

Making Inferences

Lesson 1: It says + I know = So

GRADES 3-5



IT SAYS



SO

ANCHOR CHART

2 ORIGINAL PASSAGES

SORT + EXIT TICKET

WHAT'S INSIDE

- Teacher page: goal, 15-20 minute plan, standards
- Illustrated anchor chart: It says + I know = So
- Guided passage with think-aloud notes (Level A)
- Independent passage (Level B) + 7 questions
- Cut-and-glue sort (12 cards) + mat
- Exit ticket (two per page) and answer keys

It says + I know = So

LEARNING GOAL

I can make an inference by joining a clue from the text with something I already know.

THE 15-20 MINUTE LESSON

3 min	Hook	Anchor chart (page 3): read the Leo example. Ask: what does the text say? What do you know? What can you figure out?
8 min	I do	Read Jamal and the Storm aloud (page 4). Think aloud with the notes for sentences 2, 9, 12 and 18.
5 min	We do	Partners use It says, I know, So for sentences 7 and 17: why did Jamal and his mom get a flashlight and candles ready?
3 min	Check	Exit ticket (page 9), two per page.

Next day, centers or homework: The New Girl at Recess and seven questions (pages 5–6) and the cut-and-glue sort (pages 7–8). Answer key: page 10.

Say: An inference is an idea the text does not say. You figure it out from a clue the text gives you plus something you already know: it says, I know, so. Probably and must are clues, not rules.

LISTEN AND LOOK FOR

- Students point to the exact words of the clue and say the I know step out loud.
- Students catch a thought that only repeats the story (sentence 18: the lights went out) and say why it is not an inference.
- A student who says every thought with probably or must is an inference needs one more example: “Mia probably has a little brother” has probably but no clue.

STANDARDS (WORDING CHECKED AGAINST THE OFFICIAL COMMON CORE TEXT)

RL.3.1/RI.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

RL.4.1/RI.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

RL.5.1/RI.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Common Core's reading standard 1 uses the same wording for literature (RL) and informational text (RI) at each grade; this unit uses both text types, so either prefix applies. Check your state or district document for its own wording.

WHERE THIS LESSON FITS

This is Lesson 1 of the Making Inferences Complete Unit (Grades 3–5). Page 11 shows real pages from the unit and what it adds.

Making an Inference

It says + I know = So



IT SAYS

A clue is something the text says. You can point to the words.

Look at what people do, say, and see.

IT SAYS

“Leo came inside. His boots were muddy, and his coat was dripping wet.”



SO

Add what you KNOW to the clue.

Then figure out an idea the text does not say. That is an inference.

I KNOW + SO

“I know rain makes things wet. So it is raining outside.”

NOT AN INFERENCE (TRICKY!)

- 1 It only repeats what the text says, even in new words. “Leo's coat was wet” is not an inference.
- 2 It is a guess with no clue behind it. “Leo has a pet dog” has no clue.
- 3 It goes further than the clues. A wet coat does not show that Leo fell in a lake.
- 4 Signal words are clues, not rules. Probably and must can start an inference, but they do not make one. “Leo is cold” has no signal word, and it can be an inference.

Follow along as your teacher reads and thinks aloud. Then, with a partner, use **It says**, **I know**, **So** for sentences 7 and 17.



Jamal and the Storm

● Level A · 169 words

- 1 Jamal looked out the window. 2 The sky had turned dark gray. 3 Wind bent the branches of the old tree in the yard. 4 A loose shutter banged against the house. 5 Down the street, a neighbor hurried to pull her car into the garage.
- 6 Jamal ran to find his rain boots. 7 He took a flashlight from the kitchen drawer, too. 8 His dog, Biscuit, curled up in a tight ball on the rug. 9 Biscuit was shaking, and he squeezed his eyes shut. 10 Jamal sat down on the rug and patted his head.
- 11 A low rumble rolled across the sky. 12 A minute later, another rumble came, louder than the first. 13 Fat drops began to hit the window. 14 Then the rain came down hard. 15 Water ran fast along the curb outside.
- 16 Jamal's mom came in and shut all the windows tight. 17 She set two candles and a box of matches on the table. 18 The lights flickered once, then went out. 19 Jamal clicked on his flashlight and smiled. 20 He was glad he had gotten ready.

THINK ALOUD

2 It says...

The sky turned dark gray, and wind bent the tree. I can point to those clues.

9 I know... so...

Dogs shake when they are scared. So Biscuit is scared of the storm.

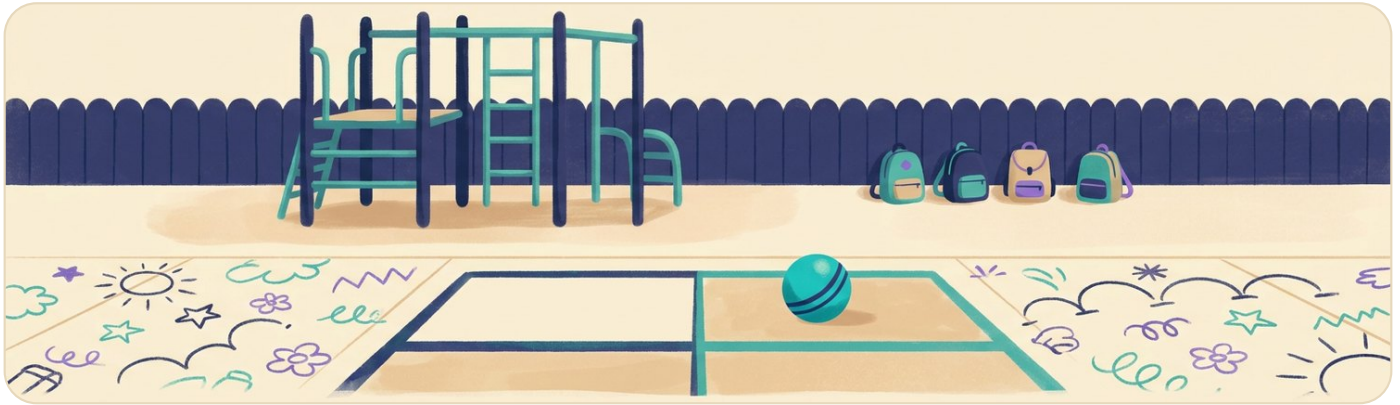
12 Stay close to clues

Louder thunder is closer thunder. So the storm is coming closer. Not: it will hit our house.

18 Not an inference

The story SAYS the lights went out. Repeating it is not inferring.

Read the story. Then answer the questions on the next page. For each answer, find a clue and ask: what do I already know?



The New Girl at Recess

■ Level B · 223 words

- 1 Mia stood alone at the edge of the blacktop. She held her backpack straps tightly with both hands. Her eyes moved slowly around the busy playground, never stopping in one spot for long. A whistle blew somewhere behind her, but she did not turn around. She had not said a word to anyone all morning.
- 2 A group of girls laughed loudly near the four-square court. Mia took one small step toward them, then stopped and looked down at her shoes. She had moved to this school only three days before. No one there knew her old school or her old friends. Every face around her still felt like a stranger's face.
- 3 Priya noticed Mia standing by herself and waved her over. Priya asked if Mia wanted to play four-square with them. Mia's shoulders relaxed, and a small smile appeared on her face. She jogged over and joined the line without saying a word. The other girls scooted over to make room for her. Someone tossed her the ball on her very first turn.
- 4 By the end of recess, Mia was laughing along with the others. She sat with Priya and her friends at lunch for the rest of the week. On Friday, Priya invited her to a birthday party the next weekend. Mia wrote the date down so she would not forget it.

Use The New Girl at Recess to answer each question.

- 1 What can you infer about Mia at the end of the story?
 - (A) Mia's troubles at her new school are over.
 - (B) Mia was laughing along with the others.
 - (C) Mia feels happier at her new school now.
 - (D) Mia won the first game she played.
- 2 Which sentence shows Mia felt at ease after Priya asked her to play?
 - (A) She had moved to this school only three days before.
 - (B) Mia's shoulders relaxed, and a small smile appeared on her face.
 - (C) Priya asked if Mia wanted to play four-square with them.
 - (D) A group of girls laughed loudly near the four-square court.

IS IT AN INFERENCE ABOUT THE STORY? CIRCLE YES OR NO.

- 3 "Priya is a kind person."

Circle one:

YES

NO

- 4 "Mia had been at the school for three days."

Circle one:

YES

NO

- 5 "Mia must be the best four-square player at the school."

Circle one:

YES

NO

- 6 "Priya probably invited Mia because they had become friends."

Circle one:

YES

NO

- 7 The story never says Mia felt lonely. Copy a clue from paragraph 1 that shows it.

Cut out the 12 cards. Each card is a thought about Mia in The New Girl at Recess. Is it an inference? Glue it on the mat under YES or NO.

1

Mia felt nervous
at her new school.

2

Mia had moved to the
school three days before.

3

The other girls were
probably friendly to Mia.

4

Mia must have been
by herself at first.

5

Mia wanted to
play with the girls.

6

The girls let Mia win the game.

7

Mia must have felt relieved
when Priya asked.

8

Mia probably has
a little brother.

9

Mia must be the new
leader of the group.

10

Mia wants to go to the party.

11

Mia jogged over to the line.

12

Mia probably felt shy.

YES: a clue in the story + what you know lead here. **NO:** it only repeats the story, has no clue, or goes too far.



YES

It is an inference.



NO

Not an inference.

glue

glue

glue

glue

glue

glue

glue

glue

glue

glue

glue

glue

LESSON 1 · EXIT TICKET

Is the So an inference?

Name _____

- 1 | “It says: Tom's hands shook as he read his poem to the class. So: Tom felt nervous.”

Circle one:

YES

NO

- 2 | “It says: Ana has a bandage on her knee. So: Ana probably has a pet turtle.”

Circle one:

YES

NO

- 3 | Write your own about something you saw at school today.

It says: _____

I know: _____

So: _____

cut

LESSON 1 · EXIT TICKET

Is the So an inference?

Name _____

- 1 | “It says: Tom's hands shook as he read his poem to the class. So: Tom felt nervous.”

Circle one:

YES

NO

- 2 | “It says: Ana has a bandage on her knee. So: Ana probably has a pet turtle.”

Circle one:

YES

NO

- 3 | Write your own about something you saw at school today.

It says: _____

I know: _____

So: _____

Lesson 1

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: THE NEW GIRL AT RECESS

1	C	A too far; B repeats; D no clue
2	B	C repeats the question's words but tells what Priya did
3	YES	no signal word; clues: waved her over, asked her, invited her
4	NO	the story says it (paragraph 2)
5	NO	must, but nothing shows how well Mia plays: too far
6	YES	clues: lunch together all week, then the party
7	Mia stood alone at the edge of the blacktop.	or: She had not said a word to anyone all morning.

CUT-AND-GLUE SORT (YES = IT IS AN INFERENCE)

Card 1	YES	trap: no signal word	Card 7	YES	clue: shoulders relaxed
Card 2	NO	repeats the story	Card 8	NO	trap: probably, no clue
Card 3	YES	clue: scooted over	Card 9	NO	trap: must, too far
Card 4	NO	trap: must, but repeats	Card 10	YES	trap: no signal word
Card 5	YES	trap: no signal word	Card 11	NO	repeats the story
Card 6	NO	too far: a pass is not a win	Card 12	YES	clue: looked at her shoes

EXIT TICKET

1	YES	no signal word; clue: shaking hands
2	NO	probably, but a bandage is no clue about pets
3	Sample	It says: The class plants are drooping. I know: plants droop when they need water. So: the plants need water.

Making Inferences Complete Unit · Grades 3-5

Real pages from the unit (reduced):

NAME _____ DATE _____

PRE-ASSESSMENT Form A

Read carefully. Take your time. Score: ____ / 12

PART A: READ THE SCENE

Nora Comes Home

Nora walked in the front door and dropped her backpack on the floor. Her soccer socks were covered in grass stains, and her face was bright red. She drank two big glasses of water without stopping once. Then she held up a shiny gold trophy and grinned at her dad.

IS IT AN INFERENCE? CIRCLE YES OR NO. IF NO, CHECK ONE REASON.

1. "Nora's socks had grass stains on them."

Circle one: YES NO IF NO: ☐ repeats ☐ no clue ☐ too far

2. "Nora was thirsty."

Circle one: YES NO IF NO: ☐ repeats ☐ no clue ☐ too far

3. "Nora probably has a pet cat at home."

Circle one: YES NO IF NO: ☐ repeats ☐ no clue ☐ too far

4. "Nora must have played soccer today."

Circle one: YES NO IF NO: ☐ repeats ☐ no clue ☐ too far

5. "Nora must be the best soccer player in the world."

Circle one: YES NO IF NO: ☐ repeats ☐ no clue ☐ too far

6. "Nora's team will win the next game, too."

Circle one: YES NO IF NO: ☐ repeats ☐ no clue ☐ too far

Milestone Reading Skills · Making Inferences Complete Unit Page 1

Pre-assessment, Form A

NAME _____ DATE _____

LESSON 2: PART B Inference or Not?

Each sentence is a thought about The Busy Beaver. Is it an inference? Write YES or NO. For a NO, check one reason.

Sentence	YES or NO	IF NO, why not?
1. Beavers are good swimmers.	☐	repeats the text ☐ no clue ☐ goes too far
2. Beavers build homes out of branches and mud.	☐	repeats the text ☐ no clue ☐ goes too far
3. A beaver can probably see underwater.	☐	repeats the text ☐ no clue ☐ goes too far
4. Beavers probably eat fish every day.	☐	repeats the text ☐ no clue ☐ goes too far
5. A beaver has to swim to get into its lodge.	☐	repeats the text ☐ no clue ☐ goes too far
6. A beaver's tail stop must be louder than thunder.	☐	repeats the text ☐ no clue ☐ goes too far
7. A beaver's front teeth never stop growing.	☐	repeats the text ☐ no clue ☐ goes too far
8. The tail stop probably warns other beavers.	☐	repeats the text ☐ no clue ☐ goes too far

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Lesson 2: Inference or Not? chart

NAME _____ DATE _____

LESSON 3: YOU DO! Tricky thoughts

Probably and must are clues, not rules. Ask: which clue leads here? Does the thought repeat the text or go too far?

PART A: IS IT AN INFERENCE ABOUT THE MAIN? CIRCLE YES OR NO.

1. "A month holds its front legs folded close together."

Circle one: YES NO

2. "A green month is hard to see on a green leaf."

Circle one: YES NO

3. "A month must be able to catch a crow."

Circle one: YES NO

4. "The spores probably help a month hold on to its prey."

Circle one: YES NO

PART B: CHOOSE THE BEST INFERENCE.

5. Why does a month wait quietly on a plant? What can you infer?

(A) A month probably sits still to warm its body in the sun.
(B) A month must wait on a plant for days without eating.
(C) Waiting quietly helps it surprise the insects it hunts.
(D) A month often waits quietly on a plant.

6. What can you infer from paragraph 4?

(A) At first the case is soft, like foam.
(B) The hard shell helps keep the eggs safe.
(C) The mother month probably guards the case.
(D) The tough shell is as hard as a rock.

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Lesson 3: tricky thoughts

NAME _____ DATE _____

LESSON 4: YOU DO! Clue to inference

Use the diary entry. Copy one clue from each of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3. Then write what it tells you about Ben's feelings.

How does Ben feel about being on the beach? (use inference)

A clue from the diary (it says)	What it tells you (so)
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____

Paragraph 4 never says Ben is nervous, but one sentence shows it. Copy that clue and write the inference.

Milestone Reading Skills · Making Inferences Complete Unit Page 24

Lesson 4: organizer

NAME _____ DATE _____

LESSON 5: SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW Sea Turtles

Read the passages. The sentences are numbered. Then answer the Show What You Know questions.



Sea Turtles Level C · 239 words

1. A mother sea turtle comes ashore and lays her eggs in a nest in the warm sand of a beach. A single nest can hold more than one hundred round eggs. When she has finished, she returns to the sea and leaves the eggs behind. The eggs may be buried in the warm sand for about two months before they hatch.

2. A newly hatched sea turtle is called a hatchling. Each hatchling breaks out of its shell with a tiny tooth on its snout, and it does not keep this tooth for long. The hatchlings in a nest climb up through the sand together, as a group. Near the top, they usually wait until the sand cools, which is often a sign that night has come.

3. Next, the hatchlings must cross a wide stretch of open beach to reach the water. Great crabs, birds, raccoons, and even dogs hunt hatchlings on the sand.

4. Hatchlings find the water by crawling toward the brightest part of the horizon.

5. On a natural beach, the brightest horizon is usually over the ocean. However, lights from nearby buildings and streets can lead hatchlings in the wrong direction.

6. Some beach towns have made rules that people must turn off beach lights while the turtles nest.

7. Scientists think that only about one hatchling in a thousand lives to become an adult.

8. Those that do can live for a long time. A green sea turtle may live for 70 years or more. Many years later, the females return to lay their own eggs near the beach where they hatched.

Milestone Reading Skills · Making Inferences Complete Unit Page 28

Lesson 5: Level C passage

NAME _____ DATE _____

REVIEW TASK CARDS Inference or not?

Put apart the cards. Each card has a clue (it says) and a thought (so). Is the so an inference? Circle YES or NO on the recording sheet and write why.

TASK CARD Is the So part an inference? Why? "It says: Maya yawned and rubbed her eyes. So: Maya is sleepy."	TASK CARD Is the So part an inference? Why? "It says: The dog's leash is gone from its hook. So: Someone probably took the dog for a walk."
TASK CARD Is the So part an inference? Why? "It says: Liam got a gold medal for winning the race. So: Liam must have won the race."	TASK CARD Is the So part an inference? Why? "It says: Kai walked into the library. So: Kai loves mystery books."
TASK CARD Is the So part an inference? Why? "It says: There are crumbs on Max's shirt. So: Max ate six cookies."	TASK CARD Is the So part an inference? Why? "It says: Sam's lips are purple and he is shivering in the pool. So: Sam is cold."
TASK CARD Is the So part an inference? Why? "It says: A new boy joined our class today. So: He probably likes soccer."	TASK CARD Is the So part an inference? Why? "It says: The puddles on the road are frozen. So: It must be very cold outside."

Milestone Reading Skills · Making Inferences Complete Unit Page 31

24 task cards

WHAT THE FULL UNIT ADDS TO THIS LESSON

- 4 more lessons in gradual release: inference or not, tricky thoughts (clues, not signal words), a character's feelings in a diary entry, and a show-what-you-know finale
- 6 more original passages at three measured reading levels (150 to 260 words), level and length printed; the finale puts one topic at all three levels
- Pre- and post-assessment in parallel forms (12 points each) with a class tracker
- 24 task cards with a recording sheet, including trap cards where probably or must misleads
- 3 small-group reteach cards for the most common mix-ups, mapped to the test items
- Exit tickets for Lessons 1-4 and an answer key for every page

Find the full unit on TpT:

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/x-17726112>

THANK YOU

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MILESTONE TEACHERS

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TOMORROW: THE THREE MIX-UPS AND WHAT TO SAY

Repeats the story. Ask: does the story already say this? Then it is not an inference. Find something the story does NOT say.

No clue. Ask: which words in the story lead you there? If the student cannot point to any, it is a guess.

Goes too far. Ask: do the clues show THIS much? Shrink the thought until the clue fits.

Next step. Sort the exit tickets into got it, almost and not yet. Give the almost pile one new It says / So card to judge aloud.