



Figure 9.2 The Inferring Umbrella

Visualizing: Movies in the Mind

Visualizing brings joy to reading. When we visualize, we create pictures in our minds that belong to us and no one else. As more and more books are routinely churned into movies, we are not surprised that most people prefer the book over the movie, kids included. One problem inherent in transforming text to film is that Hollywood routinely takes a four-hundred-and-fifty-page novel and converts it into a one-hundred-page script. Not surprisingly, depth and texture suffer. Another common complaint relates to the characters. Steph could never sit back and enjoy the film *Seven Years in Tibet*, based on one of her favorite books by Heinrich Harrer, because Brad Pitt, no matter how cute he was, did not jibe with her image of the book's protagonist.

Some years ago, a short-lived program about Beverly Cleary's beloved character Ramona hit TV. Kids were outraged. Each had clear, yet very different, pictures of Ramona in mind. Not one we spoke to could relate to the televised image of Ramona. When we visualize, we create our own movies in our minds. We become attached to the characters we visualize. Visualizing personalizes reading, keeps us engaged, and often prevents us from abandoning a book prematurely. When we introduce visualizing, we are likely to facilitate a conversation about books and movie adaptations in an attempt to make the strategy concrete. Kids relate and quickly weigh in with their own opinions.