

Name: _____

Date: _____

Making Inferences in a Fictional Text

An **inference** is a conclusion you come to based on reasoning and evidence within a text. Making an inference requires using both information from the text and your background knowledge. Read the passage below and answer the inference questions that follow.

clues in text

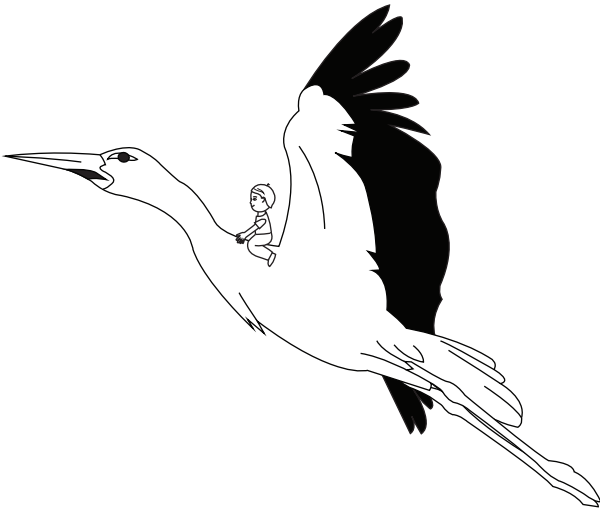
+

what you know

=

inference

The Hazelnut Child



Once upon a time, before the continent of Europe was given that name, there lived a couple who had no children. They wished every day for a child, even if he were no bigger than a hazelnut. At last, their wish was granted, and they had a child who was the size of a hazelnut, just as they had said. They loved the child very much and they took excellent care of him. When the hazelnut child turned fifteen, his parents asked what he would become, now that he was of an age to work. "I would like to be a messenger," said the child. His mother laughed and asked, "How can you possibly be a messenger? Your tiny feet would take an hour to carry

you the distance anyone else could cover in a minute." "Give me a message to carry," said the boy, "and see how quickly I return." So his mother told him to go the house of his aunt in the neighboring village and bring back a comb. "I'll be back before you know," said the boy. His mother held the front door open for her son, and off he went on his journey. He found a man on horseback who was headed for the next town. The boy **crept** up the horse's leg, crawled under the saddle, and began to pinch the horse's back. Rearing up, the horse took off at breakneck speed and wouldn't slow down, no matter how hard the rider pulled at its reins. When they reached the neighboring village, the hazelnut child quit pinching the horse, and it slowed enough that the boy was able to climb back down its leg. His aunt was delighted to see him and gave him the comb he asked for. The hazelnut child returned home on the back of another horse and presented his mother with the comb. "But how did you get home so quickly?" she asked. He did not answer her question, but only said, "You see, I told you messenger was the **profession** for me." Using his newfound skill, the hazelnut child hitched a ride on a stork that was heading south for the winter and landed in a faraway country. There, he met the king, who was **astonished** by this tiny creature who rode storks as if they were horses. The king was so taken with the hazelnut child that he gave the boy a diamond bigger than himself. The boy hitched the diamond to his stork and flew home, and he and his parents lived in peace and **prosperity** for the rest of their lives.

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Defining Key Vocabulary

Directions: Use context clues to match each vocabulary word to its definition.

crept	a paid occupation or job
profession	wealth or good fortune
astonished	moved slowly and quietly to avoid being noticed
prosperity	greatly surprised or impressed

Making Inferences

Directions: Complete the chart by writing a quote from the text (on the left) or an inference you can make (on the right).

	The text states...	This most likely means...
1	"They wished every day for a child, even if he were no bigger than a hazelnut."	What can you infer about the couple who later became the hazelnut child's parents? _____ _____ _____
2	Write a quote from the story that supports this inference. _____ _____ _____	The hazelnut child was determined to prove that he could accomplish his goals, despite his small size.
3	"The king was so taken with the hazelnut child that he gave the boy a diamond bigger than himself."	What can you infer about the king? _____ _____ _____