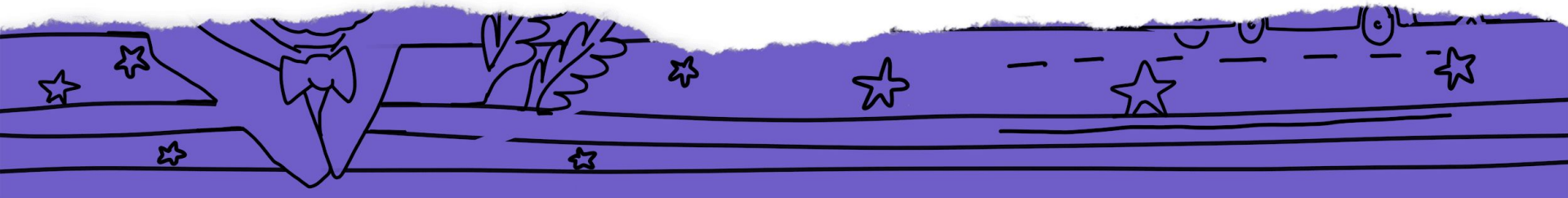


Grade 8: Reading Benchmark

Central Idea

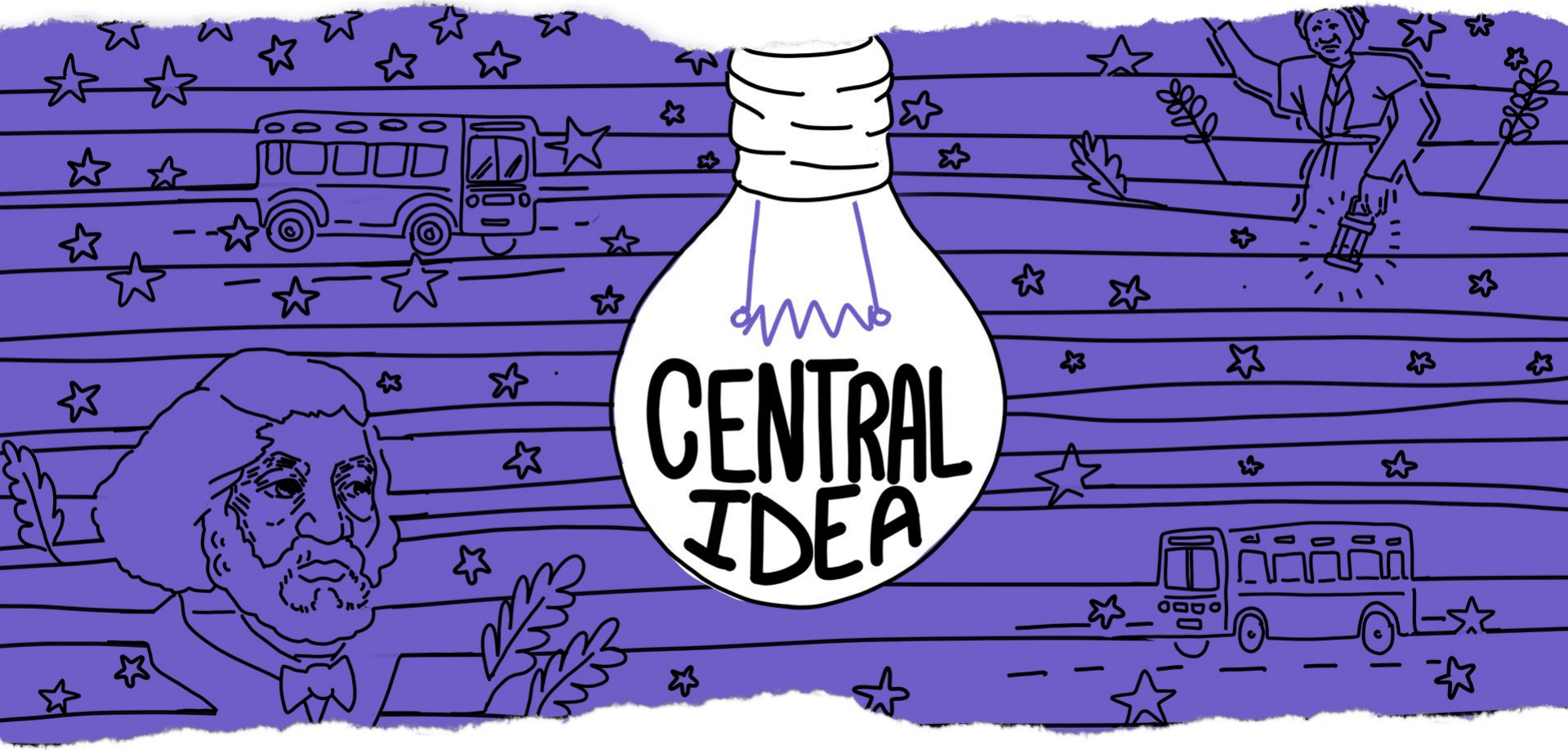
8.R.2.2: Analyze two or more central ideas and their development throughout a text.



© 2021 Amplify Education, Inc.

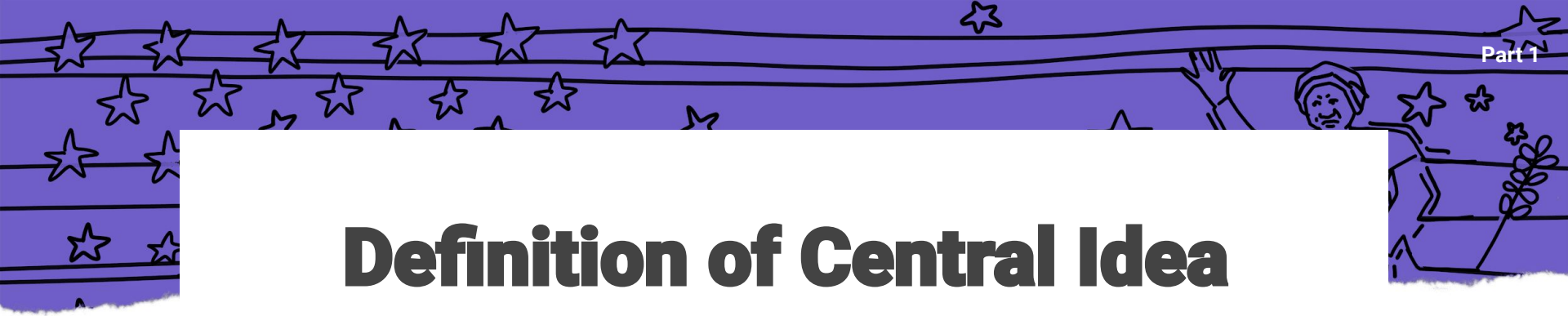
These materials are provided solely for licensed users of Amplify ELA Florida Edition. Any further reproduction or distribution of this document or its contents is prohibited.

Benchmark Introduction



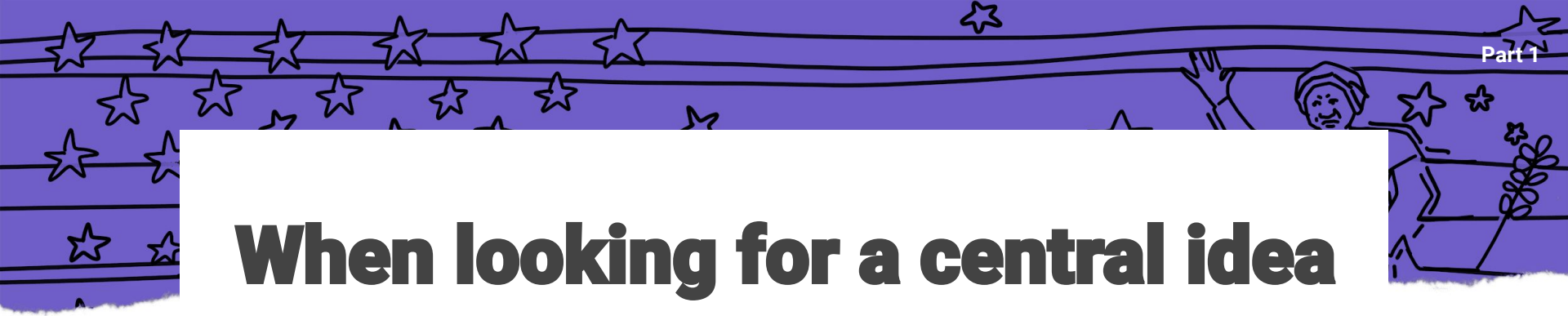
Benchmark:

Analyze two or more central ideas and how they develop in a text.



Definition of Central Idea

A **central idea** is the most important idea conveyed about a topic in a text.



When looking for a central idea

1. There can be a **central idea** for one paragraph or across the text as a whole.
2. A **central idea** can be explicit (clearly expressed) or implied (indirectly expressed).
3. A **central idea** is developed through choice of key details and descriptions.
4. There can be more than one **central idea** in a text.

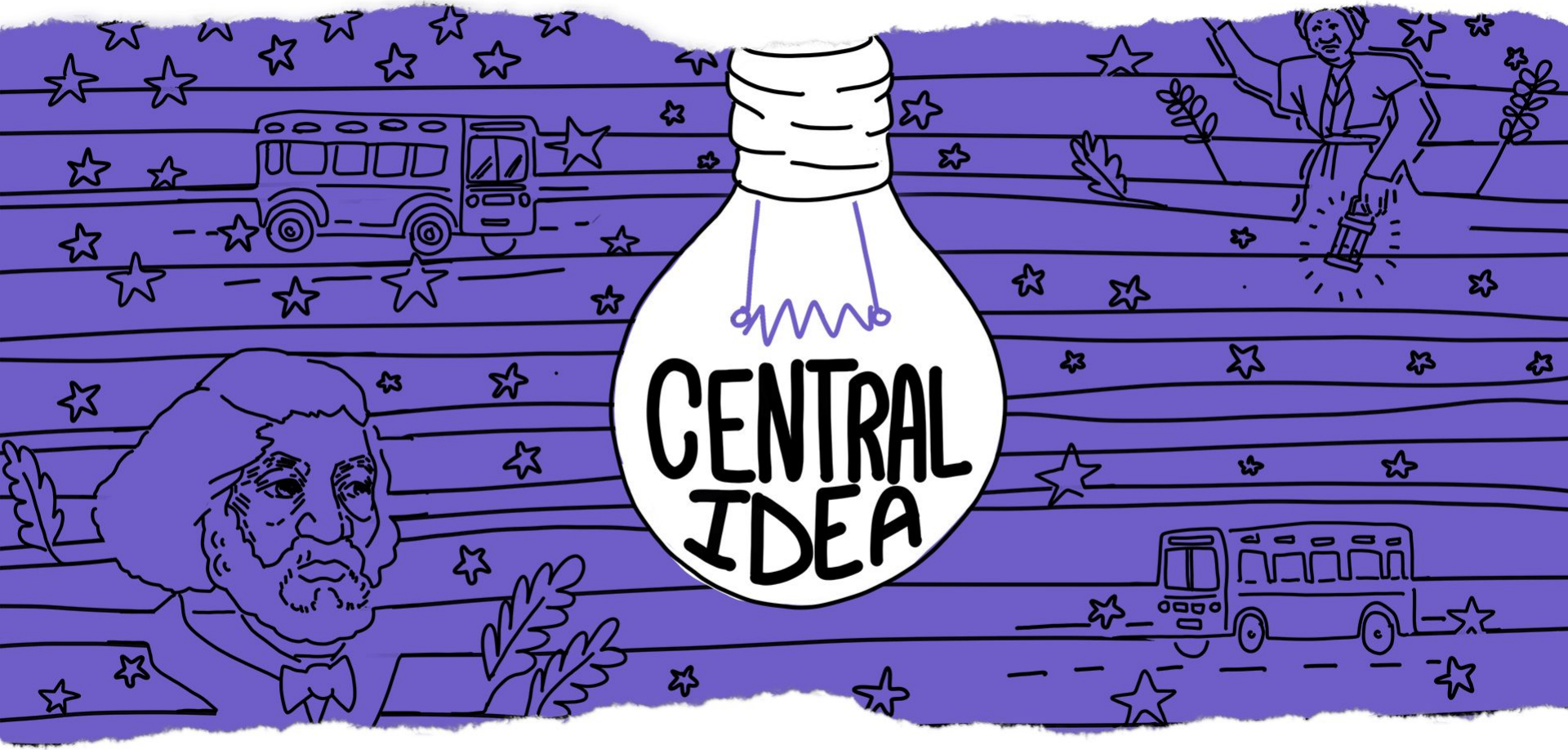
Example of developing central ideas

In *Red Scarf Girl*, Ji-li Jiang explains her early commitment to the leaders of the cultural revolution. However, she also describes her devotion to her family. The author introduces two **central ideas**:

- Mao has tremendous influence over the thoughts and actions of young Chinese citizens.
- Young people like Ji-li have tremendous respect for and devotion to their families

As the memoir continues, Ji-li Jiang develops these ideas by exploring her struggles to find a balance between two powerful influences in her life.

Benchmark Skill Routine



How to analyze central ideas and their development

Identify the specific topic.

Define the topic of the passage as specifically as possible.

How to analyze central ideas and their development

Read closely, highlight, and annotate.

Identify key descriptions of experiences and people. What is the focus of these descriptions?

How to analyze central ideas and their development

Read closely, highlight, and annotate.

Make observations about the connections between key information such as details, facts, and quotations.

How to analyze central ideas and their development

Ask yourself:

What important ideas about the topic do these observations suggest?

How to analyze central ideas and their development

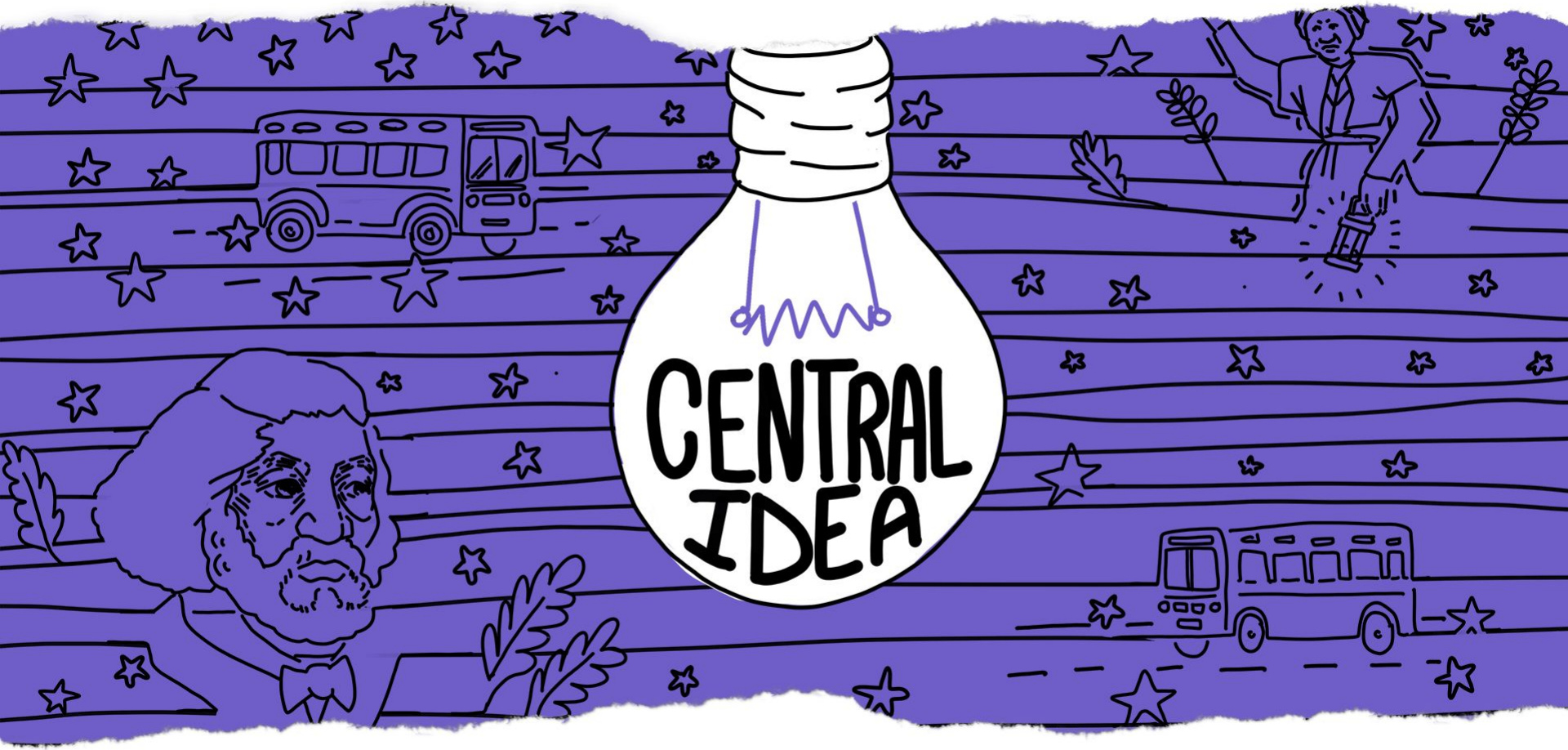
Trace central ideas across the text:

- What central ideas emerge?
- How does each central idea develop?
- Which central idea or ideas are most supported by the ending of the text?

Remember

1. Identify the specific topic.
2. Read closely and make observations.
3. Connect your observations: What central ideas about the topic do they suggest?
4. Trace how each central idea develops across the text: Which ones are supported by the ending of the text?

Benchmark in Action: Example of how to analyze central ideas and their development



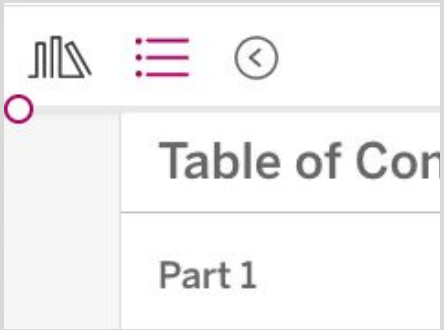
Get ready to read two passages in “Blessings of Liberty and Education” by Frederick Douglass.



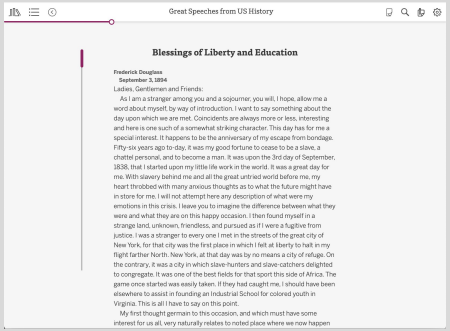
1. Open the Library app.



2. Type “Great Speeches from US History” into the search bar. Click on the title of the book to open it.



3. Click on the Table of Contents. Find and click on “Frederick Douglass 1894.”



4. Read paragraphs 2–4 in “Blessings of Liberty and Education.”

“Blessings of Liberty and Education”

Context for Passage 1

Frederick Douglass presented this speech at the dedication of the Manassas Industrial School for Colored Youth, which was founded in Virginia thirty years after the Civil War. The school was founded to provide technical education for African Americans.

Read paragraphs 2–4 in “Blessings of Liberty and Education.”

As you read...

- identify the specific topic of the text.
- make observations about key information and descriptions of experiences or people.
- think about the central ideas your observations suggest.
- pay attention to the ending of the text how the central ideas are developed.

Practice Step 1

Identify the specific topic.

Define the topic of the passage as specifically as possible.

Practice Step 1 Example:

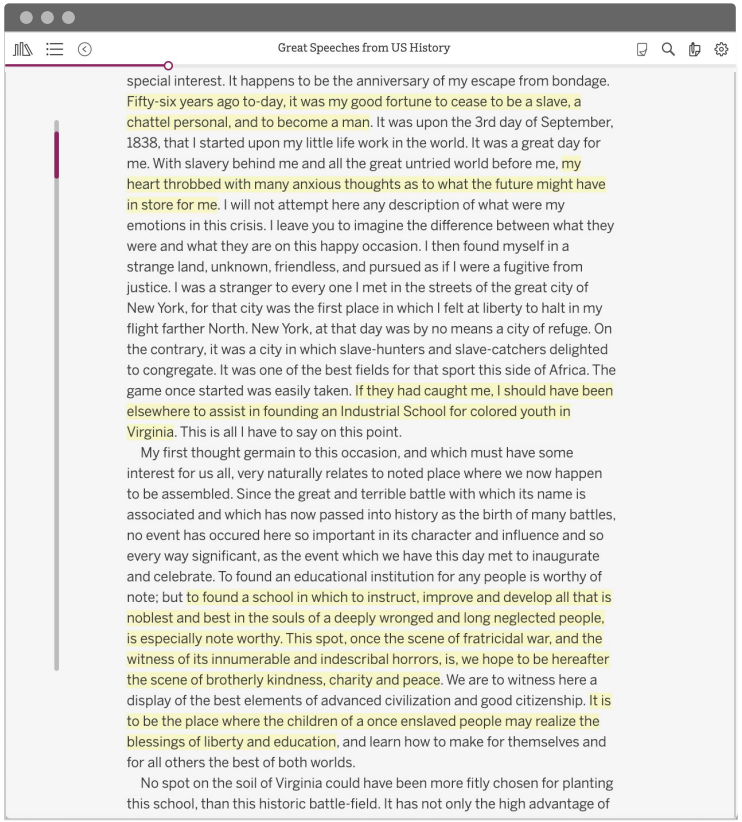
Frederick Douglass is talking about the importance of opening a school for Black Americans in a country with a history of slavery.

Practice Step 2

Read closely, highlight, and annotate.

Make observations about the connections between key information such as details, facts, and quotations.

Practice Step 2



Highlight key details and descriptions of experiences and people.

“Fifty-six years ago to-day, it was my good fortune to cease to be a slave, a chattel personal, and to become a man.”

“my heart throbbed with many anxious thoughts as to what the future might have in store for me”

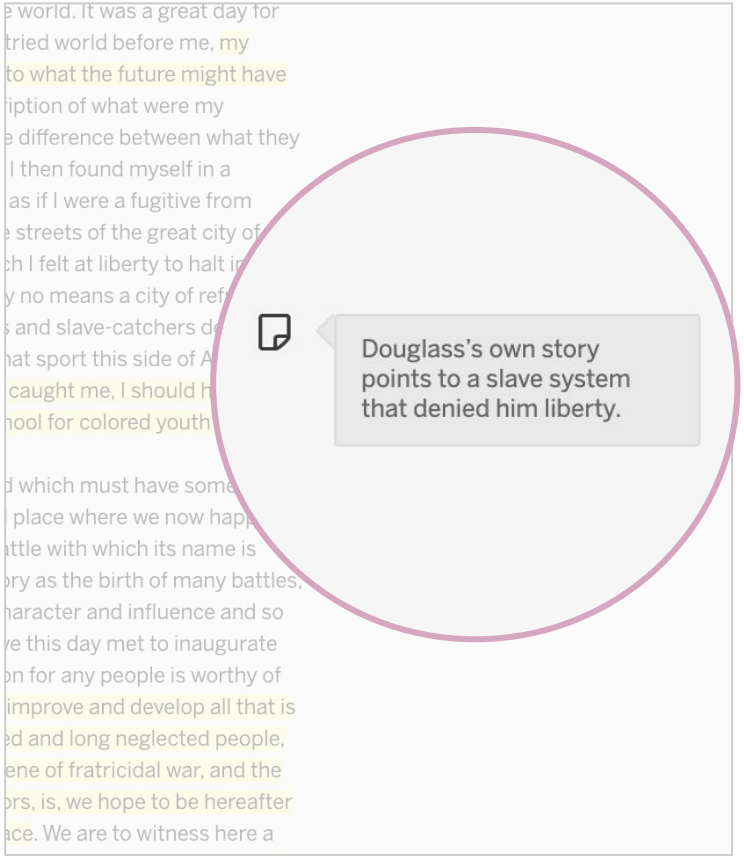
“If they had caught me, I should have been elsewhere to assist in founding an Industrial School for colored youth in Virginia.”

“to found a school in which to instruct, improve and develop all that is noblest and best in the souls of a deeply wronged and long neglected people, is especially note worthy”

“This spot, once the scene of fratricidal war, and the witness of its innumerable and indescribal horrors, is, we hope to be hereafter the scene of brotherly kindness, charity and peace.”

“It is to be the place where the children of a once enslaved people may realize the blessings of liberty and education.”

Practice Step 2



Annotate the focus of your highlighted details.

- Douglass's own story points to a slave system that denied him liberty.
- Establishing a school to help the children of enslaved people truly access liberty and education is very significant.
- The founding of the school is a sign that the country is hopefully moving toward a better future.

Practice Step 3

Ask yourself:

What important idea about the topic do these observations suggest? Can I identify more than one central idea?

Practice Step 3 Examples:

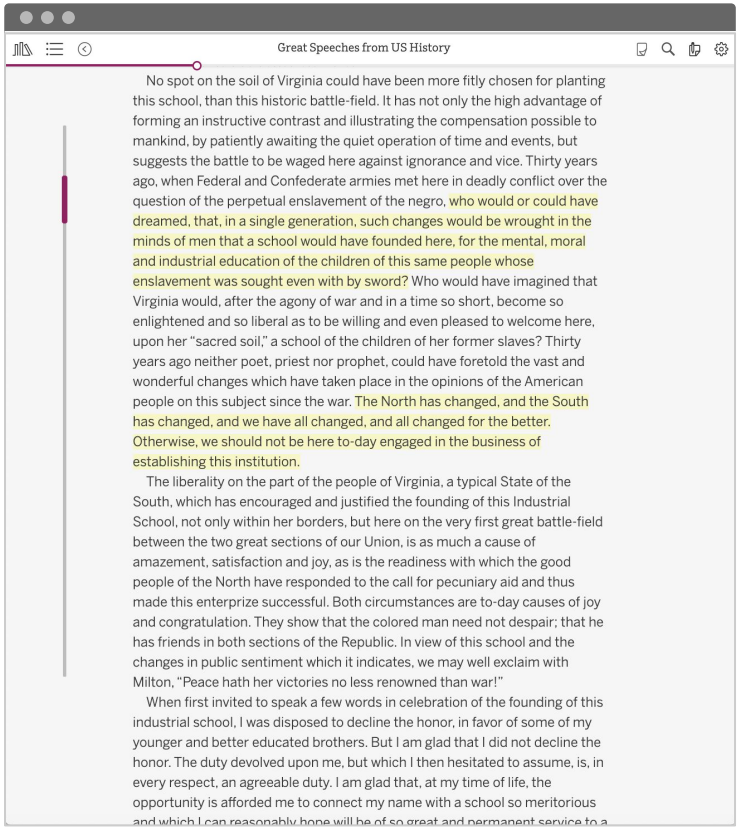
1. The system of slavery was deeply wrong and denied Douglass and all others justice, liberty, and education.
2. Establishing schools is a hopeful sign that the children of the formerly enslaved may finally enjoy the benefits of liberty and education.

Practice Step 4

Trace how each central idea develops across the text.

Which ones are supported by the ending of the text?

Practice Step 4



Trace central ideas across the text.

"who would or could have dreamed, that, in a single generation, such changes would be wrought in the minds of men that a school would have founded here, for the mental, moral and industrial education of the children of this same people whose enslavement was sought even with by sword?"

"The North has changed, and the South has changed, and we have all changed, and all changed for the better. Otherwise, we should not be here to-day engaged in the business of establishing this institution."

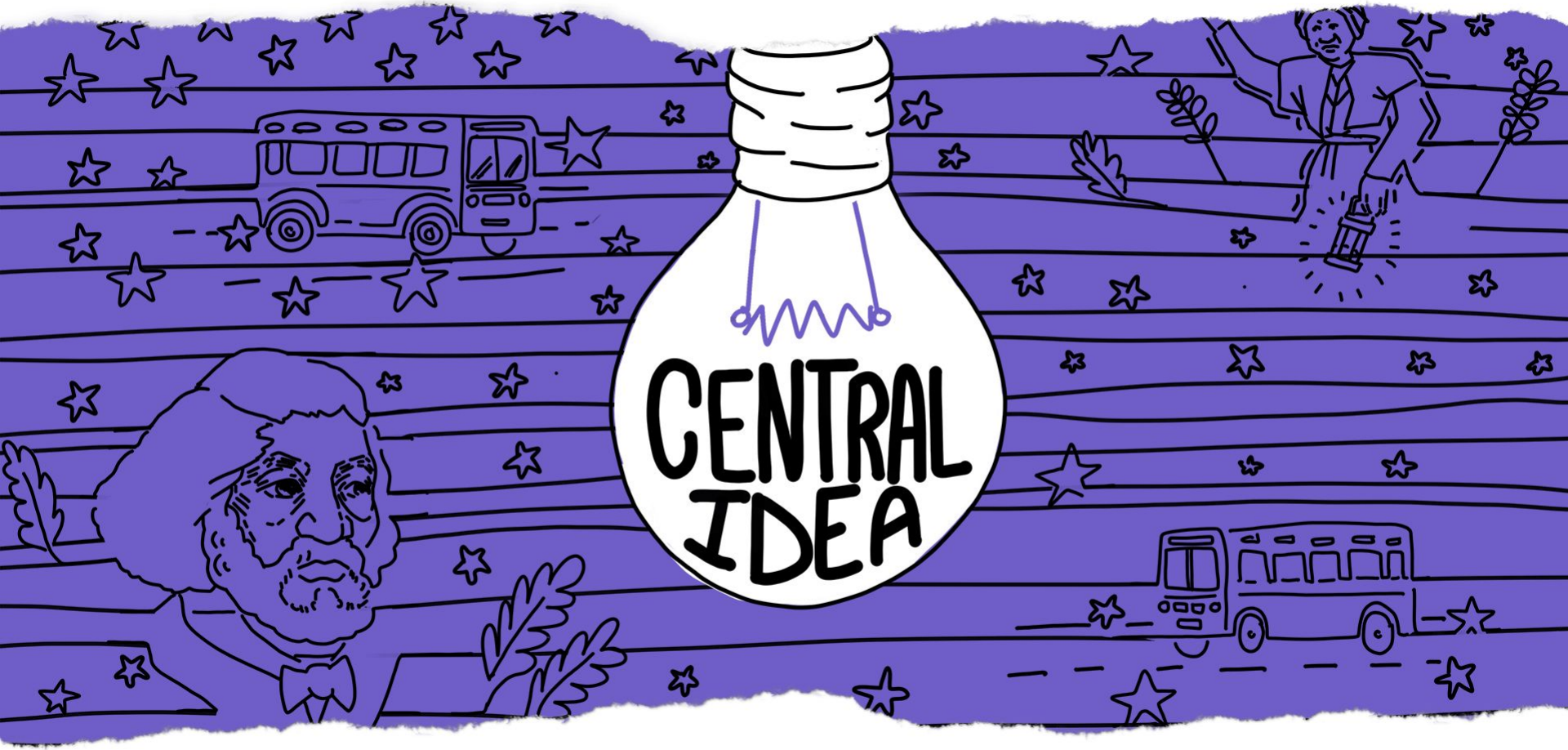
Practice Step 4 Example:

Douglass's details and descriptions continue to develop the central idea about the brutal history of slavery and the bitter civil war fought to end it, as well as the idea that the support for education is a hopeful sign that America is living up to the promise of emancipation.

Remember

1. Identify the specific topic.
2. Read closely and make observations.
3. Connect your observations: What central ideas about the topic do they suggest?
4. Trace how each central idea develops across the text: Which ones are supported by the ending of the text?

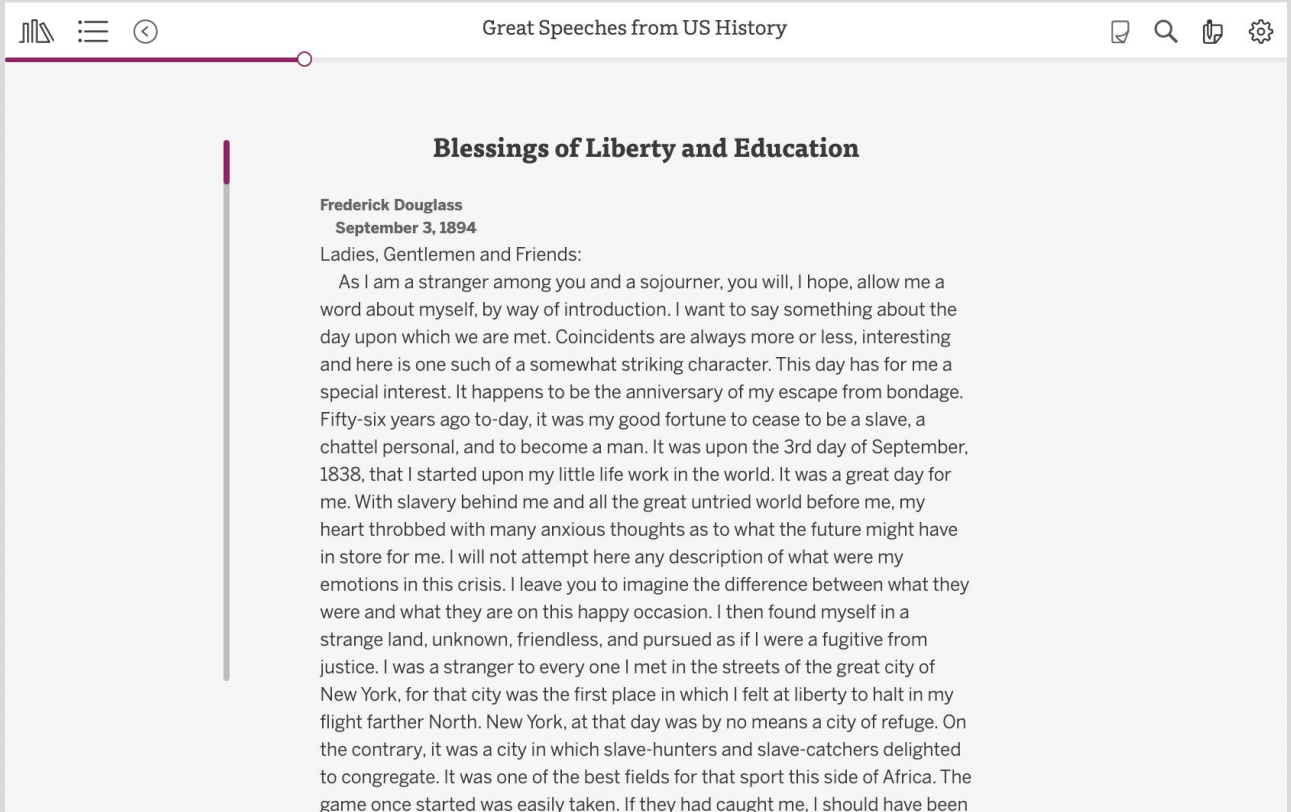
Independent Practice



Benchmark:

Analyze two or more central ideas and how they develop in a text.

Now read paragraphs 5–16 in “Blessings of Liberty and Education.”



“Blessings of Liberty and Education”

Context for Passage 2

Frederick Douglass’s speech at the dedication of an industrial school for African Americans focused on the progress signaled by the establishment of the school, and the importance of education as a key way to transform society.

Practice analyzing central ideas and their development

Step 1

Identify the specific topic.

Step 2

Read closely and make observations about the connections between key information such as details, facts, and quotations.

Practice analyzing central ideas and their development

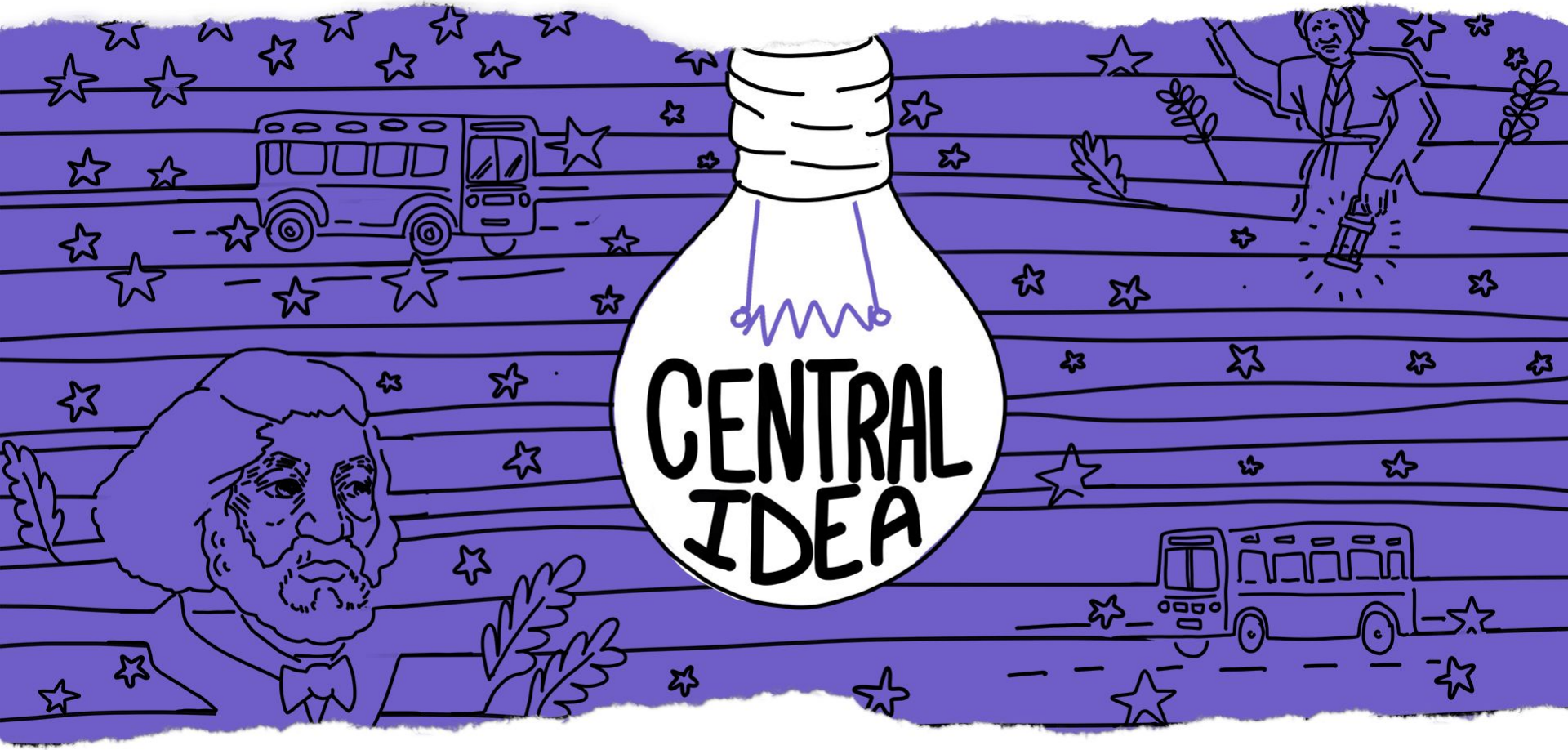
Step 3

Connect your observations: What central ideas about the topic do they suggest?

Step 4

Trace how each central idea develops across the text: Which ones are supported by the ending of the text?

Check for Understanding



Share and Discuss

1. What are three or four key details that provide clues to the central ideas in this text?

Share and Discuss

2. How do your observations add to or refine the central ideas previously discussed?

Share and Discuss

3. How do the central ideas develop and how does the text end?