

Why He Keeps Looking

TIME	30 minutes full · 15 minutes short
PRIMARY SKILL	Infer a reason from evidence supplied across a text
OBJECTIVE	Collect information given at different points in a book, distinguish what is stated from what is inferred, and use the accumulated evidence to explain why a search matters so much to a character.
STUDENT EVIDENCE	A two-column record: what the book states and what the reader can infer from those statements.
ESSENTIAL QUESTION	How do you make an inference when the reason is supplied in pieces instead of one sentence?

Before teaching

Read or play the complete book before the timed lesson. Keep the book available so claims and evidence can be checked against the text. Book-specific targets: Collect the early pieces about Reece's search and the later information that completes the reason, including the late creek revelation.

Materials:	the book, Student Evidence page, pencil.
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Lesson sequence

TIME	TEACHING MOVE
4 min	Start with stated facts Collect the early information without explaining it.
6 min	Add later evidence Record what the book reveals later.
7 min	Separate told from inferred Put each item in the correct column.
8 min	Build the reason Use at least two stated details to explain why the search matters.
5 min	Check the inference Point to the two strongest details and remove any claim they do not support.

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Access routes

SOLO	Use the book independently to complete the evidence page. Require book-based support for the reasoning.
SUPPORTED	Pause at the key evidence moments. Rephrase the task orally, then have students point to or record evidence before explaining.
LISTENING	Use narration and illustrations. Ask the same book-specific questions orally and accept pointing, choosing between evidence already visible in the book, drawing, or an oral explanation. Do not require teacher-invented answer choices.
EXTEND	Apply the same reasoning move to a second moment in the book or ask students to explain why a tempting alternative is weaker.

Teacher guidance

This is whole-text inference. Require evidence from more than one point in the book so the lesson does not collapse into explaining one scene.

Book-specific answer anchors

- Reece keeps looking for Burgess for more than the ordinary reason that a pet is missing. Burgess is tied to Reece's absent father and to the time Reece and his father first found the frog together.
- Early evidence: Reece is missing two things at once - his father, who is living in another city after his parents' separation, and Burgess.
- Late evidence: on the camping trip Reece returns to the creek on Salt Spring Island where he and his father first found Burgess. That place completes the inference: finding the frog is also a way of holding onto the connection with his father.

Assessment

- Evidence comes from more than one point in the text.
- Stated information and inferred meaning are kept separate.
- The final reason is supported by at least two recorded details.

Short route · 15 minutes

3 min - name/model the skill. 8 min - gather the minimum evidence required on the student page. 4 min - explain the answer and verify it against the book.

Watch for

Giving a plausible reason based on general character knowledge but not showing how separate details across the book build it.

Source note

Extracted and audited as a standalone from the ELA unit Using the Evidence. No regional standards are attached to this standalone skill lesson.

STUDENT EVIDENCE · GRADES 2-3

Where's Burgess?

Why He Keeps Looking

Name _____ Date _____ A two-column record: what the book states and what the reader can infer from those statements.

WHAT THE BOOK STATES EARLY

WHAT THE BOOK STATES LATER

WHAT I INFER

EVIDENCE 1

EVIDENCE 2

EXIT CHECK

How do you make an inference when the reason is supplied in pieces instead of one sentence?

TEACHER KEY · GRADES 2-3

Where's Burgess?

Why He Keeps Looking

Book-specific answer anchors

- Reece keeps looking for Burgess for more than the ordinary reason that a pet is missing. Burgess is tied to Reece's absent father and to the time Reece and his father first found the frog together.
- Early evidence: Reece is missing two things at once - his father, who is living in another city after his parents' separation, and Burgess.
- Late evidence: on the camping trip Reece returns to the creek on Salt Spring Island where he and his father first found Burgess. That place completes the inference: finding the frog is also a way of holding onto the connection with his father.

Expected student evidence

- Evidence comes from more than one point in the text.
- Stated information and inferred meaning are kept separate.
- The final reason is supported by at least two recorded details.

Watch for

Giving a plausible reason based on general character knowledge but not showing how separate details across the book build it.

Independent success

The student completes the required evidence product, uses the named book-specific evidence above, and can explain the reasoning move without relying only on recall or a teacher-supplied answer.

Unit source

Using the Evidence · Where's Burgess? by Laurie Elmquist