

What Helps You Analyze Characters' Motivations?

Feature Menu

[Making Inferences](#)

[Comparing and Contrasting](#)

[Making Connections](#)

[Your Turn](#)

[Back](#)

[Next](#)

[Feature Menu](#)

[Main](#) 

Making Inferences

In life, getting to know people can be hard. It can take time and careful observation to figure them out. ▾

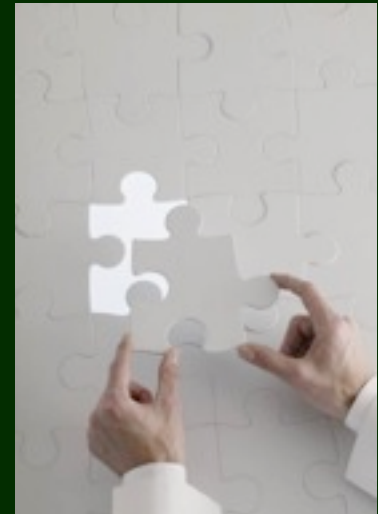
Getting to know characters in a story can also be challenging. These reading strategies can help you make sense of what characters do: ▾



make inferences



compare and contrast



make connections

< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Making Inferences

You can make **inferences**, or educated guesses, based on your observations and prior experience. ▾

When you see a group of classmates giggling in the hallway, what do you think is happening? ▾



The answer depends on your past experience with the group.



< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Making Inferences

If the students have been mean, you may decide they are laughing at someone. ▼



However, if they're friendly, you may think someone is telling a funny story about something that happened in class. ▼



Your past experience lets you make an inference, or guess, about why they're laughing.

< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Making Inferences

How to Make Inferences About Motivation

To make an inference about a character's motivations, combine the information the writer gives you with what you already know. ▾



information

+



your knowledge

=



inference

< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Making Inferences

How to Make Inferences About Motivation

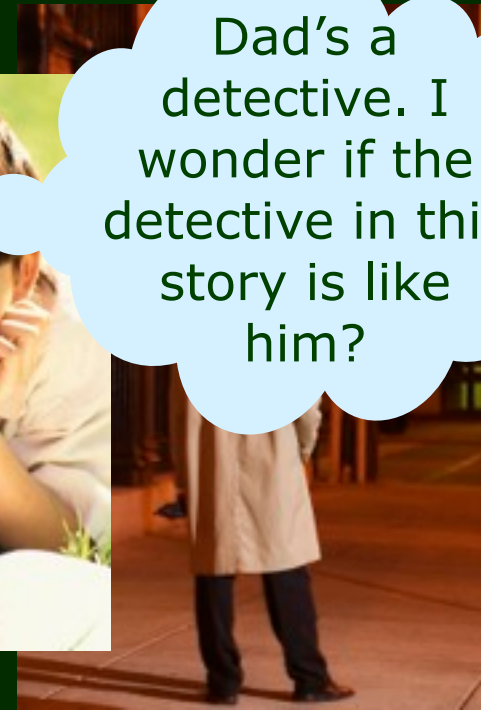
As you read, keep these questions in mind:

What does the writer tell you about how the character looks and acts? ▼



Dad's a detective. I wonder if the detective in this story is like him?

The detective turned up the collar of his raincoat against the cold, then stood motionless on the dark street, silently watching.



< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Making Inferences

How to Make Inferences About Motivation

As you read, keep these questions in mind:

What does the writer tell you about problems the character faces? ▼

What do you know about similar situations?



Boy, do I understand how Jason feels.

Jason hobbled awkwardly down the hallway, wondering whether he'd ever play football again. ▼

< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Making Inferences

How to Make Inferences About Motivation

As you read, keep these questions in mind:

What does the writer tell you about how others respond to a character? ▼

What do such responses tell you about a person? ▼

The school nurse truly cares about the health of the students.



Mrs. McCarthy is a wonderful school nurse. When I'm hurt or feeling sick, she listens and takes care of me.

< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Making Inferences

Quick Check

Ulrich carefully closed the principal's office door behind him. He was shaking and sweating.

"Are you okay?" asked Fred. "You're as pale as a ghost."

"Yeah, but I just can't believe it," replied Ulrich, wiping his forehead with the back of his hand.

Based on this passage and your own knowledge, what inference can you make about Ulrich?

Answer

[End of Section]

< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Making Inferences

Quick Check

Ulrich carefully closed the principal's office door behind him. He was shaking and sweating.

"Are you okay?" asked Fred. "You're as pale as a ghost."

"Yeah, but I just can't believe it," replied Ulrich, wiping his forehead with the back of his hand.

Based on this passage and your own knowledge, what inference can you make about Ulrich?

Ulrich seems shocked by something—good or bad—that he's heard from the principal.

< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Comparing and Contrasting

When you are getting to know a character in a book, think about how that character *is* or *isn't* like other characters you've read about. ▼



Inuit mom with son



Peruvian mom with son



Thai mom with son

< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Comparing and Contrasting

When you **compare** two characters, you look for ways in which they are alike. ▾

When you **contrast** characters, you point out their differences.



< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Comparing and Contrasting

Organize your discoveries about characters' similarities and differences in a Venn diagram like the one below. ▼

Character 1 ▼

- female
- class clown
- loves to play sports

Differences

Both characters face their problems bravely.

Similarities

Character 2 ▼

- male
- serious
- focuses on helping his family

Differences

< Back

Next >

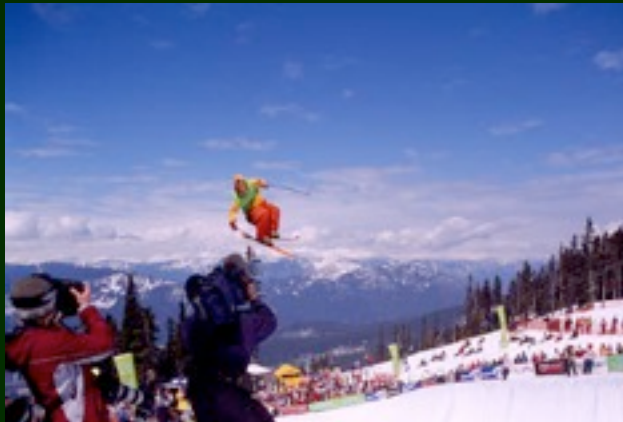
Feature Menu

Main 

Making Connections

You may not realize it, but you have a wealth of knowledge to draw on—simply from ▾

- reading stories, ▾
- meeting people, and ▾
- experiencing or hearing about world events.



< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

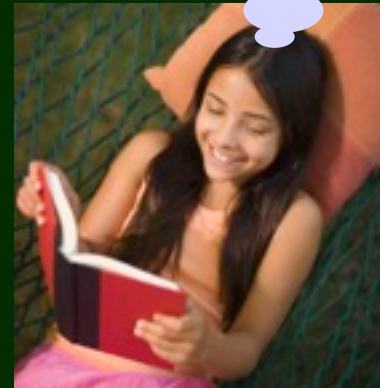
Making Connections

What you already know will help you understand the stories you read. That's **making connections.** ▼

Sheri ran onto the soccer field despite the pain in her ankle.

"I can do this," she said to herself. "I don't want the coach to think I'm weak and afraid."

The ball zoomed toward her. To make the pass, Sheri had to put all her weight on the injured ankle.



< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Making Connections

Read for deeper meaning by making three important types of connections to a text. ▼

Text to Self

Look for connections to your own life that help you put yourself in the story. ▼

Text to Text

Look for similarities between a new story and a familiar one. ▼

Text to World

Look for connections to similar situations or conflicts in your community and around the globe.

< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Making Connections

As you read about the characters in this chapter, use a chart like this one to connect to what you already know about people. ▼

	Character:	Oliver Benson
●	Situation:	He's afraid of air travel, but he wants to visit his sister in Italy.
●	Text to Self:	I'm afraid of heights.
	Text to Text:	
	Text to World:	

< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Making Connections

Quick Check

Aksana grinned as she walked from the library. *That was a great slide show, she thought. I loved seeing the pictures of my native country, Romania.*

“Hey, Aksana,” called Louisa, “wait up. Can you work with me on the social studies presentation? I want to learn more about Romanian politics.”

“Well,” said Aksana, “I was born after the 1989 revolution, but I’ve heard about it from my family.”

How does Aksana connect the slideshow to herself? to world events?

Answer

[End of Section]

< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Making Connections

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How does Aksana connect the slideshow to herself? to world events?

connection to self

connection to world

< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

Apply Reading Skills

Your Turn

Read the passage from “The Circuit” in your textbook. Then, answer the following questions.

1. What can you infer about the narrator’s feelings toward education?
2. Compare the situations of the narrator and his brother Roberto. How are they different? Why do you think they are different?
3. After reading the passage, what connection to historical events or to other works of literature can you make?

[End of Section]

< Back

Next >

Feature Menu

Main 

The End

[< Back](#)

[Next >](#)

[Feature Menu](#)

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