

If you only have 15 minutes ...

How much do you remember of what you read? It's easy to scan something—or even to read it carefully, start to finish—and not remember it later. “Oh yeah, I read about that,” you might say. But can you tell someone else about it? That's the real test of your reading. When you read an article—say, for example, “Somaliland's Midwife”—you should be able to give a one- or two-sentence summary of it. In fact, it's a good skill to practice. After you finish reading something, say (to yourself, at least) what the article is about. What was its “big idea”? In academic terms, what is its thesis?

Try it with “Somaliland's Midwife.” Read the article. Then pause. What is it about? Write your answer.¹

Now, get more specific. Every well-written article has a main point, or thesis. What is the main point of “Somaliland's Midwife”?²

Common Core Standard(s) Met:

CCRA.R.2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

¹ The article is about Edna Anan, a midwife, educator, and public health activist in Somaliland.

² Edna Anan has hugely influenced post-civil-war Somaliland as a midwife of babies as well as a midwife to a new and growing country.