

Making Inferences

Feature Menu

[What Are Inferences?](#)

[Why Make Inferences?](#)

[Tips for Making Inferences](#)

[Use the Strategy](#)

[Practice the Strategy](#)



Previous

Next

Collection
Menu

Exit

Making Inferences

What are inferences?

When you make an **inference**, you gather clues and come to a conclusion. You make inferences every day. ▼



You walk into class and realize something is different. Here's what goes through your mind. 🔊 ▼

You didn't see the substitute, and no one *told* you, but you made an inference based on the clues.



Making Inferences

What are inferences?

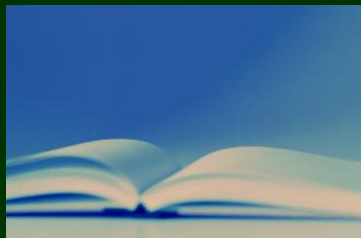
You also make inferences when you read.

You take information the author puts on a page

and combine it with

what you already know

to make an inference.

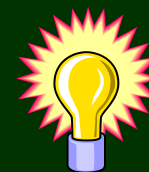


external knowledge ▾

+



internal knowledge ▾



=

inference



Previous

Next

Feature Menu

Exit

Making Inferences

What are inferences?

Here's an example:

The girl gulped down the food, barely chewing it before taking another bite.

She could hear the school bus heading toward her house.

The external knowledge you get from this passage is that the girl is eating quickly. But why? ▼

As you read on, you can **infer** that the girl is eating fast because she needs to hurry to catch the bus.

[End of Section]



Previous

Next

Feature
Menu

Exit

Making Inferences

Why make inferences?

Making inferences can help you

- comprehend the characters and the conflicts they face. ▼
- get a deeper understanding from your reading. ▼

Making inferences is particularly useful when reading stories with complex characters.

[End of Section]



Previous

Next

Feature
Menu

Exit

Making Inferences

Tips

Ask yourself, "What does the writer tell me about how the character acts or thinks?"

Answer

"Oh, no! I'll be late again!" Ellie pulled on a pair of dirty shorts from the pile on the floor. Pawing through her overflowing drawer, she mumbled, "Where *is* that other sock?"

As she mounted her bike, a little voice chirped, "Ellie, can you play with me?"

"Not today, Chipper. I've *got* to get to band practice." She checked her back pocket for her drumsticks. Neighbors waved as she pedaled fiercely down the street. Only once did she stop, to help Mrs. Wills unload a heavy box from her car.

"Glad you could make it," Joe growled as Ellie burst through the door. "You promised to be on time. What happened?"



Making Inferences

Tips

Next, ask yourself, "What do I know about people who act or think this way?"

Answer

"Oh, no! I'll be late again!" Ellie pulled on a pair of dirty shorts from the pile on the floor. Pawing through her overflowing drawer, she mumbled, "Where *is* that other sock?"

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Making Inferences

Tips

You might also ask yourself, "What does the writer tell me about problems the character faces?"

Answer

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As she mounted her bike, a little voice chirped, "Ellie, can you play with me?"

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Making Inferences

Tips

Then ask, "What do I know about that situation or similar situations?"

Answer

"Oh, no! I'll be late again!" Ellie pulled on a pair of dirty shorts from the pile on the floor. Pawing through her overflowing drawer, she mumbled, "Where *is* that other sock?"

As she mounted her bike, a little voice chirped, "Ellie, can you play with me?"

"Not today, Chipper. I've *got* to get to band practice." She checked her back pocket for her drumsticks. Neighbors waved as she pedaled fiercely down the street. Only once did she stop, to help Mrs. Wills unload a heavy box from her car.

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Making Inferences

Tips

If other characters are involved, ask, "How do others respond to the character? What do these responses show?"

Answer

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Making Inferences

Tips

Finally, combine **what the writer says** with **what you know** to make an **inference**. What can you infer about Ellie?

Answer

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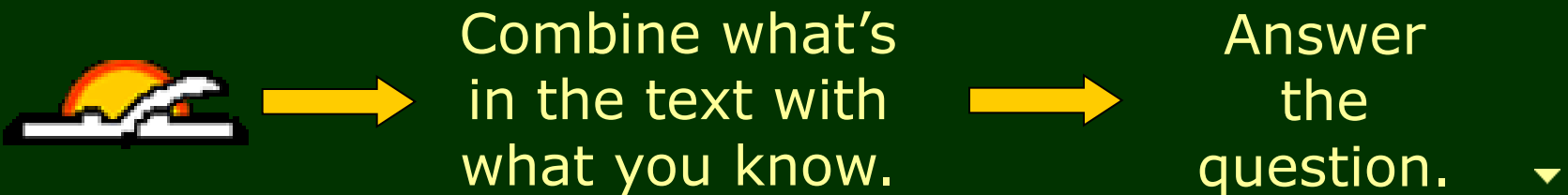
“Glad you could make it,” Joe growled as Ellie burst through the door. “You promised to be on time. What happened?”



Making Inferences

Use the Strategy

As you read the excerpt from “Bud, Not Buddy,” stop at each open-book sign  and think about what you have just read. ▼



These questions will help you learn how to make inferences as a reading strategy.

Example

[End of Section]



Previous

Next

Feature
Menu

Exit

Making Inferences

Practice the Strategy

As you read the selection, a chart like this can help you keep track of what's in the text ("It Says") and what's in your mind ("I Say"). Make your inferences in the "And So" column. ▾

Question	It Says	I Say	And So
1. How does Jerry feel when he's going to live with a new family?	He "looked like he'd found out they were going to dip him in a pot of boiling milk."	That look on his face must be awful.	I think Jerry must feel terrible.



Making Inferences

PRACTICE

Now, it's your turn. Fill in the chart as you read a question or think about the questions listed under "Hints for Making Inferences" on page 126 of your textbook.

Question	It Says	I Say	And So
1. Have the tough times he's been through made Bud a tough guy?			

[End of Section]



Making Inferences

The End



Previous

Next

Feature
Menu

Exit