

Evidence for Inferences



Connections

Finding and evaluating evidence for inferences is an important skill. It's how you show whether the inference is valid. Does the text support it?



Why Should You Learn It?



Curtis says:

When you make an inference about something, it needs to be backed up with evidence. Pretty straightforward, right? Where, in the text, do you get that idea? The better you are at finding evidence, the better your reading and analysis skills will be.

Evidence is a big deal, because you're making a leap in logic when you make an inference, whether it's a big inference or a small one. And you want to know whether you're right. One of the kids in my neighborhood had cancer when he was about ten. That was pretty tough on his folks. They were visiting my mom one day, and they got into an argument. His dad thought they had to go to a different doctor now that his treatment was over. His mom thought that was ridiculous. She didn't want to change doctors.

Well, they got out the pamphlet they were reading and started looking at it. They were looking for evidence. Who was right? Did they need a different doctor? His dad had made an inference, and now he had to prove it. He had to find the **evidence** for the **inference**.





Identifying Evidence

You might make an inference from one sentence or paragraph. You might make an inference about a whole text as a *hypothesis*, just like in science. It's something you think is true, but you haven't completely proven it. So how do you prove your inference?

Just like in science, you need to look for evidence. Where's the evidence in the text that shows it's true?

How to Find Evidence

Here's an example: Dwayne was reading *Frankenstein* for class. He was learning about Romantic heroes, which is a kind of character in literature. Mr. Williams told the class about how Dr. Frankenstein, was a Romantic hero. He's worrying, dark, and emotional. He's outside of society, and he's trying to do something big and great.

Dwayne said that the monster is a Romantic hero, too. He gave some quotes. The monster says, "Hateful day when I received life! I exclaimed in agony. 'Accursed creator! Why did you form a monster so hideous that even YOU turned from me in disgust?'" That's pretty dark and emotional.

He gave another quote: "Am I not shunned and hated by all mankind? You, my creator, would tear me to pieces and triumph; remember that, and tell me why I should pity man more than he pities me?" No one's more of an outsider than the monster that everyone hates.

Finally, he said the monster wanted to be human, and that's a pretty great achievement from someone Dr. Frankenstein describes as having "yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath" and a "shrivelled complexion and straight black lips."

Dwayne's point was pretty convincing. Why? He gave evidence from the book for his inference. Say what you think is true, and then say *why*. Show the evidence in what you read.



Try It: Identifying Evidence

Read the example passage.

Care for Childhood Cancer Survivors

(A) While the completion of your child's cancer treatment is something to celebrate, it may also bring new challenges. You may worry that the cancer will return. Your child may struggle to get used to new routines. Some families enter this new phase feeling stronger, whereas others are more fragile. Many families are surprised by anxious feelings that arise during this long-awaited time, when they expected to feel only relief. **(B)** Instead of this being a time to go back to life as it used to be, it may be a time of continued adjustment, as you leave the security of the people on your child's health care team. Some said the transition to life after treatment took longer and was more challenging than they thought it would be.

Follow-Up Care after Cancer Treatment

Get a written copy of your child's treatment summary and survivorship care plan. **(C)** Ask for recommendations to hospitals that offer the type of follow-up or survivorship care that your child needs.

A survivorship care plan (also called a follow-up care plan) is developed for each child. Survivorship care plans are based on the type of cancer and treatment your child received.

(D) For example, some children may need to return for visits each month for the first year after they have completed treatment. Others may not need to return as often.

Places that specialize in follow-up care for children who have been treated for cancer are called follow-up care clinics or survivorship clinics. At these clinics, your child will see specialists who will monitor your child's health.

Although many side effects go away once treatment has ended, long-term side effects, such as fatigue, may take some time to go away. Other side effects, called late effects, may not occur until months or even years after treatment.

Whether or not your child may have late effects of treatment depends on the type of cancer your child had and how it was treated, as well as personal factors, such as:

- Cancer-related factors such as the type of cancer, where it was in the body, and how it affected tissues and organs
- Treatment-related factors such as the type and dose of treatment(s) or the type of surgery
- Patient-related factors such as your child's gender, age at diagnosis, length of time since diagnosis/treatment, personal and family health history, and health habits

Late effects may be physical, emotional, or cognitive. Knowing what symptoms to be aware of and when they may occur can help you plan for the needs of your child. Not knowing what to expect can cause anxiety for some parents. However, for other parents, knowing about late effects that may or may not happen to their child in the future can be overwhelming. Many parents find it helpful to ask their child's doctor what to focus on at each step of their child's recovery.

Source: National Cancer Institute. Excerpted from "Care for Childhood Cancer Survivors," available at: <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/coping/survivorship/child-care>

Which underlined sentences in the passage are the best evidence for the inference that children need a new doctor after their treatment?

Select the two best answers.

| A |
|------------|
| Sentence A |

| B |
|------------|
| Sentence B |

| C |
|------------|
| Sentence C |

| D |
|------------|
| Sentence D |

Go to page 11 of the answers and explanations to see the answer.

Uncertainty in the Text

Sometimes a writer leaves some things uncertain. One way things can be uncertain is if there's more than one possible meaning. Here's an important word: **ambiguous**. Something is ambiguous when it could be interpreted in more than one way. If you can figure out when something's ambiguous—maybe it means one thing, or maybe it means something else—you're understanding more deeply.

Look at this example:



Charles often went to the park. He went every so often, when he felt lonely or frustrated.

First it says: "Charles often went to the park." Then it says he went "every so often." That means every once in a while. Those two sentences seem to contradict each other, right? How often does he really go to the park? Maybe he goes a lot, but doesn't want to admit how often he feels lonely. Or maybe he doesn't really go too often, but it feels like it's a lot. Or maybe he goes often, but only every once in a while it's because he's lonely. Maybe later when you're reading, you'll get more information that will help you figure it out, or maybe it's something the writer leaves up to you to wonder about.

Another way things can be uncertain is when information is missing. Look at this example:

Mitosis is one type of cell division. It results in two child cells.

Each new cell has the same number and kind of chromosomes as the parent cell.

What's uncertain here? Well, there's an obvious question that's left unanswered, and that's what you want to look for—unanswered questions. It says mitosis is one type of cell division. That implies that there are other types. What are they? How are they different?

Just like the other example, maybe this uncertainty is explained later. Or maybe it's something you'll need to find out on your own.

Identifying uncertainty helps you ask questions and understand more. It helps you come up with research questions, think about characters in stories, and even evaluate whether you believe a writer's honest. That's a valuable skill.

Try It: Uncertainty in the Text

In the passage "Care for Childhood Cancer Survivors," which of these ideas does the text leave as uncertain?

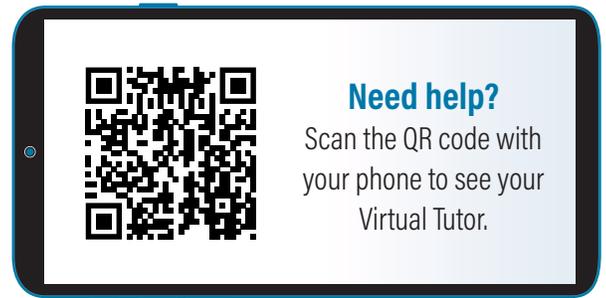
| A | B | C | D |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Whether your child's gender can affect late effects | How families might feel after cancer treatment | How your child's gender can affect late effects | Whether cancer patients need post-treatment follow-up |

Go to page 11 of the answers and explanations to see the answer.



Check Your Skills

1. Read the passage “Care for Childhood Cancer Survivors.” Which sentences are the best evidence for the inference that a survivorship care plan contains recommendations for visits with specialists? **Select the two best answers.**



A

Get a written copy of your child’s treatment summary and survivorship care plan.

B

Survivorship care plans are based on the type of cancer and treatment your child received.

C

For example, some children may need to return for visits each month for the first year after they have completed treatment.

D

At these clinics, your child will see specialists who will monitor your child’s health.

2. In “Care for Childhood Cancer Survivors,” which idea does the text leave uncertain?

A

Whether children can have different kinds of cancer and different treatments

B

Who gets a survivorship care plan

C

What causes anxiety in families when children finish cancer treatment

D

What late effects are

3. In “Care for Childhood Cancer Survivors,” which choices are the best evidence for inferring that a child’s life changes significantly after cancer treatment? **Select the two best answers.**

A

Your child may struggle to get used to new routines.

B

Some families enter this new phase feeling stronger, whereas others are more fragile.

C

Many families are surprised by anxious feelings that arise during this long-awaited time, when they expected to feel only relief.

D

Instead of this being a time to go back to life as it used to be, it may be a time of continued adjustment, as you leave the security of the people on your child’s health care team.

Read this passage and use it to answer questions 4 through 6.

Excerpt from *The War of the Worlds* by H.G. Wells

Then came the night of the first falling star. It was seen early in the morning, rushing over Winchester eastward, a line of flame high in the atmosphere. Hundreds must have seen it, and taken it for an ordinary falling star. Albin described it as leaving a greenish streak behind it that glowed for some seconds. Denning, our greatest authority on meteorites, stated that the height of its first appearance was about ninety or one hundred miles. It seemed to him that it fell to earth about one hundred miles east of him.

I was at home at that hour and writing in my study; and although my French windows face towards Ottershaw and the blind was up (for I loved in those days to look up at the night sky), I saw nothing of it. Yet this strangest of all things that ever came to earth from outer space must have fallen while I was sitting there, visible to me had I only looked up as it passed. Some of those who saw its flight say it travelled with a hissing sound. I myself heard nothing of that. Many people in Berkshire, Surrey, and Middlesex must have seen the fall of it, and, at most, have thought that another meteorite had descended. No one seems to have troubled to look for the fallen mass that night.

But very early in the morning poor Ogilvy, who had seen the shooting star and who was persuaded that a meteorite lay somewhere on the common between Horsell, Ottershaw, and Woking, rose early with the idea of finding it. Find it he did, soon after dawn, and not far from the sand pits. An enormous hole had been made by the impact of the projectile, and the sand and gravel had been flung violently in every direction over the heath, forming heaps visible a mile and a half away. The heather was

on fire eastward, and a thin blue smoke rose against the dawn.

The Thing itself lay almost entirely buried in sand, amidst the scattered splinters of a fir tree it had shivered to fragments in its descent. The uncovered part had the appearance of a huge cylinder, caked over and its outline softened by a thick scaly dun-coloured incrustation. It had a diameter of about thirty yards. He approached the mass, surprised at the size and more so at the shape, since most meteorites are rounded more or less completely. It was, however, still so hot from its flight through the air as to forbid his near approach. A stirring noise within its cylinder he ascribed to the unequal cooling of its surface; for at that time it had not occurred to him that it might be hollow.

He remained standing at the edge of the pit that the Thing had made for itself, staring at its strange appearance, astonished chiefly at its unusual shape and colour, and dimly perceiving even then some evidence of design in its arrival. The early morning was wonderfully still, and the sun, just clearing the pine trees towards Weybridge, was already warm. He did not remember hearing any birds that morning, there was certainly no breeze stirring, and the only sounds were the faint movements from within the cindery cylinder. He was all alone on the common.



Source: Excerpt from *The War of the Worlds* by H.G. Wells, 1898.
Available at: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/36/36-h/36-h.htm>

4. In the excerpt from *The War of the Worlds*, which of these ideas does the text leave as uncertain?

A

The purpose of the fallen object

B

The size of the fallen object

C

Whether the fallen object was a normal meteorite

D

The shape of the fallen object

5. In the excerpt from *The War of the Worlds*, which sentences are the best evidence for the inference that the meteorite fell over a relatively well-populated area? **Select the two best answers.**

A

Hundreds must have seen it, and taken it for an ordinary falling star.

B

Yet this strangest of all things that ever came to earth from outer space must have fallen while I was sitting there, visible to me had I only looked up as it passed.

C

Many people in Berkshire, Surrey, and Middlesex must have seen the fall of it, and, at most, have thought that another meteorite had descended.

D

The Thing itself lay almost entirely buried in sand, amidst the scattered splinters of a fir tree it had shattered to fragments in its descent.

6. In the excerpt from *The War of the Worlds*, which of these ideas does the text leave as uncertain?

A

Why the shape of the object was surprising

B

What the narrator was doing when the object fell

C

Whether the narrator saw the object fall

D

What caused the noise inside the fallen object

Read this passage and use it to answer questions 7 and 8.

Personal Protective Equipment

What is personal protective equipment?

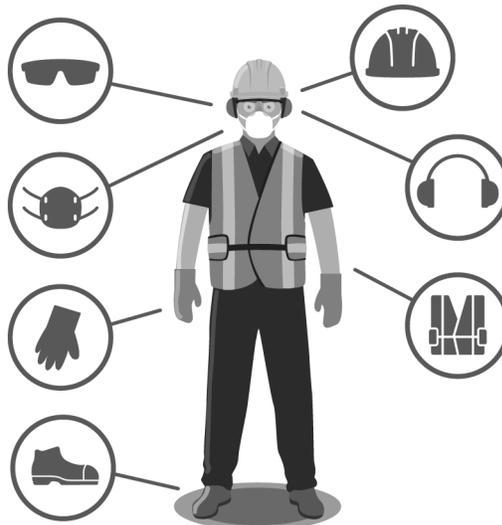
Personal protective equipment, commonly referred to as "PPE," is equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards that cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses. Personal protective equipment may include items such as gloves, safety glasses and shoes, earplugs or muffs, hard hats, respirators, or coveralls, vests and full body suits.

What can be done to ensure proper use of personal protective equipment?

All personal protective equipment should be safely designed and constructed and should be maintained in a clean and reliable fashion. It should fit comfortably, encouraging worker use. If the personal protective equipment does not fit properly, it can make the difference between being safely covered or dangerously exposed.

Sometimes engineering, work practice, and administrative controls are not feasible or do not provide sufficient protection. Then, employers must provide personal protective equipment to their workers and ensure its proper use. Employers are also required to train each worker required to use personal protective equipment to know:

- When it is necessary
- What kind is necessary



- How to properly put it on, adjust, wear and take it off
- The limitations of the equipment
- Proper care, maintenance, useful life, and disposal of the equipment

If PPE is to be used, a PPE program should be implemented. This program should address the hazards present; the selection, maintenance, and use of PPE; the training of employees; and monitoring of the program to ensure its ongoing effectiveness.

Source: Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), U.S. Department of Labor. Adapted from "Personal Protective Equipment: Overview," available at: <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/personalprotectiveequipment/>

7. In the passage “Personal Protective Equipment,” which sentences are the best evidence for the inference that there are different sizes of PPE for different employees? **Select the two best answers.**

A

All personal protective equipment should be safely designed and constructed and should be maintained in a clean and reliable fashion.

B

It should fit comfortably, encouraging worker use.

C

If the personal protective equipment does not fit properly, it can make the difference between being safely covered or dangerously exposed.

D

Then, employers must provide personal protective equipment to their workers and ensure its proper use.

8. In the passage “Personal Protective Equipment,” which of these ideas does the text leave as uncertain?

A

Who is responsible for PPE training

B

Who gives PPE to employees

C

What kinds of things workers need to know about PPE

D

Who designs and constructs PPE

Go to page 11 of the answers and explanations to see the answers.