

PiXL PRIMARY English

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# Reading

Y3 R4d. Can make inferences about characters' actions in a story based upon evidence from the text

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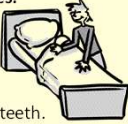
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## What is inference?

When people write or speak, they rarely tell you everything – and thank goodness. Think about these two sentences:

1. Zak went to bed.
2. Zak got up, walked out of the room and went upstairs. He changed into his pyjamas, had a wash and cleaned his teeth. Then, he walked into his bedroom and pulled back his covers. Finally, he slid into his bed and rested his head on his pillow before going to sleep.



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## What is inference?

**Sentence 1** gets straight to the point. It tells you what you really want to know and assumes that you can work out the rest.

**Sentence 2** might be accurate but you were probably either bored or annoyed by all the detail.

**Sentence 1** expects you to use inference – to fill in the gaps yourself. That means the speaker or writer can focus on the more interesting information. Other ways of describing inference include:

- joining the dots
- reading between the lines.



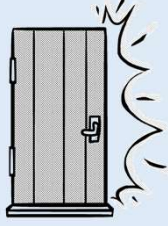
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## What is inference?

Often, a writer will let you infer the reasons for a character's behaviour or feelings.

For example, if a character stomps out of the room and slams the door, the author does not need to explain that the character was upset or in a bad mood.



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## What is inference?

What can you infer about what has happened here?

*Dr Jansen looked at the new x-ray and gasped. Then she looked at the old one, just to check. "I've got it!" she cried and ran out of the door.*

"I've got it!" is what people often say when they have worked something out. As this character is a doctor and is looking at an x-ray, we might infer that she has worked out what is wrong with a patient and has run off to tell someone.



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## Your turn

Why did Danni scream and run? Click to check.

*Danni took another careful step. The water was up to her ankles. Suddenly, an unusually big wave crashed over her. She screamed and ran for her towel, shivering.*


Danni is clearly paddling in the sea. Her scream suggests that she was taken by surprise. By describing her as running for her towel and shivering, we can infer that the water was very cold.



**Inferring feelings from behaviour**

A character's actions are often driven by what they are feeling. For example, how is the character feeling here?

*When she got to the bus stop, she could see that her bus had already left. She kicked the lamp post, howled in pain and then sat down to rub her foot.*



First she is feeling angry about missing her bus. That is why she kicked the lamp post. Then she was in pain, which is why she rubbed her foot.

**Inferring feelings from behaviour**


Infer the character's feelings from the action.

He sniffed and rubbed his eyes.	He is feeling angry.
He shook his fist at them.	He is feeling tired.
He yawned and stretched.	He was feeling sad.

**Inferring feelings from behaviour**

After taking a couple of mouthfuls, a young child has pushed away the bowl of food he has been given. Which of the following can be reasonably inferred from this behaviour? Discuss how you know.


He is full and doesn't want any more.	✓
He is really enjoying his meal.	✗
He has tried it and doesn't like it.	✓
He is so hungry he will eat anything.	✗



**Your turn**

Discuss with your group what you can infer from these actions.


- After a couple of minutes of swiping through her phone, she burst out laughing.
- After reading the letter, she slumped back on to the stairs and buried her head in her hands.
- Dad picked up the baby, said, "Ugh!" and held his nose.



**Your turn**

Read the following text and then answer the questions below. Remember to give evidence from the text to support your ideas. See the next slide to check.


*Kelsey just held the brightly wrapped present for a moment. A smile spread across her face. At last, she would have the thing she had always wanted. Not able to wait any longer, she ripped off the paper. For a second, she stared at box. Then, she burst into tears and stomped out of the room.*



- How was Kelsey feeling before she unwrapped the present?
- Why did she burst into tears?

**How did you do?**

*Kelsey just held the brightly wrapped present for a moment. A smile spread across her face. At last, she would have the thing she had always wanted. Not able to wait any longer, she ripped off the paper. For a second she stared at box. Then, she burst into tears and stomped out of the room.*



- How was Kelsey feeling before she unwrapped the present?  
*Her smile shows she was feeling happy and excited. She was certain she was going to get what she always wanted and was enjoying the moment.*
- Why did she burst into tears?  
*The tears and stomping suggest she was extremely sad and angry. We can infer that the present was not what she was hoping for so she was very disappointed.*


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## Have another go

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Read the following text, then answer the questions below. Remember to give evidence from the text to support your ideas. See the next slide to check.

*He was soaked to the skin. His teeth were chattering and his fingers would not stop shaking, making it very difficult for him to tie the ropes. If only he hadn't finished all his supplies so quickly. Even a ship's biscuit or two would help to calm the rumbling in his belly.*




- How was he feeling?
- Why did he wish he hadn't finished all his supplies?

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## How did you do?

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*He was soaked to the skin. His teeth were chattering and his fingers would not stop shaking, making it very difficult for him to tie the ropes. If only he hadn't finished all his supplies so quickly. Even a ship's biscuit or two would help to calm the rumbling in his belly.*



- How was he feeling?  
*He was cold, wet and hungry. We know because it says he was soaked to the skin and your fingers tend to shake when you are cold. Also, it says his belly was rumbling.*
- Why did he wish he hadn't finished all his supplies?  
*He really wanted something to eat. We can tell he was very hungry because his tummy was rumbling but he didn't even have a single biscuit left from the supplies he once had.*

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## Review

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- An inference is something we have worked out from what has been left unsaid.
- This is also called 'filling in the gaps' or 'reading between the lines'.
- How people behave often helps us to infer how they are feeling.
- Use evidence from the text to support your inferences.

