Get the Gist

Purpose: To help students identify the main idea of a paragraph or selection

Materials: reading selection, copies of the Get the Gist chart, pencils

Procedure:
- Pass out Get the Gist charts to students.
- This strategy can be used after reading an entire story, when reading narrative texts, or after every paragraph, when reading challenging expository texts.
- In the first box, students write the main character (or topic) for the story (or designated section of the text).
- In the second box, students write the most important thing about the main character (or topic).
- In the third box, students write the “gist” statement, which includes the main character and the most important thing about the main character, all in 10 words or less.
- Students share their gist statements with a partner or group.
1. Who or what is the text mostly about?

2. What is the most important thing about the who or what?

3. Write the gist in a complete sentence of 10 words or less.