

Tips for Teaching Drawing Conclusions

Thinking beyond the facts to draw original conclusions and make meaningful inferences about data is an essential step in thinking critically with data. It is also challenging for students, especially those who have been successful at providing answers to low-level, literal questions. Here are some strategies you can use to help students learn how to draw conclusions:

- Discuss everyday inferences that students make, such as interpreting the mood of friends and family members from their expressions and body language.
- Use think-alouds to model practices of making connections and predictions from data.
- Teach students to ask good questions of a text as a path to drawing conclusions.
- Encourage students to connect their personal experiences and what they are learning in all their classes to their thinking about data.
- Ask students to think about their data with all their senses, to create their own images, and to think about details and themes.
- Use graphic organizers to visually illustrate how connections lead to original ideas.
- Provide explicit instruction in different types of inferences, including:
 - *Explanation-based inferences* ask students to fill in components of a chain of causes and effects.
 - *Goal inferences* involve attributing a person's actions to an inferred goal.
 - *Elaborative inferences* include the description of components or features of an idea that are not specifically described.
 - *Predictive inferences* ask students to draw logical links between current information and future events.
 - *Process inferences* require students to infer steps of a process from an event.