

Lesson 12

Supporting Inferences About Literary Texts



Learning Target

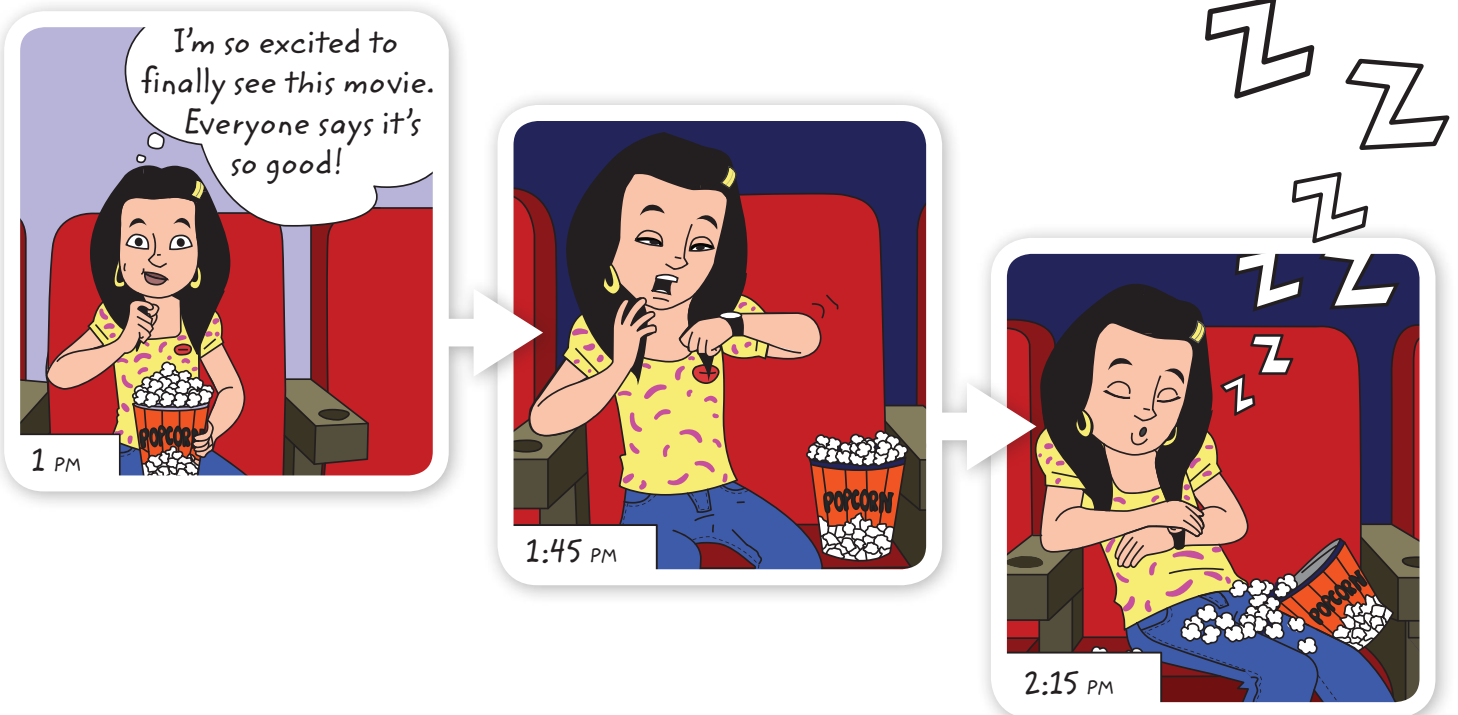


Use story details and examples to explain what the story says and to support inferences you make.

► **Read** An **inference** is a reasonable guess you've figured out based on what you already know and the **details** of what you see or read. When you make an inference, be sure you can support it with **evidence**, or details and **examples** given in the text.

Readers make inferences to figure out what a story does not say directly. Evidence from a text can often help you understand something that an author hints at but does not state directly.

Look at the cartoon below. What inferences can you make about the girl? Which details help you figure out her feelings?



► **Think** What have you learned about using details to make inferences? Consider what happens in the cartoon. How does the girl eventually feel about the movie? Use what you figured out about the girl to complete the *Inference Chart* below. Make inferences based on the details in the cartoon and what you already know.

What the Cartoon Shows (Evidence)	What I Know (Experience)	My Inference
	<p><i>People often look forward to seeing a new movie, especially if they've heard good things about it.</i></p>	

► **Talk** Did you and your partner write the same things in the “What I Know” column? How did that information affect what you wrote in the “What the Cartoon Shows” column? How did the evidence help you make inferences?



Academic Talk

Use these words to talk about the text.

- inference
- details
- evidence
- examples

The

Penny Thief

by
Charlotte
Fairchild

- 1 My family got a parakeet on the very day that we moved into our new apartment. On our first night in the new place, we tried to name our new pet. I wanted to call it Tweetie, but no one else liked that name. We couldn't find a name that everyone agreed on, so we agreed to think about it for a while.
- 2 My father always emptied his pocket change into a large glass bowl in the hallway. When we wanted money for this or that, he would count it out for us from the bowl. The very next night, as he tossed his change into the bowl, he mumbled, "Funny! I'm sure there were mostly pennies on top." None of us knew where the pennies had gone.
- 3 Every day that week, my father complained that someone was taking pennies from his bowl. We all pleaded ignorance. And every day that week, we discussed a new name for our pet.
- 4 At the end of the week, we took everything out of the birdcage to clean it. In every corner of the cage was a pile of pennies. That's when we learned that my mother had let the bird out to fly around every morning. "Penny thief!" my father cried. And our pet was named on the spot.



Close Reader Habits

As you read, **underline** the details the characters used as clues to figure out what happened to the pennies.

Explore

What details in the mystery help you make inferences about story events in “The Penny Thief”?



Think about your inferences. Is each one based on text details? Does it make sense?

Think

- 1 Complete the Inference Chart below. It will help you understand the inferences the main character made.

What the Text Says (Evidence)	What I Know (Experience)	My Inference
		<i>The family wants to find out what is happening.</i>
	<i>Some birds are attracted to shiny objects.</i>	

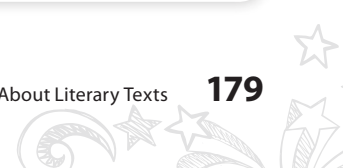
Talk

- 2 As you read the story, what inferences did you make about the missing pennies? What text details supported your inferences?

Write

- 3 **Short Response** Explain what inferences you made about the parakeet. Include at least **two** pieces of text evidence to support your answer. Use the space provided on page 182 to write your response.

HINT To explain your inferences, give story clues that tell about what the parakeet does.



Thinking Out Loud

by Ben Karlsen

- 1 Slipping off the helmet of her space suit, Shaundra took a deep breath, then another. As she had hoped, fresh air filled her lungs. It was true: This planet, which she and her crew had spied from the mother ship, had an atmosphere like Earth's. And because it had air, perhaps the planet resembled Earth in other ways. Was it possible that she, Miek, and Goran had found what humans had long sought? Could there be intelligent life here?
- 2 For hours, the three astronauts wandered through forests and meadows filled with flowers of every color, shape, and aroma, but they were disappointed. The astronauts saw nothing that looked or acted like Earth animals—not even the tiniest insect. Certainly, they met no living creature with a human form.
- 3 Finally, they returned to their landing site. Before entering the mother ship, they had to collect samples of the plants. Shaundra grasped the stem of a particularly lovely flower and placed her knife against it. Suddenly, her eyes opened wide in surprise. “Did you hear that?” she asked the other two. “Well, I don’t mean hear, exactly. It was as if this flower spoke to my mind. It seemed to be asking me not to harm it.”
- 4 Miek was about to tease Shaundra when his jaw dropped. “I heard it—no, I felt it speak! It wants to know where we come from and why we’re here. How should we answer it?”
- 5 “That’s obvious,” replied Shaundra. “We need only to think our answers, and this creature will understand. This planet is full of intelligent life—and it’s beautiful life, too.”

Close Reader Habits

What details help you understand the inferences that the astronauts made? Reread the story. To help you answer the questions that follow, **underline** the details that tell what the astronauts expected to find.

Think Use what you learned from reading the science fiction story to respond to the following questions.

- 1** This question has two parts. Answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

What kind of intelligent life did the astronauts expect to find?

- A** The astronauts expected to find plants that could communicate.
- B** The astronauts expected to find life forms they had never seen before.
- C** The astronauts expected to find life similar to that on Earth.
- D** The astronauts expected to find dangerous creatures.

Part B

Identify **two** sentences from paragraphs 1 and 2 that **best** support your answer to Part A. Write them in the box below.



A science fiction story tells about fictional settings, characters, and events but is based on scientific knowledge or theories.

Talk

- 2** Based on the astronauts' words and actions, what inferences did the astronauts make when they started collecting flowers? Use the Inference Chart on page 183 to organize your thoughts.

HINT Think about what the astronauts already knew that helped them make inferences about what they observed.

Write

- 3 Short Response** Use the information from your chart to describe how the characters used evidence to make their inferences. Include at least **two** details from the story to support your answer. Use the space provided on page 183 to write your response.



Write Use the space below to write your answer to the question on page 179.

The Penny Thief

HINT To explain your inferences, give story clues that tell about what the parakeet does.

3 Short Response Explain what inferences you made about the parakeet. Include at least two pieces of text evidence to support your answer.

Blank lined writing area with ten horizontal blue lines.



Don't forget to check your writing.

Check Your Writing

- Did you read the prompt carefully?
- Did you put the prompt in your own words?
- Did you use the best evidence from the text to support your ideas?
- Are your ideas clearly organized?
- Did you write in clear and complete sentences?
- Did you check your spelling and punctuation?

Thinking Out Loud

2 Use the Inference Chart below to organize your ideas.

What the Text Says (Evidence)	What I Know (Experience)	My Inference



Write Use the space below to write your answer to the question on page 181.

3 Short Response Use the information from your chart to describe how the characters used evidence to make their inferences. Include at least two details from the story to support your answer.

WORDS TO KNOW

As you read, look inside, around, and beyond these words to figure out what they mean.

- **immediately**
- **restore**

They Glow by Night

by Lorrie Doyle



- 1 My name is Aimee. My real name is Amy, but I prefer Aimee since it's more original and seems kind of French. Sometimes when I write Aimee I use a little heart to dot the *i*, but I think I might be growing out of that—I am, after all, almost ten.
- 2 You would think an almost-ten-year-old wouldn't need a baby-sitter, but then again, you're not my parents. They are convinced that I still need a sitter. "It's your money," I keep pointing out to them. "If you want to throw it away on a baby-sitter, that's up to you!"
- 3 Anyway, Emily's not so bad. Sometimes we actually have fun, since she always brings a supply of the newest shades of nail polish for me to try. But on this particular night, I was having a hard time concentrating on the "Glowing Green Goddess" Emily was applying to our fingers and toes. Outside, it poured rain. Lightning flashed across the sky, and thunder cracked so loudly it seemed to be exploding right in the living room. I could feel myself getting more and more nervous—not for myself, of course—I was worried about my parents being out in the storm, however.
- 4 Just as Emily was putting the finishing touches on my right pinky toe, there was a flash of lightning followed immediately by the loudest crack of thunder I'd ever heard. The television went blank and silent, and the hallway light went out, too. I noticed the familiar hum of the refrigerator was missing. The house was completely dark and silent. Emily stumbled to the window and peered outside.
- 5 "All the street lights are out. None of the other houses have lights either, so the power must be out in the whole neighborhood." She slowly bumped her way over to the phone and picked up the receiver. "No dial tone," she said glumly. "The telephone lines must be down too." She stopped and thought for a moment. "Your parents must have a flashlight around here somewhere. Do you know where they keep it?"

6 Before I could tell her I had no idea where the flashlight was, I started to cry. Yes, it's true. I cried, I wailed, I boo-hooed like a baby. I pressed my hands over my eyes to stop the flow, and still the tears kept coming. We were stuck here in the dark and quiet forever. And, to top off my fear and misery, what did I hear? Emily! Laughing! That was the last straw.

7 "Here we are," I sobbed, "stranded in the dark with my parents lost, no doubt, in the storm, and you're laughing!"

8 "Look Amy," she said. She reached out for my hand. And there, glowing in the dark, were my ten fingernails, and down at my feet were my ten glowing toenails. I looked over at Emily, whose toes and fingers were all aglow too! "Glowing Green Goddess" was fluorescent!

9 "See, we're not completely in the dark!" she said. "We can use our toes and our fingers to guide us. At least we won't bump into each other. Here, grab that bottle of nail polish. We'll search for the flashlight by the light of 'Glowing Green Goddess.'"

10 And we did. We found the flashlight, but we didn't even use it because we preferred getting around the house by "toe-light." My parents eventually got home, and the telephone and electrical service were restored. But ever since that night, I have kept an extra bottle of "Glowing Green Goddess" around because you never know when you might need some polish power!



 **Think**

Using what you learned from reading the story, respond to the following questions.

1 Which sentence **best** supports the inference that Amy isn't having fun with Emily that night?

- A** "They are convinced that I still need a sitter."
- B** "Sometimes we actually have fun, since she always brings a supply of the newest shades of nail polish for me to try."
- C** "But on this particular night, I was having a hard time concentrating on the 'Glowing Green Goddess'"
- D** "I noticed that the familiar hum of the refrigerator was missing."

2 The following question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

Which of these inferences about Emily is supported by paragraph 9?

- A** Emily is bossy and loud.
- B** Emily is clumsy and stubborn.
- C** Emily is clever and creative.
- D** Emily is kind and caring.

Part B

Underline **one** sentence in the paragraph that **best** supports your answer from Part A.

"See, we're not completely in the dark!" she said. "We can use our toes and our fingers to guide us. At least we won't bump into each other. Here, grab that bottle of nail polish. We'll search for the flashlight by the light of 'Glowing Green Goddess.'"

- 3** The following question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

What is the meaning of the word aglow as it is used in paragraph 8 of “They Glow by Night”?

- A** very excited
- B** shining with light
- C** bright green
- D** painted

Part B

Which detail from the story helps the reader understand the meaning of aglow?

- A** The girls’ nails helped them see in the dark.
- B** The nail polish was a very flashy color.
- C** The girls were painting their nails.
- D** The girls were very excited to paint their nails.

- 4** From which sentence can you infer that Amy isn’t as grown-up as she thinks she is?

- A** “Sometimes when I write Aimee I use a little heart to dot the *i*, but I think I might be growing out of that. . . .”
- B** “I could feel myself getting more and more nervous—not for myself, of course—I was worried about my parents being out in the storm, however.”
- C** “Before I could tell her I had no idea where the flashlight was, I started to cry.”
- D** “But ever since that night, I have kept an extra bottle of ‘Glowing Green Goddess’ around. . . .”

**Write**

- 5 Short Response** Make an inference about how Amy feels about needing a baby-sitter **after** the events of this story. Explain your thinking. Include **two** details from the story to support your answer.

**Learning Target**

In the lesson, you learned how to use details and examples from a story to make inferences about what the story is telling you. Write about how making inferences helped you develop a better understanding of a story.
