

Name: _____ Date: _____

Reading Comprehension

Making Generalizations

A **generalization** is a conclusion that you can make after thinking about a number of examples or facts and what they have in common. Generalizations help you recognize an author's purpose and evaluate possible bias. Clue words that can signal a generalization include *all, none, most, many, always, everyone, never, sometimes, some, usually, seldom, few, generally, in general, and overall*.

Generalizations can be valid or faulty. A **valid** generalization is one that is supported by facts or logic. A **faulty** generalization is not completely supported by facts. As you read, look for generalizations the writer makes. Decide whether they are supported by facts.

Read the following paragraphs. As you read, think about generalizations the author makes. Also think about generalizations that you can make.

Crack! Lightning strikes a tree in the middle of the forest. Soon the dry underbrush is aflame. Before the fire can get out of hand, special firefighters are preparing to parachute from a plane. These firefighters, called smokejumpers, are usually in the air within ten minutes of the call.

Once the fire has been located and evaluated, smokejumpers jump to a safe spot nearby. Generally, smokejumpers begin by cutting down nearby sources of fuel for the fire and digging a trail that surrounds the fire. Both of these steps will usually contain the fire. Then the smokejumpers attack the fire itself, cooling it down with dirt and spading the burned area.

Decide whether the following sentence is a generalization. Explain your answer.

These firefighters, called smokejumpers, are usually in the air within ten minutes of the call.



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