

Citing Evidence to Make Inferences

Theme: *Passing Wisdom Down Through the Ages*

Have you heard the story of Pinocchio, the wooden boy who came to life? Each time he lies, his nose grows. Later in the story, Pinocchio says he has been to school, and—*zoink!*—his nose grows. Now, the author doesn't say at this particular point in the story that Pinocchio lied. But you can make an **inference**—a conclusion based on what you already know and text evidence—that he did.

Good inferences are supported with textual evidence. You can practice this right now.

Read the paragraph below. Then use the chart to support an inference about the narrator.

Abraham Lincoln once said, "Whatever you are, be a good one." Easy for him to say—he was good at *everything*. It's nice advice, I guess. Still . . . you can say that you're going to be good at playing the piano. You can even say that you'll perform beautifully at the big recital. You can say that all you want, and you can still forget the notes to your song halfway through and run off the stage in tears. I wonder what Lincoln would have said about that! He probably wouldn't have felt as miserable as I do right now, at the very least.

The chart below states an inference about the narrator. Complete the chart by writing one more phrase from the paragraph that directly supports the inference.

What You Know	+	What the Narrator Says	=	Inference
People sometimes feel bad when embarrassed.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Still . . . you can say that you're going to be good at playing the piano." • 		The narrator has just had a bad experience performing in a piano recital.

When reading, always support your inferences with textual evidence. An unsupported inference won't make your nose grow an inch, but you won't be on your way to a better understanding of the story, either!



Genre: Myth

Athena, Arachne, and the Weaving Contest

by Sofia Lillios

Athena, the goddess of wisdom, was an exceptional weaver. She shared her knowledge with humans, as long as they consistently showed her their deepest gratitude. Athena’s most talented student was a young woman named Arachne.

Each day, Athena and Arachne sold their creations at a country market, and everyone said Arachne’s cloth was incredible. Athena overheard Arachne tell customers she taught herself to weave. Athena cringed as she listened to Arachne’s lies. Then, on one fateful day, Arachne kept bragging to customers that she was the greatest weaver in the world, and that her creations were more beautiful than all the others at the market.

(continued)

Explore how to answer this question: “How does Athena feel about Arachne’s bragging? Make an inference about how Athena feels. Support your inference with two details from the text.”

Look for details from the text that hint at how Athena feels about Arachne. One detail is shown in the chart below. Write a second detail next to the second bullet point. Then write down your inference.

What You Know	+	Details from the Text	=	Your Inference
Someone who expects gratitude would likely be upset if she did not receive it.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She shared her knowledge with humans, as long as they consistently showed her their deepest gratitude.” • 		

Use details from the chart to support the inference that Athena is upset about Arachne’s bragging.



Continue reading “Athena, Arachne, and the Weaving Contest.” Use the Close Reading and the Hint to help you answer the question.

Close Reading

On page 46, the author says that Athena shares her skills with humans on one condition. **Circle** the phrase stating this condition.

(continued from page 46)

An old woman in a cloak smiled and challenged Arachne to a weaving contest, which Arachne gladly accepted. The rules were simple: each would weave one complete tapestry by nightfall, and customers would judge the winner.

Throughout the day, the two sat at looms, weaving furiously. Just before sunset, they finished. Both tapestries were marvelous to behold, but the crowd chose the old woman, for her creation was flawless. “Spin and weave forever without my help, fool,” the old woman suddenly said, and pointing one finger at Arachne, turned her into a spider.

Hint

The question asks *why* Arachne was turned into a spider, not how.

Circle the correct answer.

Which sentence best explains why Arachne was turned into a spider?

- A** The old woman had special powers.
- B** Arachne did not show her thanks to Athena.
- C** Athena was disguised as the old woman.
- D** Like Arachne, spiders are good at weaving.



Show Your Thinking

Look at the answer you chose above. Explain how the details in the story helped you infer why Arachne was turned into a spider.



Read the Native American story. Use the Study Buddy and the Close Reading to guide your reading.



Based on the first paragraph, I think Young Man is a patient and determined person. I'll underline the phrase that tells me about Young Man's character.

Close Reading

What does Young Man learn on his journey? **Underline** the sentences that explain the lesson of his journey.

The willow tree is kind and wise. **Circle** words and phrases that describe the tree.

Genre: Native American Legend/Myth

The Wisdom of the Willow Tree

by Wilson Mekashone

- 1 Young Man often felt lost and pondered questions about the purpose of his life. He decided to journey far away, seeking wisdom. He hiked tirelessly for several days.
- 2 One day, the sun blazed down and he was hot, thirsty, and desperate for shade. In the distance, he saw a willow tree and crawled to it. Exhausted, he lay between its roots and had a vivid dream. In the dream, the tree had a wise old face that smiled at him and looked strangely familiar.
- 3 Young Man said to the tree, "I have failed on my journey. I still don't understand how to live my life. I'm thirsty and weary, and I cannot summon the strength to return home."
- 4 The tree then reached down its oldest branch, stroked Young Man gently on the cheek, and said, "Sleep in my shade. I am old and know the value of rest. When you wake up, follow my roots. They are wrinkled but know the way."
- 5 Young Man awoke and followed the tree's enormous roots to a burbling stream. As he drank, he saw his reflection and was shocked when he realized that the face he had seen in the willow's trunk had been his own, only much older.
- 6 He smiled as he now understood that he must age like the wise tree and help others find their way when they feel lost and defeated. Over time, he would gradually become Wise Man, whom people would seek out for help, shelter, and advice. This, he knew, would take much strength and patience.



Hints

Which choice describes what it takes for Young Man to become Wise Man?

Read each answer choice carefully. Which answer contains a word that describes something people do when they are happy?

How does Young Man feel when he approaches the willow tree? How does the willow tree encounter change Young Man's feelings?

Use the Hints on this page to help you answer the questions.

1 A student makes the following claim about Young Man in "The Wisdom of the Willow Tree."

Young Man has to develop skills if he wants to become Wise Man. Which sentence from the text best supports this claim?

- A "He decided to journey far away, seeking wisdom."
- B "This, he knew, would take much strength and patience."
- C "I am old and know the value of rest."
- D "In the distance, he saw a willow tree and crawled to it."

2 Which sentence from the text best shows that Young Man is happy about his encounter with the willow tree?

- A "Young Man awoke and followed the tree's enormous roots to a burbling stream."
- B "As he drank, he saw his reflection and was shocked when he realized that the face he had seen in the willow's trunk had been his own, only much older."
- C "I'm thirsty and weary, and I cannot summon the strength to return home."
- D "He smiled as he now understood that he must age like the wise tree and help others find their way when they feel lost and defeated."

3 Explain how the willow tree's kindness and wisdom help Young Man. Include at least one detail from the story to support your explanation.



Read the story. Then answer the questions that follow.

A Sewing Sensation

by William Rivera

1 Juan sat on the floor of Mom's sewing room with one eye on his soccer magazine and one eye on his mother. His mother was making a wedding dress for their neighbor's daughter, and Juan could see that the dress was going to be beautiful. Juan's mother had designed and sewn dresses for many of the girls in his town, and Juan felt proud that people wanted to wear his mother's creations on their special days.

2 Juan glanced up again from his magazine and asked, "Is your machine running okay, Mom? I think it's making a weird noise."

3 Mom hardly looked up and said, "I think it's working just fine. It's whirring and humming away, just as always."

4 Juan looked disappointed, but he went back to pretending to read his magazine. A few minutes later, he asked, "Do you want me to sew the hem of the dress so that you can rest your fingers? I've watched you do it millions of times, so I could do it if you are really tired." This time, Juan's mother studied Juan's face carefully.

5 "You know, I could use a break," she said, "and we need some new pillowcases. I've got the pattern cut out, and all you'd have to do is stitch up the sides." Juan dropped his magazine and was sitting in Mom's sewing chair in no time. Juan's mom carefully removed the dress she was working on, showed Juan how to thread the sewing machine, and brought him some pillowcases to sew.

6 In his enthusiasm, Juan stomped on the foot pedal and almost sewed over his finger. Then he remembered the patience that his mother always showed, and he slowed down. His seams were straight and even. Juan had a huge smile on his face when he looked over his shoulder at his mom.

7 "I can't believe you sewed that so perfectly on your first try," Mom said, patting Juan on the back. "It took me years of practice to perfect my technique, and you're already a sensation. Why don't you try making a pillow for your room? You can design it, and I'll show you how to make the pattern and cut it out."

8 Juan's face lit up, but then a dark shadow seemed to pass over it. "I think I should probably just go outside and kick the ball with my friends." To himself, he muttered, "What would Anthony think if he saw me at a sewing machine?" as he headed outdoors.

9 Mom didn't say anything as she watched Juan's reaction, but that night at dinner, she and Juan's dad began talking about a local fashion designer who had moved to Dallas and become a very successful clothing designer. Juan pretended he wasn't listening, but the scowl slowly vanished from his face. "Many of the best fashion designers are men," Juan's dad continued. "They can make a lot of money for their designs."

10 After dinner, Juan got out his notebook and began sketching. Then he showed his notebook to his mother, and she nodded approvingly. Together, they headed to the sewing room for pattern tracing paper and scissors.



11 Juan cut out two large round pieces of cloth and began stitching them together, leaving one section open. He turned the cloth inside out, stuffed the opening with cotton batting, and then sewed up the open section. Finally, he used fabric markers to add details. He placed his finished creation on his bed.

12 The next day, Anthony came over to kick the ball with Juan, but it started to rain. The two headed to Juan's room to watch soccer videos instead. When Anthony saw the new oversized soccer ball on Juan's bed, he asked Juan where he got it. Juan grinned at his friend and said, "Mine is one-of-a-kind, but I think I know how to get you one that's almost like it."

Answer the following questions.

1 Juan does not have a lot of experience with sewing. Which sentence from the passage is the **best** evidence of this claim?

- A** "Juan glanced up again from his magazine and asked, 'Is your machine running okay, Mom? I think it's making a weird noise.'"
- B** "'I can't believe you sewed that so perfectly on your first try,' Mom said, patting Juan on the back."
- C** "To himself, he muttered, 'What would Anthony think if he saw me at a sewing machine?' as he headed outdoors."
- D** "'Many of the best fashion designers are men,' Juan's dad continued."

2 Which detail **best** supports the idea that Juan's mother encourages her son's interests?

- A** She tells him that her sewing machine doesn't require fixing.
- B** She gives him some pillowcases to sew on his own.
- C** She sends him outside to play ball instead of sewing.
- D** She gives him a notebook for sketching and drawing.



3 This question has two parts. Answer Part A, and then answer Part B.

Part A

What is one reason Juan chooses to play soccer with his friends instead of continuing to sew?

- A He knew that he needed to practice if he wanted to improve his soccer skills.
- B He did not want his friends to think he was rude for keeping them waiting.
- C He thought that his father would not approve of his interest in sewing.
- D He was concerned that his friends might make fun of his sewing talent.

Part B

Which sentence from the passage best supports the answer in Part A? Underline the sentence.

Juan’s face lit up, but then a dark shadow seemed to pass over it. “I think I should probably just go outside and kick the ball with my friends.” To himself, he muttered, “What would Anthony think if he saw me at a sewing machine?” as he headed outdoors.

4 Juan seems somewhat embarrassed about his strong interest in sewing. Write a paragraph in which you agree or disagree with that statement. Use at least **two** details from the story to support your answer.

Self Check Go back and see what you can check off on the Self Check on page 44.