Quote Detectives: Prove It With Exact Words

Teacher		**Class**	Grade 5
Subject	ELA	**Topic**	Reading comprehension: quoting the text
Date		**Room**	
Lesson length	60 minutes	**Country**	United States

Students learn to quote exactly to show explicit meaning and inferences. They hunt for clues in pairs and prove ideas with exact words.

Curriculum links

- RL.CR.5.1. Quote accurately from a literary text when explaining what the text says explicitly and make relevant connections when drawing inferences from the text. [2]
- RI.CR.5.1. Quote accurately from an informational text when explaining what the text says explicitly and make relevant connections when drawing inferences from the text. [2]

Learning objectives

- Students will quote exactly from a story to show what it says clearly.
- Students will quote exact clues from a story to support a smart inference.

Success criteria

- I can copy an exact quote that shows what the text says.
- I can use an exact quote to prove my inference.

What students already know

Ask: What is the difference between what the text says right there and a smart guess from clues? Take 2-3 hands.

Key words

quote	a copy of the author's exact words used as proof [2]
accurately	exactly right, with no changes [2]
explicitly	said clearly right in the words on the page
inference	a smart guess made by using clues plus thinking
quotation marks	punctuation that shows where copied words begin and end

Materials

- printed 6-sentence paragraph about a school art project - one per pair
- yellow and blue highlighters - one set per pair
- sticky notes - two per pair
- Slides 1-7, 9-12
- Video clip 1 Quoting Accurately - Grade 5 (0:00-4:30)
- Worksheet Task B copies - Spot the mistake in each quote and fix it with proof - one per student
- whiteboard and markers

Before the lesson

- Print the 6-sentence art project paragraph for pairs and Worksheet Task B for each student
- Test Video clip 1 Quoting Accurately - Grade 5 (0:00-4:30) and load Slides 1-7, 9-12
- Set out yellow and blue highlighters and sticky notes for each pair
- Clear board space for two sticky notes per pair labeled This tells us exactly / This helps me infer

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Lesson outline

0–5 min **Starter** 5 min · Whole class

Hook students as detectives and recall the difference between exact words and guesses.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 1 Quote It to Prove It and Slide 2 Detectives Don't Guess.
2. Say the hook and read Slide 9 first sentence aloud: Rain hammered the windows.
3. Show Slide 5 Which Is Harder for You? and take a quick vote with hands.
4. Link votes to lesson goal: copy exact words to show what a story says and what we infer.

STUDENTS DO

1. Listen to the hook and look at Slides 1-2.
2. Vote on Slide 5 and tell a partner one example of finding exact words.
3. Share one idea with the class.

Say: I found two clues in this paragraph — one tells us exactly what happened, and one helps us make a smart guess. Can you find them with the exact words? Good detectives do not guess. They prove ideas with exact words from the text.

Ask: What does a detective use to prove an idea? (Clues - exact words from the text, not our own words.) · What is the difference between what text says word for word and a hidden meaning? (One is stated right there; the other is a smart guess from clues.)

Check understanding: Hands up vote on Slide 5 and cold-call two students to explain their vote; reteach explicit vs inference if confused.

Support: Let students point to words on Slide 2 photo and repeat after you: exact words prove it. **Stretch:** Ask: Why might a smart guess still need exact words as proof?

Use: Slides 1-2, 5, 9

5–15 min **Teaching** 10 min · Whole class

Teach the two jobs for quotes and how to copy them accurately.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 3 Two Jobs for Quotes and Slide 4 Key words.
2. Explain quote, accurately, explicitly, and inference in Grade 5 work [2].
3. Show Slide 7 Quote Like a Pro and model copying a short quote with quotation marks.
4. Think aloud the difference between an explicit quote and an inference clue.

STUDENTS DO

1. Read Slide 4 words with teacher and repeat the three rules from Slide 7.
2. Copy the model quote on mini slates and check capitals and period.
3. Tell a partner which quote was explicit and which was a clue for inference.

Say: Quotes have two jobs. They show what the words state right there, and they show what clues hint without saying. To quote like a pro, copy the exact words, put quotation marks around them, and keep the quote short and on point.

Worked example: Text: Rain hammered the windows. The student stared at the empty shelves and pulled a blanket tight. Her stomach growled loudly. Step 1 explicit question: What did the student do? Answer: The text says, quote Her stomach growled loudly. Step 2 inference question: How did the student feel? Clue quote pulled a blanket tight. Step 3 check: same spelling, capitals, and period, inside quotation marks. Grade 5 readers are expected to quote accurately from a literary text when explaining explicit meaning and when drawing inferences [2].

Ask: What three things must you check when you copy a quote? (Exact words, quotation marks around them, and spelling, capitals, and punctuation.) · Which quote shows explicit meaning and which helps an inference here? (Her stomach growled loudly. is explicit; pulled a blanket tight. hints she felt cold.)

Check understanding: Hold up slates with the copied quote; if many miss punctuation, remodel on board before moving on.

Support: Give the sentence starter: The text says, then point to the exact words to copy. **Stretch:** Ask students to shorten a long quote to the 5 most useful words without changing meaning.

Use: Slides 3-4, 7

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15–25 min **Guided Practice** 10 min · Whole class

See accurate quoting in action and practice fixing copy mistakes together.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 6 Watch: Quote Accurately and play Video clip 1 Quoting Accurately - Grade 5 (0:00-4:30).
2. Pause twice to name the explicit fact they quote and the inference they prove with clues.
3. Hand out Worksheet Task B and do the first mistake together on the board.
4. Model checking every letter, capital, and mark against the text.

STUDENTS DO

1. Watch the video and whisper the rule they hear for copying exactly.
2. Work with teacher on Task B item 1, circling the changed word.
3. Rewrite the fixed quote with quotation marks on their sheet.

Say: Listen for how to copy exact words and watch for quotation marks in action. We will spot the mistake in each quote and fix it with proof. A copy machine makes perfect copies, and your pencil must too.

Worked example: Board text says: Her stomach growled loudly. Student copy says: Her stomach growled loud. Fix: add -ly, keep capital H and period, write as "Her stomach growled loudly." Talk: This tells us exactly what happened, so it proves explicit meaning [2].

Ask: What did the video show about copying accurately? (Copy word for word with no changes and use quotation marks.) · How do you know a quote has a mistake? (Compare it word by word to the text for spelling, capitals, and punctuation.)

Check understanding: Thumbs up if their fixed Task B item 1 matches board; re-check word by word if not.

Support: Underline the starting words of the answer in the text so students copy from there. **Stretch:** Ask students to explain in one sentence how the fixed quote proves the answer.

Use: Video clip 1 (0:00–4:30), Slides 6, Worksheet Task B

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25–45 min **Main Activity** 20 min · Pairs

Find, highlight, and copy exact quotes for explicit meaning and inference in pairs.

YOU DO

1. Hand out the art paragraph, highlighters, and two sticky notes per pair.
2. Read the paragraph aloud once, then have pairs reread and highlight yellow for explicit and blue for inference clue.
3. Remind pairs to copy each quote word-for-word with quotation marks, checking spelling, capitals, and punctuation [2].
4. Circulate, check exact matches, and send pairs to stick notes on the board.

STUDENTS DO

1. Read the paragraph twice with partner, one reads aloud while the other follows.
2. Highlight yellow for explicit and blue for inference clue, then copy both quotes exactly.
3. Stick two notes on the board and compare with another pair for exact matches.

Say: You and your partner are quote detectives. Read twice, highlight in yellow what the text says exactly and in blue a clue that supports a smart guess. Copy each quote exactly inside quotation marks. Stick up two notes: quote plus This tells us exactly or This helps me infer.

Worked example: Full paragraph to copy from: The art teacher wheeled in a tall cart of paint jars on Monday morning. The student stared at the empty blue wall by the library door. Our mural will show the school garden in spring, the teacher said. The student dipped a brush and painted tiny green leaves for an hour. Her hands shook a little and she kept wiping them on her apron. When the bell rang, she whispered, I hope everyone likes it tomorrow. Worked pair model: Explicit Q: What will the mural show? Quote: Our mural will show the school garden in spring, - This tells us exactly. Inference Q: How did the student feel? Quote: Her hands shook a little - This helps me infer she felt nervous.

Ask: Which quote tells exactly what happened? (Listen for exact match, e.g., Our mural will show the school garden in spring,) · Which clue quote helps you infer a feeling, and what is the inference? (Her hands shook a little proves she felt nervous or excited about the mural.) · How do you know your copy is accurate? (Every word, capital, and mark matches the paragraph and has quotation marks.)

Check understanding: Partners trade papers and circle any difference from the paragraph; fix before sticking notes up.

Support: Give a shorter paragraph with the explicit sentence already underlined so students copy from the underline. **Stretch:** Ask students to add why the second quote proves the inference in one sentence.

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45–60 min **Plenary** 15 min · Whole class

Share proofs and confirm students can explain why exact quotes are stronger.

YOU DO

1. Invite three pairs to read one explicit quote and one inference quote from the board.
2. Show Slide 10 Proving With Quotes and check each quote for exact words and marks.
3. Lead Slide 11 Think, pair, share: Why is an exact quote stronger than saying it in your own words?
4. Show Slide 12 Exit ticket and have students write two lines to hand in.

STUDENTS DO

1. Share quotes and vote with thumbs if each copy matches exactly.
2. Think, pair, share why exact quotes beat own words, then share ideas.
3. Complete Slide 12 exit lines: One quote rule I will use is... One question I still have is...

Say: Strong writers do not just say I think. They say I think this because the text says... Look at our board proofs. An exact quote lets everyone check your thinking in the author's own words.

Worked example: Pair share model: Claim: The student felt nervous. Evidence: The text says, Her hands shook a little. Explanation: Shaking hands is a clue for nerves, and these are the author's exact words, so the proof is strong [2].

Ask: Why is an exact quote stronger than saying it in your own words? (It proves with the author's words so others can check it exactly.) · When do we quote in Grade 5 reading? (When explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences [2].)

Check understanding: Collect exit tickets and sort into got it / close / reteach; pull small group tomorrow if quotes changed words.

Support: Provide sentence starters and a pre-copied quote to glue in and explain. **Stretch:** Have students include two quotes for the inference answer and explain how they connect.

Use: Slides 10-12

Common mistakes

Mistake	How to spot it	How to fix it
Changing words when copying, like loud for loudly or adding words	Quote does not match text word for word when checked	Compare letter by letter and rewrite inside quotation marks with same capitals and punctuation [2]
Using own summary instead of an exact quote as proof	Answer has no quotation marks or cannot be found in text	Find the sentence that proves it, copy 5-10 exact words, and add quotation marks
Mixing up explicit fact and inference clue	Student calls a smart guess explicit or cannot point to clue words	Ask: Does it say it right there? If yes, it is explicit; if you added thinking to clues, it is inference [2]

Support

- Give a shorter paragraph with the explicit sentence already underlined.

Stretch

- Ask students to add why the second quote proves the inference in one sentence.

For the LSE or teaching assistant

Sit with target pairs in main activity; read paragraph aloud, point to starting words, check yellow/blue highlights and exact copying.

Check for understanding

Question	Answer
Copy the exact quote that shows what the mural will show.	Our mural will show the school garden in spring,
Which exact clue helps you infer how the student felt, and what do you infer?	Her hands shook a little - infer nervous, excited, or worried.
What two things must an accurate quote have?	The author's exact words with no changes, inside quotation marks.

Homework

Copy one exact quote from your reading book that shows something explicit.

Sources

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