

Menu☰

HOME

TEACHER RESOURCES

INFOGRAPHICS

INFERRING WITH NORMAN ROCKWELL – FINDING THE CLUES

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One of my favorite ways to teach inferencing skills to students is to use Norman Rockwell. He captures the hearts of so many of us: young and old. He has a realistic sense of humor, a poignant grasp of the human spirit, and an ability to express so much in his characters' faces. Even if some of his paintings seem old fashioned, students still love them and that makes them a great resource for classroom use.

To practice inferring, ask students to first look at the painting you have chosen. Ask them to make observations only about what they see. For example: a man is sitting, he has wrinkles on his face, his mustache is white, he is wiping his brow with a white cloth. These are all clues we can use to draw a conclusion. When we put these clues together, based on what we see and what we know, we make an inference. In this case, those clues tell me that this is an old man and he is tired.

It's always interesting to see students realize that they make inferences all the time and quite often instantly. By using paintings and not text, they are able to practice this reading skill in a different way that allows them to gain a better understanding of what their brains are doing when they make an inference.

If you are interested in trying this activity with your students, you will need a Rockwell painting and [this worksheet](#) to guide you.

You can make many inferences from one painting since there are so many things that go on in each painting. Once you have introduced this activity to your students together, you can have them work on their own.

- Have a copy of a painting for each student. (They do not have to be the same.)
- Give students a copy to use in small groups.
- Place copies of paintings around the room and have students do the activity while traveling from piece to piece in an "around the world" format.
- Do a shared lesson or activity with a small group.
- Create a center in your room where students can visit and complete the activity.

Collecting Rockwell paintings can be easy. Maybe you have old calendars of his work or a few prints in your home. If not, you can display some of his works from your classroom computer after finding a few examples on the internet. A great resource is the Norman Rockwell Museum website <http://www.nrm.org/>. Here, along with finding images, you can explore Rockwell's biography and view his home and studio. Another wonderful website to visit is <http://www.rockwelllicensing.com/index.html>. Click the gallery tab and view full screen images of

Rockwell's paintings.

Painting suggestions for kids: *The Diary*, *After the Prom*, *Four Sporting Boys Oh Yeah*, *Sheer Agony*, *Clown*, *Moving In*, *Losing the Game*, *Child Psychology*, *Tough One*

Finding clues in a Norman Rockwell painting and putting them together is a fun activity for students and it can really help them to slow down and practice inferring.

~EMP



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SAY SOMETHING

Are You Human? *

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