then, students read and reread “Tackling the Trash” to figure out the text’s main ideas and key details. Jill Esbaum wrote “Tackling the Trash” in 2002. However, work by Chad Pregracke (pronounced “Per-grack-ee”) continues through his organization Living Lands and Waters. For more information, see his website: <a href="http://www.livinglandsandwaters.org">http://www.livinglandsandwaters.org</a>.</li> <li>• As they read this text, students also focus on synonyms, in support of NYSP12 ELA CCLS L.3.5. This text provides an opportunity to focus students’ attention on how authors use different words with the same meaning to make their writing more interesting and precise. This work with synonyms is an important connection that helps students build their vocabulary and their understanding of word meanings.</li> <li>• Students use Determining the Main Idea and Key Details task cards to complete their synthesis of “Tackling the Trash.” These are the same task cards that were used in Lesson 2, as well as Unit 1, Lessons 6–11. In advance, decide whether students would benefit from having new copies of these task cards or whether they can reuse the original ones.</li> <li>• In advance: Gather highlighters or colored pencils for students to use when they complete Part 2 of the Determining the Main Idea and Key Details task card.</li> <li>• Post: Learning targets.</li> </ul>



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
act out (perform), pantomime, synonym, trash, litter, junk, clutter, landfill, determined/determination, grant, donate/donation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being Well Aware anchor chart (begun in Lesson 2)</li><li>• “Tackling the Trash” (one per student and one to display)</li><li>• Determining the Main Idea and Key Details task card (from Unit 1, Lesson 8)</li><li>• Determining the Main Idea and Key Details task card (specific to today’s lesson; answers, for teacher reference)</li><li>• Document camera</li><li>• Determining the Main Idea and Key Details anchor chart (begun in Unit 1, Lesson 6)</li><li>• Highlighters or colored pencils (one per student)</li><li>• Equity sticks</li><li>• Independent Reading recording form (from Unit 2, Lesson 4; one per student)</li></ul>



Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p><b>A. Engaging the Reader: Sharing Conservation Commitments (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask students to refer to the commitment cards they made for homework.</li><li>• Invite them to determine how they can act out or silently perform their commitments for one another (pantomime).</li><li>• Review the Back-to-Back, Face-to-Face protocol with students, and ask them to stand back-to-back with a partner.</li><li>• Tell students: “When I say, ‘Front-to-front,’ turn around and silently act out your commitment. Watch what your partner does, and call out your guess. The only rule is that you have to stay in the same place.”</li><li>• Call out, “Front-to-front.” Give students 30 seconds to 1 minute to share with their partner.</li><li>• Then say, “Back-to-back” and ask students to find a new partner.</li><li>• Repeat as time permits.</li><li>• Refocus students whole group. Commend them on their efforts to be well aware. Invite the class to share some of the ways to save water that are not yet on the <b>Being Well Aware anchor chart</b>. Add these to the chart.</li><li>• Remind students that they may use some of these ideas in their VoiceThread.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Physical movement supports ELLs and students with different learning styles.</li></ul>
<p><b>B. Unpacking Learning Targets (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Direct students’ attention to the posted learning targets. Ask students to read them silently.</li><li>• Acknowledge that they have worked on main ideas and key details many times this year. Then ask students to turn and discuss the following with a partner:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “Why do you think we have spent so much time on main ideas and key details?”</li></ul></li><li>• Cold call a few students to share out. Listen for ideas like: “The main idea is what the author wants you to know. If you can’t find the main idea, you may not be learning what you are supposed to from the text. The key details help you to understand the main idea more deeply and make sure that you got it right.”</li></ul>	



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Determining the Main Idea of “Tackling the Trash” (15 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Distribute <b>“Tackling the Trash”</b> and the <b>Determining the Main Idea and Key Details task card</b>. Tell students this text tells the story of a young man named Chad Pregracke, who is well aware.</li><li>• Read the directions for Part 1 of the Determining the Main Idea and Key Details task card aloud. Tell students they will have 10 minutes to complete Part 1 of the task card.</li><li>• Encourage students to think about how they might include ideas from this text in their VoiceThread.</li><li>• Circulate and observe students as they read. Give support with decoding only when necessary.</li><li>• As students begin to work on their main idea statements, ask questions like the following to individuals, small groups, or the whole class:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “What is helping you determine the main idea?”</li><li>* “What is this text mostly about?”</li></ul></li><li>• You might ask follow-up questions like:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “How do the text features like the title, pictures, and border help you to determine the main idea?”</li><li>* “How do the illustrations along the border reinforce the main idea?”</li></ul></li><li>• Refocus students’ attention whole group.</li><li>• Ask students to turn to a neighbor and share their main idea statements. If students have not yet written their main idea statements, they can write these with their partners.</li><li>• Remind students to give their partners a chance to share ideas. Remind them that it is important to notice and discuss differences between their ideas. Be sure students are using evidence from the text.</li><li>• Circulate and select a few strong main idea statements to share. It’s OK if these are simple first drafts as long as they have the main idea that Chad took action on pollution by cleaning up the river around his home and getting the help of others.</li><li>• After a few minutes, call students together. Share the main idea statements that you selected.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In support of RI.3.10, students are asked to read this text independently. If students need support with the text, have them whisper-read with their partners or pull together a small group to whisper-read with your support .</li><li>• Consider pulling small groups for support with the text .</li></ul>



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p><b>B. Answering Questions about “Tackling the Trash” (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display a copy of “Tackling the Text” on a <b>document camera</b>.</li> <li>• Direct students’ attention to the displayed text.</li> <li>• Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “With your partner, look over the first three paragraphs of the text. What synonyms, or words that mean nearly the same thing, can you find for the word ‘garbage?’”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ask for volunteers to call out a few words they found (“trash,” “junk,” “clutter,” “litter”).</li> <li>• Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “Why do you think the author used these different words for garbage?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Call on a volunteer. If needed, note that authors often use synonyms to make their writing more interesting and precise. Point out the first sentence in the third paragraph, “Spring floods added to the clutter.”</li> <li>• Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “Why do you think that the author used the word ‘clutter’ in this sentence instead of just saying ‘trash?’”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Again give students a few moments to think; then call on a volunteer to respond.</li> <li>• Direct students to the last paragraph on the first page. Read the sentence: “When his boat was full, he took the load to the landfill.” Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What is a synonym for ‘landfill?’”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cold call a few students to respond.</li> <li>• Read Paragraphs 3 and 4 on the second page aloud.</li> <li>• Refer students to the word donate. Tell them that sometimes people give away things like food, clothes, or money to help people or a cause, such as cleaning up the river. The thing that they donate is called a donation.</li> <li>• Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “In the fourth paragraph, which word do you think is a synonym for a donation of money?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cold call partners to respond. Listen for: “grant.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider posting the questions you ask to support visual learners .</li> </ul>



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p><b>C. Finding Key Details and Revising the Main Idea Statement (15 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Redirect students’ attention to the posted learning targets. Ask a volunteer to read the second learning target aloud.</li><li>• Tell students they are now going to complete Part 2 of the task card with their partners.</li><li>• Suggest to students that—especially on the second page—they figure out the main idea one paragraph at a time. If not already listed, add this strategy to the <b>Determining the Main Idea and Key Details anchor chart</b>.</li><li>• Distribute one <b>highlighter or colored pencil</b> to each student.</li><li>• Give students about 10 minutes to complete Part 2.</li><li>• Circulate as students work. As needed, ask questions like:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “Why did you select this passage as a key detail?” (Listen for approaches listed on the Determining the Main Idea and Key Details anchor chart.)</li><li>* “What’s the important thing to learn from this paragraph about how Chad Pregracke made a difference?”</li></ul></li><li>• Refocus students’ attention whole group. Direct students to their main idea statement. Ask them to discuss the following with their partners:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “Based on the key details that you identified, would you change your main idea statement? Why or why not?”</li></ul></li><li>• Circulate as students discuss. Select a few highlights to share or a few students to share their thinking.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using silent signals (a quiet thumb, etc.) ensures engagement by promoting simultaneous engagement, communicating when students have had enough think time, and promoting accountability. Any student who gives the signal is communicating readiness to share.</li><li>• Students may benefit from talking with a partner before sharing their answers. Consider using strategies like Think-Pair-Share.</li></ul>





Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p><b>A. Sharing Ways to Be Well Aware (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tell students to turn to a new partner and share what they learned from Chad Pregracke’s story about becoming well aware. Encourage students to use specific examples from the text.</li><li>• Use <b>equity sticks</b> to call on at least three students to share their ideas. Add ideas to the Being Well Aware anchor chart.</li><li>• Distribute the <b>Independent Reading recording form</b> to students and preview the homework.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mixing partners for the sharing serves two primary purposes: 1) to encourage sharing new information and 2) to allow students to work with someone new. If your class does not easily pair, either have students share with their existing partner or predetermine pairs.</li></ul>
Homework	Meeting Students’ Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When Chad Pregracke decided to clean up the river, he was being well aware. Share with someone at home three things that Chad did to make a difference. Which one of these ideas might you want to share in your VoiceThread to help others be well aware?</li><li>• Continue reading your independent reading book.</li><li>• Begin completing your Independent Reading recording form.</li></ul> <p><i>Note: Students work on their Independent Reading recording form for homework across several lessons.</i></p>	



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## Supporting Materials



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Being Well Aware Anchor Chart  
For Teacher Reference

(Continued from Lesson 2; new answers are in bold. Answers will vary based on the input of the students from homework, the text, and past research.)

Being Well Aware	
<b>Learn More and Educate Others</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Take pictures of the problem to share with others</b></li><li>• <b>Share your story with other groups</b></li></ul>
<b>Join Others</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pass laws to encourage people to save water</li><li>• <b>Work together to clean up a river (Adopt-a-Mississippi Mile)</b></li><li>• <b>Ask for money for or donate money to people who are doing good work</b></li></ul>
<b>Conserve Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limit lawn watering</li><li>• Use cool water from the shower to water plants</li><li>• Use buckets to wash cars</li><li>• Take short showers</li><li>• Use water-saving showerheads</li><li>• Limit baths</li><li>• Turn off leaky faucets</li><li>• Design houses that save water</li><li>• Drink from a cup instead of the faucet</li><li>• (Add student responses from homework.)</li></ul>
<b>Protect Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Clean up trash near waterways</b></li></ul>
<b>Improve Access</b>	



“Tackling the Trash”

13 air conditioners 

28 toilets 

350 propane tanks 

56 stoves 

46 washing machines 

223 milk crates 

8 anchors 

348 bottles of antifreeze 

18 duck decoys 



## Tackling the Trash

By Jill Esbaum

**N**ot many people would spend their free time picking up other people's litter. But Chad Progracke has spent most of the past five years doing just that along the Mississippi, Ohio, and Illinois Rivers.

Why?

Chad grew up in a house alongside the Mississippi. He loved to fish and camp on the river's wooded islands. That's when he first noticed the junk dotting its shoreline. Many other boaters and campers used the river, too. Unfortunately, some of them didn't care where they threw their trash.

Spring floods added to the clutter. When flood waters went down, they left behind everything from tin cans to 55-gallon steel drums, from tires to TV sets.

"It was getting worse every year," Chad says. "And nobody was cleaning it up."

In May of 1997, Chad came home from college for summer vacation. As usual, he was disgusted by the junk that littered the riverbanks near his hometown of East Moline, Illinois. But this time, instead of wondering why someone else didn't clean it up, he decided to tackle a few miles of shoreline himself.

With only a flat-bottom boat, a wheelbarrow, and a sturdy pair of gloves, he motored up and down the river. Whenever he spotted trash, he pulled to shore and picked it up. When his boat was full, he took the load to a landfill. Chad even took pictures of the junk he hauled away. "I thought it might be fun to see how much trash I could pick up," he says.

14,240 pounds of metal 

28 garbage cans 

4,870 car tires 

55 life jackets 





“Tackling the Trash”

**3 baby pools**  **968 buckets**  **287 refrigerators**  **1,109 55-gallon steel drums** 

Soon the riverbanks near his hometown were litter-free. And Chad was hooked. “I really enjoyed it,” he says. “I could see the results day after day. It made me feel good to help my community.” So he kept going, sleeping under a tarp each night.

But Chad's money was disappearing fast. Food, gasoline for his boat, landfill charges, and film costs were gobbling up his resources. He wondered if others would help support his cleanup.

First Chad talked to government agencies like the National Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. While happy about his work, they didn't have much money to donate.

So Chad called area businesses. He explained about growing up beside the river, the mess it had become, and his determination to clean it up. Most companies wouldn't help either. But finally one company decided to lend a hand. Chad got his first small grant and the encouragement he needed to find others to help as well.

Chad began visiting other companies in person and found that his careful record keeping paid off. People couldn't help being impressed by his enthusiasm, or by the pictures of the junk he'd already hauled away. The next year, Chad received enough money to finish his summer's work with several volunteers to help him. In two years he raised enough money to buy two more boats and hire five helpers for the next summer.

In 1998, Chad's goal was to clean 1,000 miles of shoreline. Beginning in northern Iowa, he and his crew slowly worked their way south. Their final destination was St. Louis, Missouri. Along the way, Chad had to receive permission from each town to pile his junk in a parking lot or field. When he finished each area, he trucked the trash to the nearest landfill.

As the hot summer wore on, the work became more difficult. The farther south they traveled, the more trash littered the shore. One mile of shoreline was so full of old tires, it took more than a month to clean—one small boatload at a time. Sheltered only by tents and tarps, Chad and his crew battled mosquitoes and summer storms. By summer's end only Chad and one helper remained



**What has Chad taken out of the rivers? Here is a partial list of what he's pulled out as of July 2001.**

**27 bicycles**  **40 barbecue grills**  **430 feet of steel cable**  **15 boat bumpers**  **75 water heaters** 

**307 chairs**  **171 coolers**  **2 swing sets**  **49 sinks**  **72 TV sets** 

**Chad Pregracke made clean rivers his business.**

Illustrated by Beth A. Florigan

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Determining the Main Idea and Key Details Task Card  
Answers for Teacher Reference

**Learning target:** I can determine the main idea and key details of an informational text.

**Part 1: Determining the Main Idea**

1. Read the text.
2. In your own words, what is the **main idea** of this text? On the **back** of your text, write a #1, then write a **main idea** statement.

(Answers will vary. Student answers may not be this complete on the first draft. Look for something about how Chad took action on pollution by cleaning up the river around his home and getting the help of others.)

**Part 2: Finding Key Details**

1. Reread the text. As you read, highlight the **key details** that you think support the main idea.

(Answers will vary. Look for answer about how and why Chad cleaned up the river and how he involved others. Some examples follow.)

- This time, instead of wondering why someone else didn't clean it up, he decided to tackle a few miles of shoreline himself.
- I could see the results day after day. It made me feel good to help my community.
- Chad got his first small grant and the encouragement he needed to find others to help.
- Chad received enough money to finish his summer's work with several volunteers to help him.
- His goal was to clean 1,000 miles of shoreline.
- He shared his story with community groups.
- In 2000, he began hosting community-wide cleanup days.

**Part 3: Revising the Main Idea Statement**

1. If needed, revise your main idea statement. Write a #2 next to it. Put a ✓ if you choose not to revise.