

Grade 5 Playlist: Drawing Inferences

Aligns with *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.1*:

- Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Welcome

Not all of the information in texts is directly stated. Reading would be boring if every text was just a list of facts. Reading is enjoyable partly because readers have to look at details about characters, settings, and events to draw inferences about what is happening in the text. The inference is an idea that the reader comes up with based on the text, such as how a character feels about another character or event.

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn to:

- draw inferences from the text.
- use evidence from the text to support inferences.

Review

Key Terms

- **Inferences** are thoughts and ideas about a text based on what is indirectly or *implicitly* stated.
- **Explicit** information is information stated directly in the text.
- **Evidence** is details, examples, and quotes in a text that help explain something about the text.
- **Quotes** are words, sentences, and phrases taken directly from the text.

Exploring the Standard

Explicit information answers several questions. *Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?* However, sometimes ideas are not clearly stated in a text, so readers have to go a step further and draw inferences. They must use the information given to determine the ideas developed in the text but not stated, such as how a character may feel about another character or event without a clear description of those emotions.

A Closer Look: Using Quotes When Drawing Inferences

When drawing inferences, it helps to use quotes to support the inferences. The evidence answers the question: **How does the reader know?** Quotes from the text contain explicit information about the text.

Read this excerpt from chapter 2 of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Dorothy's house has just been set down by cyclone, and she finds herself in a strange land filled with interesting people:



¹When these people drew near the house where Dorothy was standing in the doorway, they paused and whispered among themselves, as if afraid to come farther. But the little old woman walked up to Dorothy, made a low bow and said, in a sweet voice:

²**“You are welcome, most noble Sorceress, to the land of the Munchkins.** We are so grateful to you for having killed the Wicked Witch of the East, and for setting our people free from bondage.”

³**Dorothy listened to this speech with wonder. What could the little woman possibly mean by calling her a sorceress, and saying she had killed the Wicked Witch of the East?** Dorothy was an innocent, harmless little girl, who had been carried by a cyclone many miles from home; and she had never killed anything in all her life.

⁴But the little woman evidently expected her to answer; so Dorothy said, with hesitation, “You are very kind, but there must be some mistake. I have not killed anything.”

⁵“Your house did, anyway,” replied the little old woman, with a laugh, “and that is the same thing. See!” she continued, pointing to the corner of the house. “There are her two feet, still sticking out from under a block of wood.”

⁶Dorothy looked, and gave a little cry of fright. There, indeed, just under the corner of the great beam the house rested on, two feet were sticking out, shod in silver shoes with pointed toes.

⁷**“Oh, dear! Oh, dear!”** cried Dorothy, clasping her hands together in dismay. **“The house must have fallen on her. Whatever shall we do?”**

⁸“There is nothing to be done,” said the little woman calmly.

⁹“But who was she?” asked Dorothy.

This chart shows the inferences that a reader could draw from this excerpt:

Inference	Text Evidence (How does the reader know?)
The Munchkins and the Witch of the North think Dorothy has magic powers.	“You are welcome, most noble Sorceress, to the land of the Munchkins.”
Dorothy is confused by what the Witch of the North is saying.	Dorothy listened to this speech with wonder. What could the little woman possibly mean by calling her a sorceress, and saying she had killed the Wicked Witch of the East?
Dorothy did not mean to kill the Wicked Witch of the East.	“Oh, dear! Oh, dear!” cried Dorothy, clasping her hands together in dismay. “The house must have fallen on her. Whatever shall we do?”

Keep in mind that it is important for readers to quote accurately so that the inferences and support make sense. The way to ensure accuracy is as follows:

- Read the text carefully.



Teacher Notes: Drawing Inferences

The goal of RL.5.1 is for students to **understand** how to quote accurately when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text and be able **apply** their understanding when reading texts. The following information contains ideas that teachers can incorporate into their classroom as well as additional resources to peruse and integrate into instruction as appropriate.

Activities

1. Select an excerpt from a grade-appropriate text, such as *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, *Heidi*, “The Diamond Necklace,” and *The Story of the Treasure Seekers*. Come up with at least **four** inferences from the excerpt chosen. Then create flashcards with inferences and quotes from the text. Have students match the inference to the correct text evidence.
2. Have students fill out a graphic organizer based on an excerpt from a grade-appropriate text. Students will identify inferences and the quotes that support them.

Writing Prompt

1. Provide students with three simple sentences that provide explicit information (e.g., **Lucas is scared of clowns.**) Ask students to write a short paragraph about each of the sentences, so that the reader has to make an inference instead of just reading the explicit information (e.g., **Lucas loves the circus, but he refuses to go. Ever since he watched a horror movie about an evil clown, the sight of a clown makes him scream. He figures the best way to avoid seeing a clown is to avoid the circus entirely.**)

Answer Key: Practice!

Which details support the other two inferences? Look back at the text for quotes that **show** the father trying to be brave and how the narrator feels about the father.

The father is trying put on a brave face for his children: The narrator describes what the father said to them: “we should go to a good school” and “a holiday would do us all good.”

The narrator admires and cares for the father: The narrator compliments the father: “Because only cowards and snivellers cry, and my Father is the bravest man in the world.

Additional Resources

Consider these additional resources when teaching RL.5.1:

This video shows a teacher demonstrating how to form inferences:

- <https://www.opened.com/video/drawing-inferences/115148>

