What is inferring?

To infer is to draw a conclusion based on reasoning and evidence. When making inferences, information at hand is analysed for any patterns or connections that are implied or hinted at. For example, in English, students infer meaning to connect and compare content between texts.

A process of inferring may include:

- identifying the evidence in the information

- connecting the patterns in the evidence to what you know

- using the evidence to draw conclusions.

Infer as a cognition

Cognitive verbs are categorised using Marzano & Kendall's four elements of the cognitive system: retrieval, comprehension, analysis and knowledge utilisation (2007).

The cognitive verb infer is part of the retrieval element of cognitive process. This element involves the 'generation of new information not already possessed by the individual' (p. 44).

Infer in the Australian Curriculum Version 9.0

The cognitive verb infer appears in various learning area achievement standards (AS) and/or content descriptions (CD) in the Australian Curriculum. The following table shows the use of infer across the Australian Curriculum in Prep–Year 6.

Infer in the Prep–Year 6 Australian Curriculum AS and CD

	English	Health and Physical Education	P–6 HASS	Mathematics	Science	Technologies		
						Technologies	Design and Technologies	Digital Technologies
Prep								
Year 1	CD							
Year 2	AS CD							
Year 3	AS CD							
Year 4	CD							
Year 5	CD		CD					
Year 6	CD		CD					

Learning area/subject examples include, but are not limited to:

Year/s	Learning area/subject	AS	CD
Year 2	English	They (students) read, view and comprehend texts, identifying literal and **inferred** meaning, and how ideas are presented through characters and events.	use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising, monitoring and questioning to build literal and **inferred** meaning AC9E2LY05
Year 3	English	They (students) identify literal meaning and explain **inferred** meaning	use comprehension strategies when listening and viewing to build literal and inferred meaning, and begin to evaluate texts by drawing on a growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features AC9E3LY05
Years 5–6	HASS		evaluate information and data in a range of formats to identify and describe patterns and trends, or to **infer** relationships AC9HS5S03 AC9HS6S03
Year 6	English		use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising, monitoring and questioning to build literal and **inferred** meaning, and to connect and compare content from a variety of sources AC9E6LY05

References

Marzano, R & Kendall, J 2007, *The New Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA.

More information

This information sheet is part of a suite of resources to support teachers in the explicit teaching and assessment of students' thinking. The suite of resources includes categories of common cognitive verbs, cognitive verb overviews and a cognitive verb toolkit with information sheets, posters and graphic organisers.

If you would like more information, please visit the QCAA website www.qcaa.qld.edu.au and search for 'cognitive verbs'. Alternatively, the suite of resources can be found here: www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/p-10/aciq/version-9/cognitive-verbs-in-version-9.0.