

# Reading Skill 5

## Making inferences

Making inferences plays an essential role in comprehending a passage thoroughly. To make inferences means to discover implied information by drawing conclusions from the information presented by the writer. When making inferences, we combine what we read from the passage with our personal knowledge and logical thinking. Through making such guesses, the task of figuring out hidden messages in a piece of writing becomes much easier.

### Example 1

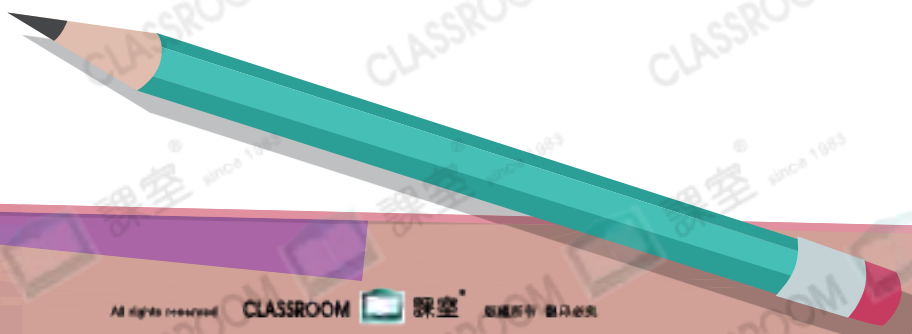
When we come across the word 'carnivorous', we think of animals. In fact, there are carnivorous plants too, such as the Venus flytrap and pitcher plants. Carnivorous plants neither go around hunting for prey nor have the strength to feast on large animals. Instead, they have traps pre-set and wait for the victims. That is why a lot of those meat-obsessed plants give out sweet scents that are irresistible to insects or relatively small animals like birds and rats.

Think about the following questions:

What does the adjective 'carnivorous' mean?

Why may insects get eaten by the Venus flytrap?

Although the above paragraph offers no information that serves to directly answer these two questions, we can find out the answers by paying attention to the information given. On the one hand, by the words 'prey', 'feast on large animals' and 'meat-obsessed', we can at least come to the conclusion that the adjective 'carnivorous' is related to eating habits and meat. On the other hand, noticing that the writer mentions words like 'traps' and 'sweet scents that are irresistible to insects', we can see that insects may get eaten by the Venus flytrap probably because of the scent given out by the plant.





## Let's Practice

Read the following paragraphs and choose the best answers.

Before the advent of the smartphone, it was usual that people could remember the phone numbers of their family members or friends. It never occurred to them that remembering a person's phone number could be a difficult task. Nowadays, it seems that most people who have smart phones have difficulty recalling the phone numbers of their family members or best friends, since they can save hundreds of contacts in their devices.

1. What does the writer want to tell the readers?  
 A. People in the past had a better quality of life.  
 B. Having a good memory is important.  
 C. Depending on technology is not good for our memory.  
 D. There are many ways to train our memory.

25 Sept

Maggie invited me to McDonald's after school. I'd like to go and have a hamburger but I can't because I've gained 3 kilos this month. I can't wear my favourite dress any more!

26 Sept

Today is a holiday. In the evening my family all went outside to watch the full moon and ate delicious moon cakes. But I didn't eat any.

2. What festival did the writer's family celebrate on 26<sup>th</sup> September?  
 A. Chinese New Year  
 B. Mid-Autumn Festival  
 C. Dragon Boat Festival  
 D. Easter
3. Who wrote the above diary entries?  
 A. a man who is overweight  
 B. a boy who doesn't like mooncakes  
 C. a girl who worries about her health  
 D. a woman who works at McDonald's