

Scaffolding Inference

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Levels of inference

Next, we need to be able to work out the roles and positions of characters or objects.

For example:

Bailey buried his bone beneath his kennel.

We can infer that *his kennel* refers to a location.

Your turn: What do you think Old Tom is in the following sentence? How do you know?

Old Tom gave a spine-chilling moan and drifted away through the wall opposite.



Levels of inference

Inference helps us to understand the reasons for a character's feelings or behaviour without the need to explain it in great detail.

For example:

Bailey barked loudly as the stranger hopped over the fence.

We can infer that Bailey was barking to alert his owners about an intruder.

Your turn:

Read this sentence.

After standing there for a couple of minutes,

Gaston coughed politely.

Why did Gaston cough?

How do you know?



Levels of inference

We can also look for clues in the text surrounding a particular word or sentence in order to draw inferences about it.

For example, where is 'she' in this passage?

She arrived in plenty of time, dressed neatly in her uniform and carrying her book bag. After talking to her friends for a couple of minutes, she heard the bell and went to line up with the rest of her class.

You are never told where 'she' is. You can, however, infer from clue words such as *uniform*, *book bag*, *bell* and *class* that she is lining up to go into school.

