

Predicting Outcomes

Using given information and prior knowledge to make predictions is a critical thinking skill necessary for academic success. At this level, when the student is presented with a narrative story, he or she should be able to predict how the story will end.

It may be useful to tell the student a story and have him or her predict the ending. Move on to having the student read a dialogue, except for the last page, and guess how the dialogue will end.

The student may need practice applying deductive reasoning. Games and stories which require him or her to find clues and solve mysteries will help the student develop logical strategies useful in making predictions.

Assumptions

An assumption takes information for granted. It draws a conclusion without all of the necessary evidence. Identifying assumptions requires critical and analytical reading skills.

The student must be able to determine which statements can be proved and which statements cannot be proved.

For example, "Michael is tall, so he must like to play basketball." The person speaking is assuming that because Michael is tall he must enjoy basketball (which is often played by tall athletes). The statement is not supported by fact, so it is an assumption.

Another example of an assumption is "My sister sneezed, so she must have a cold." The statement is not based on fact. It is an assumption. There is no proof that she has a cold; there are many other reasons why she may have sneezed.

Help the student recognize assumptions by making a list of statements. Make some of the statements true, and some of the statements assumptions. Here are some examples:

1. Jane looks sad. She must be mad at her sister.
2. The baseball player hit his tenth home run of the season.
3. Filipe must have just heard a joke. He's smiling.

Only the second example is a fact that can be proven. In the first example, there could be many other reasons why Jane looks sad. In the third example, there could be other reasons why Filipe is smiling.