

PRACTICE Making Inferences

When you make an **inference**, or logical guess, you use details from the article, along with your knowledge and common sense.

Read the following paragraphs. Think about what the author tells you directly and what you have to infer.

Is it good manners to put your elbows on the table while eating dinner at someone's house? Since 1922, American people have turned to Emily Post's book *Etiquette* for instruction on good behavior. The funny thing is, Emily Post had never intended to write a book on manners at all!

In the 1920s, Emily was a prize-winning novelist and journalist who hated the snobbish tone that she found in most books on etiquette. One day, an editor friend, Frank Crowninshield, dared her to write an honest, down-to-earth book on good manners. Emily rose to the challenge and succeeded. The year that her book was published, it zoomed to the top of the bestseller list. In every social situation, people began to ask each other, "What would Emily Post say?" Even today, many years later, it is still in print, and Emily's name is so familiar that *Post, Emily* has become an entry in several dictionaries.

1. **Write one inference you can make about Emily Post. Then write the evidence you used to make your inference.**

Inference: _____

Evidence: _____

2. **Write one inference about the book that Emily Post wrote. Then write the evidence you used to make your inference.**

Inference: _____

Evidence: _____

PRACTICE**Making Inferences**

When you make an **inference**, or a logical guess, you use details or clues from the story and your own knowledge and common sense. Authors don't always explain everything directly, so it is important for you to be able to make inferences from what they write.

Read the following paragraph about Aaron Copland.

The Music Man

Often called the “dean of American composers,” Aaron Copland was one of our country’s most talented musical artists. Among his works are the scores for ballets, films, marching songs, children’s operas, and songs for workers. Many of his most famous pieces, such as *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo*, and *Appalachian Spring*, are still performed regularly by orchestras. His work has been imitated in commercials and in music for the Olympic games. From his humble beginnings as a piano student in his native Brooklyn, Copland went on to become one of the first musicians to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom as a contributor to American culture. Throughout his career, Copland referred to himself as just a “good citizen of the Republic of Music.” His contributions prove that he was indeed that, but also a great deal more.

Write three inferences you can make based on what you have learned about Aaron Copland. Then list the evidence you used to help you make each inference.

1. **Inference:** _____

Evidence: _____

2. **Inference:** _____

Evidence: _____

3. **Inference:** _____

Evidence: _____

PRACTICE Making Inferences

When you do not have enough details to draw a conclusion, you make an **inference**—a logical guess. Use details from the selection, along with your knowledge and common sense, to infer what the author has not directly stated.

Read this article about jogging.

Jogging has been popular for a long time in many countries around the world. It became popular in the United States about thirty years ago. Its popularity is understandable. Thirty minutes of jogging three or four times a week can strengthen your heart. Such jogging can also keep your lungs working at their full capacity.

There are a few things that people who jog should consider, though. You have to be careful not to become dehydrated. This happens when the body does not have enough fluids. To avoid this condition, you should be sure to drink plenty of water before and after running. Having a good pair of running shoes is also important. Running in regular sneakers is not a good idea and can cause injuries to your feet, legs, and back.

1. **Skim the first paragraph. What can you infer about the effects of jogging on the body?**

2. **Write two details from the paragraph that helped you make this inference.**

3. **Now skim the second paragraph. What inference can you make?**

4. **Write two details from the paragraph that helped you make this inference.**

When you make an **inference**, or logical guess, you use details or clues from the story and your own knowledge and common sense. Authors don't always explain everything directly, so it is important for you to be able to make inferences.

Read the following poem. Then answer the questions.

Aunt Fatima

Creamy toffee skin
Eyes like chocolate buttons
Appropriate for one
So sweet. Always teasing,
Her throat full with ready laughter,
On the darkest day, she was my sparkle.
Her hug: a soothing welcome home,
And later, after homework,
When all the books were closed
After snacks and late night chatting,
She'd always tuck me into bed.
So long ago it seems. So long ago.
But I can hear even now.
"Lucky us," she'd whisper.
And she was right!

1. What can you infer about the speaker's age at the end of the poem? _____

2. What details from the poem helped you make your inference? _____

3. What can you infer about the speaker's feelings for her Aunt Fatima? _____

4. What can you infer about Aunt Fatima? _____
