

TEACHERS' NOTES Inference Grids

This is a good way of using images as a lesson starter or as stimulus for discussion at any point during a lesson. Inference grids can support peer learning if done in groups or can be an individual activity; and they encourage structured thinking as well as higher order thinking skills. Commonly used in history to look at sources, they can be adapted for other subjects. In geography you might be asking similar questions — who, what, where, when, how and why — but in English the image may be a source of inspiration for creative writing.

A student's first instinct can be to jump to the explanation but inference grids encourage them to look for evidence — the observing and describing — so they can then draw reasoned conclusions and think about what else they would like to learn.

Describe — focus on describing and encourage detail as this is the evidence that will be used to make inferences/suggestions.

Infer — what do I think is going on? What does it mean? Get students to use the evidence to justify their suggestions/inferences.

Question — what else would I like to know about the image and its context? This obviously allows students to do the *who, what, where, when, how and why?* If doing sources in history then ask the questions about purpose of the source and reliability.

What else do I want to know? / What questions can I ask to help me learn more?

What do I think is happening based on what I can

What can I see? / Describe what you can

