



CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS ACTIVITY 2

Making Inferences

Social Studies Objective: Analyze information by making inferences.

Learning the Skill

An **inference** is a conclusion or observation based on evidence or facts. The way you think about facts or evidence helps you to draw conclusions, or to make inferences. For example, you know your sister needs at least nine hours of sleep to feel rested. She wakes up for school at 6:00 A.M. One night she stayed up until 11:30 P.M. reading a good book. You can infer that the next morning it will be hard for her to wake up.

To make accurate inferences, follow these steps.

- Read (or listen) carefully for stated facts and ideas.
- Then review what you already know about the topic or situation.
- Put all your information together to see if you have enough evidence to draw an inference about a situation.
- If necessary, find specific information that proves or disproves your inference.

Practicing the Skill

Directions: Read the following paragraphs about early Egyptian personal grooming habits. Then write several sentences stating at least three inferences you have drawn from the information.

Eye makeup was the most characteristic of the Egyptian cosmetics. Green and black were the most popular colors. Ancient Egyptians painted their eyebrows and the corners of their eyes. Red iron ore mixed with fat or resin was perhaps used as lipstick or face paint. Henna was used as a hair dye and is still used today.

Hair grooming was very important to early Egyptians. They thought that an overabundance of facial hair showed uncleanness and personal neglect. Shaving and tweezing facial hair were very important. However, some men wore thin mustaches or goatees. Many people wore their hair elaborately curled, braided, or adorned with beads and decorations. Wigs and hairpieces such as extensions were very popular. Hairstyles varied with age, gender, and social status.

CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS ACTIVITY 2 (continued)

Making Inferences

Applying the Skill

Directions: Use the information about Egyptian personal grooming habits to answer the following questions. Circle the letter of the correct answer.

1. Which of the following is an inference you can make about ancient Egyptians and their personal grooming habits?
 - A. Only Egyptian women were concerned with their appearance.
 - B. Ancient Egyptians took a lot of care with their appearance.
 - C. Most early Egyptian men wore beards.
 - D. Ancient Egyptians did not care about their appearance.

2. What were the two most popular colors of eye makeup?
 - A. green and henna
 - B. black and henna
 - C. green and black
 - D. gold and black

3. Which of the following was NOT a hair grooming habit of ancient Egyptians?
 - A. shaving and tweezing their facial hair
 - B. dyeing their hair
 - C. wearing hair extensions
 - D. getting a permanent



WORLD LITERATURE READING 2

Book for the Afterlife

About the Selection

The ancient Egyptian text *Book of the Dead* is a collection of spells and formulas to help the dead on their journey to the afterlife. Spell 125 gives instructions about what to do when facing a trial by the gods. In the spell, a deceased man (called NN) describes his innocence, and his sins are erased. The spell claims that following these instructions will give the dead anything they desire for themselves and their children.

Guided Reading

As you read, consider what you can learn about the ancient Egyptians' beliefs about right and wrong. Then answer the questions that follow.



Reader's Dictionary

- purging:** freeing from sin and guilt
- recitation:** speaking aloud memorized material
- debased:** treated without honor and respect
- deprived:** taken away
- slandered:** told lies about
- diminished:** made smaller

Book of the Dead, "The Negative Confession"

WHAT IS SAID WHEN ARRIVING AT THIS HALL OF TWO TRUTHS, PURGING NN OF ALL MISDEEDS THAT HE HAS DONE AND SEEING THE FACES OF THE GODS.

Recitation by NN: "Hail to you, great god, Lord of the Two Truths! I have come before you, my lord, just so that . . . I might see your beauty. I know you and I know your name and the names of the forty-two gods who are with you in this Hall of the Two Truths, . . . Behold, I have come before you bringing to you Truth, . . .

- I have not committed wrongdoing against anyone.
- I have not mistreated cattle. . . .
- I have not done evil. . . .
- I have not debased a god.
- I have not deprived an orphan. . . .
- I have not slandered a servant to his superior.
- I have not caused pain.
- I have not caused weeping.

WORLD LITERATURE READING 2 (continued)

Book for the Afterlife

I have not killed.
I have not commanded to kill.
I have not made suffering for anyone.
I have not diminished the offering loaves in the temples. . . .
I have not taken milk from the mouths of children. . . .
I have not snared birds of the branches of the gods.
I have not trapped fish in their marshes.
I have not diverted water in its season.
I have not erected a dam against flowing water.
I have not extinguished a fire at its critical moment.
I have not neglected the days concerning their meat offerings.
I have not driven away the cattle of the god's property.
I have not stopped a god in his procession.
I am pure, I am pure, I am pure, I am pure!

. . . As for the one for whom this book is done, he will flourish and his children will flourish. . . . Truly effective, millions of times.

Source: *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*. Edited by William Kelly Simpson. Yale University Press, 2003.

Literary Response and Analysis

Directions: Answer the questions below in the spaces provided.

1. List three ways an Egyptian could wrong another person.

2. List three ways an Egyptian could wrong the gods.

3. **Critical Thinking** Do any parts of the Egyptian selection remind you of rules you have learned to follow? Explain.
