

Inference Questions

Directions: In the story “The Good Deed,” the author does not always tell you how characters feel or why they act the way they do. Instead, you must use text clues to make inferences. Read each set of lines from the story. Think about the questions in small type on the sides. Then make an inference to answer each question in bold.

1. Think about these lines from page 11: “As I stood in front of her apartment door, pausing before I knocked, this girl stuck her head out of the door across the hall. ‘What do you want?’ she said. ‘I’m visiting Miss Benson,’ I told her, which was perfectly obvious. The girl had long reddish-brown hair. It was a tangled mess.” How do the two girls feel about each other at first? What does Heather’s reaction to Risa tell you about how she might treat Risa?

2. Look at these lines on page 12: “Miss Benson said, ‘Risa, why don’t you read the next one?’ ‘Oh no!’ she said. ‘I have to get home to help my mom with dinner.’ She hurried out like her feet were on fire.” How does Risa react when Miss Benson asks her to read? Why might she want to leave instead?

3. Now think about these lines on page 14: “Why had I hidden the book? Something about not wanting Risa to horn in on my good deed? I tried another attack. ‘How come you went off and left your brothers?’” How does Heather react when Risa makes her think about her behavior? Do you think she’s proud of herself?

4. Now think about Risa at the end of the story: “Risa lifted her chin and said, ‘I found Miss Benson’s book in the wastebasket.’ She tossed her head. Her chestnut hair had been brushed that morning, and it flowed like a horse’s tail. ‘She said if I read aloud to my brothers, it would help me get better.’” How does Risa behave with Heather in the end? Do you think Risa is shy or nervous with Heather anymore?
