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This lesson was created by a teacher participating in the Eisenhower Professional Development Project/Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title II grant entitled *Using Archaeology as an Integrated Gateway to Teacher Professional Development*.

Title: *Motel of Mysteries*

Submitted by: Vance Mead

This was the third lesson I implemented in my unit. It was based on the book *Motel of Mysteries*. The purpose was to give students further insight into the concept of making inferences. This book should help students to better understand that archaeologists make inferences based upon what they observe. This does not mean that they are always correct. This lesson will not only help students to better understand an archaeologist's job, it will also tie into our curriculum for Reading and Science by helping students to "read between the lines" and to get them thinking more outside of the box.

I knew that this would be a hard lesson for students because many of the words were big and foreign. Being able to understand difficult text is an important skill for students, and I was able to make use of some of the reading resources we have on the subject. I tried to accommodate this difficult text by assigning only a page of the story to each student. I also allowed them to work with a learning partner while developing their summary. These adaptations helped greatly. In the end, students enjoyed the experience and got a kick out of the inferences the main character made in regards to the artifacts found at the motel. This book greatly increased their knowledge about inferences.

Grade Level: 5-8

Subjects: Reading, social studies

Objectives:

1. That even though inferences are based on observations that does not mean they are always true or correct.
2. How to pull the topics and main ideas out of a piece of difficult text.

WI Standards:	Science B.8.1 Reading A.8.4
Duration	45 minutes
Materials:	-Individual pages of the book <i>Motel of Mysteries</i> , one for each student -Highlighters for each student
Vocabulary:	Inference - making or drawing a conclusion based on observation
Background:	Making inferences is an important skill for students to develop. With literature, we call it reading between the lines. To make a good inference, one must take observations or information and attempt to answer who, what, where, why, and how. An inference is like an hypothesis. It is something that is assumed because it seems likely to be a true explanation. Archaeologists make inferences based on the artifacts they have uncovered. By comparing their inferences and findings with those from other sites and archaeologists, a theory is developed. This means that the hypothesis has been tested and confirmed many times as a general principle or explanation. One example of this might include the existence of pottery on a site. Our inference might be that this culture was agrarian in nature and was able to live in one place for longer periods of time due to the ability to store grains. This inference, or hypothesis, might be confirmed through the discovery of charred grains and from other similar discoveries at other archaeological sites.
Setting the Stage:	To get students ready for this lesson I will first review previous lessons on inference. We will discuss what an inference is and how inferences are made. We will also review topics, main ideas, and supporting details.
Procedure:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Divide a KWL chart in half and have students complete the K (Know) and W (Want to learn) sections for making inferences and strategies used to understand difficult text. After ten minutes discuss these as a class and record them on a master copy. 2. Read the two introductory pages that come before the copyright page in the book <i>Motel of Mysteries</i>. 3. Display the first page of the story on the overhead. Pass out a copy to each student in the class. As a group, apply the methods for understanding difficult text identified on the KWL chart described above. 4. Discuss and highlight/underline the topic and main ideas on the page. 5. Give each student a different page from the book and have him or her highlight/underline the topic and main ideas. 6. Have students rewrite into their own words what their page was about. 7. Gather together as a class. Sitting in a circle according to the order of the book, students will tell in their own words what their portion of the

book was about. In this manner the entire story of *Motel of Mysteries* will be shared.

Closure: After the book has been shared and discussed, students will return to their desks and complete the L (Learn) section of the chart. First, they will write one lesson they learned about making inferences. Second, they will write one lesson they learned about gaining the meaning from difficult text. The teacher will collect these and share some of them with the class

Evaluation: The teacher will know that the students have successfully met the objectives by evaluating the answers given in the closure activity. Successful answers to the first question may include information about inferences not being facts. Students should recognize that inferences are based on observations and may or may not be close to the truth. For the second question in the closure, students should include information about reading the entire passage to gain a greater understanding of the context. They may mention that often times the topic is included in the first sentence, that difficult words may be looked up, or that a good summary include important information like topics and main ideas.

Links: This lesson can be linked directly to any science unit. Making inferences is one of the first steps in the scientific model. Inferences lead to hypotheses, hypotheses lead to theories, and theories can lead to facts.

Understanding difficult text is a skill that students will encounter often throughout their school careers. Practicing on a small volume of text should guide students to understand larger portions of hard text.

Extension: Writing: Ask students to pretend that one thousand years from now archaeologists will dig up a section of this school, like the playground. Have them write a story that includes the inferences archaeologists might make about the different pieces of equipment they find.

References:

1. *Writer's Express* book pages 238 and 239 help to prepare students to read for understanding. Page 241 gives good information on mapping content, and page 243 instructs students to retell content that was read.
2. *Project CRISS* book pages 26 and 27 provide helpful instruction on how to effectively highlight and underline text.

Name:

K - What I Know	W - What I Want to Know	L - What I Learned
Inferences:		
Strategies for understanding difficult text:		