Making Inferences :

Good readers make inferences as they read. That is, in addition to reading the words, they use their imagination and their knowledge about the world to fill in facts and ideas that are not stated in the text. This is sometimes called "reading between the lines." It is often necessary to read between the lines because a writer cannot include all the possible information about a topic or situation. Writers leave out information that they think readers will know already or will be able to guess.

**Separating Fact from Inference**

In many kinds of writing, the author presents facts about a situation or topic and also makes inferences from those facts. Facts are statements of information that can be verified.

**For example :**

Chile is considered one of the most conservative Catholic countries in South America. On January 15, 2006, Chileans elected their first woman president, the Socialist Michelle Bachelet, with 53.5 percent of their votes. She is a former defense minister, a doctor, a single mother and a non-Catholic. Her father, a general in the army, was killed in 1973 under the military dictatorship of Pinochet. Her election campaign was based on promises of social and economic reform aimed at more equality.

**Inferences are educated guesses that are based on facts.**

For example:

People in Chile are not as conservative as generally thought.

People in Chile want changes in their society and economy.

President Bachelet's background and experience should help her understand the problems in Chile.

The fact that she served as defense minister may have reassured conservatives afraid of radical change.

The fact that her father was killed under Pinochet probably raised her standing among leftists.

**EXERCISE 1 :**

Preview the passage. Then read it and underline the facts. Working with another student, answer the questions that follow. The first two have been done for you.

**Olive Oil Works as a Natural Painkiller**

It is not just price that makes extra virgin olive oil different from other oils. Now scientists have discovered that it contains a chemical compound' that acts similarly to the painkiller ibuprofen.

Paul Breslin from the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia and colleagues describe in Nature how they isolated a compound called oleocanthal from extra virgin olive oil. Pouring 50 gm of the best olive oil on your food each day is equivalent to about 10 percent of the average ibuprofen dose.'

chemical compound: containing atoms from two or more chemical elements.

1. What facts are included in the first paragraph?

Extra virgin olive oil contains a chemical compound that acts like a painkiller.

1. What can you infer about the price of extra virgin olive oil?

It costs more than other olive oils.

3. What can you infer about other kinds of oil?

4. What facts are included in the second paragraph?

5 . What inferences can you make about Paul Breslin?

6 . What can you infer about Nature?