

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# WHAT IS AN INFERENCE?

Writers don't always come right out and tell you what they mean. Often, you have to INFER, or draw a conclusion, based on clues in the text. This is sometimes called "reading between the lines." Here are two examples:

**Max looks longingly at Rosie's fries and asks, "Are you going to finish those?"**  
*You can infer that Max wants to eat Rosie's fries.*

**Kai pointed at a sign across the street. "Does that say 'museum'?" he asked. "I don't know," Jay muttered. "I wish I'd paid more attention in French class."**  
*You can infer that Kai and Jay are in a French-speaking city and that the sign is in French.*

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**Directions:** Practice making inferences with the multiple-choice questions below.

1. At the door, Lena searched her purse. She pulled out her wallet, hairbrush, gum, earbuds, and pens. She found everything except the one thing she needed. Frustrated, she sat down on her front porch and waited for her brother.

**You can infer that Lena**

- A. prefers a different kind of gum.
- B. needs a new purse.
- C. lost her keys.
- D. is mad that her brother is late.

2. Jose threw his backpack down and ran to the stack of mail on the counter. His hands trembled as he held up a thin white envelope.

**You can infer that Jose**

- A. gets interesting letters every day.
- B. wasn't expecting this letter.
- C. doesn't know who the letter is from.
- D. is nervous about this letter.

3. "This will only hurt for a second," said Dr. Thomas while she prepared the shot. Eva squeezed her eyes shut and gripped her paper gown.

**What conclusion can you draw?**

- A. Eva has measles.
- B. Eva has never been to the doctor before.
- C. Eva is scared of getting shots.
- D. Eva doesn't like Dr. Thomas.

4. When Boomer heard the car pull into the driveway, he bounded off the couch and wagged his tail excitedly. The front door opened and Boomer leaped onto Eddie, licking his face and knocking him over onto his suitcase.

**You can infer that Boomer**

- A. is upset that Eddie went away without him.
- B. is glad that Eddie is back from a trip.
- C. knows Eddie has a treat for him.
- D. is always happy when Eddie returns.