

The idea

An inference is a claim the text supports without stating. These five books all withhold something and leave the evidence for it in plain sight - some show the reader missing an inference at first, while others show a narrator or character drawing the wrong one even when the evidence is genuine. That complication is what stops the skill collapsing into guessing. The unit develops the skill through six moves: evidence that was there all along and gets missed; questions that help a reader find evidence; evidence that cannot be trusted; a narrator who misses an inference the reader can make; real evidence that supports a wrong conclusion; and evidence carried by pictures as well as words.

Day 5 is the day that matters. *Chicken Big* shows characters reasoning from genuine evidence and still reaching the wrong conclusion,

so the class cannot conclude that careful reasoning is always rewarded. Nothing else in this unit makes that point as directly.

The arc

1. A book can tell you something without saying it
2. Good questions help you find the evidence
3. Some evidence is not to be trusted
4. A narrator can miss an inference the reader can make
5. Careful reasoning from real evidence can still be wrong
6. Words and pictures can provide different evidence for the same claim

The 6 days

DAY 1

Who Is Sarah Go back through the book and find the clues that Sarah is not a child.

Why here. First because the evidence is complete on the first reading and the class still misses it. Finding it on the second pass is the most persuasive possible introduction to the skill.

From First Day Jitters by Julie Danneberg · Inference from evidence that was there the first time 35 min full · 20 min short · Makes: A table of clues and what each one tells you

DAY 2

The Questions Ace Asks Track the questions asked in this mystery, whether they get answered, and which questions help uncover useful evidence.

Why here. Second because inference depends on finding the right evidence. A detective's questions give the class a practical method for locating clues before they have to judge what those clues support.

From Ace Lacewing - Bug Detective by David Biedrzycki · Asking questions that help uncover evidence 34 min full · 18 min short · Makes: A table of questions and answers, then two evidence-finding questions of your own

DAY 3

Follow The Honey Collect the clues in this mystery and work out which one actually helps solve it.

Why here. Third, and the pair to day 2 - now the questions are used on a trail that includes one witness who should not be believed.

From Ace Lacewing - Bug Detective by David Biedrzycki · Inference from evidence, including evidence not to be trusted 35 min full · 20 min short · Makes: A clue table, and a judgement about a witness

DAY 4

The Secret Recipe Work out what Dad's plan really was, using evidence he never explains.

Why here. Fourth. The narrator is in front of the evidence throughout and never draws the inference. The class outruns the person telling the story, which they enjoy and which is the skill.

From Enemy Pie by Derek Munson · An inference the book never states, and a narrator who misses it 35 min full · 20 min short · Makes: A written explanation with three pieces of evidence

DAY 5

Wrong Every Time Find the clue behind each of the chickens' wrong answers, and say why the conclusion does not follow strongly enough from the evidence.

Why here. Fifth, and the turn of the unit. Genuine evidence, careful reasoning, wrong conclusion, five times over.

This is where the class learns that an inference is a claim to be tested, not a guaranteed result.

From Chicken Big by Keith Graves · Inference gone wrong, from evidence that was genuine 35 min full · 20 min short · Makes: A table of clues, conclusions, and why the evidence was not enough

DAY 6

What The Words Do Not Say Work out what the pictures are telling you that the words leave out.

Why here. Last: evidence in the illustration that adds to and sometimes contradicts the words.

Hardest, because two sources have to be weighed against each other.

From Oddrey and the New Kid by Dave Whamond · Inference from what an illustration adds and contradicts 34 min full · 18 min short · Makes: Three findings, each matched to a page Words to use Word How it is used clue Anything on the page that supports a claim. Introduced day 1 and used all unit. says / shows / makes you think Three different strengths, kept apart deliberately. wrong

Day 5. Applied to the characters' reasoning, never to a child's.

What to prepare Checkpoint 1 page, one per child Checkpoint 2 page, one per child A four-row clue table per child for the performance task Checkpoints After day 3 · The claim and the clue One page of Ace Lacewing. The child makes a claim the page does not state directly and names the clue behind it. Without a book. No - it needs the page, which can be photocopied. Look for. The claim can be worked out from the page, and the clue is a specific line or detail. "It says so on this page" is not yet a clue. Say to the child. Tell me something you can work out from this page that it does not say directly. Now tell me what made you think it. After day 6 · Which conclusion is best supported? Give the child three clues about one question, with one clue coming from a less reliable source. Ask the child to choose the conclusion best supported by the full set, then identify which clue they would rely on least. Without a book. Three short clue statements and two possible conclusions on a page are enough. Look for. The child chooses the conclusion that fits the evidence best, then identifies the weaker clue and gives a reason about its source or how little it supports the claim. Ranking only by how dramatic a clue sounds is not enough. Say to the child. Which conclusion is best supported by these clues? Which clue would you trust least, and why? The task at the end

The clue table Each child takes one of the five books and fills four rows. Each row records the claim, the clue, where the clue is, and how strongly the clue supports the claim. They then swap tables with a partner, who has to find each clue in the book and mark any row where the clue is not where it says or does not support the claim as strongly as the writer says. For a book that includes an unreliable source, students may also note that source reliability affects how strongly the clue should count. Collect. The completed table and the partner's check marks. Time. One session of about 40 minutes.

Teacher key

Checkpoint 1: on Ace's crime-scene page, the tape, the honey and the witness are clues; the room being full of insects is setting. Checkpoint 2: the strongest answer chooses the conclusion supported by the full set of clues and identifies the clue from the less reliable source as weaker. The reason should name either the source problem or the weak connection to the claim, not simply say the clue sounds strange. Task: the partner's check is the real assessment. A row whose clue cannot be found, or whose clue does not actually support the claim, is the commonest failure and the most instructive. What a strong answer looks like Strand What to see Claim States something the book does not say directly. Evidence Names a specific line, detail, or illustration behind it. Location Can find the evidence again on request. Weighing Says how strongly the evidence supports the claim, and why. Keeping the daily evidence Keep one claim-and-clue pair from day 1 and one of the child's page-matched findings from day 6. The unit is working when the evidence stops being "the whole page" and becomes a specific line, detail, or part of an illustration, and when the child can say how strongly it supports the claim. What to pass on A child who chooses conclusions by how interesting they sound rather than by how well the clues support them should meet the Grades 2-3 evidence unit with that flagged.

Day 5 is often uncomfortable for a class that has been rewarded for confident

answers. Let the wrong conclusions stand for the whole session before resolving them. The books this unit uses Ace Lacewing - Bug Detective by David

Biedrzycki · 2 lessons Enemy Pie by Derek Munson · 1 lesson First Day Jitters by Julie Danneberg ·	1 lesson
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