

Making Inferences

What's an Inference?

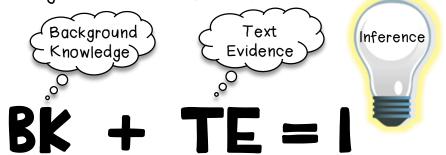
Much of what we understand from a text is not written, or stated, by the author. A lot of times an author will give us enough clues to figure things out on our own. For example, an author might say...

Judith rushed into the classroom, threw her backpack onto a hook, and hurried to her seat, just after the morning bell rang. As Judith took her seat, Ms. Walsh shook her head and didn't seem to be surprised.

Based on the information given by the author, we can make a guess that Judith is frequently late to class. This is called making an **Inference**. Authors leave it up to the reader to make their own connection, and read between the lines.

How are Inferences Made?

In order to make an inference about a text, you need two things; background knowledge and evidence from the text.



Using the example above, think about the background knowledge and text evidence we used to make the inference that Judith is frequently late to class.

Background Knowledge	Text Evidence
When a student rushes into a room and hurries to their seat, they are usually late.	The author said Judith rushed into the classroom and hurried to her seat.
When someone isn't surprised about something, it is because they are used to it happening often.	The author said Ms. Watsh doesn't seem surprised.

As you can see, using your background knowledge, along with evidence from the text, will allow you to make inferences and see beyond what is written.

DIRECTIONS: Use your background knowledge, and evidence from the text, to make an inference.

Awaiting Dad

Every day, Martha waited for her dad to return home from work. Sometime before dinner, Martha would hear her father's car slowly pull into the drive way. She eagerly watched him exit the car and make his way up to the front door. She loved the way his white coat would sway behind him like sheets blowing in the wind, and the way the setting sun would beam off his stethoscope still around his neck. Her dad was finally home.

What type of job does Martha's dad have	?
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What background knowledge and text clues helped you answer this question?

Text Evidence

How does Martha feel about her dad?	

What background knowledge and text clues helped you answer this question?

Background Knowledge	Text Evidence



Daylight Saving Time

Most people do not know that in 1794, Sir Benjamin Franklin was the first person to suggest Daylight Saving. It wasn't until 1907, more than 100 years later, that people began to reconsider Daylight Saving as a way to conserve energy. After another nine years of further consideration, Daylight Saving became a law in England. Two years later, the United States also passed the law, but only to provide soldiers with more daylight hours during World War One. Right after the war, the law was reversed until World War Two (1942) began, and Daylight Saving was reinstated for a period of three years. Finally, in 1966, Daylight Saving became an official law. People believed the law would aid in saving energy and give farmers more daylight hours.

hours.	
How do you think people felt about the idea of Daylight Saving?	
What evidence from the text helped you answer this question?	
Trifut original from the text helped you anower the question.	
The Presidency of Lincoln	
As the North and South were turning against one another, Abraham Lincoln was elected president of the United States of America. During his presidency, Lincoln had many great accomplishments. His emancipation proclamation was one step he took in freeing slaves in the United States. This proclamation freed slaves in enemy territories. During the Civil War, he was faced with many tough decisions, but ultimately won the war for the Union. It is widely known that his speech, The Gettysburg Address, helped turn the war in favor of the Union. After the war, President Lincoln supported the passing of the 13th amendment freeing all slaves in the reunified United States of America. Although Lincoln was reelected for a second term, he was never able to see the 13th amendment pass. He was assassinated on April 14, 1865.	
What can you infer about President Lincoln?	
What evidence from the text helped you answer this question?	
That or solide from the text helpes you allower the question.	

Excerpt from Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone by J.K. Rowling

Nearly ten years had passed since the Dursleys had woken up to find their nephew on the front step, but Privet Drive had hardly changed at all. The sun rose on the same tidy front gardens and lit up the brass number four on the Dursleys' front door; it crept into their living room, which was almost exactly the same as it had been on the night when Mr. Dursley had seen that fateful news report about the owls. Only the photographs on the mantelpiece really showed how much time had passed. Ten years ago, there had been lots of pictures of what looked like a large pink beach ball wearing different-colored bonnets - but Dudley Dursley was no longer a baby, and now the photographs showed a large blond boy riding his first bicycle, on a carousel at the fair, playing a computer game with his father, being hugged and kissed by his mother. The room held no sign at all that another boy lived in the house, too.

Yet Harry Potter was still there, asleep at the moment, but not for long. His Aunt Petunia was awake and it was her shrill voice that made the first noise of the day.

"Up! Get up! Now!"

Harry woke with a start. His aunt rapped on the door again.

"Up!" she screeched. Harry heard her walking toward the kitchen and then the sound of the frying pan being put on the stove. He rolled onto his back and tried to remember the dream he had been having. It had been a good one. There had been a flying motorcycle in it. He had a funny feeling he'd had the same dream before.

His aunt was back outside the door.

"Are you up yet?" she demanded.

"Nearly," said Harry.

"Well, get a move on, I want you to look after the bacon. And don't you dare let it burn, I want everything perfect on Duddy's birthday."

What are the Dursleys' feelings towards Harry Potter?	
What evidence from the text helped you answer this question?	

Make an Inference (Answers)

DIRECTIONS: Use your background knowledge, and evidence from the text, to make an inference.

Awaiting Dad

Every day, Martha waited for her dad to return home from work. Sometime before dinner, Martha would hear her father's car slowly pull into the drive way. She eagerly watched him exit the car and make his way up to the front door. She loved the way his white coat would sway behind him like sheets blowing in the wind, and the way the setting sun would beam off his stethoscope still around his neck. Her dad was finally home.

What type of job does Martha's dad have? He is a doctor

What background knowledge and text clues helped you answer this question?

Background Knowledge	Text Evidence
(accept reasonable answers)	The text said his white coat swayed in the wind. It also said the sun was beaming off his stethoscope.

How does Martha feel about her dad? She loves him and likes spending time with him.

What background knowledge and text clues helped you answer this question?

Background Knowledge	Text Evidence
(accept reasonable answers)	The text said that she waited for her dad to come home every day. It also said she eagerly watched him. She loved the way his coat swayed in the wind.



Daylight Saving Time

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How do you think people felt about the idea of Daylight Saving? Accept all reasonable answers. Possible Answer: People didn't think it was a great idea.

What evidence from the text helped you answer this question? It took more than 100 years for people to begin considering the idea of Daylight Saving. It wasn't until 1966 that it became an official law.

The Presidency of Lincoln

As the North and South were turning against one another, Abraham Lincoln was elected president of the United States of America. During his presidency, Lincoln had many great accomplishments. His emancipation proclamation was one step he took in freeing slaves in the United States. This proclamation freed slaves in enemy territories. During the Civil War, he was faced with many tough decisions, but ultimately won the war for the Union. It is widely known that his speech, The Gettysburg Address, helped turn the war in favor of the Union. After the war, President Lincoln supported the passing of the 13th amendment freeing all slaves in the reunified United States of America. Although Lincoln was reelected for a second term, he was never able to see the 13th amendment pass. He was assassinated on April 14, 1865.

What can you infer about President Lincoln? Accept all reasonable answers. Possible Answers: Lincoln was against slavery. Lincoln was a popular president. Lincoln was a good president.

What evidence from the text helped you answer this question? Possible Answers: Lincoln freed slaves through the emancipation proclamation and the 13th amendment. Lincoln was reelected for a second term. Lincoln had many great accomplishments.

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Nearly ten years had passed since the Dursleys had woken up to find their nephew on the front step, but Privet Drive had hardly changed at all. The sun rose on the same tidy front gardens and lit up the brass number four on the Dursleys' front door; it crept into their living room, which was almost exactly the same as it had been on the night when Mr. Dursley had seen that fateful news report about the owls. Only the photographs on the mantelpiece really showed how much time had passed. Ten years ago, there had been lots of pictures of what looked like a large pink beach ball wearing different-colored bonnets - but Dudley Dursley was no longer a baby, and now the photographs showed a large blond boy riding his first bicycle, on a carousel at the fair, playing a computer game with his father, being hugged and kissed by his mother. The room held no sign at all that another boy lived in the house, too.

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His aunt was back outside the door.

"Are you up yet?" she demanded.

"Nearly," said Harry.

"Well, get a move on, I want you to look after the bacon. And don't you dare let it burn, I want everything perfect on Duddy's birthday."

What are the Dursleys' feelings towards Harry Potter? They don't like Harry.

What evidence from the text helped you answer this question? The text said that their living room held no sign at all that another boy lived in the house. Also, Aunt Petunia yells at Harry.

Organizing My Inferences

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Background Knowledge	Text Evidence	My Inference
		_
		//



Groups: 2-4 students per group

Materials: 3-4 cards per group, I clue sheet per group.

How To Play: Each group of students will get 3-4 cards. Each card will have an object on it. The group must work together to develop 5 clues for each card. Once finished, two groups will join together and try to guess the other group's cards. The first group will give their clues one at a time. If the "guessing" group can figure out the mystery object, they earn a point. The groups take turns until all objects and clues have been used. The team with the most points wins.

Example:



Object: Night

Clues:

- 1. It begins later in the day.
- 2. It's over when you wake up.
- 3. Owls wait for it.
- 4. It makes it hard to see.
- 5. It has lots of stars.

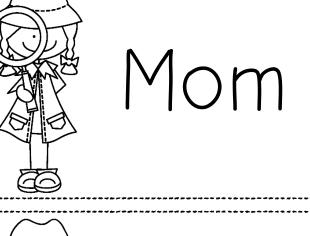
Inference Riddle Game

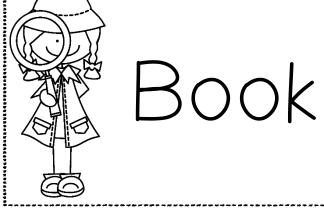
Team Members:

Object:	Object:
Clues:	Clues:
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2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
Object:	Object
	Object:
Clues:	Clues:
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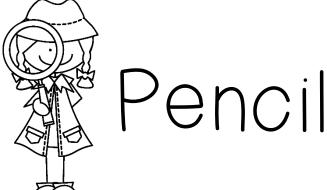
Team I Points	Team 2 Points

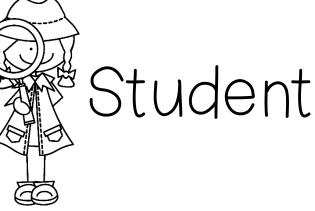








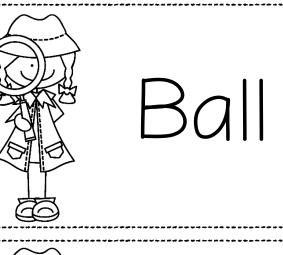




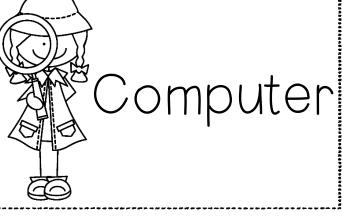


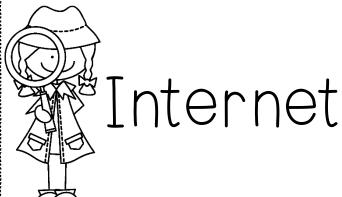








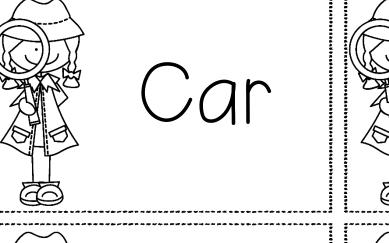


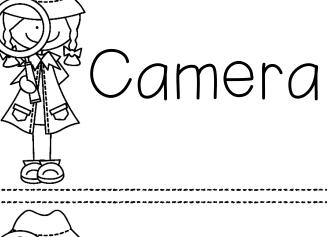




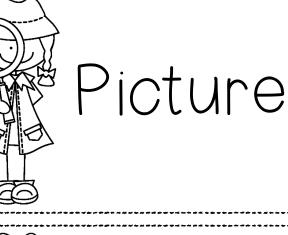












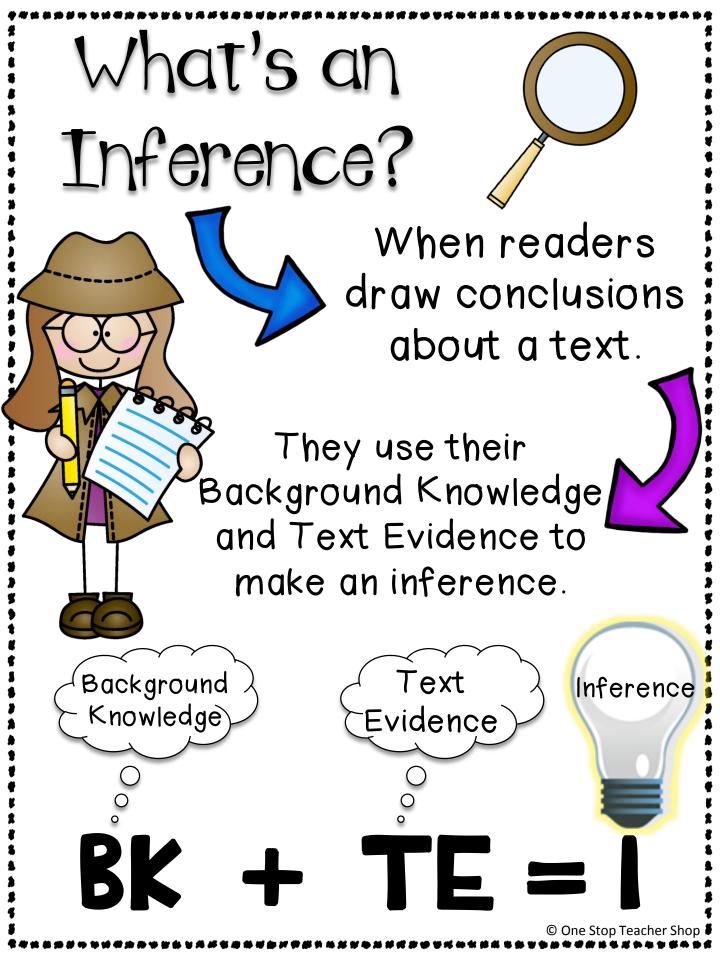


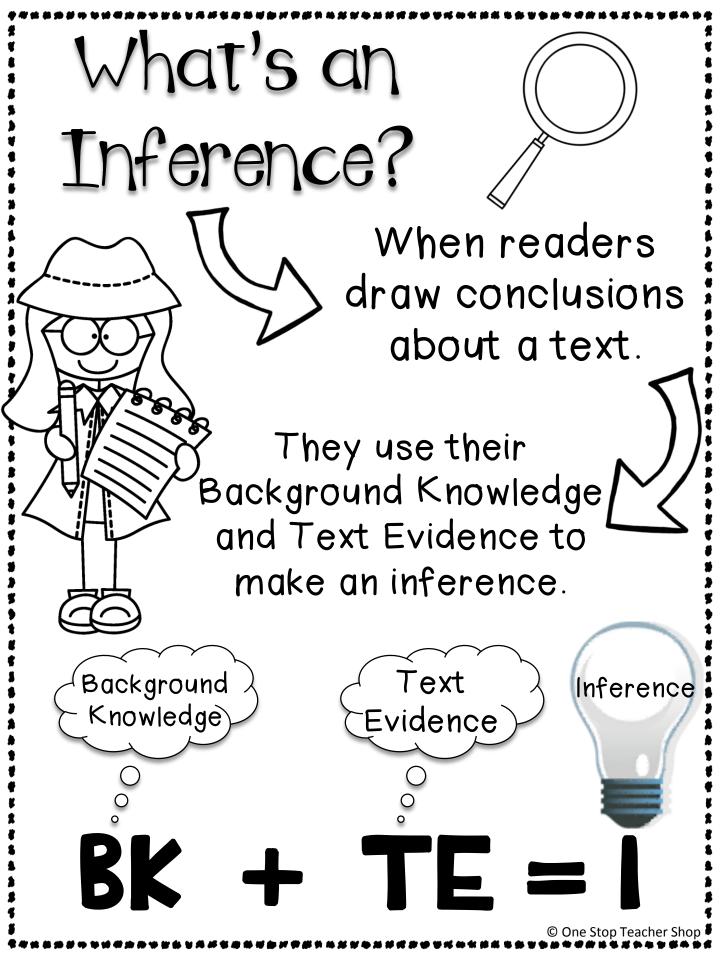
Necklace



Bed







Name:	Date:
]	Inference Test
	The Porcelain Box
·	man who tilled the soil, planted seeds, and harvested his ved the land, and more than anything else he loved his
I. What inference can you make abo	out Joseph?
2. What clues helped you make this	inference?
	
against a stone, and Joseph stumbled deep, and the blood flowed quickly. When he tried to walk, the pain was a hear him. His wife had gone to the devening. Joseph knew he would not a Then to his great joy, he saw so recognized him. He was a homeless around the farm, looking for handout "Please help me!" Joseph called the bandage this wound as soon as possi	meone coming. As the person drew nearer, Joseph man named Kelly. For weeks Kelly had been hanging ats. o him. "I have to get to my house. I need to clean and ble." Kelly walked up to him. He crouched, looked at That's a bad cut you've got there," he said. A clever smile t's in it for me?"
4. What clues helped you make this	inference?
barn." Kelly stood up and looked do your life not of great value to you want and it will be yours." "I want the treasure you keep that loose brick above your firepla about the porcelain box?"	en giving you food and drink. Every night you sleep in my own at Joseph. "I want much more than that," he said. "Is it?" Joseph felt himself getting weaker. "Tell me what you in the porcelain box," said Kelly, "the box you hide behind ace." Again Joseph stared in surprise. "How do you know window," said Kelly. "Every morning before your wife

wakes up, you sneak downstairs and take something out of the box. Every night, after she goes to bed, you carefully put the treasure back." Joseph looked up at Kelly, shading his eyes against the burning sun. "What I keep in that porcelain box is of great value to me," he said,

"but it would be of no value whatsoever to you."

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Kelly laughed a deep wicked sound. "This morning you didn't take the treasure as you usually do. The porcelain box and treasure it holds are waiting behind the loose brick. If you want my help, promise that you will give me whatever is in that box."

"Help me, and I'll reward you well," Joseph promised. "I'll prepare a party in your honor. "I'll invite friends and neighbors from near and far. Everyone will know you as a man of charity and kindness."

"I care nothing for charity and kindness," said Kelly. "I want the treasure."

By now the shirt binding Joseph's wound was soaked with blood. He knew he had no choice but to agree. "You may have what is in the porcelain box," he said. "Now, please, help." Kelly picked Joseph up, heaved him onto his shoulder, and carried him back to the house.

"My reward," Kelly said the minute Joseph had finished bandaging his foot. "Give me the porcelain box." Joseph limped to the fireplace and took the box from behind the loose brick. He turned to Kelly. Joseph was a man of his word, so he handed Kelly the porcelain box. Kelly opened it. His eyes grew huge and flashed with anger.

He glared at Joseph. "You tricked me!" he shouted. "This is of no value to me."

"I didn't trick you," said Joseph. "I warned you that the contents were of value only to me." In a towering rage, Kelly threw the porcelain box at Joseph and stormed out of the house.

Joseph caught the box before it hit the ground. He opened it and took out his treasure. Then he quickly put the finely carved set of fake teeth into his mouth before his beautiful young wife could come home and find him toothless.

5.	How ald Kelly feel about the freasure in the porcelain box?
Ь.	What clues helped you make this inference?

- 7. Which of the following words best describes Joseph?
 - a. adventurous
 - b. kindhearted
 - c. greedy
 - d. cruel

- 8. What will most likely happen next?
 - a. Joseph will never walk again.
 - b. Kelly will return and apologize.
 - c. Joseph's wife will return and be upset about his teeth.
 - d. Joseph's wife will return and never know about his teeth.

1.	Look at your answer for number 8.		are nothing for charity and kindness," said ly. "I want the treasure."			
	What detail from the story helped you answer the question?		Based on the quote above, how would you describe Kelly?			
			a. thoughtful			
			b. greedy			
			c. pleasant			
			d. angry			
		13.	What is the MAIN theme in this story?			
			a. Hard work pays off			
			b. It is not good to be greedy			
Э.	Why did Joseph offer to prepare a party in		c. Don't lie about wearing fake teeth			
	Kelly's honor?		d. It is good to forgive people			
	a. He knows Kelly likes parties.b. He believes Kelly is a kind man and		14. What clue from the story helped you figure out the theme?			
	wants everyone to know it.		a. Joseph was a happy man who worked			
	c. He is trying to persuade Kelly to take		hard on his farm.			
	something besides the treasure.		b. Joseph wanted to give Kelly a party			
	d. He has nothing else of value to offer		instead of his box.			
	Kelly.		c. Kelly would only help Joseph if he gave			
ı \	Why is the treasure only valuable to		him what he wanted.			
1.	Joseph?		d. Joseph never told his wife about his			
	0036рп.		fake teeth.			
- - -			Why did Joseph finally agree to give Kelly his treasure?			
			a. Joseph was tired of arguing with Kelly.			
			b. Joseph wanted to trick Kelly.			
			c. Joseph knew his wife would be home			
			soon, and he was running out of time.			
			d. Joseph's foot was getting worse, and			
			he was running out of time.			

Name:	Date:	
	Inference Test (ANSWER KEY)	

The Porcelain Box

Joseph was a farmer, a simple man who tilled the soil, planted seeds, and harvested his crops in season. He loved life, he loved the land, and more than anything else he loved his beautiful young wife.

- I. What inference can you make about Joseph? Joseph is a very happy man
- 2. What clues helped you make this inference? He loved life, he loved the land, and more than anything he loved his beautiful young wife.

Then one day, while he was plowing his field, a terrible thing happened. The plow slipped against a stone, and Joseph stumbled. In a flash, the blade sliced into his foot. The cut was deep, and the blood flowed quickly. Joseph yanked off his shirt and bound the wound, but when he tried to walk, the pain was unbearable. He called for help, but there was no one to hear him. His wife had gone to the city the day before, and she wouldn't be home until evening. Joseph knew he would not survive long without help.

Then to his great joy, he saw someone coming. As the person drew nearer, Joseph recognized him. He was a homeless man named Kelly. For weeks Kelly had been hanging around the farm, looking for handouts.

"Please help me!" Joseph called to him. "I have to get to my house. I need to clean and bandage this wound as soon as possible." Kelly walked up to him. He crouched, looked at Joseph's foot, and shook his head. "That's a bad cut you've got there," he said. A clever smile crossed his face. "If I help you, what's in it for me?"

- 3. What inference can you make about Kelly? Kelly is selfish, and only worries about himself.
- 4. What clues helped you make this inference? A clever smile crossed Kelly's face and he said, "If I help you, what's in it for me?"

Joseph stared at him. "I've been giving you food and drink. Every night you sleep in my barn." Kelly stood up and looked down at Joseph. "I want much more than that," he said. "Is your life not of great value to you?" Joseph felt himself getting weaker. "Tell me what you want and it will be yours."

"I want the treasure you keep in the porcelain box," said Kelly, "the box you hide behind that loose brick above your fireplace." Again Joseph stared in surprise. "How do you know about the porcelain box?"

"I've watched you through the window," said Kelly. "Every morning before your wife wakes up, you sneak downstairs and take something out of the box. Every night, after she goes to bed, you carefully put the treasure back." Joseph looked up at Kelly, shading his eyes against the burning sun. "What I keep in that porcelain box is of great value to me," he said, "but it would be of no value whatsoever to you."

Kelly laughed a deep wicked sound. "This morning you didn't take the treasure as you usually do. The porcelain box and treasure it holds are waiting behind the loose brick. If you want my help, promise that you will give me whatever is in that box."

"Help me, and I'll reward you well," Joseph promised. "I'll prepare a party in your honor. "I'll invite friends and neighbors from near and far. Everyone will know you as a man of charity and kindness."

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"My reward," Kelly said the minute Joseph had finished bandaging his foot. "Give me the porcelain box." Joseph limped to the fireplace and took the box from behind the loose brick. He turned to Kelly. Joseph was a man of his word, so he handed Kelly the porcelain box. Kelly opened it. His eyes grew huge and flashed with anger.

He glared at Joseph. "You tricked me!" he shouted. "This is of no value to me."

"I didn't trick you," said Joseph. "I warned you that the contents were of value only to me." In a towering rage, Kelly threw the porcelain box at Joseph and stormed out of the house.

Joseph caught the box before it hit the ground. He opened it and took out his treasure. Then he quickly put the finely carved set of fake teeth into his mouth before his beautiful young wife could come home and find him toothless.

- 5. How did Kelly feel about the treasure in the porcelain box? He was angry, and did not like it.
- b. What clues helped you make this inference? He glared and shouted at Joseph. In a towering rage, Kelly threw the porcelain box at Joseph and stormed out of the house.
 - 7. Which of the following words best describes Joseph?
 - a. adventurous
 - b. kindhearted
 - c. greedy
 - d. cruel

- 8. What will most likely happen next?
 - a. Joseph will never walk again.
 - b. Kelly will return and apologize.
 - c. Joseph's wife will return and be upset about his teeth.
 - d. Joseph's wife will return and never know about his teeth.

9. Look at your answer for number 8.
What detail from the story helped you answer the question? The story said that
Joseph quickly put his fake teeth into his mouth before his beautiful young wife could come home and find him toothless.

- IO. Why did Joseph offer to prepare a party in Kelly's honor?
 - a. He knows Kelly likes parties.
 - b. He believes Kelly is a kind man and wants everyone to know it.
 - c. He is trying to persuade Kelly to take something besides the treasure.
 - d. He has nothing else of value to offer Kelly.
- Joseph? The treasure is not worth a lot of money. The treasure is only valuable to Joseph because his teeth will only benefit him. His teeth allow him to hide his secret from his wife.

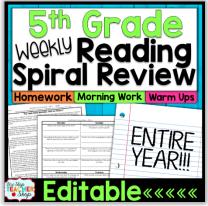
"I care nothing for charity and kindness," said Kelly. "I want the treasure."

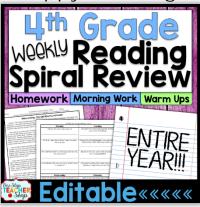
- 12. Based on the quote above, how would you describe Kelly?
 - a. thoughtful
 - b. greedy
 - c. pleasant
 - d. angry
- B. What is the MAIN theme in this story?
 - a. Hard work pays off
 - b. It is not good to be greedy
 - c. Don't lie about wearing fake teeth
 - d. It is good to forgive people
- I4. What clue from the story helped you figure out the theme?
 - a. Joseph was a happy man who worked hard on his farm.
 - b. Joseph wanted to give Kelly a part instead of his box.
 - c. Kelly would only help Joseph if he game him what he wanted.
 - d. Joseph never told his wife about his fake teeth.
- 15. Why did Joseph finally agree to give Kelly his treasure?
 - a. Joseph was tired of arguing with Kelly.
 - b. Joseph wanted to trick Kelly.
 - c. Joseph knew his wife would be home soon, and he was running out of time.
 - d. Joseph's foot was getting worse, and he was running out of time.

RECOMMENDED FOR YOU

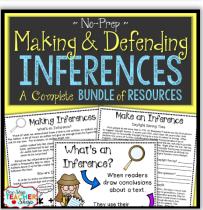
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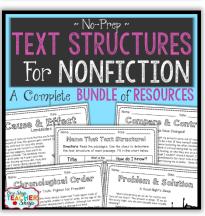
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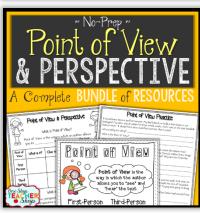


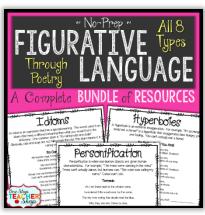


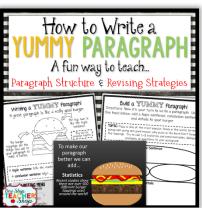














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