Name: _____ Date: _____

Finding the Main Ideas

The main idea of a section or a whole article is an important idea that the author wants you to know about the topic. Looking at the details can help you figure out what the main idea is. What do they mainly describe? You can also use the titles of sections as clues.

Directions: Complete the chart below after reading "Out of the Shattered Land." Use the prompts to help you.

Section	Main idea	How do you know?
First section, starting at the beginning of the article	Since a war began in Syria, bombs and gunfire have destroyed much of the city of Aleppo and endangered the lives of people who live there, including the Jacob family.	*Give two details from this section that describe how war and violence are destroying Aleppo and endangering lives:* • •
"A Terrible Crisis"	*Write the main idea:*	*The main idea is supported by the details below. Think about the main problem described in this section:* • Five million Syrians have fled to other countries as refugees. • Thousands of people have died trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. • People become refugees when their lives are in danger.
"Just in Time"	*Write the main idea after filling in the details on the right:*	*Give three details from this section that describe the bad conditions in Aleppo and the offer of help the Jacob family received:* • • •

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Section	Main idea	How do you know?
"Huge Challenges"	*Write the main idea. Think about the section header and what the section describes:*	*We've given you one detail that supports the main idea. Write two more details:* • Refugees may be unable to speak English. • •
"Starting Over"	*Write the main idea. Think about what the section header refers to:*	*Give three details that support the main idea:* • • •
"Looking Forward"	*Write the main idea:*	*Give three details that support the main idea:* • • •