

Improving Your Reading with Inference Iggy: Suspicion



Despite the things they had in common, the two friends had very different appearances. Benji, with his dark, frizzy hair and skin the colour of caramel, was the shorter of the pair. Freya stood a few inches taller, with fiery red hair and freckles scattered across her nose and cheeks. Their families had been friends for years before Freya and Benji were born, and they had grown up around each other.

“Don’t be so ridiculous!” Freya scoffed dismissively when Benji told her about his theory while walking home that afternoon. “Just think about it for a moment,” he beseeched her. “Wouldn’t it be amazing? Our teachers could actually be superheroes! Like some secret crime-fighting duo or something! One of them is always dashing off here or there at lunchtimes or whenever they’re not teaching us.”

“Superheroes are just for comic books,” replied Freya.

“No, they’re not!” insisted Benji. “They just don’t like to be known by their secret identities. I even saw something on the news the other day. Some guy had run out of a shop after stealing a bunch of stuff from the shelves. The shop owner had phoned the police but thought the guy had already got away. Then the news reporter said police found the thief around the corner, tied up with all the stuff he had stolen right there next to him. There was a note stuck on his chest saying: ‘Stealing isn’t cool. Don’t be a dinkus.’ It wasn’t the police who had caught him, and the thief was so confused that he said he couldn’t even remember what happened.”

“Don’t be a dinkus? That’s pretty funny. But it’s hardly likely to be Mr Jay or Miss Higgins, is it?” asked Freya.

“I’m telling you, I have a weird feeling about this,” said Benji.

The next day, Freya hardly gave another thought to their conversation. Benji, on the other hand, was constantly on the lookout for clues. He kept a close watch on his teachers all morning, and he was rewarded at lunchtime: Miss Higgins received a phone call and Mr Jay gave her a friendly nod as she left.

“Your turn today!” Mr Jay said with a smile.

Both classes were combined again for the start of the afternoon while Mr Jay read the beginning of a story. The classes sat patiently, perched on tables and packed onto the carpet, and listened

while they digested their lunch. After about 20 minutes, Miss Higgins returned quietly and sat at the side until they reached a suitable place to pause.

“We’ll leave it there for now,” Mr Jay decided, closing his copy of the book as they reached a place where two sections of the chapter were separated from each other by three asterisks. “Here’s a quick trivia question: does anyone know what these three asterisks are called, where we just stopped reading?”

There was a short silence, and it became clear that this question was beyond the classes’ knowledge. Eventually, Miss Higgins raised her hand with a grin.

“Well, I know you already know!” Mr Jay laughed. “Go on then, Miss Higgins.”

“It’s a dinkus!” replied the other teacher.

“Indeed it is,” said Mr Jay. “A funny old name, rarely used nowadays, but I like it!”

Amidst the mass of children, two jaws dropped open in astonishment.

1. What evidence is there that Benji and Freya looked nothing alike?

Give **two** points.

1. _____
2. _____

2. What impression is the reader given in the second paragraph?

3. "*Just think about it for a moment,*" he beseeched her.

Benji did this because... Tick **one**.

- He was certain about his belief.
- He wanted her to ignore him.
- He was confused about what she had said.
- He didn't want his teachers to find out.

4. "*Wouldn't it be amazing?*"

Why do you think that Benji thinks this would be **amazing**?

5. "Superheroes are just for comic books," replied Freya.
What impression is the reader given about Freya in this sentence?

6. Look at the paragraph beginning "No, they're not!"
Explain how the reader is made to think that superheroes were involved in the thief's capture. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

7. "I'm telling you, I have a weird feeling about this," said Benji.
This tells the reader that Benji feels... Tick **one**.

- certain
 forgetful
 uncertain
 unhappy

8. Why do you think that Freya didn't give 'another thought to their conversation'?

9. What evidence is there that the children in the class were well behaved?
Give **two** points.

10. *Amidst the mass of children, two jaws dropped open in astonishment.*
Why did this happen?

Answers

1. What evidence is there that Benji and Freya looked nothing alike?

Give **two** points.

Accept any two of the following: the two friends had very difference appearances; Benji had dark, frizzy hair whereas Freya had fiery red hair; Freya stood a few inches taller; Freya had freckles.

2. What impression is the reader given in the second paragraph?

Pupils' own responses, such as: The reader is given the impression that Freya thinks that Benji's idea is silly and does not believe him.

3. *"Just think about it for a moment," he beseeched her.*

Benji did this because... Tick **one**.

- He was certain about his belief.**
 He wanted her to ignore him.
 He was confused about what she had said.
 He didn't want his teachers to find out.

4. *"Wouldn't it be amazing?"*

Why do you think that Benji thinks this would be amazing?

Pupils' own responses, such as: Benji thinks that this would be amazing because it would be fun to have real-life superheroes as teachers.

5. *"Superheroes are just for comic books," replied Freya.*

What impression is the reader given about Freya in this sentence?

Pupils' own responses, such as: The reader is given the impression that Freya does not believe that superheroes are real.

6. Look at the paragraph beginning *"No, they're not!"*

Explain how the reader is made to think that superheroes were involved in the thief's capture. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: The reader is made to think that superheroes are involved because nobody saw who caught the thief and the text says that it wasn't the police. This implies that superheroes were involved.

Answers

7. *"I'm telling you, I have a weird feeling about this," said Benji.*

This tells the reader that Benji feels... Tick **one**.

- certain
- forgetful
- uncertain**
- unhappy

8. Why do you think that Freya didn't give *'another thought to their conversation'*?

Pupils own responses, such as: Freya didn't give another thought to their conversation because she did not think it was important and she had not believed any of it to be true.

9. What evidence is there that the children in the class were well behaved?

Give **two** points.

Accept any two of the following: sat patiently; perched on tables; listened while they digested their lunch; short silence.

10. *Amidst the mass of children, two jaws dropped open in astonishment.*

Why did this happen?

Pupils own responses, such as: This happened because the use of the unusual word 'dinkus' had confirmed Benji's suspicions that the two teachers were the superheroes responsible for catching the thief.