

Drawing Conclusions

A fictional passage is a work of literature which utilizes characters, events, and other story elements imagined by the author to tell a story.

Drawing conclusions is the ability to read a story and come to a logical conclusion based on the details presented in the story. Reading comprehension is the ability to read a story, understand story details, make connections among story details, and construct meaning from the text. A student engaging with fictional material should improve comprehension by discussing or summarizing the story. Parents can encourage these discussions or summaries by asking questions about the story and its characters.

Before reading, the student should become familiar with the following elements:

Details elaborate and clarify ideas within a passage. Students should understand the sequence, or logical order of these details.

Drawing conclusions requires the student to use their prior knowledge, personal experiences, and underlying ideas from the story to arrive at some type of hypothesis or educated guess.

Choose reading material that is interesting or relevant to the student. A school literature book is an excellent resource. It will contain a variety of types of stories of varying length.

To help the student begin making inferences towards drawing conclusions, begin by choosing a multi-paragraph passage from a book. It is extremely important that the book is on the student's reading level, or even below to begin with.

Ask the student to read the passage aloud. After he or she reads it, ask questions about the selection. Call the student's attention to dialogue, setting, and events in the passage. This will enable the student to draw logical conclusions through support from the text.

For instance, "Why do you think Snow White ate the apple?" or "What do you think will happen next?"

When the student gives his thoughts, remind him or her that it's important to find support from the text to support his or her answers. The student can look at the text for clues as to what will happen next in the story.

At this point, it would be helpful to share your thoughts about the questions you asked the student. This will help the student evaluate ideas that he or she might not have thought of already.

After the student has read several passages and you have discussed the characters' words and actions, as well as clues to help draw conclusions about the story, choose another text selection. Ask the student to read the selection independently.

Then encourage the student to write down a conclusion he or she arrives at from the information in the text. It might be what will occur next in the story, or it could be an explanation of why a character behaved a certain way. Remind the student to support conclusions with factual information from the text.

By repeating this activity, the student will become more aware of character dialogue and interaction, setting, and events in the reading material. This skill will become easier for the student with practice.

Practice

The student should practice drawing conclusions to improve making connections from the reading. One way to accomplish this task is to have the student look through picture books without reading the text. Parents should then ask the student to make a guess about the events that occurred throughout the story. Then parents should read the text along with their student, to confirm or reject the drawn conclusions. For an older student, the same concept can be applied using newspaper illustrations along with their captions. Then parents and student can read the article to confirm or reject their conclusions. Overall, this activity should display the student's understanding of drawing conclusions.