

How to Make an Inference

When you see someone, you know some facts about the person right away. These are some facts you might know about the person:

- male or female
- someone you know or a stranger
- color of hair, eyes, and skin
- hairstyle
- clothing
- child or adult
- body shape



You can't know for a fact how the person feels or what the person thinks. You have to make a good guess. That kind of guess is called an **inference**.

You make an inference about things like these:

- how someone feels and why the person feels that way
- what will happen next or what someone will do
- why something happened
- what someone really means, no matter what words he says
- how people feel about each other or about you
- who people are to each other – strangers, friends, or relatives

Here's how to make an inference.

1. Think about **what you already know** about the person.
2. Look for **free clues** about what is happening.
3. **Guess** what the person feels or thinks and what the person might do next.

Clues from Pictures 10

Use what you know and clues from the pictures to answer the questions.

1.



- Where are these boys? How do you know?
- What are they doing? How do you know?
- Why are they running? How do you know?

2.



- Who are these people? How do you know?
- What is happening? How do you know?
- What might the woman (left) be thinking? Why?
- What might the girl (right) be thinking? Why?

Making Inferences Checklist

Student _____ Instructor _____

Dates _____

Check each way the student makes inferences appropriately and consistently without any cueing or prompting.

- _____ Detects and understands the significance of clues in pictures
- _____ Detects and understands the significance of clues in everyday situations
- _____ Makes appropriate inferences about characters and events in stories
- _____ Infers people's intentions and predicts their actions
- _____ Identifies causes and predicts consequences of comments and behaviors
- _____ Interprets gestures appropriately
- _____ Interprets facial expressions appropriately
- _____ Interprets others' emotions accurately
- _____ Pays attention to others' eye contact; interprets eye signals correctly
- _____ Recognizes when others need assistance and helps spontaneously
- _____ Detects when others are busy and would not welcome distractions
- _____ Modifies communication to show emotional support for others
- _____ Recognizes making social errors; learns from mistakes
- _____ Learns social behavior rules from observing others as well as personal experience
- _____ Detects the intent of a playful remark (doesn't take it too seriously)
- _____ Responds appropriately to hints used as gentle or indirect commands
- _____ Justifies inferences clearly to others