

# Clues in the Text: Making Inferences — Facilitator guide

Teaching notes and answers

## Overview & Pedagogical Guidance

This guide supports the Grade 5 lesson on making inferences using text evidence and schema. When assessing student work, emphasize that an inference is a logical conclusion built by combining clues from the text with what the reader already knows (schema).

**Important Note on Body Language:** Remind students that body language alone (such as clenched fists or shaking hands) does not definitively prove a specific feeling. Physical reactions are clues that must be combined with situational context and schema to form a logical inference. Different people may express the same emotion in different physical ways.

**Accepting Multiple Interpretations:** Encourage diverse, well-supported interpretations. If a student can logically connect their inference to a specific text clue and explain it using valid background knowledge, their response should be considered correct, even if it differs from the sample answers.

## Mateo & Maya Sample Responses

**Mateo's Scenario (Warm-Up) Sample Response:** Mateo may or could be feeling angry, frustrated, or upset. Text Clues: 'hands clenched into tight fists,' 'shoulders remained stiff,' and 'walked out... without saying a word.' Schema: People often clench their fists and refuse to speak when trying to control anger, though physical reactions are clues and do not definitively prove an emotion. Inference: Mateo could be angry or frustrated and might need space, but other supported interpretations are acceptable.

**Maya's Scenario (Exit Ticket) Sample Response:** Maya may or could be feeling anxious, nervous, or apprehensive. Text Clues: 'hands shook,' 'took a deep breath, closed her eyes,' and 'slipped it into her desk drawer without opening it.' Schema: Shaking hands and deep breathing can be clues of nervousness, and putting a letter away without reading it might suggest hesitation, though physical reactions do not prove an emotion and we do not know the envelope's contents. Inference: Maya could be anxious or nervous about the envelope, but other supported interpretations are acceptable.

## The Missing Key — Graphic Organizer Exemplar

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Row 1 Exemplar — Text Clue: 'Her fingers met empty space. Her heart did a sudden flip. She frantically patted her jeans pockets...' | Schema: Reaching for an important item and finding it missing can cause a sudden physical reaction like a racing heart, though physical clues do not prove an emotion. We also do not know if she has permanently lost her key. | Inference: Clara could be feeling startled or worried that she misplaced her key, but other supported interpretations are acceptable.

Row 2 Exemplar — Text Clue: 'The sun was dipping below the tree line, casting long, eerie shadows. A cold wind began to whistle through the branches.' | Schema: A forest growing dark with cold wind can feel spooky or unsettling to someone outside, though setting clues do not guarantee how a character feels. | Inference: Clara may feel uneasy or anxious about the approaching darkness, but other supported interpretations are acceptable.

Row 3 Exemplar — Text Clue: 'Clara swallowed hard, her eyes wide as she gripped the porch railing... the front door was locked tight.' | Schema: Swallowing hard and wide eyes can be physical clues of fear or anxiety, but they do not prove an emotion. Being locked out at dusk often causes worry, though we do not know if she has permanently lost her key. | Inference: Clara could be feeling anxious or scared because she is locked out as night falls, but other supported interpretations are acceptable.

## Worksheet answer copy

An inference is a logical conclusion built by combining clues from the text with what you already know (your schema). Good readers look for these clues to understand characters and events that the author doesn't state directly.

### Part 1: Warm-Up — Mateo's Scenario

Read the short passage below. Pay close attention to Mateo's actions and body language.

Mateo stared at the floor, his hands clenched into tight fists. He took a deep breath and slowly released it, but his shoulders remained stiff. When his sister asked if he wanted to play, he walked out of the room without saying a word.

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1. What is Mateo feeling? Write down your inference and explain which clues in the text helped you figure it out.

**Answer:** Mateo may or could be feeling angry, frustrated, or upset. The text says his hands were clenched into tight fists, his shoulders remained stiff, and he walked out without speaking. While these physical reactions are clues, they do not prove an emotion. I know from my own experience that people often clench their fists when angry, but other supported interpretations are acceptable.

## Part 2: Reading — The Missing Key

Read the story below. Look for clues that tell you more about Clara's feelings and the situation.

Clara kicked off her muddy boots and reached into her jacket pocket. Her fingers met empty space. Her heart did a sudden flip. She frantically patted her jeans pockets, then dumped the contents of her backpack onto the porch floor—pencils, a crumpled notebook, and a half-eaten apple rolled out, but no brass ring.

She looked back down the gravel path winding into the dark woods. The sun was dipping below the tree line, casting long, eerie shadows. A cold wind began to whistle through the branches. Clara swallowed hard, her eyes wide as she gripped the porch railing. She had promised her father she would be home before dark, and the front door was locked tight.

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## Part 3: Inference Graphic Organizer

Complete the graphic organizer below by making three logical inferences based on 'The Missing Key'. For each inference, identify the text clue and explain how your background knowledge (schema) helped you reach that conclusion.

| Text Clue / Evidence | My Schema (What I Know) | My Inference |
|----------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
|                      |                         |              |
|                      |                         |              |
|                      |                         |              |

## Part 4: Exit Ticket — Maya's Scenario

Read the passage below and answer the question.

Maya's hands shook as she held the envelope. She took a deep breath, closed her eyes, and slipped it into her desk drawer without opening it.

2. What can you infer about Maya's feelings? Explain your inference using clues from the text and your background knowledge.

**Answer:** Maya may or could be feeling anxious, nervous, or apprehensive. The text says her hands shook, she took a deep breath, closed her eyes, and slipped it into her desk drawer without opening it. While these physical reactions are clues, they do not prove an emotion, and we do not know the envelope's contents. I know that people's hands might shake when they are nervous, but other supported interpretations are acceptable.

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