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## Clues for Finding Answers in the Text

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### ON THE LINES

Some questions can be answered by “reading on the lines”; the answer is *right there* in the text. The question asks for literal information from the selection such as details, facts and information stated by the author. Some “question starters” that ask for literal knowledge are *give, list, find, describe, tell, retell, and what*. To answer a question “on the line”:

- Find the words used to create the question.
- Look at the other words in that sentence to find the answer.

### AMONG THE LINES

The answers to some questions are to be found by “reading among the lines.” This type of question has an answer in the text, but this answer requires information from more than one sentence or paragraph. Some “question starters” that ask for literal knowledge are *list, compare, how, and summarize*. To answer a question “among the lines”:

- Find the words used to create the question.
- Reread the sentences or paragraphs that contain the question words.
- Look at the other words in the sentences or paragraphs to find the answer.

### BETWEEN THE LINES

Some questions ask you to “read between the lines”. This type of question asks the reader to make inferences based on the ideas and information in the text. The answer might be found interpretively in the reader’s own background knowledge, but would not make sense unless the reader had read the text. Some “question starters,” that ask for inferences are *why, how might, what do you think, explain, predict, and what might*. To answer a question “between the lines”:

- Look for key words and clues in the question.
- Re-read that part of the text in which the author gives the clues needed to construct the answer.
- Ask yourself:
  - Is this what the author meant?
  - Does this make sense?

### BEYOND THE LINES

The answers to some questions are not in the text at all: they are “beyond the lines.” This means searching for the answer in the reader’s own background knowledge. Some “question starters” that ask for interpretations are *what can you learn from, how might you, what if, and is it fair that*. To answer a question “beyond the lines”:

- Read the question and identify the key words.
- Identify your beliefs, experiences and knowledge that relate to the question.
- Ask yourself:
  - Would the author agree with this conclusion?