

Inference Detective: Into the Light

Read the story closely and use clues to work out what the writer does not say directly.

Name _____ Date _____ Class _____

Learning objective: I can make inferences about characters' feelings and actions and support them with evidence.

✓ I spot clues in the text ✓ I explain what the clues suggest ✓ I quote evidence to back up my ideas

Into the Light

Leo stood at the edge of the stage, gripping the curtain so tightly that his knuckles turned white. Beyond it, he could hear the low murmur of three hundred people shuffling in their seats.

"You'll be brilliant," whispered Miss Patel, squeezing his shoulder. Leo nodded, but he didn't trust himself to speak. He glanced down at the crumpled piece of paper in his hand. The words he had practised every night for a month swam in front of his eyes.

Somewhere in the third row sat his gran. She had caught two buses to get here, even though her knee had been playing up all week. Leo pictured her best blue hat and felt his chest loosen, just a little.

The music stopped. The lights dimmed. Leo took a long, slow breath, folded the paper and pushed it deep into his pocket.

Then he stepped out into the light.

An original story written for The Teacher Vault.

1 Detective warm-up Circle the best answer.

- 1 At the start, Leo feels...
☐ (A) bored ☐ (B) nervous ☐ (C) angry ☐ (D) sleepy
- 2 Where is Leo?
☐ (A) in a classroom ☐ (B) backstage at a performance ☐ (C) on a bus ☐ (D) at his gran's house
- 3 "...the words... swam in front of his eyes" suggests that Leo...
☐ (A) needs glasses ☐ (B) is too anxious to focus on the words ☐ (C) is in a swimming pool
☐ (D) has lost the paper

2 Word detective

- 4 "...felt his chest **loosen**, just a little." What does this tell you about how Leo's feelings change?
[1 mark]

- 5 The final paragraph is only one sentence long. Why do you think the writer did this? [1 mark]

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3 Clue hunt Find a clue (evidence) in the text for each inference.

Inference	Evidence from the text
Leo is very tense.	
The audience is large.	
Miss Patel wants to reassure Leo.	
Leo has worked hard to prepare.	

4 Think deeper Use evidence from the text in each answer.

6 Why does Leo think about his gran? [2 marks]

7 What does it tell you about Gran that she “caught two buses... even though her knee had been playing up”? [2 marks]

8 Why do you think Leo pushes the paper “deep into his pocket”? [2 marks]

9 Predict what happens next. Explain your prediction using the text. [2 marks]

Answer Key

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Question	Answers
1 Detective warm-up	1 B (nervous); 2 B (backstage at a performance); 3 B (is too anxious to focus on the words)
2 Word detective	4. He relaxes slightly – the tight, tense feeling of nerves eases (but only ‘a little’, so he is still nervous). 5. To create a dramatic, tense moment/emphasise Leo’s big decision – the short paragraph makes the reader pause.
3 Clue hunt	Leo is very tense. – Evidence from the text: “gripping the curtain so tightly that his knuckles turned white” The audience is large. – Evidence from the text: “three hundred people shuffling in their seats” Miss Patel wants to reassure Leo. – Evidence from the text: “You’ll be brilliant,” / “squeezing his shoulder” Leo has worked hard to prepare. – Evidence from the text: “practised every night for a month”
4 Think deeper	6. Picturing her (and knowing she made a real effort to come – two buses, painful knee) calms him: “felt his chest loosen, just a little”. 7. She cares about Leo very much/is determined to support him – the journey was difficult and painful for her. 8. He has decided he does not need it – he feels ready/confident to perform from memory; it shows a change from nervous to determined. 9. Any sensible prediction linked to evidence, e.g. he performs well because he has practised for a month and feels calmer.

Teaching note: the text is original. Inference questions rarely have one fixed wording, so accept any answer that makes a sensible point and supports it with evidence. A strong answer follows *point – evidence – explain*.