

# Making Inferences

- An inference is the ability to connect what is in the text with what is in the mind to create an educated guess. (Beers, 2003)
- So, an inference is drawing conclusions based on observations. Read the following situations and infer what is happening.

- 1. A young man brings a bouquet of flowers to the home of a girl who goes to his school.
- 2. A truck is parked in a Canadian Tire parking lot. No one is inside, the headlights are on and the driver's door is open.
- 3. A man arrives at the home of a woman with red roses and a diamond ring.

- 4. Your neighbour, married about a year ago, is shopping for diapers and baby formula.
- 5. A car containing two men has been parked in front of your neighbour's home every day for a week.
- 6. A car stops at a gas station in the middle of the night and a woman rushes in asking to use the telephone.

- 7. A friend of yours suddenly begins buying everything in sight - fancy food, expensive clothes, a big-screen t.v, a dishwasher, and a new car.
- 8. Two of your friends were rushed to the hospital together one evening. When you see them the next day, they look fine, but seem embarrassed when you ask what happened.

# OSSLT Literacy Test

- Three Kinds of Questions
  - Directly Stated
    - Found within the text
  - Indirectly Stated
    - Make inference, read between the lines
  - Making Connections
    - Connect to self, world, other text (movies, song lyrics, books, short stories, novels, etc.)

On the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test you will be asked to

answer three different kinds of questions: directly stated, indirectly stated, and making connections. The answer to directly stated questions can be found within the text.

However, to answer indirectly stated questions you must make an inference or read between the lines. To answer making connections questions you must make a connection to self, the world, or other texts (e.g. movies, song lyrics, books, short stories, novels, etc.)

Read the following excerpt and answer the questions. Also, determine which type of question each one is.

From *The House on Mango Street*

## **"My Name"** **by Sandra Cisneros**

In English my name means hope. In Spanish it means too many letters. It means sadness, it means waiting. It is like the number nine. A muddy color. It is the Mexican records my father plays on Sunday mornings when he is shaving, songs like sobbing.

It was my great-grandmother's name and now it is mine. She was a horse woman too, born like me in the Chinese year of the horse – which is supposed to be bad luck if you're born female – but I think this is a Chinese lie because the Chinese, like the Mexicans, don't like their women strong.

My great-grandmother. I would've liked to have known her, a wild horse of a woman, so wild she wouldn't marry. Until my great-grandfather threw a sack over her head and carried her off. Just like that, as if she were a fancy chandelier. That's the way he did it.

And the story goes she never forgave him. She looked out the window her whole life, the way so many women sit their sadness on an elbow. I wonder if she made the best with what she got or was she sorry because she couldn't be all the things she wanted to be. Esperanza. I have inherited her name, but I don't want to inherit her place by the window.

At school they say my name funny as if the syllables were made out of tin and hurt the roof of your mouth. But in Spanish my name is made out of a softer something, like silver, not quite as thick as my sister's name – Magdalena – which is uglier than mine. Magdalena who at least can come home and become Nenny. But I am always Esperanza.

I would like to baptize myself under a new name, a name more like the real me, the one nobody sees. Esperanza as Lisandra or Maritza or Zeze the X. Yes. Something like Zeze the X will do.

# Questions to “My Name”

1. The narrator’s name is:
  - a) Esperanza
  - b) Magdalena
  - c) Lisandra
  - d) Zeze the X
  
2. She inherited her name from:
  - a) her sister
  - b) her grandmother
  - c) her great-grandmother
  - d) a horse

3. Her name reminds her of:

- a) the colour of mud
- b) sad songs
- c) the number nine
- d) all of the above

4. The other kids at school pronounce the narrator's name:

- a) incorrectly
- b) harshly and unattractively
- c) smoothly
- d) musically

5. The narrator thinks her sister is luckier than she is because:
  - a) she has a cute nickname
  - b) she has a prettier name
  - c) she inherited her name from a happy person
  - d) the students at school don't make fun of her name
  
6. The narrator's great-grandmother probably had a sad life because:
  - a) she was carried away in a bag by her future husband
  - b) she was a free spirited woman whose freedom was taken away from her
  - c) she was born in the Chinese year of the horse, considered unlucky for females
  - d) she stared out the window all day, resting her chin in her hand

7. The narrator wants to:

- a) live a life where she is free to fulfill her dreams
- b) legally change her name
- c) ask people to call her by a nickname
- d) be like her great-grandmother

8. The narrator feels that her name

- a) is interesting and unusual
- b) can generate a lot of metaphors and similes
- c) is ugly but honourable
- d) does not represent the person inside her

9. The dash in paragraph two is used to introduce

- a) a new idea
- b) a definition
- c) direct speech
- d) an explanation

10. “I have inherited her name, but I don’t want to inherit her place by the window.” (Paragraph 4)

Why does the narrator make this statement?

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11. Answer in full and correctly written sentences.

Explain how your name is or is not a reflection of your personality.

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## Answer Key

- 1) A – directly stated
- 2) C – directly stated
- 3) D – directly stated
- 4) B – indirectly stated - inference
- 5) A – indirectly stated - inference
- 6) B – indirectly stated - inference
- 7) A – indirectly stated - inference
- 8) D – indirectly stated - inference
- 9) D – indirectly stated - inference
- 10) She doesn't want a life like her great-grandmother - Indirectly stated - inference
- 11) Student must be able to make connections to self and provide specific examples -  
Making connections