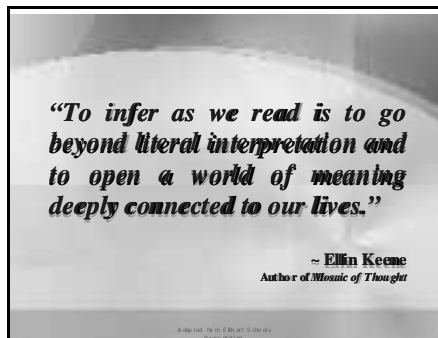


Slide 1



Making an inference is *“Reading between and beyond the lines.”*

Slide 2



*Allow time for participants to read the slide.*

We create an original meaning, a meaning born at the intersection of our background knowledge (schema), the words printed on a page, and our mind's capacity to merge that combination into something uniquely ours. We go beyond the literal and weave our own sense into the words we read. As we read further, that meaning is revised, enriched, and sometimes abandoned, based on what we continue to read.

Slide 3

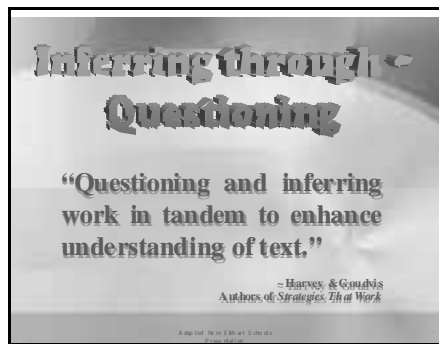


When proficient readers infer, they create a meaning that is not necessarily stated in the text. Inference is a tough strategy to teach because it involves many processes and requires the reader to hold several ideas in his/her mind.

When we infer, we use a combination of ~

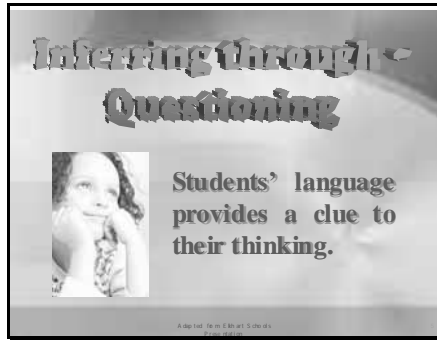
- Questioning
- Making Connections
- Background Knowledge (Schema)
- Predictions
- Imagination/Visualization
- Analysis of Text: Interpretation Judgments
- Drawing Conclusions

Slide 4



As students read, they ask questions to clarify their uncertainty and make inferences about their thoughts and the ideas/concepts within the text. Readers are able to think inferentially when they connect their background of information, ideas, and experiences with the text.

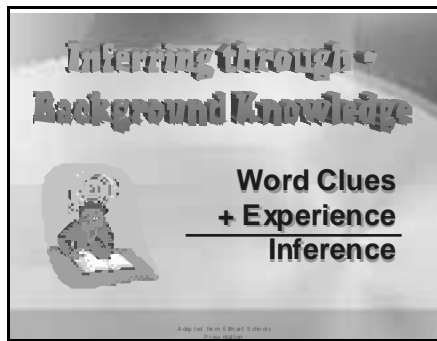
Slide 5



According to Harvey and Goudvis, when a student says, "Well, maybe it means . . .," we are quick to label his/her thinking as inferring. Or, when a student says, "I wonder . . .," he/she is posing a question. With questions like these, an inference is rarely far behind. Inferring and questions are next of kin.

As educators, it is important for us to engage in conversation with our students about their thinking processes while they are reading in order to help them clarify meaning and monitor comprehension.

Slide 6



If students do not have the experience portion of the equation (word clues + experience = inference), no matter how many words the author uses, the reader will not be able to think inferentially about the text.

Therefore, it is critical for teachers to provide experiences that build the background knowledge of their students.

Slide 7

**Inferring through -  
Background Knowledge**

Dorothy Strickland shares, "For struggling readers, it is critical that we not only activate their knowledge of topics they must read about and study, but also be aware of situations in which they have little or no background knowledge so that we can build essential understandings before they begin reading."

Adapted from E.W. at 5/20/14

*Read the slide.*

She goes on to say, "The time spent doing this might be the most important part of the lesson; without it, struggling readers have little chance of understanding what they are reading."

It is important for the readers to have background knowledge about a text they are reading if they are expected to read inferentially.

Slide 8

**Inferring through -  
Predictions**

Predicting is related  
to inferring - - -  
**BUT**  
what's the difference?

Adapted from E.W. at 5/20/14

According to Stephanie Harvey, making a prediction about an outcome, event, or action is confirmed or contradicted by the end of the story. Inferences are often more open-ended and may remain unresolved when the story draws to a close.

Slide 9

**Inferring through -  
Imagination/Visualization**

"When you read, you use all your senses. You see things in your 'mind's eye' and hear the sounds you connect to that about which you are reading."

- Guided Reading: the Four Block's Way

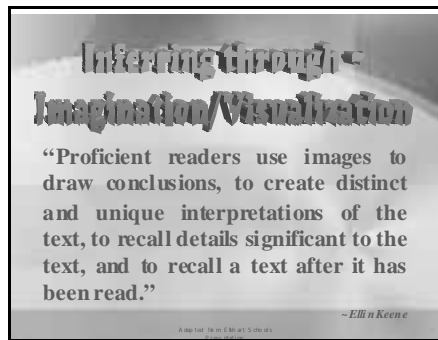
Adapted from E.W. at 5/20/14

We have all experienced a time when we were so "into" the book we could almost taste, smell, and feel the physical sensations we would actually have if we were in that situation. We almost get lost in the book and may sometimes be startled if someone interrupts us while reading.

In these situations, as you read, you imagine the situation about which you are reading, and you infer things the author has not told you in the text. You infer

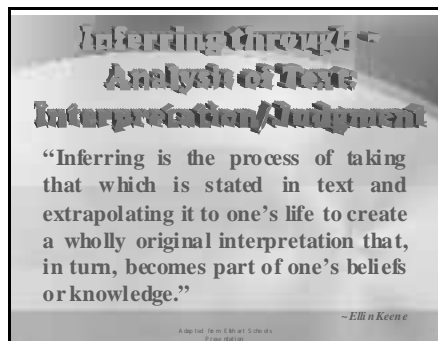
why things happen, why characters behave the way they do, and how characters are feeling. You enter the world created by the author, and you create images and inferences based on what the author tells you and on your own knowledge and beliefs about that world.

Slide 10



Ellin Keene also shares that, “Images from reading frequently become part of the reader’s writing. Images from a reader’s personal experience frequently become part of his/her comprehension.”

Slide 11

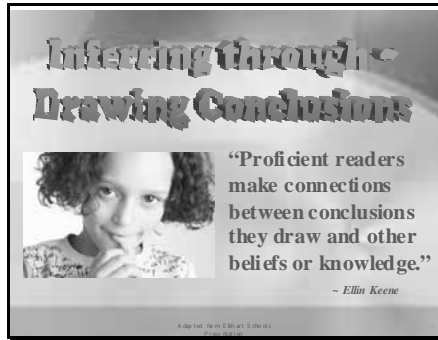


*Read Slide.*

It is critical for us as educators to ask the question of ourselves ~

How do you use the literal – the words printed on the page – to propel children to conclusions, predictions, and interpretations?

Slide 12



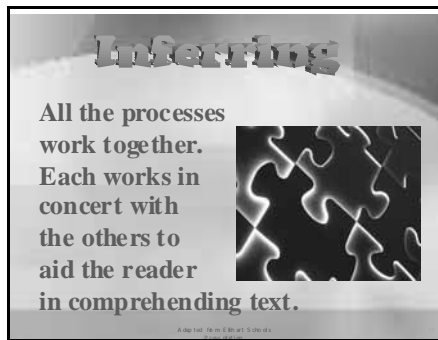
**Inferring through  
Drawing Conclusions**

“Proficient readers make connections between conclusions they draw and other beliefs or knowledge.”  
- *Ellin Keene*

Adapted from Ebnat S. Oros

Proficient readers draw conclusions from the text.

Slide 13



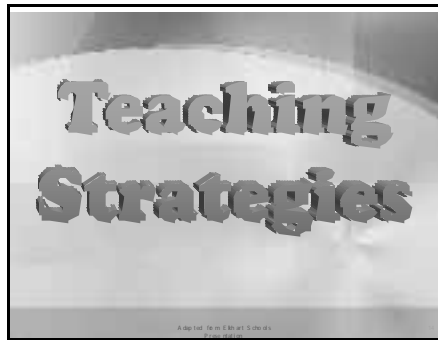
**Inferring**

All the processes work together. Each works in concert with the others to aid the reader in comprehending text.

Adapted from Ebnat S. Oros

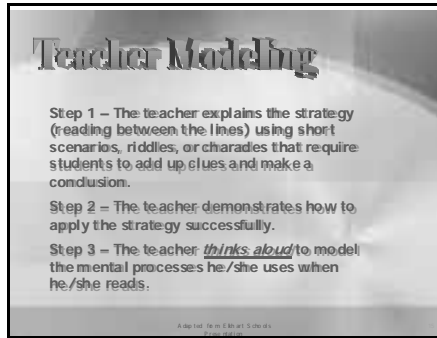
*Read Slide.*

Slide 14



**Teaching  
Strategies**

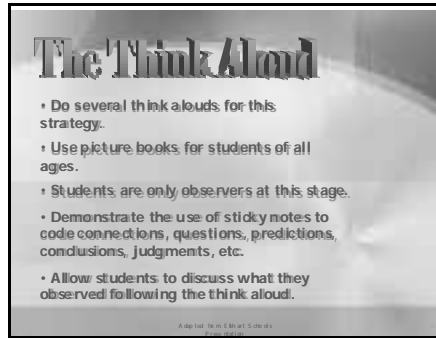
Adapted from Ebnat S. Oros



Once again applying the gradual release of responsibility, we begin with the teacher modeling the strategy. The importance of this strategy cannot be understated. Using the analogy of teaching a child to ride a bike, teacher modeling of the inference strategy is like having a child watch the adult ride the bike before teaching the child to do it.

Students can draw inferences from short scenarios. This can be a fun way to introduce what inference means. For example, tell them about this situation: "You just get home from school and you see a big truck in your neighbor's driveway. The front door of the house is propped open and someone is carrying a table to the truck." Then ask students questions such as, "What are the neighbors doing? How do you know that?" Make the students justify their answers and talk about their thinking as they answer the questions. Point out that our conclusion that the people are moving is not directly stated in the words; but based on our experiences, we can feel confident that our inference is correct. Using riddles, charades, and mystery stories can also be a fun way to get kids to think about inferring.

Slide 16



**The Think Aloud**

- Do several think alouds for this strategy.
- Use picture books for students of all ages.
- Students are only observers at this stage.
- Demonstrate the use of sticky notes to code connections, questions, predictions, conclusions, judgments, etc.
- Allow students to discuss what they observed following the think aloud.

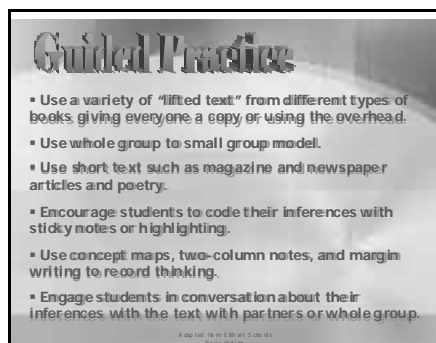
Adapted from EFL at Schools

*Allow time for participants to read slide.*

Harvey and Goudvis say that, “Much of what we do as educators is to make what is implicit explicit. Explicit reading instruction means that we show learners how we think when we read.” It’s important to point out to students ALL the thought processes we use in order to make an inference.

It is important to use several different types of text when modeling a think aloud for the strategy. Poetry can be a very useful tool for demonstrating inference as it often requires inferring setting, time periods, and other important elements. Narrative and expository text should also be modeled.

Slide 17



**Guided Practice**

- Use a variety of “lifted text” from different types of books giving everyone a copy or using the overhead.
- Use whole group to small group model.
- Use short text such as magazine and newspaper articles and poetry.
- Encourage students to code their inferences with sticky notes or highlighting.
- Use concept maps, two-column notes, and margin writing to record thinking.
- Engage students in conversation about their inferences with the text with partners or whole group.

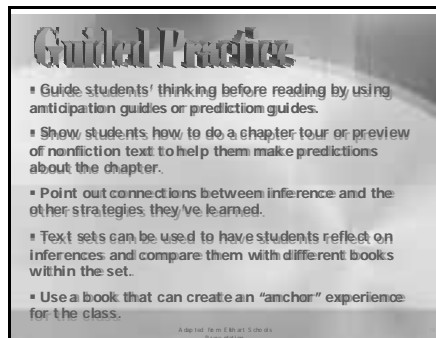
Adapted from EFL at Schools

Continuing with the analogy of teaching a child to ride a bike, the parallel with guided practice is having the child practice riding a bike with training wheels. What’s important here is that students are led by the teacher to form their own inferences while the teacher assists in clearing up misconceptions and assists them in monitoring their own comprehension. This step is important because in order to infer, students need to be able to hold several ideas in their minds at a time, which will be difficult for some students. At this step we show the students how to use tools such as highlighting, sticky notes, concept maps,



graphic organizers, two-column notes, and margin writing to assist our inferences.

Slide 18



**Guided Practice**

- Guide students' thinking before reading by using anticipation guides or prediction guides.
- Show students how to do a chapter tour or preview of nonfiction text to help them make predictions about the chapter.
- Point out connections between inference and the other strategies they've learned.
- Text sets can be used to have students reflect on inferences and compare them with different books within the set.
- Use a book that can create an "anchor" experience for the class.

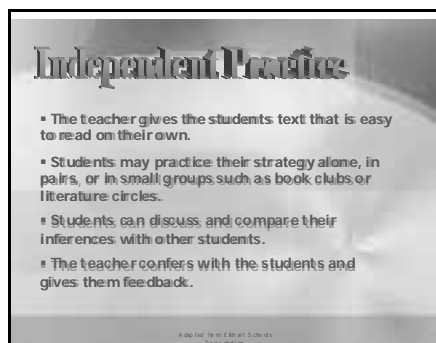
Adapted from EWL at 5:26:44

These are more suggestions for guided practice. Take a moment and read through them.

A text set is a group of books designed to support the study of a particular theme or genre across a variety of reading levels.

An "anchor" is a key lesson or minilesson that helps students learn and remember a specific strategy. The "anchor" is then referred to in order to activate prior knowledge during a related lesson.

Slide 19



**Independent Practice**

- The teacher gives the students text that is easy to read on their own.
- Students may practice their strategy alone, in pairs, or in small groups such as book clubs or literature circles.
- Students can discuss and compare their inferences with other students.
- The teacher confers with the students and gives them feedback.

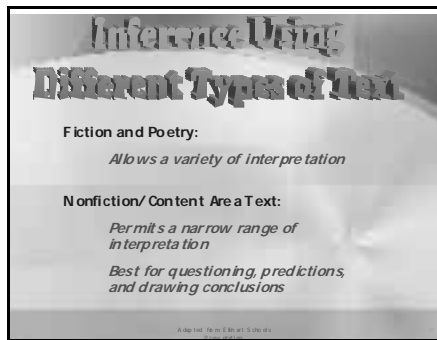
Adapted from EWL at 5:26:44

Finally, the child learning to ride a bike is ready to do it on his or her own. He/she takes the training wheels off and cruises up and down the street enjoying his/her new found independence,

**BUT** the teacher is still watching. Just like that child on the bike, it's now time for the students to take something they are able to read independently and use the strategy. But at the heart of this level is the conference with the teacher. In reading conferences, the teacher focuses on how the

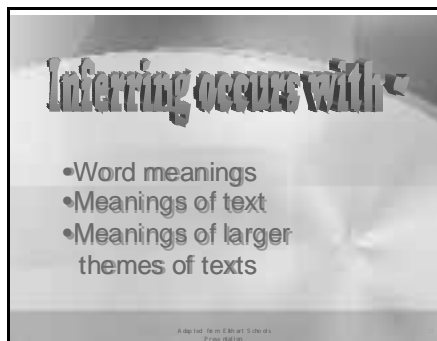
student understood the reading from his/her background knowledge and how he/she created new meaning not directly stated in the text.

Slide 20



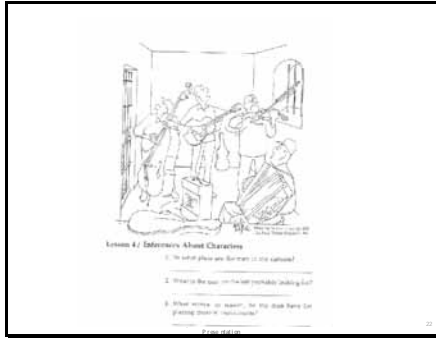
Some types of texts lend themselves better to using inferences than others. Teachers should allow great latitude for inferences, provided that the reader can defend his/her inferences with a description of relevant prior knowledge and specific text he/she has read.

Slide 21



As educators work with students to develop their ability to infer, unique and individual meaning can be created from a word, passages of text, or the theme of a large passage.

Slide 22



The humor in the cartoon depends on your ability to make inferences about what the men are trying to do. You learn about people in everyday life—and about characters in written selections—in similar ways. The way they act, their appearances, the situations they are in—all provide clues to what characters are like and what causes them to behave as they do.

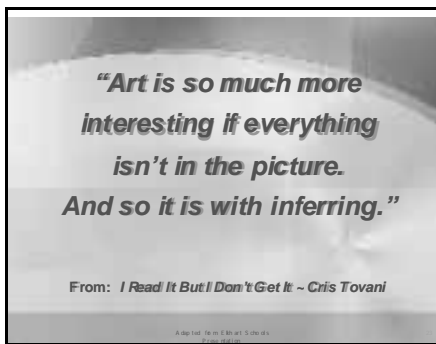
Questions on cartoon:

In what place are the men in the cartoon?

What is the man on the left probably looking for?

What motive, or reason, do the men have for playing musical instruments?

Slide 23



Reading is much more interesting if readers can add their own “two cents’ worth” as they unite personal connections with textual evidence. Inferring makes texts multidimensional. Readers get to put their personal stamp on every text they read.

*From : I Read It But I Don’t Get It ~ Cris Tovani*

Slide 24

