Reading inference: questions that ask for evidence

PUPIL ACTIVITY • Name: _____ Date: _____

Read: The paper bag

Amina reached the classroom with a paper bag held carefully against her chest. She put it beneath her chair and checked that it was upright. When Mr Kato asked for the seedlings, she looked at the floor. “Mine looked different this morning,” she said. At break, Musa brought a small cup of water. Together they lifted the bag onto the table. One thin stem leaned over the edge of its pot. “Let's put it by the window and ask what it needs,” Musa said. Amina loosened her grip on the bag.

Find a fact

1. Where does Amina put the bag?

_____

Use the clues

2. How might Amina feel when the seedlings are requested? Give a clue.

_____

3. What suggests Musa wants to help?

_____

What can we know?

4. Do we know why the stem is leaning? Explain.

_____

5. What might Amina loosening her grip suggest? Give another possible explanation.

_____

Teacher notes

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Purpose

Separate retrieval, supported inference and uncertainty. Allow 15–20 minutes. Explain “seedling” if needed. Read aloud if comprehension, rather than independent word reading, is the focus.

Suggested responses

1. Beneath her chair.
2. Worried, uncertain or embarrassed are plausible if linked to looking at the floor or saying the plant looked different. Accept other defensible explanations.
3. He brings water, helps lift the bag and suggests asking what the plant needs.
4. No. The stem is leaning, but its cause is not stated. Do not treat bringing water as proof that lack of water caused it.
5. She may feel relieved because Musa is helping; she may simply no longer need to hold the bag firmly once it is on the table. The text does not settle this.

Follow up

Ask “Which detail supports that?” and “Does the story tell us, or are we inferring?” Do not require one emotion word when the evidence supports alternatives.

Adapt

Support: read aloud and discuss two questions first. Challenge: compare two interpretations and explain which has stronger textual support.

Background

EEF: Reading comprehension strategies. Story and questions are original SkillFlex material; no endorsement or measured impact is claimed.

Further reading:
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/reading-comprehension-strategies

Original activity and notes prepared by SkillFlex. Share the article link with colleagues. No login or pupil-data upload is needed.