

# Improve constructed-response writing

## Make inferences and explain them in writing.

Target thinking first.



People crowd to enter the open door. They rush to find a seat. Many are left to stand when all the seats are taken. The vehicle jerks forward at a high velocity, causing the standers to lurch. They tighten their grips on the straps hanging from the ceiling. Although it's daytime, the view out the windows is pitch black. Only lights inside the vehicle keep it from being totally dark.

Where does this scene take place?

Identify the 3 facets of a constructed response.

1. Provide an inference/answer to the question or prompt.
2. Support the inference with examples/details from the text.
3. Explain how the evidence supports the inference.

### Answer • Inference

Repeat key words from the question/command and provide a general answer.

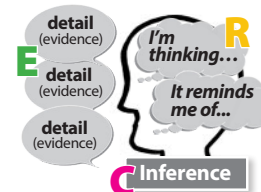
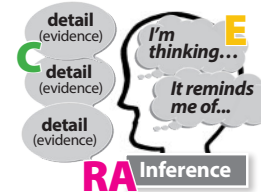
### Details • Evidence

Support your answer with textual evidence.

Support your answer with *more* evidence from the text.

### Explanation

Explain how the evidence fits the answer/inference.



What is the answer?

Why do you think that?



Write the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.



LESSON IDEA: Stretch the answer into a topic sentence.

Repeat key words from the question...

... and state the inference.

**M C R A**

Readers make inferences & explain them in writing

Repeat words from question + INFERENCE

I'm thinking... detail + detail + detail it reminds me of... INFERENCE

LESSON IDEA: Identify key words.

|            |          |        |             |
|------------|----------|--------|-------------|
| After      | reading  | the    | descriptive |
| paragraph. | identify | where  | this        |
| scene      | takes    | place. |             |

|       |       |        |
|-------|-------|--------|
| scene | takes | place. |
|-------|-------|--------|

LESSON IDEA: Introduce the *Goldilocks Principle*.

In the descriptive paragraph about the people standing in the vehicle and holding on, it's clear that it takes place within an underground subway train.

In an underground train.

This scene takes place in an underground subway train.



LESSON IDEA: Implement *Invisible Questions*.

Assignment

\_\_\_\_\_?

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_?

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_?

\_\_\_\_\_.

Teacher Questions

\_\_\_\_\_?

\_\_\_\_\_?

\_\_\_\_\_?

Student Responses

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

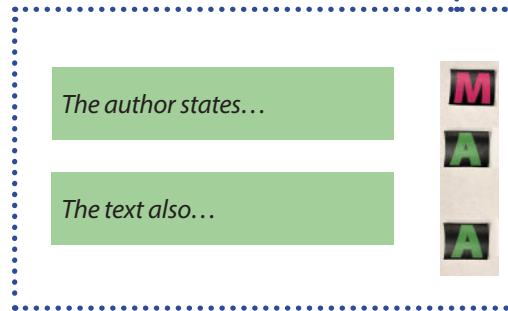
\_\_\_\_\_.



Write the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences.

LESSON IDEA: Introduce evidence.

- Revisit 2-part *what-and-why* answers.



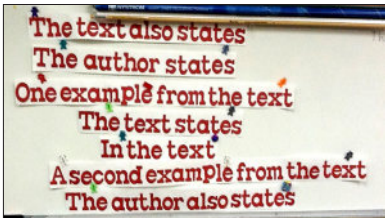
Readers make inferences & explain them in writing

Repeat words from question + INFERENCE

The author states...

The text also...

- Provide sentence starters for efficiency.



- Provide alternative verbs for said.

|                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>The text:</i> | <i>The author:</i> |
| states...        | wrote...           |
| includes         | implies...         |
| presents...      | describes...       |
|                  | proposes...        |

LESSON IDEA: Include evidence in blended sentences.

- Define *kerplunked* evidence versus *blended* evidence.



The text states that "the vehicle jerks forward at a high velocity, causing the standers to lurch. They tighten their grips on the straps hanging from the ceiling."

The text also states that "although it's daytime, the view out the windows is pitch black."

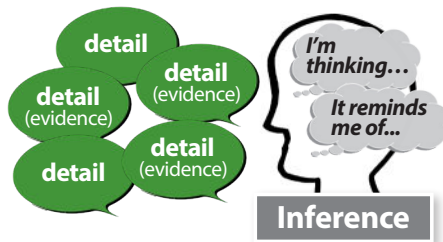
Sentences should flow with all of the thoughts connected. It should sound like one person wrote it.

The text states that the standers "lurch" and "tighten their grips" on the ceiling straps.

The text also states that, despite it being "daytime," the people inside the vehicle see only "pitch black" out the windows.

LESSON IDEA: Determine the strongest evidence.

- Revisit *details* versus *evidence*.
- Identify the most helpful text details.



- Introduce a 5-step strategy.

1. READ and determine the most important author words/phrases.
2. REMOVE the original text.
3. SAY or compose an oral sentence blending your words with the author's.
4. WRITE what you just said out loud.
5. RETURN to the text to verify that the author's words have quotation marks.



Write the 4<sup>th</sup> sentence.

LESSON IDEA: Assume the reader “doesn’t get it.”  
 • Describe the purpose of the concluding sentence.

These details demonstrate...  
 ...because...



Readers make inferences & explain them in writing

Repeat words from question + INFERENCE

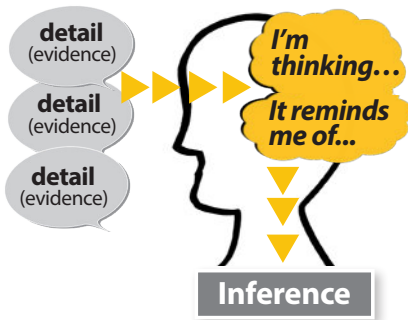
The author states...

The text also...

These details prove... because...  
 This demonstrates... since...

LESSON IDEA: Connect the dots.

• Distinguish **what the text says (i.e., evidence)** from **what it means (i.e., explanation)**.



This scene takes place in an underground subway train. The text states that the standers “lurch” and “tighten their grips” on the ceiling straps. The text also states that, despite it being “daytime,” the people inside the vehicle see only “pitch black” out the windows. These details prove this is an underground subway train because it’s a fast moving vehicle that travels in a dark tunnel.

LESSON IDEA: Explain the connection in 3 parts.

1. Restate the answer.
2. Add a connecting word.
3. Describe the connection.

This shows...  
 This demonstrates...  
 These details prove...

because      consequently  
 since        as a result  
 so            therefore

Use thoughts noted within the Silhouette Head.

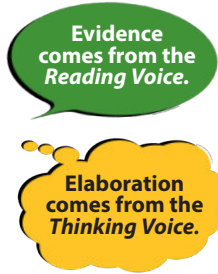


End a constructed response with an explanation.



LESSON IDEA: Double the elaboration-to-evidence ratio.

|            |                         |
|------------|-------------------------|
| Inference  | Inference               |
| Evidence   | Evidence<br>Elaboration |
| Evidence   | Evidence<br>Elaboration |
| Conclusion | Conclusion              |



### Insert elaboration.

- This is important because...*
  - This matters because...*
  - This means...*
  - ...in other words...*
  - This conveys...*
  - ...gives the impression...*
  - This is important because...*
- This signifies...*
  - This causes...*
  - The impact of this is ...*
  - It follows that...*
  - Consequently...*
  - This suggests...*
  - If this continues...*

This scene takes place in an underground subway train.  
 The text states that the standers "lurch" and "tighten their grips" on the ceiling straps.  
 This suggests a vehicle moving so fast that people have to hold on for balance.  
 The text also states that, despite it being "daytime," the people inside the vehicle see only "pitch black" out the windows.  
 This matters because daytime implies sunlight.  
 These details prove this is an underground subway train because it's a fast moving vehicle that travels in a dark tunnel.

LESSON IDEA: Generate compound sentences using *but, so, because, then, since, consequently, therefore, thus, etc.*

This scene takes place in an underground subway train.  
 The text states that the standers "lurch" and "tighten their grips" on the ceiling straps because the vehicle is moving so fast that people have to hold on for balance.  
 The text also states that, despite it being "daytime," the people inside the vehicle see only "pitch black" out the windows, but daytime implies sunlight.  
 These details prove this is an underground subway train because it's a fast moving vehicle that travels in a dark tunnel.

LESSON IDEA: Stack explanation and elaboration.

This scene takes place in an underground subway train.  
 The text states that the standers "lurch" and "tighten their grips" on the ceiling straps because the vehicle is moving so fast that people have to hold on for balance.  
 Consequently, this eliminates any slow moving vehicles where passengers are required to remain seated.  
 The text also states that, despite it being "daytime," the people inside the vehicle see only "pitch black" out the windows, but daytime implies sunlight.  
 Therefore, the description of darkness puts this scene in a cave or tunnel.  
 These details prove this is an underground subway train because it's a fast moving vehicle that travels in a dark tunnel.

WRITTEN RESPONSE with Elaboration

|            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| Answer     |             |
| Evidence   | Elaboration |
| Evidence   | Elaboration |
| Conclusion |             |



TEXT-BASED RESPONSES  
 Session 1 | First Day to Test Day  
 Session 4 | Extended Responses