Inferring Meaning
Visual and Text Practice
Using Captain Cook

Scrap paper needed.
Short Task

Look at the picture
Write 3-5 statements based on evidence
Example

- They are close together, so they are probably family.
- They are walking towards the water
- Probably to explore, but not in the water. (no tools, towels)
  It’s a sunny day, but not too warm. Waves are small.
Your notes

What did you observe?
What did you infer?
Would you believe...

...these paintings are by the same person Cleveley

...about the same event?!

What really happened?
One of the most famous reproductions of Cleveley's *Death of Cook* hangs at the Honolulu Academy of Arts. It depicts Captain Cook as a peacemaker.

The original painting by Cleveley was discovered in 2004 and depicts Captain Cook as a violent man. The painting proved some artists skewed history to show Europeans in favorable light.
What can you believe?

Information needs to be checked and verified from a variety of sources to be authoritative.
Short pause before text inference.
Captain Cook

Inferring with Text

http://www.nmm.ac.uk/mag/pages/mnuExplore/ViewLargelimage.cfm?id=BHC4227&letter=c
You will be shown 2 paragraphs.

How are they alike?
How are they different?
"Many believe that Captain James Cook was the greatest ocean explorer ever to have lived, and that he mapped more of the world than any other man."

"He also set an example of how to treat a ship, its crew, and the people he met on his explorations."
Cook often took leaders of native groups hostage if any of his possessions were stolen. He would hold the chief hostage until the stolen goods were returned. On the day the Hawaiians killed Captain Cook, he had taken one of their chiefs hostage and was about to row the chief back to the ship.

In this case a large row boat had been stolen. At first this chief agreed to go along, but an argument started. His wife and two other chiefs urged him not to go with Cook. He changed his mind, a struggle started and the British started shooting as they saw the Hawaiians approach in a threatening manner with stones and spears.

Once their muskets and pistols were fired, killing several Hawaiians, Cook and his party were overwhelmed and killed.
You were shown 2 paragraphs.

How were they alike?
How were they different?

Does this raise any questions?
What do you do now?
What kind of information will help you know what kind of person Captain Cook was?

What can you read that isn’t someone else’s opinion?
Primary Sources

These include diaries, journals, letters, drawings.
Example Journal Entry

WEDNESDAY 13th In the PM had light airs at ESE with which we kept edgeing in for the land, got up the Main topmast and Main yard and having got the sail ready for fothering the Ship we put it over under the Starboard for chains where we suspected the Ship had sufferd most and soon after the leak decreased so as to be kept clear with one Pump with ease, this fortunate circumstance gave new life to every one on board. It is much easier to conceive than to discribe the satisfaction felt by every body on this occasion, but a few minutes before our utmost wishes were to get hold of some place upon the Main or an Island to run the Ship ashore where out of her Materials we might build a vessel to carry us to the East Indias, no sooner were we made sensible that the outward application to the Ships bottom had taken effect than the feild of every mans hopes inlarged so that we now thought of nothing but rainging along shore in search of a harbour where we could repair the damages we had susstained. In justice to the Ships Company I must say that no men ever behaved better than they have done on this occasion, animated by the beheavour of every gentleman on board, every man seem'd to have a just sence of the danger we were in and exerted himself to the very utmost.

National Library of Australia
Journal Entry
These are Captain Cook’s Words- NO interpretation

Historians job is interpreting
YOU can be that interpreter
Teacher Notes

Example One: The Captains

A middle school class must research the following question:
Who was the best Captain and which would you pick to sail under?

- Cook
- Bligh
- Vancouver
- Shackleton

Perhaps the teacher has found Inspiration™ a great tool to support the questioning required to explore a demanding issue like this one, so he or she asks students to work as trios with laptops to map out the qualities of a good question along with the subsidiary questions they need to research to compare and contrast the four leaders.

At the same time, some members of the class may prefer to map out such questions on huge sprawling sheets of butcher paper that allow them to stretch out on the carpet of the media center and sketch their research plan.

A smart teacher leaves room for divergent strategies. An ideologue mandates a digital mind map. What matters here is smart thinking, not the technology employed.

Once they have identified key qualities, the students must list the subsidiary questions that will lead them to specific evidence of each man's successes or failures. The list for navigational skill might include the following:

Did he know how to use all the best instruments of his time?
Did he keep a careful log?
Did he usually know where they were?
Did he ever get lost?
Did he seem to know what he was doing?
Did his ships have to wander around very much?
Did he stay clear of known hazards?
Did he know how to make the best of prevailing winds?

Did he know how to maneuver during a sea battle?
Did he have mates that could help him when he needed it?
Did he know when to ask for directions?

Where are students most likely to find answers to such questions?
A teacher might presume that the Internet would be a sufficient source, but a quick look at Google would show
the folly of such presumption.

An exact phrase search for "Captain Cook" turns up 165,000 Web pages. Many of the first 100 Web pages are related to tourism, gambling or modern cultural offerings playing on the good captain's name.

If we add "navigation skill" to the search, the number of Web pages drops to 497 Web pages. Unfortunately many of these pages are provided by amateurs or report the conclusions of others without any specifics.

Here's one: (click here for full text)

Following the war, Cook's skill at navigation and interest in astronomy made him the perfect candidate to lead an expedition planned by the Royal Society and Royal Navy to Tahiti to observe the infrequent passage of Venus across the face of the sun.

We have a secondary source but no evidence.

Here's another from PlantExplorers.Com: (click here for full text)

His extraordinary skills at navigation and cartography soon gained him a promotion.

Again we have a secondary source but no evidence.

As we proceed through the Google listing, we come to a page listing books about Captain Cook. (click here for full text)

One of the books listed is The Journals of Captain Cook (Penguin Classics) [ABRIDGED] by J. C. Beaglehole, et al

Book Description A new one-volume abridged edition of Cook's famous journals--"a majestic story of epic proportions"(Philip Edwards in the Introduction) Captain Cook's Journals provide his vivid first-hand account of three extraordinary expeditions between 1768 and 1779. These charted the entire coast of New Zealand and the east coast of Australia and brought back detailed descriptions of Tahiti, Tonga, and a host of previously unknown islands in the Pacific including the Hawaiian Islands. The journals amply reveal the determination, courage, and skill that enabled Cook to wrestle with the continuous dangers of uncharted seas and the problems of achieving a relationship with the peoples whose unannounced guest he became.

If only those journals were available online! Sadly, a Google search for The Journals of Captain Cook turns up only references to printed versions from Penguin Classics and others. (look at Google results)

It would be possible to digitize the journals, but as with most of the primary source material needed to compare the ship captains for this research project, digitization has not yet happened. A smart teacher examines the information available from a variety of sources and makes sure students work with that which is reliable and pertinent.
Picture Collection