

SMART™ Lesson

Inferring Meaning in Early Literature

What is Inferring?

Inferring involves making an educated guess or drawing a conclusion based on evidence or clues from the text. Inferring is an essential reading skill and can help readers comprehend texts deeply by making connections and bridging gaps in the text.

How to Infer Meaning?

To infer meaning, you need to:

- Read the text carefully
- Identify the evidence or clues
- Make logical inferences based on the evidence or clues
- Confirm your inferences by checking them against the text

Your inferences may not always be correct, but use the clues in the text to make the most educated guess about what is happening.

Inferring Meaning in Early Literature

Early literature was often written with subtle hints of meaning that the author wanted the reader to infer. There are many examples of this type of writing technique in early literature:

- **Fables** often contain animal characters that represent human characteristics or traits. It is up to the reader to infer the meaning behind the story.
- **Myths** often contain symbolism and metaphor that the reader must infer to understand the story's deeper meaning.
- **Parables** were often used in religious texts to convey complex spiritual concepts to the reader. The reader was required to infer the meaning behind the story and apply it to their own life.

Worksheet Questions

1. What is inferring, and how does it help readers comprehend texts?
2. What are the four steps for inferring meaning in a text?
3. What type of literary technique did fables use to convey meaning to readers?
4. What type of literary technique was often used in religious texts to convey complex spiritual concepts to the reader?

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