Lesson 2

Make Predictions and Inferences to Support Understanding

8.5(C) Make, correct, or confirm predictions using text features, characteristics of genre, and structures.
8.5(F) Make inferences and use evidence to support understanding.
8.5(G) Evaluate details read to determine key ideas.
8.6(G) Discuss and write about the explicit or implicit meanings of text.
8.5(I) Monitor comprehension and make adjustments such as re-reading, using background knowledge, asking questions, and annotating when understanding breaks down.

Introduction

Real-World Connection

When reading a mystery novel, Stacy tries to solve the mystery before she finishes the book. As she reads, she pays attention to the clues the author provides. Sometimes the clues are obvious, but other times she has to put together several clues to solve the mystery. As she reads, she gathers information and connects ideas that may change her predictions. Although some clues seem obvious, Stacy is later surprised by something that is revealed that she did not expect. She may even go back to reread something from earlier chapters if she is unclear on later events in the story. The whole time that she is reading, she is gathering strong evidence to support her ideas and understanding of the text. We will practice the skills in Guided Instruction and Independent Practice. Then, at the end of the lesson, we will revisit Stacy and her mysteries.

What I Am Going to Learn

• Predict outcomes in text using text features, characteristics of genre, and structures.
• Make inferences and use evidence to comprehend text.
• Evaluate details to determine key ideas.
• Identify explicit or implicit meaning of text through writing and discussion.
• Monitor comprehension and make adjustments as needed.

What I May Already Know 7.5(C), 7.5(F), 7.5(G), 7.6(G)

• I can make, correct, or confirm a prediction.
• I can use inferences and evidence from the text to help with understanding.
• I can identify details that support a main idea.
• I can find explicit or implicit meaning in a text.

Words to Know

analysis
explicit
implicit
inference
evidence
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Understand the TEKS

These vocabulary words will help you understand the TEKS.

Before you read, you should make predictions. Predictions are educated guesses about what will happen in the text. To make predictions before you read, skim the text. Take note of the title, headings, graphic elements, bolded words, sidebars, and any text structures that you see.

• If you see several illustrations that show a person making a craft project, what prediction can you make about the text?

• If you see a lot of dialogue between two characters in quotation marks, what prediction can you make about the text?

• If you see a chart that shows the number of people who carpool to work each day, what prediction can you make about the text?

As you begin to read, you should confirm or correct your predictions. Were you correct in your predictions? If not, you will need to correct your prediction.

Title: The Best Friend I Ever Had

• What prediction can you make about the text based on the title?

Now, read the first few sentences from The Best Friend I Ever Had.

Many people have a human best friend who listens to all of their problems and provides advice through all the ups and downs of life. My best friend is quite different. She is a great listener and a great companion, but she does a terrible job of giving advice. Why? Because she is a parakeet named Lucinda.

• Was your prediction correct? Only partly correct? Does it need to be changed or corrected?
As you read, you make an **analysis** of the text, which means you try to figure out what the author is saying and consider it thoroughly. You analyze a text by reading it closely, rereading it, annotating it, and possibly writing about it or discussing it with your teacher and your peers. To analyze a text, you must consider two types of information.

When authors say exactly what they mean, the text is **explicit**, or clearly stated. There are exact details that explicitly state what an author means.

> He was very tired when he got home from work.

This is an explicit statement that clearly states how the man felt when he got home from work.

Sometimes authors are **implicit**, which means they do not say exactly what they mean. Instead, they hint at or suggest meaning through words that are not plainly expressed. When authors are implicit, you have to find clues from the text to make an **inference**, an educated guess, about what the author is saying.

> After he got home from work, he slunk down into a reclining position on the couch without even removing his shoes.

This is an implicit statement. You have to infer, based on the information given, that the man is very tired.

During your analysis of a text, you are looking for **evidence**—a sentence or a phrase from the author’s work that supports your analysis and the inferences you will need to make. Even if the information is only implicit, there will always be evidence in the text that supports it.

When you use evidence from the text, you use key details, facts, information, or quotations from the text to support and prove your inferences or predictions and your understanding of the text. Which sentences or phrases you use as evidence depends on how the author presents information in the text. If you are not able to find evidence for an inference, your inference is likely not a correct one.

Some ideas in the text will be more important than others. As you read, take note of key ideas. Key ideas are ideas that are essential to the overall meaning and your understanding of the text. Read the paragraph below. Highlight key ideas in the text.

> Though the celebration of Juneteenth now occurs in many states, its origins lie in a small island off the coast of Houston. It commemorates June 19, 1865, in which Major General Gordon Granger issued the order freeing all slaves in the United States. His proclamation was given from a balcony in Galveston, Texas, where news of emancipation had not yet spread.

Sometimes key ideas will be implicit, and not stated directly. Read the paragraph below.

> Every morning, my sister straightens her hair with a flat iron. Then, she curls it with rollers. Finally, she uses hairspray to keep everything in place. After her hair routine is complete, she begins the process of finding an outfit. This includes trying on several options with many different shoes and accessories. An hour or more later, she heads out to the bus stop.

- What implicit key idea is expressed in this paragraph?
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Guided Instruction

Read the passage below. Then answer the questions in the margin and complete the activities.

A New Resident

1. As soon as day turned to dusk in Foggy River, doors were locked, and the alleys became empty. Newspapers and fallen leaves blew around vacant side streets, and no one dared utter even the slightest whisper.

2. For almost a month, the residents of Foggy River had reported hearing unusual sounds and seeing strange visions each day near the riverbanks.

3. Only one person dared go out at night: Nelson Harcourt. He seemed strange to many longtime residents, who were intrigued by his dress, his slow walk, and the way his black hat always seemed to shadow his face. He walked up and down the alleys each evening, and the sound of his shoes on cobblestone interrupted the silence.

4. Nelson knew what the others did not. Someone was coming to Foggy River.

5. How did Nelson know this? He had the gift of an extra sense. This sense foretold what would come. Of course, it was not a purely visual sense, or even an auditory one. It was a feeling he got. The feeling came on from time to time, and each time almost without any warning. It would begin with a twitch in his right foot and then an electrifying feeling in his body. Then, slowly, he would form the picture in his mind. This time what he saw was a man, tall and elderly, with a full grey beard that went to the middle of his chest. The man wore a lab coat and a pair of oval-shaped wire spectacles.

6. This visitor would be misunderstood just as he was, he deduced. The man who was coming to Foggy River would be like him in many ways, but very different in others.

7. Unlike Nelson, the new resident of Foggy River would startle residents in a very different way.

Guided Questions

Read the title of the text. What prediction can you make?

Read paragraph 2. What does the text explicitly say about the town residents?

Based on paragraphs 3 and 4, what inferences can you make about Nelson Harcourt?

What is the key idea of paragraph 5? Underline the portion of the text that supports your answer.
8 He would have knowledge of a great many things—things the sleepy town knew little of. He would bring an excitement and energy coupled with a failure to fully understand. He would jolt the town to life in a shared confusion.

9 But what exactly would the visitor bring? Who was he? These were things that Nelson Harcourt’s sense could not tell him. His vision stopped short of a truly vivid picture. He could only reluctantly wait and see.

Guided Questions

Read paragraph 8. Highlight the evidence that helps you infer that the townspeople might react badly to the new resident.

Read paragraph 9. Does Nelson’s special sense show him everything he wants to know? Highlight the sentence that leads you to this inference.

Critical Thinking

1. What can you infer about the activity of Foggy River residents at night by the author’s implicit statement “doors were locked, and the alleys became empty”?

2. Revisit the prediction you made about the text based on its title. Was your prediction correct? In what way was your prediction confirmed or corrected by reading further?

3. “The New Resident” includes information that suggests that individuals often misunderstand or fear what is unknown or different. Use the library and/or the Internet to locate a nonfiction article about something still largely “unknown.” You might consider topics such as outer space, the deep ocean, or any largely unexplained phenomenon. Before reading the article, use the article’s structure and text features to make at least two predictions. After you have read the article, write a short summary. Your summary should include at least three key details you learned from the text.
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How Am I Doing?

★ What questions do you have?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

★ What is the difference between text that is explicit and text that requires you to make inferences?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

★ Fill in the circle that shows how you are doing with the skill.

○ I am stuck. ○ I almost have it. ○ I understand the skill.
Independent Practice

Practice

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

from

The Importance of Being Earnest

by Oscar Wilde

Characters:
Lady Bracknell
John Worthing, J.P. (called Jack)

SCENE:
Jack proposed to Gwendolen, who has accepted his proposal. Lady Bracknell, who is Gwendolen’s mother, is speaking with him.

1 LADY BRACKNELL: [Pencil and notebook in hand.] I feel bound to tell you that you are not down on my list of eligible young men, although I have the same list as the dear Duchess of Bolton has. We work together, in fact. However, I am quite ready to enter your name, should your answers be what a really affectionate mother requires . . . I have always been of opinion that a man who desires to get married should know either everything or nothing. Which do you know?

2 JACK: [After some hesitation.] I know nothing, Lady Bracknell.

3 LADY BRACKNELL: I am pleased to hear it. I do not approve of anything that tampers with natural ignorance. Ignorance is like a delicate exotic fruit; touch it and the bloom is gone. The whole theory of modern education is radically unsound. Fortunately, in England, at any rate, education produces no effect whatsoever. If it did, it would prove a serious danger to the upper classes, and probably lead to acts of violence in Grosvenor Square. What is your income?

4 JACK: Between seven and eight thousand a year.

5 LADY BRACKNELL: [Makes a note in her book.] In land, or in investments?

6 JACK: In investments, chiefly.

7 LADY BRACKNELL: That is satisfactory. What between the duties exacted from one after one’s death, land has ceased to be either a profit or a pleasure. It gives one position and prevents one from keeping it up. That’s all that can be said about land.

8 JACK: I have a country house with some land, of course, attached to it, about fifteen hundred acres, I believe; but I don’t depend on that for my real income. In fact, as far as I can make out, the poachers are the only people who make anything out of it.
9  LADY BRACKNELL: A country house! How many bedrooms? Well, that point can be cleared up afterwards. You have a town house, I hope? A girl with a simple, unspoiled nature, like Gwendolen, could hardly be expected to reside in the country.

10  JACK: Well, I own a house in Belgrave Square, but it is let by the year to Lady Bloxham. Of course, I can get it back whenever I like, at six months’ notice.

11  LADY BRACKNELL: Lady Bloxham? I don’t know her.

12  JACK: Oh, she goes about very little. She is a lady considerably advanced in years.

13  LADY BRACKNELL: Ah, nowadays that is no guarantee of respectability of character. What number in Belgrave Square?

14  JACK: 149.

15  LADY BRACKNELL: [Shaking her head.] The unfashionable side. I thought there was something. However, that could easily be altered.

16  JACK: Do you mean the fashion, or the side?

17  LADY BRACKNELL: [Sternly.] Both, if necessary, I presume. What are your politics?

18  JACK: Well, I am afraid I really have none. I am a Liberal Unionist.

19  LADY BRACKNELL: Oh, they count as Tories. They dine with us. Or come in the evening, at any rate. Now to minor matters. Are your parents living?

20  JACK: I have lost both my parents.

21  LADY BRACKNELL: To lose one parent, Mr. Worthing, may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness. Who was your father? He was evidently a man of some wealth. Was he born in what the Radical papers call the purple of commerce, or did he rise from the ranks of the aristocracy?

22  JACK: I am afraid I really don’t know. The fact is, Lady Bracknell, I said I had lost my parents. It would be nearer the truth to say that my parents seem to have lost me... I don’t actually know who I am by birth. I was... well, I was found.

23  LADY BRACKNELL: Found!

24  JACK: The late Mr. Thomas Cardew, an old gentleman of a very charitable and kindly disposition, found me, and gave me the name of Worthing, because he happened to have a first-class ticket for Worthing in his pocket at the time. Worthing is a place in Sussex. It is a seaside resort.

25  LADY BRACKNELL: Where did the charitable gentleman who had a first-class ticket for this seaside resort find you?

26  JACK: [Gravely.] In a handbag

27  LADY BRACKNELL: A handbag?
28 JACK: [Very seriously.] Yes, Lady Bracknell. I was in a handbag—a somewhat large, black leather handbag, with handles to it—an ordinary handbag in fact.

29 LADY BRACKNELL: In what locality did this Mr. James, or Thomas, Cardew come across this ordinary handbag?

30 JACK: In the cloak-room at Victoria Station. It was given to him in mistake for his own.

31 LADY BRACKNELL: The cloak-room at Victoria Station?

32 JACK: Yes. The Brighton line.

33 LADY BRACKNELL: The line is immaterial. Mr. Worthing, I confess I feel somewhat bewildered by what you have just told me. To be born, or at any rate bred, in a handbag, whether it had handles or not, seems to me to display a contempt for the ordinary decencies of family life that reminds one of the worst excesses of the French Revolution. And I presume you know what that unfortunate movement led to? As for the particular locality in which the handbag was found, a cloak-room at a railway station might serve to conceal a social indiscretion—has probably, indeed, been used for that purpose before now—but it could hardly be regarded as an assured basis for a recognized position in good society.

34 JACK: May I ask you then what you would advise me to do? I need hardly say I would do anything in the world to ensure Gwendolen's happiness.

35 LADY BRACKNELL: I would strongly advise you, Mr. Worthing, to try and acquire some relations as soon as possible, and to make a definite effort to produce at any rate one parent, of either sex, before the season is quite over.

36 JACK: Well, I don’t see how I could possibly manage to do that. I can produce the handbag at any moment. It is in my dressing-room at home. I really think that should satisfy you, Lady Bracknell.
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1 Based on overall text structure, the reader can predict that —
   A the text will be literary nonfiction
   B the text will be a drama
   C the text will include mostly implicit information
   D the text will include few key details

2 Which sentence from the text was most likely included to give explicit information about who Jack is?
   F I have a country house with some land, of course, attached to it...
   G Well, I own a house in Belgrave Square, but it is let by the year to Lady Boxham.
   H The late Mr. Thomas Cardew, an old gentleman of a very charitable and kindly disposition, found me...
   J I can produce the handbag at any moment.

3 Which inference about Lady Bracknell does the stage direction in paragraph 5 best support?
   A She thinks Jack is lying to her about the amount of his income.
   B She wants her daughter to marry someone with a high income.
   C She knows her daughter will marry anyone with a high income.
   D She does not want to add Jack to her list of eligible young men.

4 What does the text say explicitly about how Jack makes money?
   F He owns two houses.
   G He has many investments.
   H He owns many acres of land.
   J He has inherited his income.

5 What key idea does the information in paragraph 3 support?
   A Lady Bracknell believes that ignorance is a good thing.
   B Lady Bracknell is not well-educated and despises those who are.
   C Lady Bracknell believes that Jack is largely ignorant.
   D Lady Bracknell wants to reform the educational system.
Assessment

Choose the best answer to each question.

1. Which sentence reveals how Jack feels about Lady Bracknell’s daughter?
   A. *I know nothing, Lady Bracknell.*
   B. *I need hardly say I would do anything in the world to ensure Gwendolen’s happiness.*
   C. *Well, I am afraid, I really have none.*
   D. *I really think that would satisfy you, Lady Bracknell.*

2. What was Lady Bracknell most concerned about in the circumstances that led to Jack losing both his parents?
   F. She was unsettled with his last name being a seaside resort.
   G. She assumed that carelessness led to his desertion.
   H. She was curious about his placement in the handbag given to Thomas Cardew.
   J. She questioned his worthiness without proof of societal position.

3. Lady Bracknell’s opinions indicate that —
   A. she will come to accept that her daughter should make her own decisions
   B. she will control events in her daughter’s future
   C. she will be satisfied as long as her daughter finds love
   D. she will leave important decisions up to her daughter once she is married

4. Which sentence best states an understanding of the implicit information revealed about Lady Bracknell’s hopes for her daughter?
   F. Lady Bracknell believes that her daughter will quickly fall in love with Jack.
   G. Lady Bracknell wants her daughter to marry someone with a sparkling personality.
   H. Lady Bracknell is seeking a man of particular prominence for her daughter.
   J. Lady Bracknell would prefer that her daughter marry an uneducated man.

5. Which provides the best evidence to use to make a prediction about this text prior to reading this selection?
   A. The title
   B. The text structure
   C. The graphic elements
   D. The character names
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Exit Ticket

Now that you have learned how to make inferences about a text and use evidence to support your analysis of the text, let’s revisit Stacy and the Real-World Connection. Read the lyrics to one of Stacy’s favorite songs. What strong evidence from the song can she use to support her inferences about the song? Complete the chart to show the inferences you can draw from the song lyrics and the quotations from the text to show as evidence.

I Waited at the Station

1. It’s 9 a.m. on Monday with my suitcase and my money.
2. You promised we would travel somewhere sunny.
3. Now it’s 6 p.m. on Monday. I’m standing here alone.
4. Even though you said you would not postpone.
5. I’m here crying and waiting, but you’re nowhere to be found.
6. Maybe I should go home.
7. But then what will I gain from standing in the rain?
8. I’m leaving anyway because tomorrow’s a new day.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>STACY’S INFERENCES</th>
<th>EVIDENCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can infer that the speaker is heartbroken and that the “you” is important to the speaker because of the sad emotions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I infer that, while waking, the speaker has looked around for the “you” in case the person is standing somewhere else.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can infer that the speaker has a positive outlook and will travel on his/her own.</td>
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