

Sherwood Anderson's *Death in the Woods*

Day 7 (*Time required: 45-55 mins.*)

***Death in the Woods*, Section II**

Students can read Section II silently or take turns reading aloud.

Making Inferences

Explain that an inference is a conclusion that is drawn by observation or by using facts. For example, if you saw someone smiling and humming as he walked down the street, you might make an inference that he is having a really good day. Another way of saying this is that you infer that the smiling, humming man is having a really good day. You make this connection based on what you see.

Differentiated Learning: Additional Instruction

If pre-assessment reveals that students are encountering the term “infer” for the first time, or if you feel additional reinforcement would be beneficial, then ask, “Has anyone ever made an inference about you based on an observation that was correct? Has anyone ever inferred something about you that was not correct?” Discuss reasons why people might make incorrect inferences, and remind students that it is important for them to be alert and careful when they make inferences, both about fictional characters and about real people.

Ask the students:

- What can you infer about the woman in the story?
- What can you infer about the narrator?

Have the students explain their inferences using details that the narrator provides about himself and about the woman. They should use these examples after the word “because” in their inferences. For example: “I think the woman was really lonely because she didn’t have anyone to talk to her,” or “The narrator seemed sad for the woman because he talked about all of the difficulties that she faced in keeping the animals fed.” Ask students to be aware of how they make inferences as they answer these questions:

- Why was it difficult for Jake Grimes’ business to succeed?
- How would you describe the woman’s relationship with her husband and son?
- What did the woman’s husband and son expect her to provide for them? What did they offer in return?
- Why did the butcher treat the woman kindly on this particular trip to town?
- In what ways would the woman’s life be affected if she couldn’t feed the animals?
- In what ways was the woman’s married life like her life at the German’s farm? In what ways was it different?