Making Inferences
Inferring

1. Good readers determine meaning of unknown words by using their schema, paying attention to the text and picture clues, rereading, and engaging in conversation with each other.

2. Good readers make predictions about text and confirm or disprove their predictions as they read.

3. Good readers use their prior knowledge and clues from the text to draw conclusions and form their own ideas about the text.

4. Good readers infer meaning when the answers to questions are not directly (explicitly) stated in the text.

5. Good readers use the text to create their own ideas about a subject in order to deepen and enrich understanding.

6. Good readers revise their images to add new information.
Making an Inference

I use clues from the author and what I know to make an inference.

What I see in the picture: The little boy is hugging his dog.

What I already know: When someone hugs someone they really care for them.

(My background knowledge)

My Inference: The little boy loves his dog.
Making an Inference

I use clues from the author and what I know to make an inference.

What I read and learned: The little girl had tears in her eyes.

What I already know: People with tears in their eyes are often sad.

(My background knowledge)

My Inference: The little girl is sad because....

(she fell, she is hurt, someone hurt her feelings)
Inferring with pictures

Picture from the text

What I know

My Inference
Name________________________ Inference

What do I see in the picture? What is happening?

What do I know about this?

My Inference is..
My Inference (In My Head)

Adapted from Reader's Handbook (Great Source)
# Inference Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I learned from the text</th>
<th>What I already know</th>
<th>=</th>
<th>What I infer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLUES FROM THE TEXT</th>
<th>MY BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE</th>
<th>=</th>
<th>MY INFEERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Adapted from Reader's Handbook (Great Source)
Inference Record Form

When I read, (words from text)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

I think (inference) ______________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

because ______________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

(My background knowledge/schema)
We are learning about inferring as a comprehension strategy proficient readers use to better understand their reading.

When we read: ____________________________
we inferred the meaning of unknown words, like:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD</th>
<th>What we infer it means:</th>
<th>What helped us?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
Inferring Meaning About Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Word</th>
<th>What We Infer It Means</th>
<th>What Helped Us</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

Lesson from Reading With Meaning by Debbie Miller
## Making Inferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quote or Picture from the Text</th>
<th>Inference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Inferring About Character Traits

- **Name**: 
- **Date**: 
- **Title**: 
- **Author**: 

**Character**: 

**Trait(s)**: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What the character does</th>
<th>What the character says</th>
<th>What the character thinks</th>
<th>Summary of character and traits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Double Entry Journal
### Making Inferences

**Title**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotes</th>
<th>My Thoughts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pg:</td>
<td></td>
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<th>Pg.</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Kashian/Carlo 2007*
Making Inferences

Think about what you know, and use what the author tells you to make inferences.

My Schema:
What I Know

Clues I Found in the Story

What I Infer

©www.HaveFunTeaching.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facts About the Character</th>
<th>What the Character Says</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characters Actions</td>
<td>Characters Name:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thoughts and Feelings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What I Can Infer About the Character:

- ______________________________________
- ______________________________________
- ______________________________________
- ______________________________________
- ______________________________________
- ______________________________________
- ______________________________________
Inferencing Cards (adapted from Robb, *Teaching Reading in the Middle School*)

**Physical Traits**

Find the words the author uses to describe a character's facial expression, body (height, weight), clothing, hair, etc.

What can you infer about the character?

The text says the character is . . .

So I think . . .

---

**Physical Traits**

Find the words the author uses to describe a character's facial expression, body (height, weight), clothing, hair, etc.

What can you infer about the character?

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What can you infer about the character?

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So I think . . .
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consider the dialogue between two characters. What do you think the character is thinking when s/he says those words? Also consider the speaker tags in your inference. (How did the character say those words?)</strong>&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;When the character says...&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;I think...</td>
<td><strong>Consider the dialogue between two characters. What do you think the character is thinking when s/he says those words? Also consider the speaker tags in your inference. (How did the character say those words?)</strong>&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;When the character says...&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;I think...</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inferencing Cards (adapted from Robb, *Teaching Reading in the Middle School*)

**Inner Thoughts**

Find the words that tell what the character is thinking - the words not spoken - and reflect on what these show about mood, feelings, reactions, and personality.

*The text says the character thinks...*

*So I think this means...*

---

**Inner Thoughts**

Find the words that tell what the character is thinking - the words not spoken - and reflect on what these show about mood, feelings, reactions, and personality.

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Find the words that tell what the character is thinking - the words not spoken - and reflect on what these show about mood, feelings, reactions, and personality.

*The text says the character thinks...*

*So I think this means...*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review some action a character takes and decide what you can infer from that action.</td>
<td>Review some action a character takes and decide what you can infer from that action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I think the character does this because...</em></td>
<td><em>I think the character does this because...</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predict what the character might do next. Support your prediction with evidence from the text.</td>
<td>Predict what the character might do next. Support your prediction with evidence from the text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Review some action a character takes and decide what you can infer from that action. *I think the character does this because...* Predict what the character might do next. Support your prediction with evidence from the text.
Open Mind
Name ________________________________

**Making Inferences**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What others say about the character</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>What I know</th>
<th>=</th>
<th>My Inference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Double-Entry Journal

### Make Inferences From Physical Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I infer about the character because the author used these words to describe him/her.</th>
<th>I am thinking this about the character.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Making Inferences: Reading Between the Lines

Question: (from the book, our group, or my teacher)

What I know from the book:

What I know from my brain:

My Inference

(be sure to use at least one "because")
The young girl is standing on the corner. She is wearing a bright red jacket and bright red snow pants. She has a scarf tied around her face. She is wearing striped mittens. She looks to the left down the street. She stamps her feet. She puts her backpack on the ground. She looks to the left down the street again.

### Making Inferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It Says... (What the text says)</th>
<th>I Say... (My Background Knowledge)</th>
<th>So... (Inference)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story Clues</td>
<td>What I Know</td>
<td>Inference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Making Inferences
Inference Chart

From Question-to-Inference Chart

A number of graphic organizers are very helpful to students who struggle to make inferences, because the organizers help the students focus on textual details, bring into play their own thoughts about the topic or information, and then create meaning—make an inference. Because inferences are deeper meanings not stated directly in the text, it’s important for teachers to "walk through" each organizer—to fill it out together with the students—as a way to model the process.

The chart below (based on Beers’s "It Says, I Say, and So" chart, 2003, p. 166) is a good example of a graphic organizer that allows students to visualize the steps in making an inference. Initially, students respond to a question that can only be answered by inference, even though the question is about a particular reading or text. First the students have to find out what the reading says. Then they add, in their own words, their thoughts about what the reading says. Finally, the students combine what the reading says and their thoughts to answer the question and thus create new meaning—the inference.

As an example, in introducing this organizer, you might ask students to read "Purchase," by Naomi Madgett (2001). Hand out the organizer and have students answer the questions based on facts and details found in the reading (in this case, a poem). Explain to students that although they may add several comments for each of the two middle boxes, those comments should lead to only one inference that builds their comprehension of the speaker’s character. Before the students begin, you might want to fill out an organizer with the class to model the process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>What the reading says</th>
<th>What I think</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What kind of &quot;purchase&quot; does the speaker really make?</td>
<td>&quot;I like the smell of new clothes&quot;</td>
<td>I like it too when I get new jeans or sneakers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;This dress has no past/ Linked with regretful memories&quot;</td>
<td>She must have some old clothes that remind her of bad times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;I prefer the new scent/ Of a garment unworn,/ Untainted&quot;</td>
<td>She wants new clothes, ones that are fresh and unused.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My answer to the question—what I infer

She wants her life to feel like the way you feel when you buy new clothes, fresh and unused.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What the reading says</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My Answer to the question—what I infer
# The Important Idea/Theme

**Name: __________________________**  
**Book Title: __________________________**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Ideas (The Theme)</th>
<th>The evidence that supports our important idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Adapted by:  
Cario/Kashian
Hey, What's the BIG IDEA?

Story:

Theme:

My Evidence:
Teacher Trash!

Here's what I know about my teacher after going through her trash!

What I infer:

What I infer:

© W. Abbey Mullins 2017
What's in My Teacher's Bag?

(...and what does it mean?)

What I infer:

What I infer:

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Inferring at a Glance

What's Key for Kids?

- Readers determine meanings of unknown words by using their schema, paying attention to textual and picture clues, rereading, and engaging in conversations with others.
- Readers make predictions about text and confirm or contradict their predictions as they read on.
- Readers use their prior knowledge and textual clues to draw conclusions and form unique interpretations of text.
- Readers know to infer when the answers to their questions are not explicitly stated in the text.
- Readers create interpretations to enrich and deepen their experience in a text.

(Adapted from Keene and PEBC)

Tried and True Texts for Inferring

Creatures of Earth, Sea, and Sky by Georgia Heard
Fireflies by Julie Brinkloe
Fly Away Home by Eve Bunting
For the Good of the Earth and Sun by Georgia Heard
Grandfather Twilight by Barbara Berger
How Many Days to America? by Eve Bunting
If You Listen by Charlotte Zolotow
Miss Maggie by Cynthia Rylant
Mother Earth, Father Sky selected by Jane Yolen
Oliver Button Is a Sissy by Tomie dePaola
The Royal Bee by Frances Park and Ginger Park
Something Beautiful by Sharon Dennis Wyeth
Where Are You Going, Manyoni? by Catherine Stock
Winter Fox by Catherine Stock
Books that stimulate inferential thinking:

*Ball Run* by Paul Fleischman

In this collection of vignettes about different characters connected to the first battle of the Civil War, the reader must infer who they are, where they are, what they are doing and why.

*Dateline: Troy* by Paul Fleischman

Contemporary newspaper articles are linked with ancient historical events, and the reader needs to infer the connection between the two.

*Dandelion* by Eve Bunting

Because the woman and her daughter in this pioneer family are so stoic, the reader must infer how the characters really feel about their increasing isolation.

*Encounter* by Jane Yolen

The fictionalized account of Columbus’s arrival in the New World, from a Taino boy’s perspective, nudges readers to try to understand his culture’s plight.

*Fables* by Arnold Lobel

Twenty original tongue-in-cheek animal fables that poke a little subtle fun at the human condition. Great for inferring the moral.

*June 29, 1999* by David Wiesner

A wordless picture book that requires the reader to infer the meaning behind the pictures. *Free Fall*, another wordless book by Wiesner, also requires readers to use inferential thinking skills.

*The Rag Coat* by Lauren Mills

This book about a young girl who loses her father at an early age prompts readers to draw inferences about her feelings as well as about the outcome of the story.

*Rose Blanche* by Roberto Innocenti

This story of a young German girl who passes a concentration camp on the way to school each day leaves lots of gaps that the reader must fill in, particularly in regard to the ambiguous ending.

*See the Ocean* by Estelle Condra

Clues abound that something is wrong with Nellie, but what could it be?

*The Table When Rich People Sit* by Byrd Baylor

A young girl asks her parents why they say they’re rich when they obviously have very little money. Readers have to infer another meaning of the word rich to fully understand this story.

*Teammates* by Peter Golenbock

This moving story of teammates Pee Wee Reese and Jackie Robinson brings up multiple themes, from racism to friendship, that readers must infer.

*Tight Times* by Barbara Shook Hazen

A boy desperatey wants a pet, but times are rough in his house. Even the title requires inferential thinking.

Author Sets

Alexandra Day

*Frank and Ernest*

*Frank and Ernest Play Ball*

*Frank and Ernest on the Road*

The charming stories of two fast friends, a bear and an elephant, who take temporary work in a diner, for a baseball team, and as truck driv-
Making Inferences Using Pictures
After looking at this picture, I can... that...
After looking at this picture, I can infer that...
She likes to take pictures.
She likes the color pink.
Maybe she got a new camera.
She is happy.

He is going on a trip.
He is excited about his trip.
He is staying for awhile.
He is waiting.

www.HaveFunTeaching.com
By looking at the picture, I can infer that...
She is happy.  
He is waiting.  
Maybe she got a new camera.

He is staying for awhile.  
She likes the color pink.  
He is excited about his trip.

She likes to take pictures.  
He is going on a trip.

www.HaveFunTeaching.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. When I woke up, there were branches and leaves all over the yard.</th>
<th>2. We bought tickets and some popcorn.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. I forgot to set my alarm clock last night.</td>
<td>4. A student yawns several times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A student falls asleep.</td>
<td>6. One student takes a pen from a classmate's desk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. A group of students has not completed homework.</td>
<td>8. Three students leave the room without permission.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>A student returns from recess crying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Mary plays her flute for 2 hours every day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Sharon grabbed her rain coat and her umbrella.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Inference Answer Key
1. There was a big storm the night before.
2. We were going to a movie.
3. I overslept.
4. They are tired.
5. They are tired.
6. They do not have a pen and they are stealing.
7. They will go to study hall.
8. They will get in trouble.
9. They got hurt or were picked on.
10. She plays well.
11. It was raining outside.

Inference Answer Key
23. There was a big storm the night before.
24. We were going to a movie.
25. I overslept.
26. They are tired.
27. They are tired.
28. They do not have a pen and they are stealing.
29. They will go to study hall.
30. They will get in trouble.
31. They got hurt or were picked on.
32. She plays well.
33. It was raining outside.

Inference Answer Key
12. There was a big storm the night before.
13. We were going to a movie.
15. They are tired.
16. They are tired.
17. They do not have a pen and they are stealing.
18. They will go to study hall.
19. They will get in trouble.
20. They got hurt or were picked on.
21. She plays well.
22. It was raining outside.

Inference Answer Key
34. There was a big storm the night before.
35. We were going to a movie.
36. I overslept.
37. They are tired.
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41. They will get in trouble.
42. They got hurt or were picked on.
43. She plays well.
44. It was raining outside.