



ELA Virtual Learning

8th grade

**Drawing conclusions, inferring, and analyzing a
text**

April 29, 2020



8th Grade/ELA
Lesson: April 29, 2020

Objective/Learning Target:

- I can use textual evidence to analyze what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- I can write clear answers to constructed response questions with explained supporting evidence and relevant reasoning.

Warm Up

The first thing you are going to do is use song lyrics to determine what the singer/songwriter is explicitly saying and what the singer/songwriter is inferring.

When a text says something explicitly, it's saying it clearly. The details are easy to understand.

However, inferring means the reader has to “read between the lines”. The meaning isn't clear, so the reader must use clues from the text to understand what the writer is trying to say.

On the next slide are the lyrics to Elvis Presley's song, “In the Ghetto”. Use the link at the top to listen to the song and follow along with the lyrics. Slide 5 has a couple of questions to answer when you are finished with the song.

“In the Ghetto” by Elvis Presley

[Link to the song](#)

As the snow flies
On a cold and gray Chicago mornin'
A poor little baby child is born
In the ghetto (in the ghetto)

And his mama cries
'Cause if there's one thing that she don't need
It's another hungry mouth to feed
In the ghetto (in the ghetto)

People, don't you understand
The child needs a helping hand
Or he'll grow to be an angry young man some day?
Take a look at you and me
Are we too blind to see
Do we simply turn our heads, and look the other way?

Well, the world turns
And a hungry little boy with a runny nose
Plays in the street as the cold wind blows
In the ghetto (in the ghetto)

And his hunger burns
So he starts to roam the streets at night
And he learns how to steal, and he learns how to fight
In the ghetto (in the ghetto)

Then one night in desperation
A young man breaks away
He buys a gun, steals a car
Tries to run, but he don't get far
And his mama cries
As a crowd gathers 'round an angry young man
Face down on the street with a gun in his hand
In the ghetto (in the ghetto)

And as her young man dies
On a cold and gray Chicago mornin'
Another little baby child is born
In the ghetto (in the ghetto)

And his mama cries (in the ghetto)

Warm Up Continued

On a piece of paper, write a 2-3 sentence summary of what happens in the story. What does the singer/songwriter tell you explicitly (clearly)?

Next, it's time to make an inference, an educated guess, based on evidence from the lyrics. The song ends by saying, "And as her young man dies on a cold and gray Chicago mornin' another little baby child is born in the ghetto. And his mama cries." What can you infer will happen to this new baby born in the ghetto? Explain your answer in 1-2 sentences using evidence from the lyrics.



Warm Up Continued (Potential Answers)

On a piece of paper, write a 2-3 sentence summary of what happens in the story. What does the singer/songwriter tell you explicitly (clearly)?

The song is about a poor boy born in the ghetto. His mother doesn't have much money, so the boy is angry and gets into trouble. One night he gets a gun, steals a car, and ends up getting killed in the street.

Next, it's time to make an inference, an educated guess, based on evidence from the lyrics. The song ends by saying, "And as her young man dies on a cold and gray Chicago mornin' another little baby child is born in the ghetto. And his mama cries." What can you infer will happen to this new baby born in the ghetto? Explain your answer in 1-2 sentences using evidence from the lyrics.

I can infer that this new baby born in the ghetto will end up just like the young man who is killed. One reason I can infer this is because the lyrics "And his mama cries" give us a clue his future will be the same as the baby who is born at the beginning of the song because the mother in the beginning also cries when the baby is born because she doesn't have enough money.

Using What You Know

Now you are going to use what you know about determining the explicit meaning in a text and inferring what the author is saying in a text.

First, read the short story, “The Anatomy Lesson”, by Scott Sanders. Here is a link to the story: ["The Anatomy Lesson"](#)

When you are finished, use the back of the paper you used during the warm-up activity to answer the questions on the following slide. Each question needs to be answered in one or two complete sentences using evidence from the text.

Questions from “The Anatomy Lesson”

1. What does the narrator see the other students doing in the anatomy library? How does the text explicitly explain it?
2. What is unusual about the skeleton the narrator is trying to assemble? How does the text explicitly explain?
3. Using details from the text, what does the librarian explicitly reveal to the narrator about herself?
4. Using evidence from the text, what type of career do you think the narrator is pursuing?
5. Using evidence from the text, what can you infer will happen to the narrator?

Answer Key

1. The narrator sees other students examining bones in the anatomy library. The narrator explains seeing “students bent over the wooden boxes everywhere, in hallways and snack bar, assembling feet and arms, scribbling diagrams in notebooks. Half the chairs were occupied by slouching skeletons, and reclining skeletons littered the tables like driftwood.”
2. The skeleton the narrator is trying to assemble is “irregular” compared to a normal human skeleton. The narrator notices that the foot bones look like wings or flippers. The narrator also notes that the hand has six fingers instead of five with the extra finger being a second thumb. Also, the skull was double in normal size and there was a third eye socket.
3. The librarian reveals to the narrator that she is turning into whatever was in the box. She shows the narrator her hands that appear to have a spot for an extra thumb and her fingers curled in both directions. She said her “face was skinny” and her “shoes used to fit”. However, she claims she is human and says she is from Boise, Idaho.
4. I can infer that the narrator is pursuing a career in the medical field. I can confidently infer this because the narrator says he has an examination over the skeleton the next day. The narrator also refers to thinking back to an anatomy test to help him assemble the skeleton.
5. I can infer that the narrator is going to suffer the same fate as the librarian and the skeleton in the box. I believe that will happen because the librarian says the changes to her body started after she assembled that skeleton and the narrator also assembled that same skeleton. The narrator also ends the story by saying “[I] turned my hands over to examine the twitching skin where the knuckles should be. This is a clue the transformation is already beginning.

Additional Resources

Here is a list of other works by Scott Sanders:

- The Engineer of Beasts: A Novel (2019)
- Stone Country: Then & Now (2017)
- Dancing in Dreamtime: Stories (2016)
- Divine Animal: A Novel (2014)
- Earth Works: Selected Essays (2012)
- A Conservationist Manifesto (2009)
- A Private History of Awe (2006)
- The Force of Spirit (2000)
- The Country of Language (1999)
- Hunting for Hope (1998)
- Writing from the Center (1995)
- Staying Put: Making a Home in a Restless World(1993)
- Secrets of the Universe (1991)
- The Paradise of Bombs (1987)
- Bad Man Ballad (1986)
- Terrarium (1985)
- Wilderness Plots (1983)

