

Main Idea Strategy 3: Informing Future Doctors

MCAT Program

Link to test taking strategy video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCN3NzOWWFE&t=94s>

Step 3: Short N' Sweet (Weeks 11-20)

The Short N' Sweet (SNS) method was aptly named. This is where we will condense all 4 competencies into one Mature Main Idea. You will no longer be writing down the big-ticket arguments or the tone; just the Mature Main Idea.

A Mature Main Idea is your personal and perfect representation of what the author was talking about, how they feel towards the subject, and why they feel that way. It should be succinct but organized. Oftentimes, it will take me 20-30 seconds just to author this main idea, but once it's there, I no longer have to return to the passage.

A Mature Main Idea is generally composed of but does not have to include all 4 CARS competencies. However, there are some slight variations as follows:

- IMI – Your IMI will now be interwoven with the other 4 competencies. It will still be there (as it's the central thrust of the passage), but it will be fleshed out with supporting arguments/motivations, etc.
- Arguments – They're no longer free-standing statements but now are offered as "because" statements to support the IMI
- Tone – you'll no longer label the tone as "enthusiastic" or "nonchalant". Instead, you'll just choose words within your Mature Main idea that represent the tone. (i.e. for an enthusiastic passage I would say, "The author adored Da Vinci" rather than, "the author likes Da Vinci".
- Author's Motivations/Intentions – Similar to arguments, they're no longer free-standing statements but now are offered as "because" statements to support the IMI.

An example of the Short N' Sweet Method is:

The Formalist Critic removes emotion to objectively grade literature by assuming an Ideal Reader and focusing on the thoughts the author chose to include rather than fancy wordplay or emotive exclusion.