

Name: _____

Date: _____

Inference: 6th Grade

Remember that **inferencing** is when you use the details from a text to come to a conclusion that is not explicitly stated in the text. We “read between the lines” by making **inferences** about what is not said based on what is said.

Read the excerpt from *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott and answer the questions that follow.

"Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents," grumbled Jo, lying on the rug.

"It's so dreadful to be poor!" sighed Meg, looking down at her old dress.

"I don't think it's fair for some girls to have plenty of pretty things, and other girls nothing at all," added little Amy, with an injured sniff.

"We've got Father and Mother, and each other," said Beth contentedly from her corner.

The four young faces on which the firelight shone brightened at the cheerful words, but darkened again as Jo said sadly, "We haven't got Father, and shall not have him for a long time." She didn't say "perhaps never," but each silently added it, thinking of Father far away, where the fighting was.

Nobody spoke for a minute; then Meg said in an altered tone, "You know the reason Mother proposed not having any presents this Christmas was because it is going to be a hard winter for everyone; and she thinks we ought not to spend money for pleasure, when our men are suffering so in the army. We can't do much, but we can make our little sacrifices, and ought to do it gladly. But I am afraid I don't," and Meg shook her head, as she thought regretfully of all the pretty things she wanted.

"But I don't think the little we should spend would do any good. We've each got a dollar, and the army wouldn't be much helped by our giving that. I agree not to expect anything from Mother or you, but I do want to buy *Undine and Sintran* for myself. I've wanted it so long," said Jo, who was a bookworm.

"I planned to spend mine in new music," said Beth, with a little sigh, which no one heard but the hearth brush and kettle-holder.

"I shall get a nice box of Faber's drawing pencils; I really need them," said Amy decidedly.

"Mother didn't say anything about our money, and she won't wish us to give up everything. Let's each buy what we want, and have a little fun; I'm sure we work hard enough to earn it," cried Jo, examining the heels of her shoes in a gentlemanly manner.

"I know I do—teaching those tiresome children nearly all day, when I'm longing to enjoy myself at home," began Meg, in the complaining tone again.

"You don't have half such a hard time as I do," said Jo. "How would you like to be shut up for hours with a nervous, fussy old lady, who keeps you trotting, is never satisfied, and worries you till you're ready to fly out the window or cry?"

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"It's naughty to fret, but I do think washing dishes and keeping things tidy is the worst work in the world. It makes me cross, and my hands get so stiff, I can't practice well at all." And Beth looked at her rough hands with a sigh that any one could hear that time.

"I don't believe any of you suffer as I do," cried Amy, "for you don't have to go to school with impertinent girls, who plague you if you don't know your lessons, and laugh at your dresses, and label your father if he isn't rich, and insult you when your nose isn't nice."

Where is the girls' father? Provide at least one detail from the text to support your answer?

What can you infer about each of the girls based on what they say they "need" to buy for themselves? Make sure to include at least one inference for each of the girls. Include at least one detail from the text for each inference you make.

Why are Beth's hands "rough"? Include at least one detail from the text to support your answer.

Which girl is the youngest? Include a detail from the text to support your answer.

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Answers--Inference: 6th Grade

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Answers will vary. Students should be able to provide details to support answers when asked.

Where is the girls' father? Provide at least one detail from the text to support your answer?

He is fighting in a war. He is "far away, where the fighting was" at Christmas. Their mother does not think the girls should spend money on pleasure when the "men are suffering in the army."

What can you infer about each of the girls based on what they say they "need" to buy for themselves? Make sure to include at least one inference for each of the girls. Include at least one detail from the text for each inference you make.

Meg wants "pretty things"—she likes to be pretty and wear nice things. Jo wants a book—she calls herself a bookworm, so she likes to read. Beth wants new music, so she must play an instrument (she also talks about how hard it is to practice with rough hands). Amy must like to draw because she wants a new box of drawing pencils.

Why are Beth's hands "rough"? Include at least one detail from the text to support your answer.

Beth cleans and washes the dishes. Her hands are rough from all of the hot water and soap that is used for her chores.

Which girl is the youngest? Include a detail from the text to support your answer.

Amy. Amy is the only one of them who still goes to school, so that means she must be the youngest.
