

INFERRING

Making inferences is an important reading comprehension strategy that requires students to use evidence to identify hidden meanings in a text. In Hedgehog the Wonder Dog the meaning of the text is not explicitly identifiable within the words alone, students must look at the illustrations to fill the gaps and create deeper meaning.

Australian Curriculum Links

Interpreting, Analysing, Evaluating	Year 4	Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning to expand content knowledge, integrating and linking ideas and analysing and evaluating texts (ACELY1692)
Examining Literature	Year 4	Discuss how authors and illustrators make stories exciting, moving and absorbing and hold readers' interest by using various techniques, for example character development and plot tension (ACELT1605)
Expressing and Developing Ideas	Year 5	Explain sequences of images in print texts and compare these to the ways hyperlinked digital texts are organised, explaining their effect on viewers' interpretations (ACELA1511)
Interpreting, Analysing and Evaluating	Year 5	Identify and explain characteristic text structures and language features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text (ACELY1701)
Interpreting, Analysing and Evaluating	Year 6	Analyse how text structures and language features work together to meet the purpose of a text (ACELY1711)
Examining Literature	Year 6	Identify the relationship between words, sounds, imagery and language patterns in narratives and poetry such as ballads, limericks and free verse (ACELT1617)

Activity 1

Tune In: Read through the text without showing the students any illustrations and ask students to write down any words or phrases that specifically tell us about the characters.

Class Discussion: Once the book is complete ask students to share what they wrote. Do they know a lot about the characters? What information were they given? What happened in the story? Discuss how the author and illustrator have worked together to create the full story.

Individual Activity: Read the text again but this time show students the images along with the words. Ask students to write down any new details they can infer from the illustrations in the text. Once the book is finished, students can share their inferences within small groups, or in pairs.

Reflection: Finish the lesson with a class discussion using these prompts;

- Do you think this book would have as much of an effect without the illustrations?
- Why did the author choose not to give many character details in the wording?
- Could you understand the storyline if you just saw the illustrations and not the words?
- Why doesn't it say specifically who the author is and who the illustrator is on the cover?

Activity 2

Tune In: Reflect on the students' character inferences from activity 1 and collate them on the board under four headings; Sam, Hedgehog, Jo and Nurse Dave.

Class Discussion: How are each of these characters similar/ different?

Individual Activity: Ask students to consider the perspective of each of these four characters. Are they each looking forward to Friday equally? How would they all view each other? What emotions would they each be feeling throughout the week? Students can discuss this orally or collate their thoughts using a concept map.

Reflection: Come back to the floor to have a class discussion on which character students identify with the most.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Building connections and links between one text and another helps students to comprehend morals, plot points and characters in a deeper way. Students can also benefit from making comparisons between a text and their personal life, or something occurring in the world or media at the time. This text invites many potential pathways for students to be able to identify with the characters' experiences.

Australian Curriculum Links

Literature and Context	Year 4	Make connections between the ways different authors may represent similar storylines, ideas and relationships (ACELT1602)
Responding to Literature	Year 4	Discuss literary experiences with others, sharing responses and expressing a point of view (ACELT1603)
Literature and Context	Year 5	Identify aspects of literary texts that convey details or information about particular social, cultural and historical contexts (ACELT1608)
Responding to Literature	Year 5	Present a point of view about particular literary texts using appropriate metalanguage, and reflecting on the viewpoints of others (ACELT1609)
Literature and Context	Year 6	Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1613)
Responding to Literature	Year 6	Analyse and evaluate similarities and differences in texts on similar topics, themes or plots (ACELT1614)
Examining Literature	Year 6	Identify, describe, and discuss similarities and differences between texts, including those by the same author or illustrator, and evaluate characteristics that define an author's individual style (ACELT1616)
Interpreting, Analysing, Evaluating	Year 6	Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts (ACELY1713)

Activity 1

Tune In: Explain to students what a text connection is and how we can build a deeper understanding of a text by making connections within our lives, the wider world and other texts we have read.

Class Activity: Read the text as a class and pause on each page to discuss potential connections that could be made. Discuss surface level connections versus deeper connections using the examples below.

Individual Activity: Students write down their own text to text, text to self and text to world connections. If time permits, students could share their connections in small groups, they could write them on post it notes and display on a classroom wall, or they could orally share with a peer.

Reflection: Reflect on the connections that the class made and how they are all different. We all interpret and relate to books differently depending on our personal views and experiences.

Text to Text

Students draw comparisons and contrasts between the given text and another text they are familiar with. This could include analysing characters, author's purpose, plot or literary features.

Surface Connection Example

I have read another book that has a dog in it.

Deep Connection Example

I have read a book where the main character is sick and the family are trying to support him while he is in hospital. I can imagine the child's family in this text would be going through similar emotions.

Text to Self

Students draw connections between the text and their thoughts, family, friends, hobbies or personal experiences.

Surface Connection Example

I like dogs and so does the main character.

Deep Connection Example

When I am sick I find it really comforting to have my pets sit with me. It cheers me up and helps me to feel better. If I was in hospital I can imagine I would also really look forward to my dog visiting.

Text to World

Students reflect on news stories, pop-culture, world issues and current events to build connections between the text and the world around them.

Surface Connection Example

When people get sick they have to go to hospital.

Deep Connection Example

At the supermarket there are sometimes guide dog charity collections. Guide dogs are support animals that help blind people, but there are other kinds of support dogs that help make people smile when they are in hospital.

Activity 2

Tune In: Reflect on the reflection from activity 1 and ask for student's opinions on the topic; do you think your personal experiences and values effect how much you enjoy a book? Why?

Individual Activity: Ask students to give the book a review out of 5 stars and to justify their opinion. This can be done using Think, Pair, Share or using a formal concept map.

Group Activity: In small groups, ask students to share and compare their book reviews. Are they similar or quite different? How? Once students have had this discussion, ask them to open their text connections from the previous lesson. Did the students who enjoyed the book more have deeper connections with the text?

Reflection: As a class, discuss how much more of a book we can understand once we start looking for these deeper text connections. These connections can also give us a new perspective to view the text from. Ask the students to reflect on their current favourite book and why it is their favourite. Did they have a personal connection with the character? Did it remind them of another book they really like? Does it correlate with things happening in the world that are relevant to them at this time? How can this understanding help us find new books to read that we will likely enjoy?

RESPONDING TO LITERATURE

Allowing students to explore their curiosities that a text provides is a powerful way of building a connection with literature. The comprehension strategy of thinking beyond a book and finding a place for the story in their real lives is a wonderful way of effectively engaging students in literacy learning.

Australian Curriculum Links

Creating Literature	Year 4	Create literary texts that explore students' own experiences and imagining (ACELT1607)
Responding to Literature	Year 4	Discuss literary experiences with others, sharing responses and expressing a point of view (ACELT1603)
Creating Texts	Year 5	Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive print and multimodal texts, choosing text structures, language features, images and sound appropriate to purpose and audience (ACELY1704)
Creating Literature	Year 5	Create literary texts using realistic and fantasy settings and characters that draw on the worlds represented in texts students have experienced (ACELT1612)
Creative Literature	Year 6	Create literary texts that adapt or combine aspects of texts students have experienced in innovative ways (ACELT1618)
Creating Texts	Year 6	Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, choosing and experimenting with text structures, language features, images and digital resources appropriate to purpose and audience (ACELY1714)

Activity 1

In the text, the child is in hospital for what seems like an extended period of time. Ask students to think about the following points and then write a letter to Sam acting as one of his friends.

- How would you feel if you had to stay in hospital for a week, a month, or a year?
- How would you feel if your best friend was the one in hospital?
- What do you think you would do to cheer your friend up?
- If you were in hospital, how would you want your friends to support you?
- What would you miss the most about your regular daily routine?

A possible extension of this activity is contacting your local hospital to see if they have a program in place that your students could write a letter to real children staying in hospital.

Activity 2

Many students will have a pet at home, or may know the role of a seeing eye dog, but may not know what a support animal is. In this activity, students will write down a list of the benefits Hedgehog and the other 'Wonder Dogs' give to the children in the story. Students can then compare the story to real life 'Wonder Dogs' by researching support animals in Australia through this link:

<https://www.deltasociety.com.au/>