

How can you develop strong skills for hypothesizing?

Hypothesizing is putting forward a guess or theory to explain facts. As you read, you can use the skill of hypothesizing to help you make predictions about a character's actions and motivations.

Use the following steps to help you. These steps will be demonstrated on the following screens.

Step 1: Early in the reading of the text, formulate a hypothesis about key ideas in the text.

Step 2: Make observations about the hypothesis as you continue to read.

Step 3: When you finish reading, check the accuracy of your hypothesis.

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Step 1: Early in the reading of the text, formulate a hypothesis about key ideas in the text.

The passage below is from “Search and Rescue” (pages 24–31). As you read, make a hypothesis about the hunter who is lost and about the person telling the story.

Park County Search and Rescue called me out just before midnight on a cold November evening. The hunter had been missing for forty hours. He’s been working Tom Miner Basin, in the mountains adjacent to Yellowstone Park, tracking elk, his partner said. It was now about two in the morning, and the temperature had plunged to
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almost 30 degrees below zero. A local outfitter had volunteered his cabin near the trailhead, and that's where we were, poring over topographical maps, matching the terrain with what we knew of the hunter.

He was from out of state and didn't know the Montana mountains, his partner said, . . . The guy went up alone, just to test himself in the snow. He was a highly trained security guard at the sort of facility terrorists target, and he kept himself in shape. We knew that while he didn't have a tent or sleeping bag, he did have matches, good boots, warm gloves and a good hat, and had dressed in woolen layers.

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Directions: Fill in your hypotheses in the chart below. Include textual evidence on which your hypotheses are based.

Hypothesis	Evidence

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Your responses may look like this.

Hypothesis	Evidence
I think the hunter will be found alive.	He is in good shape. He has supplies, and he has some experience in the snow. He also seems like the kind of person who has the will to survive.
I think the person writing the story will find the hunter.	People usually write about things that they have experienced personally or that have made a deep impression on them. I think finding the hunter alive would make a big impression on the writer.

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Step 2: Make observations about the hypothesis as you continue to read.

As you read, take notes about textual evidence that supports or disproves your hypothesis. Note ideas expressed both explicitly and through inferences.

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Directions: Continue to read “Search and Rescue.” Record evidence in the chart below and on the following screens.

Hypothesis	Evidence

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Hypothesis	Evidence

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Your responses may look like this.

Hypothesis	Evidence
I think the hunter will be found alive.	<p>Support: He was the type of guy who pushed himself and didn't give up. (p. 24)</p> <p>Against: After 40 hours in 30 degrees-below-zero weather, people usually don't make it. (p. 25)</p>

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Your responses may look like this.

Hypothesis	Evidence
I think the person writing the story will find the hunter.	Support: The writer was going to be searching the area on foot. Since the hunter is on foot, it seems likely that rescuers walking will find him. (p. 26) The writer has experience finding lost people before. (pp. 27–28)

Step 3: When you finish reading, check the accuracy of your hypothesis.

Checking the accuracy of your hypothesis will help you make better assumptions when reading other texts. Think about why your assumptions were accurate or inaccurate. Was your thinking logical? Did you inaccurately interpret the evidence in the text?

Directions: Use the chart on the following page to check the accuracy of your hypotheses about “Search and Rescue.”

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Hypothesis	Final Conclusion

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Your responses may look like this.

Hypothesis	Final Conclusion
I think the hunter will be found alive.	The hunter was found alive.
I think the person writing the story will find the hunter.	The writer didn't find the hunter. The hunter found his own way. I think this was an unexpected ending based upon the evidence given in the text. I believe the writer set the reader up to be surprised and a little disappointed.