

Mini-Lesson

Teaching How to Make Inferences

1. Introduce the concept: Write this sentence on the board.

Walker received a funny e-mail from his friend Lily.

Ask students which of the following sentences goes best with the statement.

A. Walker will write back to Lily.

B. Walker will buy something on the Internet.

2. Model thinking: Think aloud as you guide students in identifying A. as the sentence that best goes with the statement.

Most people respond to e-mails from friends. I know this because that's what my friends and I do. Since the e-mail from Lily was funny, Walker will probably mention something about that when he answers her.



Although Walker could buy something while he's on the Internet, there's nothing in the sentence that suggests he will.

3. Define the skill: Tell students that a writer doesn't always explain every fact or detail about something. A writer expects that readers will fill in missing information from their own experience. Readers do this by putting together what they already know and what they have read to make the best guess they can. When readers add information from their own experience to what is stated in a text, they are making an inference. Point out that students make inferences all the time, not only in their reading but in other ways as well. For example, people make inferences when they look at a photograph or see someone walking by on the street.

Mini-Lesson

Teaching How to Draw Conclusions

1. Introduce the concept: Write these sentences on the board.

Judd likes the color blue.

He says it gives him a peaceful feeling.

Judd bought paint for his living room.

Ask students what color paint they think Judd might have bought.

2. Model thinking: Think aloud as you guide students in recognizing that these sentences, while sharing information about Judd, help the reader come to the conclusion that Judd might have bought blue paint.



The first sentence states that Judd likes the color blue. The second sentence explains why Judd prefers blue. People generally like their living rooms to be peaceful colors. These are good clues about what color paint Judd might have bought for his living room.

3. Define the skill: Tell students that a conclusion is a decision that readers make after thinking about the information in a text. Since a writer doesn't always state all of his or her ideas, readers often have to look for clues to understand the whole passage, paragraph, or story. Readers must put together the clues that the writer provides and then draw the best conclusions they can to understand the text. Caution students that a conclusion should make sense.