

The Town of Many Earthquakes

The small town of Moodus, Connecticut, is a quiet place—if you don't count the noise from earthquakes. For several hundred years, Moodus has had an unusual number of earthquakes. Sometimes there are as many as six or seven earthquakes in a single day.

The earthquakes in Moodus range from small to large. Most of the quakes are tiny. Usually they cause rumbling noises that last about 30 seconds. There is often a boom and a slight tremble of the earth. People in Moodus compare the noises to the sound of thunder or truck traffic. Sometimes the quakes are larger. They bounce beds, rattle windows, and shake dishes. One earthquake in 1791 did more serious damage, however. It knocked over parts of many homes in Moodus.

In the early years, no records were kept of the number of earthquakes. Equipment for recording the earthquakes was installed in 1979. The equipment showed that there were many more earthquakes than anyone had realized. There were 500 earthquakes in just one three-month period of 1981!

There have been different ideas about why Moodus has had so many earthquakes. Scientists believe that earthquakes take place along fault lines. These are deep cracks in the earth. But no active fault lines have been found in Moodus.

In the 1600s, the Wangunk Indians believed that the noises came from an angry god, Hobomoko. They claimed that Hobomoko became angry when the English settlers did not worship him, so he began to shake the earth. The Wangunk believed that Hobomoko lived under a small mountain in Moodus. Strangely enough, scientists now believe that the center of the earthquakes is at that same mountain.

In the 1700s, a doctor came from England to try to solve the mystery of the earthquakes. He blamed the quakes on a glowing rock that he had found at the foot of the mountain. While the doctor was sailing home to England with the rock, his ship sank. Legends say that the rock still sends out a bright glow from the ocean floor. While there is no question that Moodus is the town of many earthquakes, the cause of the Moodus earthquakes remains a mystery.

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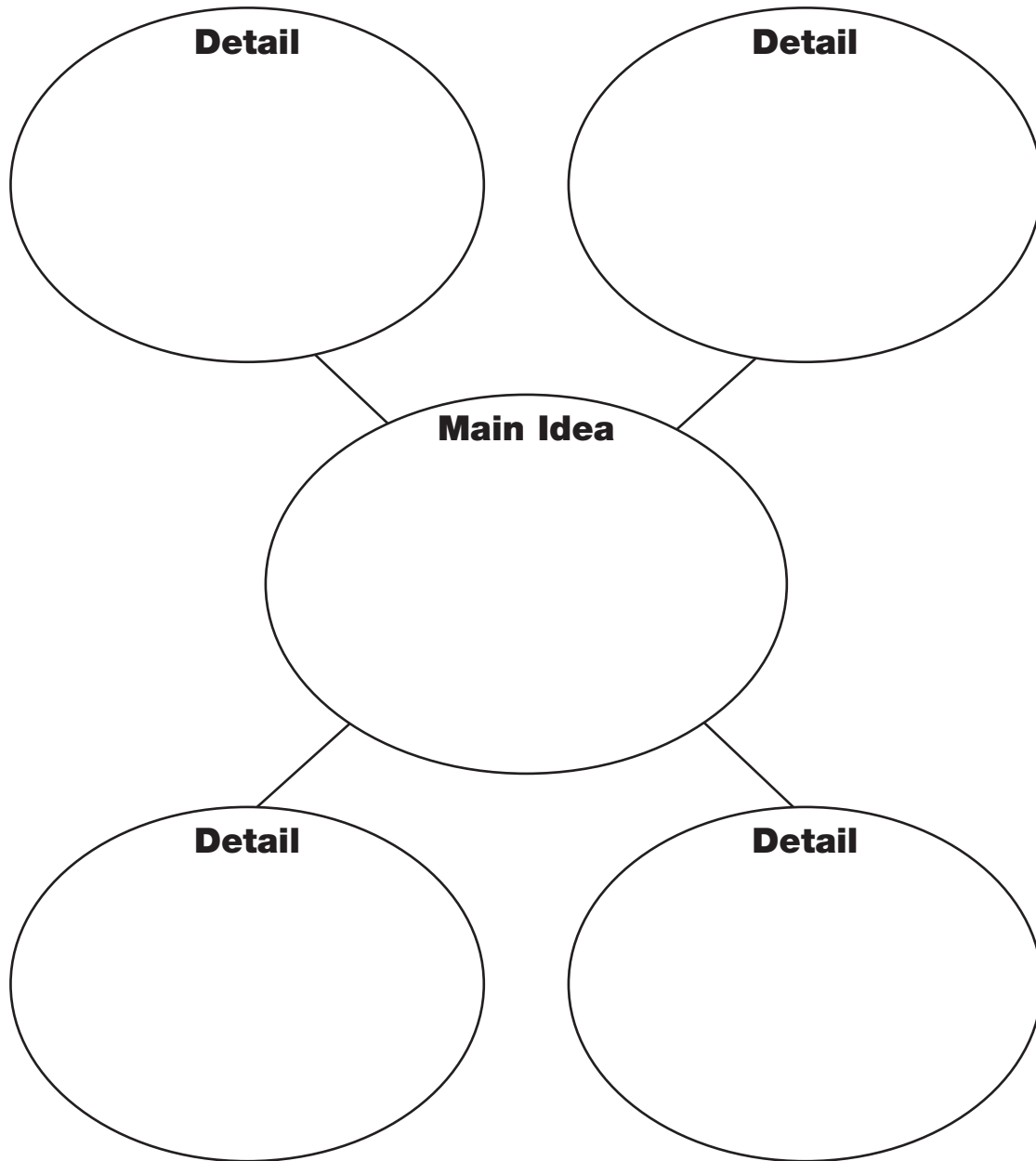
Resource Links**2** RDI Book 2: p. 350**SAM** Keywords: Main Idea

Main Idea and Details

The **main idea** is the most important idea in a text. **Details** in a passage give more information that supports the main idea.

Use the web below to list the main idea and the details that support it.

Passage: _____



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