

Teaching Plan & Guideline for Chapter 1

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Objectives:

1. To provide experiences that will result in students' ability to:
 - 1.1 apply levels of comprehension skills into use namely: read the lines or literal comprehension, read between the lines or interpretative comprehension, and read beyond the lines or critical comprehension.
 - 1.2 read various selections and search for the hidden or implied meanings by inferring from the facts / information or ideas given.
 - 1.3 discuss the reasons why events in the selection happened as they did.
 - 1.4 compose one summary sentence what the paragraph means.
 - 1.5 evaluate their inference.
2. To demonstrate the need for reading inferentially

Teaching Procedures & Activities

1. Do the preview test and explain inferential reading – how to do it.
2. Demonstrate need for finding implied meanings. Contrast literal with implied or interpretative meanings of the selected statements.
3. Point out possibilities of implications in statements contained in different examples.
4. Read the exercise to find statements that have double meaning

5. Discuss the selection to find:
 - 5.1 which statements have two or more meanings
 - 5.2 how literal and implied meanings differ
 - 5.3 if implied meanings are more forceful when given in this way than if they were stated directly.
 - 5.4 how students would feel if someone used statements such as these when talking with them.
 - 5.5 the best time to use sentences or statements that have hidden or implied meanings.
 - 5.6 definition of inference concluding from discussion, guessing and inferring from the facts or ideas given in the selection with all the guidance needed from teacher.
6. Do the review test and the assignment in "Supplementary Material for Teaching.

Teaching Materials

1. Supplementary material for teaching.
2. Handouts
3. SRA III a (Science Research Associates)
4. Reading materials i.e. news articles, features, ads, and etc.
5. Evaluation form.

Evaluation

1. Observation of students' reasons as they critically read, analyze, criticize, discuss, present, and react to a selection.
2. Exercises or materials to evaluate students' critical comprehension skills.

CHAPTER 1

MAKING INFERENCES

An inference is a logical conclusion drawn from available evidence or information that is known or presumed to be true. In reading, an inference is a logical conclusion that is based on what an author has stated – the hints, suggestions or evidence about the subject appear as we read because the information is not always stated in exact terms.

Making inferences is a thinking process we use every day. We go beyond surface details and read between the lines to reach information logically. We laugh at jokes and cartoons because we have made the correct inference. We constantly make inferences based on people's expressions, body language, and tone of voice to help understand what they are saying and how they feel about it.

In short, when writers do not directly state what they mean but present ideas in a roundabout way, they are using **inference**. Inference is more properly defined as **“understanding derived from an indirect suggestion in what is stated.”** Readers make inferences; writers make implications or **imply** meanings.

The ability to make inferences is an especially important process in reading fiction. Mystery writers find inferences essential to maintain suspense in their stories. Good readers must be alert to the ways that authors encourage inferences.

Inferences make writer's writing more interesting and enjoyable. To understand what the writer is saying, the reader must be alert to detect the clues that are given.

Exemplification

Some examples to practice inferences:

Example 1:

If you see a well – dressed man get out of a chauffeur – driven car, you use your knowledge about the way people live to ‘infer’ that the man is wealthy. If you see a man with a small satchel entering a medical office, you infer that he is a doctor.

Example 2:

If three police cars converge upon a building and police get out of the cars with guns drawn, you infer that the police are after someone in that building and that this person is considered dangerous.

Example 3:

My parents are very different: my father, for example, is very forbearing, while my mother sometimes has no patience at all.

This sentence does not tell us the meaning of forbearing, but it does suggest that forbearing means the opposite of having “no patience at all.” Thus we can infer in this sentence that forbearing means “patient.”

Example 4:

You wish to choose between two similar restaurants in an unfamiliar town. One restaurant is crowded; the other, nearly empty. You infer that the crowded restaurant is better. Nevertheless, you may not be correct: The crowded restaurant might feature an attraction unknown to you.

Example 5:

Suppose you read a newspaper article that describes a political candidate’s qualifications; They include an undergraduate degree in American history from Harvard, a stint as a volunteer in the Peace Corps in a Third World Country, and a law degree from Yale. As you are reading the article, you might infer that the candidate is well educated (degrees in American history and law), smart (earned degrees from Harvard and Yale), and has a desire to help others (served as a Peace Corps volunteer helping people in a developing country).

Example 6:

As John looked out of the train window, he spied leafless trees. What season of the year was it? (a) winter, (b) summer, (c) spring, (d) fall, (e) can’t tell.

The answer is “(e) can’t tell” although a number of people will choose “(d) fall.” You don’t have enough information to make the inference.

It could be any season of the year. We do not know in which part of the world John was traveling. The trees could be leafless as a result of a forest fire, a disease, or some other causes.

Example 7:

Instructor: "Here's your test, Gary. I'd like to suggest you come in during my office hours and talk about it."

Gary: "I blew it again? Maybe I'd better drop this course."

Instructor: "Now, don't panic. It's only the second test."

Gary: "I never was good in history."

Circle the items below that can be inferred from the conversation.

- A. Gary failed his test.
- B. It's not the first time Gary has failed in the class.
- C. The instructor feels the fault in Gary's failure is that he doesn't study enough.
- D. Gary feels like a failure in his history class.
- E. Gary doesn't like his history instructor.

You should have circled item A; we can infer he failed the test when he says, "I blew it again?" Item B should be circled, since Gary says "again" and the instructor says it's only the second test. Item C should not be circled; there's nothing in the conversation that suggests the instructor feels Gary hasn't studied. Item D should be circled, since Gary wants to drop the course and claims he was never good in history. Item E should not be circled. We don't know from the conversation how he feels about the instructor.

Example 8:

In order to be able to understand and enjoy jokes, you must be able to see double meanings and to read between the lines. Often the most important part of the joke is not what is written, but what has been left to imagination. The writer of jokes deliberately does this. For example, this joke is funny because what you expect to follow doesn't:

Student: "I don't think I deserve an F on this paper."

Instructor: "I agree with you, but an F is the lowest grade that I can give."

What makes the joke funny is that you expect a different response. When the instructor says, "I agree with you," you are fooled into expecting

the opposite of what he goes on to say: "...but an F is the lowest grade that I can give."

This joke is funny because of what is left out:

Example 9:

Robert: "Mother, I just threw down the large ladder in the front yard."

Mother: "That's all right. Tell your father and he'll help you pick it up."

Robert: "I don't think that's necessary."

Mother: "Why not?"

Robert: "He already knows because he was on it."

What makes the joke funny is that Robert does not immediately tell his mother that his father has fallen off the ladder. If Robert had, it would not have been a joke. There would have been no element of surprise. The humor in Robert's story is also in the misplaced emphasis. Robert is much more concerned at having knocked down the ladder than at having laid out his father.

Example 10:

There is a joke tradition of irony in which the listener knows something the characters in the plot do not. These are usually longer humorous stories as opposed to jokes, but some jokes rely on the form:

Person: (Standing ruefully in front of the open hood of the Volkswagen):
"No wonder it won't start. The motor's missing."

Second person (Passing by): "That's all right. I've got exactly the same model, and it has a spare motor in the back that you can borrow."

Example 11:

Many times authors use well-known proverbs to express their ideas. Proverbs are short sayings in common use that very aptly express some obvious truth or familiar experience.

To understand proverbs, you must be able to read between the lines. You cannot read the proverb in its literal sense.

For example, the proverb “A rat that has but one hole is soon caught” is not really concerned with the fate of rats. What it implies is that anyone who relies on just one thing will fail.

Read the following passage and then check (✓) the two inferences that are most firmly based on the given information.

I once hired a roofer to put a new roof on my home. He checked the roof and then quoted me a price of \$1,000. I agreed. He tore the old roof off, then came down. I noticed a barely repressed smile on his face.

“Sonny,” he said, “it’s gonna cost you \$1,800. I didn’t know it needed so much work.”

“No way,” I said, folding my arms.

“Whatever you say,” the roofer said. He looked up at the sky and commented, “You know, it looks like rain.”

I sighed, shook my head, and said, “With my luck, it will rain for three days. Finish the job.”

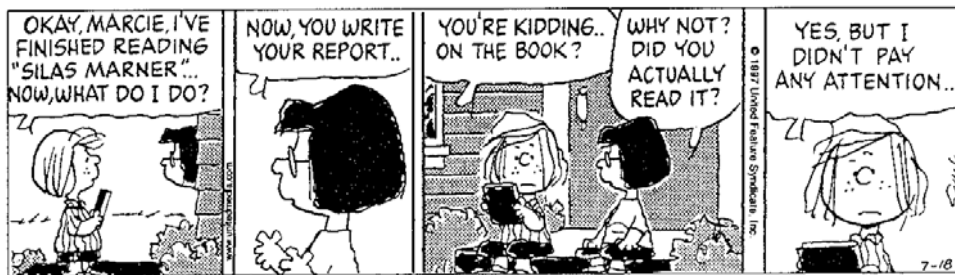
- _____ 1. At first, the author did not want to spend the extra \$800.
_____ 2. The author’s old roof would have held up for another year or two.
_____ 3. The roofer may have planned all along to raise the price after the old roof was torn off.
_____ 4. The author believes that all roofers are con men.
_____ 5. The roofer had been recommended to the author.

Explanation:

1. When the roofer first tells the author that the job would cost \$1,800, the author says, “No way.” We can conclude that the author of the selection refuses because he doesn’t want to spend the extra \$800. So you should have checked this item.
2. Nothing in the passage discusses the actual quality of the roof. You should not have checked this item.
3. The roofer says, “I didn’t know [the roof] needed so much work.” However, in telling us that the roofer had a repressed smile on his face, the author implies that the roofer may have known all along that he planned on charging an extra \$800. So you should have checked this item.

4. The passage makes no mention of the author's view of *all* roofers. We see only his reaction to this roofer. You should not have checked this item.
5. There is no mention in the passage of how the author came to hire the roofer. You should not have checked this item.

Take a moment now to look at the following Peanuts cartoon. How well a cartoon works often depends on the reader's inference skills. What can you infer about this cartoon?



Now check (✓) the **two** inferences that are most logically based on the information given in the cartoon.

1. The light-haired girl read *Silas Marner* for a school assignment.
2. Marcie also read *Silas Marner*.
3. The light-haired girl very much enjoyed reading *Silas Marner*.
4. The cartoonist suggests that reading for true understanding requires full attention.
5. Marcie and the other girl are sisters.

Explanation:

1. Since Marcie says that the light-haired girl should write a report on *Silas Marner*, we can assume that reading the book was a school assignment. Children usually don't write reports on books they read on their own. So you should have checked this item.
2. Nothing in the pictures or words suggests that Marcie has herself read *Silas Marner*. You should not have checked this item.
3. The light-haired girl says that she "didn't pay any attention" as she read the book. To say the least, this is not the sort of comment one makes about a book one has very much enjoyed. Thus you should not have checked this item either.
4. The comment "I didn't pay any attention" suggests that it's possible to read with too little attention. So you should have checked this one.
5. The light-haired girl is standing at the door as if she had come to visit Marcie. We must therefore assume that the two girls don't

live together and aren't sisters. So you should not have checked this item.

Read the following passage. Then circle the letters of the logical inferences. Hints are provided to help you think through the choices for each question.

A twenty-eight-year-old woman named Catherine Genovese was returning home from work one day. Kitty, as she was called by almost everyone in her Queens neighborhood, had just parked her car. Then a man with a knife grabbed her. She screamed, "Oh my God, he stabbed me! Please help me! Please help me!"

For more than half an hour, thirty-eight neighbors watched the killer stalk Kitty. The last time he stabbed her, she was slumped on the foot of the stairs to her apartment. Not one person telephoned the police during the fatal attack. Later, the police gathered statements from the witnesses. Among their comments were, "I didn't want to get involved," "We thought it was a lovers' quarrel," and "I was tired. I went back to bed."

1. We can infer that Kitty was attacked
 - a. while she was on vacation.
 - b. in her own neighborhood.
 - c. on her way from work to her car.

Hints: The passage tells us that Genovese "was returning home from work" and that she "had just parked her car."

2. We can conclude that the man who stabbed Genovese
 - a. was someone she knew.
 - b. intended to kill her.
 - c. was a convicted criminal.

Hints: Where is evidence that Genovese knew her killer or that he was a convicted criminal? Also, Genovese's killer stabbed her even after he was sure she was wounded and weak.

3. We can infer that the witnesses
 - a. might have stopped the attack if they had called the police.
 - b. wanted the man to kill Genovese.
 - c. would not want someone else to get involved if they themselves were being attacked.

Hints: First, the crime took at least half an hour. Also, knowledge of human nature tells us how the witnesses must have felt about Genovese being killed and themselves being attacked.

Explanations:

Here is an explanation of each item:

1. The answer to the first question is *b*. We have solid evidence to conclude that Genovese was attacked in her neighborhood: she was returning home from work and had parked her car. Since she was returning home from work, she was not on vacation. Also, we know she had just parked her car after coming home from work. So the attack could not have taken place *before* she got into the car to go home.
2. The answer to the second question is *b*. We can conclude that Genovese's attacker wanted to kill her. If his goal was to rob or rape her, he could have done so long before the last time he stabbed her. And no evidence in the passage indicates that Genovese knew her attacker. Finally, although we cannot be sure the attacker was never convicted of a crime, there is absolutely no evidence in the passage to support that conclusion-his past is not referred to at all.
3. The answer to the third question is *a*. The crime took at least a half hour; thus we can conclude that if the police had been called, there is a chance they would have arrived in time to save Genovese. However, we have no reason to believe the witnesses actually wanted the man to kill Genovese. Most people, in fact, would be horrified to see someone stabbed to death. And on the basis of our knowledge of human nature, we can be pretty sure the witnesses would have wanted others to get involved if they were victims.

Look at the following paragraph to see if you can understand Dian's behavior. Answer the questions that follow.

After lunch Diane took her bike and sneaked quietly into the yard. She moved carefully to the plot of soil under the oak in back of the house as she checked to see that nobody watched her. She leaned her bicycle against the tree and bent down. All around dark clouds rumbled noisily in the sky; a streak of yellow zig-zagged far away, and she trembled. Digging swiftly in the hot earth, she made a small hole and quickly took a crushed ten-dollar bill from her pocket. After she slipped the money into the ground and covered it, she breathed deeply and smiled. She was glad *that* was over! Now no one would find it or know how she got it. Certainly it would be there later when she wanted it.

- _____ 1. Diane is probably
- a. a child nine or ten years old.
 - b. a young mother.
 - c. a child three or four years old.

- _____ 2. About the money, Diane probably
- got it as a gift from her father.
 - earned it.
 - got it in a suspicious way.
- _____ 3. This event probable took place
- on a snowy winter afternoon.
 - before a summer rainstorm.
 - one night during Easter.
- _____ 4. After she hides the money, Diane feels
- very guilty and sorry.
 - relieved.
 - worried that someone saw her.

To answer all these questions about this deliberately over-simplified paragraph, you needed to use inference skills. The sentences about Diane give only hints about the questions asked. No one answer is stated exactly in the paragraph.

You know Diane was a nine- or ten-year-old child from her actions and thoughts, which were too advanced for her to be three or four. Further, a young mother would *generally* not bury money in the ground. Answer *a* is correct for question 1.

Because she sneaked into the yard and because she looked to see if anybody watched her, you infer that Diane has done something wrong. When she thinks that no one will know how she got the money, you guess that she received it in a suspicious way. Answer *c* is correct for question 2.

The noisy clouds and the streak of yellow – thunder and lightning, surely – suggest that a storm is coming. *Hot earth* suggests the summer. Besides, Diane goes out after lunch, so the scene is not a nighttime one. Answer *b* is correct for question 3.

You can infer from Diane’s deep breath and from the statement “She was glad *that* was over” that she is relieved after she hides the money. Answer *b* is correct for question 4.

BUILDING INFERENCE SKILLS

1. Try to read beyond the words. Fill in details and information based on the writer’s suggestions.

2. Question yourself as you read, “Why is Diane hiding the money?” you might have asked as you read, “Why are there clouds and lightning in

the sky?" Supply the answers on the basis of the writer's hints and your own experience.

3. If a writer describes a person, try to understand the person from how she moves, what she says, and what she looks like. You can infer things about character from the way a person behaves. Try to build a picture of the person in your mind; base your picture on the writer's description of action and appearance.

4. If you find that you cannot easily answer a question about what you have read, remember to use inference skills. Return to the part of the reading where you expect the answer. Then see if the writer suggests something that you yourself have to supply in clearer terms.

Practice exercises:

Practice A

Making Inferences. Read the following selection and answer the questions after it.

Greek mythology is largely made up of stories about gods and goddesses, but it must not be read as a kind of Greek Bible, an account of the Greek religion. According to the most modern idea, a real myth has nothing to do with religion. It is an explanation of something in nature; how, for instance, any and everything in the universe came into existence: men, animals, this or that tree or flower, the sun, the moon, the stars, storms, eruptions, earthquakes, all that is and all that happens. Thunder and lightning are caused when Zeus hurls his thunderbolt. A volcano erupts because a terrible creature is imprisoned in the mountain and every now and then struggles to get free. The Dipper, the constellation called also the Great Bear, does not set below the horizon because a goddess once was angry at it and decreed that it should never sink into the sea. Myths are early science, the result of men's first trying to explain what they saw around them. But there are many so-called myths which explain nothing at all. These tales are pure entertainment, the sort of thing people would tell each other on a long winter's evening. The story of Pygmalion and Galatea is an example; it has no conceivable connection with any event in nature. Neither has the Quest of the Golden Fleece, nor Orpheus and Eurydice, nor many another. This fact is now generally accepted; and we do not have to try to find in every mythological heroine the moon or the dawn and in every hero's life a sun myth. The stories are early literature as well as early

science. But religion is there, too. In the background, to be sure, but nevertheless plain to see. From Homer through the tragedians and even later, there is a deepening realization of what human beings need and what they must have in their gods.

- _____ 1. The author believes that mythology
- has nothing to do with religion
 - was discovered by means of Pygmalion and Galatea
 - is a very modern idea
 - is pure entertainment
 - has to do with science, religion, and literature
- _____ 2. In every myth
- There is a connection with some natural event.
 - There is not necessarily an attempt to explain an event in nature.
 - There are angry gods and goddesses.
 - There is a reference to long winter evenings.
 - There is early evidence of Greek bible stories.
- _____ 3. The author, in regard to modern ideas on myth,
- is impressed and agrees with them
 - refuses to accept any of them
 - adds to them her own point of view
 - has no comments to make
 - none of these



"Well, I guess I'll have the ham and eggs."

Practice B

Inferring Details from Cartoons

Look at the cartoon. Use your inference skills to answer the following questions.

- _____1. The humor in this cartoon is based on
- imagining the feelings of animals.
 - a real-life situation.
 - political events.
 - making fun of dirty restaurants.
- _____2. The animals, we can infer, are staring at the man because
- he looks funny.
 - they are waiting for the waitress to finish with him.
 - they have nothing else to look at.
 - they are upset with his order.
- _____3. The man in the cartoon
- hates pigs and chickens
 - is unaware that he has made an unpopular order.
 - Is a vegetarian.
 - Is probably a farmer.
- _____4. We can infer from her looks that the waitress is
- surprised by the man's order.
 - cheerful about having so much business.
 - not noticing anything unusual.
 - shocked by animals in her dinner.



- _____5. The setting of this cartoon is probably
- a movie theater
 - a church.
 - a political rally.
 - a classroom.
- _____6. We may infer that the man who is speaking believes that
- children are annoying.
 - It's not right to keep your eyes open when you pray.
 - the preacher's sermon was quite stimulating.
 - nobody should close his or her eyes during prayers.
- _____7. The man is screening his mouth with his hand probably because he
- wants everybody to hear him.
 - is afraid he might cough.
 - wants the preacher to see him criticizing the child.
 - doesn't want anyone but the child to hear him.

- _____ 8. From the child's question we can infer that
- a. the man's eyes were also open during prayers.
 - b. she has an excellent vocabulary for a child her age.
 - c. she cannot hear what the man is saying.
 - d. all of the above.
- _____ 9. The humor in the cartoon is based on the fact that the child's question
- a. is silly.
 - b. can be overheard by everyone surrounding her in church.
 - c. is rude and disrespectful.
 - d. serves to criticize the man for doing the same thing that he thinks the child is wrong for doing.



EAT•N

Growing into the future. **Diversification.**

Automotive • Electronics
Defense • Capital Goods

Getting into new things. Because the future belongs to those who anticipate change—to Eaton.

Practice C

Inferring Details from an Advertisement

Use your skills of inferring information to answer these questions about the advertisement. Think about what this advertisement is trying to suggest about change and diversification.

- _____ 1. The statement that best reflects the main idea of this advertisement is:
 - a. Change is always difficult and painful, even when necessary.
 - b. The more options we have, the better off we are.
 - c. The future belongs to athletes.
 - d. The future belongs to ballerinas.

- _____ 2. We can infer from the picture that the person shown
 - a. is a boy.
 - b. is a girl.
 - c. is unhappy.
 - d. is very upset.

- _____ 3. We can infer that the child in the picture
 - a. belongs to the Little League.
 - b. is just out for a walk.
 - c. is carrying someone else's bat.
 - d. is carrying someone else's ballet shoes.

- _____ 4. We can also infer from the picture that the child
 - a. is on the way to piano lessons.
 - b. is the child of a major league ballplayer.
 - c. is on the way to watch a baseball game.
 - d. is on the way to ballet class.

- _____ 5. What does the picture have to do with the advertiser?
 - a. Nothing.
 - b. The company supports the Little League.
 - c. The company believes that dancers make better infielders.
 - d. The child in the photo is a good illustration of diversification

- _____ 6. Which of the following is a valid inference from the picture?
 - a. The advertiser disapproves of co-ed sports.
 - b. The advertiser believes that women cannot fix automobiles.
 - c. The child in the picture enjoys both ballet and baseball.
 - d. The child in the picture is too shy to be photographed from the front.

- _____ 7. What is the connection between the child's interests and the Eaton Company?
- They both like ballet.
 - They both do a variety of things.
 - By trying to do several different things they are no good at any of them.
 - They cannot decide what to concentrate on.
- _____ 8. What view of the future is suggested by the ad?
- Only the strong will survive.
 - The future belongs to strong women.
 - The future belongs to those who are prepared for change.
 - The future belongs to business.
- _____ 9. We can infer that the child in the photograph
- will grow up to be the first woman major leaguer.
 - will grow up to be a famous ballet dancer.
 - will be prepared to change with the future.
 - will work for the Eaton company.

Practice D

Read each of the following passages. Then circle the letter of the most logical answer to each question, based on the information given in the passage. Use the hints where provided to help you answer questions.

Beware! Right now, a movie filled with blood, gore, and severed body parts is on its way to a theater near you. The movie's title doesn't matter. It will follow the same plot as the countless other "slash and gore" movies that have come before it. These movies are easy to spot. All involve young, attractive teens having sex and then getting sliced and diced. The chopping is usually done by an evil villain with bad teeth and a deep, threatening laugh. And if one of these movies does well at the box office, a sequel will be made—usually with an even larger dose of gore and butchery. Such movies manage to draw large audiences because they offer date-night appeal. People tend to hold, squeeze, and grab each other when they are scared. These movies also offer some privacy to teens intent on making out. Any sensible adult wouldn't be caught dead at one of these movies.

- We can conclude that the movies to which the author refers
 - attract many adults.
 - are uninteresting to teens.
 - attract teens.

Hints: The passage tells us that "countless other 'slash and gore' movies" have already been shown and that they "offer some privacy to teen intent on making out."

2. We can infer that the author of the passage feels that the audience of horror movies
 - a. likes to be scared at the movies.
 - b. does not like to be scared at those movies.
 - c. is never scared at the movies.

Hints: The passage says that the movies “offer date-night appeal” and that people “hold, squeeze, and grab each other when they’re scared.”

3. We can infer that the author of the paragraph feels the “slash and gore” plots are generally
 - a. harmful to audiences.
 - b. surprising.
 - c. not very creative.

Hint: The author states that a new “slash and gore” movie will have “the same plot as the countless [others] that have come before it.”

Practice E

The British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was a master of the elegant put-down. At one fancy dinner party, he was seated next to a favorite target—a woman whose political views were opposed to his own. The two argued more or less continually throughout the meal. Totally annoyed, the lady said, “Sir Winston, if you were my husband, I’d put poison in your coffee!” “Madam,” replied Churchill, “if you were my wife, I’d drink it.”

4. We can conclude that Churchill
 - a. constantly put people down.
 - b. liked to put down his political opponents.
 - c. was rarely invited to fancy dinner parties.
5. When Churchill said, “If you were my wife, I’d drink it,” he meant to imply that
 - a. he admired the woman so much he would do whatever she said.
 - b. he would never insult the woman by refusing her coffee.
 - c. If she were his wife, he would prefer to die.
6. We can conclude that the author of the passage admires
 - a. Churchill’s politics.
 - b. the woman’s politics.
 - c. Churchill’s wit.

Practice F

The real heroes of the fight against drugs are the teenagers who resist the ghetto’s fast track—those who live at home, stay in school, and juggle their studies and low-paying jobs. The wonder is that there are so many of them. “Most of our youngsters are not involved in crack,” says the chief judge of one juvenile court in Michigan. “Most are not running around

with guns. Most aren't killing people. Most are doing very well-against great odds." They are the youngsters who fit these words of Jesse Jackson: "You were born in the slum, but the slum wasn't born in you."

7. We can conclude that the author's attitude toward ghetto teenagers who live at home, stay in school, and work is
 - a. disapproving.
 - b. admiring.
 - c. neutral.
8. We can infer that the author believes resisting crime in the ghetto
 - a. is a challenge.
 - b. requires no effort at all.
 - c. is impossible.
9. When Jackson says, "...but the slum wasn't born in you," he implies that
 - a. being born in the slums is good.
 - b. people can rise above their slum environment.
 - c. people can never escape the worst fate of the slums.

Practice G

Read the following article, which appeared in the newspaper *USA Today*. Then check (✓) the five inferences that are most logically based on the information in the article.

In Fall, a Young Man's Fancy Turns to His Teacher

Craig Wilson

Her name was Miss Meinke. Or maybe it was Menke.

What did I know? I was in first grade and she was my teacher. I couldn't even spell my own name at the time, let alone hers.

It didn't matter. I was going to marry her and change her name to mine and that would take care of that problem once and for all.

I loved her. And I know she loved me. It was obvious, just by the way she winked at me when I came in the room.

She was kind and good and noble—all the things a first-time love should be. She never shouted, never scolded. She praised my every move.

For hours we'd push mahogany-colored chestnuts back and forth across the table. She called it a counting exercise, but I knew it was more than that.

I remember she was tall and willowy. Maybe she was short and dumpy, but in 1954 when I was three feet high, she was tall and willowy. And she had a long and beautiful neck, like a ballerina.

She smelled good too. Nothing racy. Not Miss Meinke. She wasn't that kind of girl.

I was by no means the first student to fall in love with his teacher, and I certainly wasn't going to be the last.

This fall millions of kids will have crushes on their own Miss Meinkes, staying late for special help they don't need, asking questions they already know the answers to. Some will even offer up the proverbial shiny apple to the newest woman in their lives. Could her first name be Eve?

I didn't know Miss Meinke's first name. First-grade teachers didn't have first names back then. Nor did they have personal lives.

I remember seeing her at the supermarket once and thinking how odd that was. She buys food? She cooks? She eats at places other than the teachers' table in the cafeteria?

To me she lived only in that crowded and cluttered pastel-colored classroom. Maybe she slept under her desk. I never asked. But I would be the one to take her away from all that. Who cared if there was a thirty-year age difference? Not me. Why wouldn't she want a younger man? Someone to look after her later on.

It was a perfect match.....

We've all heard about lovers writing passionate letters to their beloved. Miss Meinke never wrote me such a letter. I understand now that she really couldn't, seeing that everything I took home I immediately showed to my mother. So she did the only thing she could. She sent messages on my report card.

The first came in October. On it she wrote that basically I was the ideal young man. "A delight to have in my classroom," were her exact words. I still have the card. Now, if that wasn't a thinly veiled "I'm in love with Craig!" I don't know what was.

But it wasn't meant to be.

She left me. For another man, I found out later. Out in California. She left upstate New York the next fall and never looked back. Never wrote. Never called.

In retrospect I understand it was her way of coping. What else could she do? I had already moved on to an older, more mature woman. Mrs. Baine, who lived down the hall in a place called second grade.

- _____ 1. Miss Meinke was a kind, caring teacher.
- _____ 2. Wilson's mother and Miss Meinke were close friends.
- _____ 3. Wilson still feels bitterness toward Miss Meinke for leaving his school.
- _____ 4. Wilson probably also "fell in love" with his second-grade teacher.
- _____ 5. Miss Meinke was annoyed by young Wilson's feelings for her.
- _____ 6. Young students often adore their teachers.
- _____ 7. First-graders may find it hard to imagine their teacher anywhere but at school.
- _____ 8. Now, Wilson realizes that Miss Meinke was not a very good teacher.
- _____ 9. Miss Meinke must have been an extraordinarily beautiful woman.
- _____ 10. Wilson is making lighthearted fun of his childhood crush.

Practice H

The ability to make inferences will help you in all kinds of reading, including textbook material. Read the following textbook passages. Then check (✓) the two inferences that are most logically based on the given facts.

- a) A question that interests many is why a woman will remain with a husband who abuses her. Interviews with violent families revealed that the decision is related to three major factors. First, the more severe and more frequent the violence, the more a woman is likely to end her marriage or to seek help from social agencies or the police. The second factor has to do with how much violence she experienced as a child. The more she was struck by her own parents, the more inclined she is to stay with an abusive husband. Third, wives who have not completed high school and those who are unemployed are less likely to leave their husbands. It appears that the fewer resources a woman has, the fewer alternatives she sees and the more trapped in her marriage she feels.

- _____ 1. Abusive husbands tend to be rich.
- _____ 2. People who were beaten as children learn to tolerate being abused.
- _____ 3. Women who are dependent on their husbands economically are more likely to stay in an abusive marriage.
- _____ 4. Employed women who are well educated are never abused by their husbands.
- _____ 5. The more abused a woman is, the less likely she is to leave her husband.

- b) It may be important to have a job, but does work make people happy? In many studies during the last two decades, workers have been asked whether they would continue to work if they inherited enough money to live comfortably without working. More than 70 percent replied that they would. Asked how satisfied they were with their jobs, even more—from 80 to 90 percent—replied that they were very or moderately satisfied. But asked whether they would choose the same line of work if they could begin all over again, most said no. Only 43 percent of white-collar and 24 percent of blue-collar workers said yes. And when asked, “Do you enjoy your work so much that you have a hard time putting it aside?” only 34 percent of men and 32 percent of women answered positively.

- _____ 1. The only reason people work is to earn money.
- _____ 2. Work provides people with rewards other than money.
- _____ 3. For most people, work is as enjoyable as a hobby.
- _____ 4. Most people like their jobs but are not thrilled by them.
- _____ 5. For most people, work is the most important thing in their lives.

c) In colonial America, the typical woman gave birth to her children at home. Female relatives and neighbors would gather at her bedside to offer support and encouragement. When the daughter of a Puritan official gave birth to her first child on the last day of January 1701, at least eight other women were present at her bedside. They included her mother and four or more other neighbors. Most women were assisted in childbirth not by a doctor but by a midwife. Skilled midwives were highly valued. Communities tried to attract experienced midwives by offering a salary or a house rent-free. In addition to assisting in childbirth, midwives helped deliver the offspring of animals and attended the baptisms and burials of infants. During labor, midwives administered no painkillers except alcohol. Pain in childbirth was considered God's punishment for Eve's sin of eating the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. After delivery, new mothers were often treated to a banquet. Women from well-to-do families were then expected to spend three to four weeks in bed convalescing. Women from poorer families were generally back at work in one or two days.

- _____ 1. In colonial America, there were no doctors.
- _____ 2. Giving birth in colonial America was typically a lonely experience.
- _____ 3. In colonial America, midwives filled several community roles.
- _____ 4. Society's view of pain in childbirth has changed since the 1700s.
- _____ 5. Poor women recovered faster from childbirth than rich women.

Practice I

After you read each set of sentences, determine whether the statements following each one are true or false. Put a T for *true* or an F for *false* in the blank. Explain why you gave your answer on the line after each statement. If there is not enough evidence to determine whether a statement is true or false, write "not enough evidence."

a) Nagging, nagging, nagging. Do this. Do that. Always something. Then when I do it, it's all wrong. Well, I'm glad I left. It's for the best. I can breathe now.

- _____ 1. The person ran away from home. _____
- _____ 2. The person left his wife. _____
- _____ 3. The person quit a job. _____
- _____ 4. The person is a male. _____
- _____ 5. The person is unhappy about the decision to leave. _____

b) Walking slowly under the blazing sun, which was directly overhead, I felt content and almost joyous. The delicious sun seemed to be penetrating right through me. How good it felt? The warmth of the sun

always makes me feel good. I wonder if it's because it somehow makes up for the human warmth I crave.

- _____ 1. The person is a female._____
- _____ 2. The person is hitchhiking._____
- _____ 3. It's summer._____
- _____ 4. It's noon._____
- _____ 5. The person needs affection._____

c) If I say no, they'll think I'm chicken; however, if I go along, I may regret it for the rest of my life. How do I get into these situations? The guys mean well, but they're always just too much for me. I don't want to lose my friends, but I have to live with myself, too. I can just see Dean's face when he finds out. Maybe I'd better crack the books and take my chances with the guys.

- _____ 1. The person is a male._____
- _____ 2. The person is a college student._____
- _____ 3. The person is apprehensive._____
- _____ 4. The thing that the person is reluctant to do violates the moral or ethical standards of the person._____
- _____ 5. The thing the person is talking about has to do with playing a prank on Dean._____
- _____ 6. The person will not go along with the guys._____
- _____ 7. The person has been in conflict with the guys before._____

d) They walked slowly along for some time. Their shadows meeting and separating, meeting and separating. There was no need to speak because everything had already been said. A voice, as if speaking to itself, said, "Life plays funny tricks on you. One day you're the child, and the next day you are the father of that child, and soon, perhaps, even the grandfather of the child." The other person replied, "Yes, I know what you mean. I feel young. There's a young mind in this body, but I become confused when I look in the mirror. The image doesn't conform to mine."

- _____ 1. The persons have not seen each other for a long time._____
- _____ 2. It's daytime._____
- _____ 3. The persons are contemporaries._____
- _____ 4. The persons are both grandfathers._____
- _____ 5. The persons both feel old._____
- _____ 6. The persons feel that time goes by quickly._____
- _____ 7. The persons are two males._____

e) The men in their undershirts and shorts were aching from carrying their heavy knapsacks all day. They were tired, hungry, dusty, and sweaty. One fourth of them had already turned back. The remaining six were slowly edging away from the mountain pass to make camp for the night. For a moment they stopped because they were awed by the sight of

the setting sun. It looked like a ball of fire slowly descending behind the mountain range. After a last look they went in the opposite direction.

- _____ 1. It was a dry day. _____
- _____ 2. The men were heading west to make camp. _____
- _____ 3. The men were in a desert. _____
- _____ 4. The journey had been a hard one. _____
- _____ 5. There had been twelve persons at the beginning of the trip. _____

f) The summer was a hard one-but I fit back into the mold fairly easily. Sophomore year would be better she said. It wasn't. Sophomore year was the critical cut against my mother, giving away her prize, my virginity. It's a very funny story in a lot of ways. Though it was not as calculating as all this, a coldly logical bit of my mind was at work somewhere. My counterpart turned out to be foreign, not exceptionally intelligent (I had to feel superior), someone whose tastes were very unlike mine (I attributed it to cultural differences), and someone with whom I would eventually break up. Since pregnancy would probably tear our house asunder, I went on the pill before ever having intercourse, a move I found ironically calculating at the time. Since the gynecologist was on the same floor as the psychiatric social worker I'd seen and was a disapproving older woman, I was terrified that she would come to take me away, and a tug of war would follow between the two doctors.

- _____ 1. The girl is concerned about what her family thinks. _____
- _____ 2. The girl has had some emotional problems. _____
- _____ 3. The girl has a great deal of difficulty discussing her first affair. _____

- _____ 4. The girl expected to have sexual relations. _____
- _____ 5. The girl is rebelling against her mother. _____
- _____ 6. The girl loves her mother. _____
- _____ 7. Having sexual relations helps the girl solve her problems. _____

Practice J

After reading each of these amusing stories, state what makes each a joke.

- 1. Teacher: "Billy, why are you late for school?"
Billy: "Well, a sign down the street said....."
Teacher: "What can a sign have to do with it?"
Billy: "The sign said: 'School ahead, go slow.'"
- 2. First Cannibal: "I don't like your friend."
Second Cannibal: "O.K., just eat the vegetables."
- 3. Jim: "Did I ever tell you about the time I came face to face with a lion?"

Mary: "No. What happened?"

Jim: "There I was without a gun. The lion roared and crept closer and closer and closer...."

Mary: "What did you do?"

Jim: "I moved to the next cage."

4. Jane: "Does your watch tell time?"

Mary : "No, you have to look at it."

5. John: "My father shaves every day."

Jim: "My father shaves fifty times a day."

John: "Is he crazy?"

Jim: "No, he's a barber."

6. Diner: "This restaurant must have a very clean kitchen."

Owner: "Thank you, sir, but how did you know?"

Diner: "Everything tastes of soap."

7. Psychologist: "Why are you always stamping your feet?"

Patient: "It keeps the wolves from getting me."

Psychologist: "But there aren't any wolves in these parts."

Patient: "My method works, doesn't it?"

Practice K

See how well you can match the ten well-known proverbs in group A with the other ten proverbs in group B. After you match the proverbs, explain them.

Group A

- _____ 1. There's no use crying over spilt milk.
- _____ 2. Strike while the iron is hot.
- _____ 3. Pound the water and it is still water.
- _____ 4. The fire engine arrives after the house has burned down.
- _____ 5. Out of the frying pan and into the fire.
- _____ 6. When two quarrel the third rejoices
- _____ 7. A stitch in time saves nine.
- _____ 8. Roll my log, and I'll roll yours
- _____ 9. The bad worker blames his tools.
- _____ 10. Rats desert a sinking ship.

Group B

- a. The singer covers up his wrong note with a cough.
- b. Few are the friends of adversity.
- c. One hand washes the other.
- d. He jumped into the water to escape the rain.
- e. Make hay while the sun shines.
- f. It's too late to lock the barn door after the horse is gone.
- g. You can't unscramble eggs.
- h. The wolf devours the sheep while the dogs fight one another.
- i. The leopard can never change its spots.
- j. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Practice L

See how well you can explain each of these fifteen well-known proverbs.

1. Don't count your chickens until they hatch.
2. Don't put all your eggs in one basket.
3. Beauty is only skin deep.
4. Misery loves company.
5. It's an ill wind that blown no one any good.
6. A tiny leak will sink a big ship.
7. Necessity is the mother of invention.
8. An ape in silk is still an ape.
9. One man's meat is another's poison.
10. Don't bite the hand that feeds you.
11. Barking dogs seldom bite.
12. A good example is the best sermon.
13. Take the bull by the horns.
14. Birds of a feather flock together.
15. Look before you leap.

Summing Up

There are 4 levels of reading comprehension as follows: (Harris, & Hodges, 1981, pp.74, 151, 154, 162, 183)

1. **Literal comprehension or reading the lines:** understanding the sense meaning of what is heard or read, without making inference. There is no depth in this kind of reading; giving this answer requires no thinking, Literal comprehension simply demands readers to recall from memory what the book says, simply ask them to repeat parrot-like the words that are in the book.
2. **Interpretative comprehension or interpretation or reading between the lines:** the process of making connections among individual stated ideas, making inferences, drawing conclusions, or experience emotional reactions understanding beyond the literal meaning of a communication. Readers are concerned with supplying meaning not directly stated in the text.
3. **Critical comprehension or reading beyond the lines:** the process of making judgments in reading: evaluating the quality, value, accuracy, truthfulness, relevancy and adequacy of what is read, or read beyond the literal and interpretative levels
4. **Inference** is the process of judging or concluding in reasoning, by which we must supply our knowledge or experience based upon the hints, suggestions or evidence to gather information, which is not always stated in exact terms, in order to understand the subject as we read.
5. **Imply and infer are related, but they are two different things.** **Imply** and **infer** are really just two parts of a process. **Imply** has to do with sending a message. **Infer** has to do with receiving it. If you imply something you **hint** or suggest it without coming out directly and stating it. For example, you could imply that you do not like someone by making a face when you hear the person's name. You could imply that you'd like the rest of your friend's french fries by asking, "Are you going to eat the rest of those?" instead of just asking directly if you can have them. When a person infers a message that someone else has implied, then that person infers the sender's meaning. If your friend replies, "I am too full to eat one more bite!" then you infer (understand) that you're welcome to eat the rest of the fries!

The sender implies (hints or suggests) The receiver infers (understands or correctly interprets the hint or suggestion)

Review Test

Review the material in this chapter, then write the answer.

1. Define what you think is meant by a literal comprehension, an interpretative comprehension a critical comprehension, and an inference
2. How many skills are there in reading?
3. What inference questions should you ask yourself after you have read a paragraph?

TEST

The Landlady

"Mr. Mulholland liked a cup of tea," she said. "I have never seen any one drink as much tea as dear, sweet Mr. Mulholland. Never In my life."

"I suppose he left quite recently," Billy said. He was still thinking about the two names. He was sure he had seen them in the newspapers.

"Left?" she said, surprised. "But my dear boy, he never left. He's still here. Mr. Temple is also here. They're on the third floor together."

Billy put down his cup slowly on the table and stared at his landlady. She smiled at him, and then she put one of her white hands and patted him on his knee. "How old are you, my dear?" she asked.

"Seventeen."

"Seventeen" she cried. "Oh, it's a perfect age. Mr. Mulholland was also seventeen. But I think he was shorter than you are, and his teeth weren't quite so white. You have the most beautiful teeth, Mr. Weaver, did you know that?" "They're not as good as they look, Billy said.

"Mr. Temple, of course, was a little older," she said. "He was actually twenty-eight. But he didn't look twenty-eight. There wasn't a blemish on his body."

"A what?" Billy said.

"A mark, my dear, there wasn't a mark. His skin was just like a baby's"

Billy picked up his teacup and took another sip of his tea. He waited for her to say something else, but she was silent. He sat and stared into the far corner of the room, biting his lower lip.

"That parrot," he said at last. "You know something? When I first saw it, I thought it was alive."

"Alas, no longer."

"It's terribly clever," he said. "It doesn't look the least bit dead. Who did it?"

"I did."

"You did?"

"Of course," she said "And have you met my little Basil as well?" She nodded towards the dachshund in front of the fire.

Billy looked at it. He put out his hand and touched it on top of its back. It was cold and hard.

"Good gracious me", he said. "How absolutely fascinating. It must be awfully difficult to do a thing like that. "Not in the least", she said. "I stuff all my little pets myself when they die. Would you like another cup of tea?"

"No, thank you," Billy said. The tea tasted strange and he didn't like it much.

"You signed the book, didn't you? Its necessary because later on, if I forget your name, I can look it up. I still do that with Mr. Mulholland and Mr....Mr....

"Temple", Billy said. "Gregory Temple. Excuse my asking, but haven't there been any other guests here except them in the last two years?"

Holding her teacup high in one hand, she looked at him and gave a gentle smile. "No, my dear," she said. "Only you."

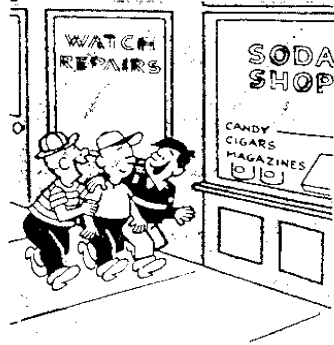
(Weinberg, 1978, p.271)

Questions

1. Why do you think that the "two names" had been in the newspaper?
2. Why did the landlady think the young men were attractive?
3. What is the landlady's special skill?
4. What is going to happen to Billy?
5. What is upstairs?

Inferences

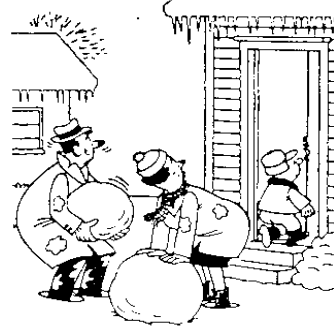
Guess who. . .



... just got his allowance



... owns the dog



... insisted on making a snowman

Making Inferences

You can probably get the point of each of the cartoons, even though the cartoonist has left something for you to figure out in each one.

1. In the first cartoon, why are the boys being so friendly with the boy in the middle?

2. What do you suppose they want him to do?

3. In the second cartoon, which man owns the dog?

4. Which person in the third cartoon insisted on making the snowman?



"I want a hundred and twenty-eight get-well cards."

Inferences About Past and Present Action

1. Where does the cook in the cartoon probably work?

2. What is probably the reason for his wanting 128 get-well cards?



Inferences About Characters

1. In what place are the men in the cartoon?

2. What is the man on the left probably looking for?

3. What motive, or reason, do the men have for playing musical instruments?

Test

Inferring Time and Place (Niles, et al., 1981, pp.82-84)

“On February 17, 1995, the explorer in western China to begin one of the most difficult journeys of his life.” An author who begins his story like this tells you exactly when and where the action will take place.

But suppose a story begins like this: “From the open well in the yard, Sara drew some water and poured it into a jug. Then she set off across the fields to where her father was plowing. Mr. Jenkins stopped the mare in the middle of a furrow.” Here the author requires you to infer the time and place of the story. What clues in this passage tell you the setting is a farm? What tells you that the times is not the present?

Below are some actual story beginnings in which you must infer the time or the place. Circle the letter of the phrase that correctly completes the statement following the passage. Underline clues that helped you arrive at your answers.

1. The sleds were singing their eternal lament to the creaking of the harnesses and the tinkling bells of the leaders; but the men and dogs were tired and made no sound. The trail was heavy with new fallen snow, and they had come far.....Darkness was coming on, but there was no camp to pitch that night.....It was very warm-barely ten degrees below zero-and the men did not mind. Meyers and Bettles had raised their ear-flaps, while Male-mute Kid had even taken off his mittens.

The setting of this story is:

- (a) the lake region of northern Wisconsin
- (b) a thinly settled part of the Ozarks in Arkansas
- (c) the Yukon region of northern Canada.

2. Joey Westfall awakened with a start. An axe rang splitting a chunk of wood. Tin cups and plates rattled, and sleepy voices echoed over the water. They were camped on the west bank of the Mississippi a mile or two upstream from St.Louis. Joey pitched aside the blanket yanked on his boots and crawled out from under the covered wagon.....

The time when this story takes place is probably:

- (a) between 1620 and 1660
- (b) between 1840 and 1880
- (d) between 1910 and 1950.

3. The Kanaka helmsman put the wheel down and the Malahini slipped into the eye of the wind and righted to an even keel.....Though it was early morning and the wind brisk the five white men who lounged on the poop deck were scantily clad. David Grief and his guest, Gregory Mulhall, were still in pajamas. The captain and mate were in thin undershirts and unstarched duck trousers, while the supercargo still held in his hands the undershirt he was reluctant to put on. The sweat stood out on his forehead and he seemed to thrust his bare chest thirstily into the wind that did not cool.

This story takes place:

- (a) on an ocean liner between New York and Naples
- (b) in a space ship heading for Venus
- (c) on board a ship in the South Seas.

4. Tito and his dog Bimbo lived under the wall where it joined the inner gate. They really didn't live there; they just slept there. They lived anywhere. Pompeii was one of the gayest of the old Latin towns.....The streets were always lively with shining chariots and bright red trappings; the open-air theaters rocked with laughing crowds; sham battles and athletic sports were free for the asking in the great stadium. Once a year the Caesar visited the pleasure-city and the fireworks lasted for days. The sacrifices in the forum were better than a show.

The setting of this story is:

- (a) a city of the Roman Empire in the first century after Christ
- (b) a South American city in the 1600's
- (c) a city in the United States in the early 1900's

Inference From Conversation

Even when an author doesn't describe his character, we can learn a good deal about them from what they say. The conversations below should give you clues that will enable you to answer the questions that follow. Circle the letter of the answer that you think is correct.

- I. "I'm fed up with this stinking army!" Joey stalked back and forth across the barracks.
Umm," Said his listener lazily, shifting his position slightly in the lower bunk.
"Just look at me-Joseph P.Riley, PFC. Four years I spend in this army during the war. Finally I'm out. I get me a wife-pretty one. Two kids. TV repair shop in Brooklyn. I'm set."
"So're we all, Joey."
"Then, whammo! Some guy in Washington decides we need another war. And some clerk in some dumpy office decides they can't fight it without me."
"That's the breaks, Joey."
"So here I sit-typing, for pete's sake. Six thousand miles from action, in the middle of dust bowl. Wife won't leave her mother, says this is no place for kids. What's a guy gonna do?"
"Donno, Joey. Me, I'm gonna take a walk."

1. What is Joey's status in the army?
(a) Professional army man
(b) Volunteer
(c) Draftee

2. What war is now going on?
 - (a) The Spanish-American War
 - (b) World War I
 - (c) The Korean War

3. How much schooling has Joey probably had?
 - (a) Six years of grade school
 - (b) High school plus some technical training
 - (c) College plus two years of graduate school

4. What is his attitude toward the army?
 - (a) He is bored and resentful.
 - (b) He is tired of army life, but realizes he must do his patriotic duty.
 - (c) He feels that the army offers him an interesting, exciting career.

5. What kind of person do you think Joey is?
 - (a) A man who had had unusually bad luck all his life, but accepts it calmly
 - (b) A lover of adventure
 - (c) A constant complainer

II. Doctor George Rand dropped the Christmas packages on the hall table.
 "Hi, Dad," Joan said. "What did you bring me?"
 Silently he handed her one of the packages.
 "Is that all?" She grabbed the gift and ran off.
 George held himself in check and walked into the living room. Anne was perched on a stepladder finishing the Christmas tree.
 "Anne, come down from there. I'll do that."
 "No need, dear. I'm finished."
 He sat down and gazed gloomily at the tree.
 "I'm hungry," Joan said from the doorway.
 Anne got down from the stepladder. "I'll get something right away, darling."
 "Anne!" George's voice cracked. "Must you jump every time Joan wants something? After all, she's twelve now-let her--"
 "I don't mind in the least, George," Anne interrupted and she was gone.
 He got up and went into the kitchen. "Anne," He said, "we've got to do something with Joan. There's no appealing to her sense of anything-she has none. Let's send her away to school. With your help—"
 "Hush, dear. You know what Joan's been through."
 "But she's been well two years now. It's time to straighten her out."

1. Who are the characters?
 - (a) A father and two daughters
 - (b) Father, mother, and daughter
 - (c) Father, daughter, and family friend

2. What do you learn about Joan from this conversation?
 - (a) She is a selfish girl whose parents have spoiled her because she was once seriously ill.
 - (b) She is a happy, affectionate girl, but overly dependent on her parents.
 - (c) She is a mentally retarded child who really belongs in a special institution.

3. What is the attitude of the adults toward each other?
 - (a) George wants to protect Anne from Joan's selfishness.
 - (b) George and Anne are constantly quarreling.
 - (c) Anne wants to force George to do what she wants.

Inference From Action

Suppose a new student were to come in to your English class today. What would the condition of his clothes tell you? What could you tell by the way he walked to his seat? What would you conclude if he constantly interrupted other students? What would you guess if he went out of his way to borrow paper from the prettiest girl in the class?

You can also form ideas about fictional characters from things they do. These ideas are generally inferences; the author does not tell you directly what each action means.

Below are three paragraphs that describe characters' actions, each followed by three statements about the central character. After each statement indicate whether you agree or disagree with it. If nothing in the paragraph enables you to decide, write "can't tell."

1. Twelve-year-old Jim tiptoes into his father's bedroom quietly opens the top drawer of the chest, and takes out an electric razor. He plugs it in and runs it carefully over his chin. Then he hears a child's voice calling his name. He hastily puts down the razor, throws a handkerchief over it, and starts to examine his father's neckties on a nearby rack as his nine-year-old sister enters the room.
 - (a) Jim was planning to "borrow" one of his father's ties and doesn't want his sister to discover it. _____
 - (b) Jim is going to his first school party and wants to look his best. _____
 - (c) Jim is secretly experimenting with his father's razor and is afraid his sister will tease him about it. _____

2. It is close to midnight. A teen-age girl sits alone in the corner of an almost deserted bus terminal. From time to time she glances at the clock, studies the remaining part of her foot-long ticket, or looks nervously toward the street door. A man walks over to her, sits down, and says something to her. She ignores him but moves to another

bench. He wanders away. A bus is called. She picks up her suitcase and hurries to the bus entrance with a last uneasy glance behind her.

- (a) The girl likes to sneak away from home to watch people in the bus terminal. _____
 - (b) The girl is changing buses and is uncomfortable alone in the bus terminal so late at night. _____
 - (c) The girl is running away from home and is afraid someone will come to stop her. _____
3. Jennifer rides to school with Dave each morning. Ordinarily they leave the car in the lot and walk hand in hand up the front steps. Where Jennifer usually joins a group of girls. This day the car screeches to a stop in the traffic circle. Jennifer, her lips tight, her eyes flashing, gets out, slams the door, and races past her friends into the building. She goes straight to her locker and noisily jerks open the doors. After she has hung up her coat, her face relaxes into a sweet, knowing smile. She spends a long time fussing with her hair, looking over her shoulder in the mirror to see who is watching her.
- (a) Jennifer is hurrying because she is late to a before-school meeting. _____
 - (b) Dave has quarreled with Jennifer; she is deeply hurt and doesn't want to see her friends. _____
 - (c) Jennifer and Dave have quarreled, but she is more interested in the dramatic effect she is creating than upset by the quarrel. _____

In making inferences from a character's action, you must consider everything the author tells you. However, you must be sure that you do not read things into the person's behavior that the author did not intend. Check back over your work on this exercise to be sure that your conclusions are reasonable on the basis of what the author has told you.

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