

THE 10

# Make Inferences

## Build Awareness of the Strategy

Help students knowingly use *Making Inferences* as one of the strategies enabling them to learn, remember, and apply what they read. Making Inferences is a tool that takes us beyond what is literally on the page, expanding it to open up new meanings and personal connections. When we infer, we take statements in the text and “read between the lines” to figure out what an author is hinting at or to draw our own conclusions.

Point out that we often naturally make inferences when we read. For instance, if we are reading an article about a hospital closing, we would probably ask ourselves why. The reason might not be directly stated in the article, but from other facts in the article as well as what we know about where it is located, we might infer that the hospital was not getting enough funding to stay open.

## Talk Through the Strategy

Model the strategy for the selection your students are reading. Use think-alouds and invite discussion as you model. Model what active readers do as they read in order to build and deepen comprehension. You might model marking the text with sticky notes or writing inferences in a notebook as you demonstrate the strategy.

## Include as many of these as apply in your modeling:

1. **Set the stage** for *Making Inferences* by asking new essential questions before and during reading or referring to questions that have already been established. Show how to make inferences to answer the questions.
2. **Model the strategy** by relating the text to something you have experienced, learned, or read previously. For example, if you are reading an article describing the damage from Hurricane Katrina, you might use what you already know about the low-lying land along the Mississippi River to infer that when the levees burst, the city would flood. Use the specific prompts for *Making Inferences* on the Teaching Card or add your own.
3. **Review the strategy** by drawing on an issue or aspect of the text that has personal relevance for you.

## Additional active reading techniques:

- Question the text, argue with it, or raise doubts about it.
- Show how to include your own ideas when you restate the text.
- Make an inference by connecting two or more details from different places in the text.
- Use the text as your support to make an argument or try to persuade someone.
- Make inferences as you reflect on the text after reading.

## Independent Practice

Have students work collaboratively or independently to apply *Making Inferences* with another text. Suggest the book listed on the Teaching Card in the Read Across Texts section, or another book you or your students choose. You might have students make inferences in a short piece of writing about the book.