



NEW YORK STATE MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM

Title: Reading Comprehension: Building Background Knowledge

Description: These strategies help teachers activate and build background knowledge to support students' comprehension. The video includes information about selecting relevant ideas that enhance comprehension. After a demonstration, participants have time to practice various strategies to build background knowledge. This module includes specific strategies for building English Learners' background knowledge to support comprehension.

Developer: Kathleen M. Lord, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Literacy Education, Department of Teaching and Learning, SUNY New Paltz.

Series: The Reading Comprehension series includes nine modules with targeted strategies to teach students how to manage their reading. The modules can be used in any order.

Facilitator Guide

INDIVIDUAL ACCESS/SELF-SERVE (*for Individuals viewing this module independently*): While a robust conversation between colleagues is an enriching way to learn, so is self-reflection. Read and use this Guide as the Facilitator of your own learning. To get the most out of the activities and questions, make sure you have the recommended handouts and supplies before beginning.

CTLE CREDIT

Group Workshop: If you are facilitating this workshop for your METS, you will have to decide which process you will use for granting CTLE credit. You can use your local LEA process, or the M-TASC process:

- Contact M-TASC in advance of the workshop to confirm date and module.
- Use the M-TASC Participant Sign-In Sheet, and submit.
- Submit Workshop Evaluations via link or hard copy. If you use the Evaluation link, M-TASC will forward the compiled evaluations once you have informed the office that all evaluations are complete.

Individual Access/Self-Serve: For those who would like to request Continuing Teacher Leader Education (CTLE) credit for On-Demand professional development, please complete the CTLE Credit Request for each module. Find the link for this process on the NYS-MEP website:

<https://www.nysmigrant.org/resources/pd>

OBJECTIVES/LEARNING TARGET(S)

- Learn the importance of building background knowledge
- Select the most important background information
- Explore instructional strategies
- Strategies to support English Learners

WORKSHOP/MODULE DESIGN

This workshop is designed for teachers and can be completed as a stand-alone or with any of the other Comprehension modules.

CONNECTION TO THE NYS MEP

THEORY OF ACTION

Subject Content and Instruction

- This activity is instructional and supports student's comprehension.

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

- **Video:** *Comprehension: Building Background*
 - Use the video link on the NYS migrant website in the Professional Development section for this workshop, "*Reading Comprehension: Building Background Knowledge*."
- **Participant Handouts**
 1. Power Point Notes
 2. Strategy 2 Instructions & Contrast Chart Organizer

3. Strategy 5 Instructions-Picture Predictions

- **Reading A-Z Readers** – use a mixture of the Literature/fiction and Non-Fiction/informational text.
 - Grade 1 – Elephants: Giant Mammals
 - Grade 2 – The Drum
 - Grade 2 – Coral Reefs
 - Grade 3 – Carlos's Puzzle (in English and Spanish)
 - Grade 3 – Soccer
 - Grade 4 – The Gossip Monster
 - Grade 5 – Leaving Home
 - Grade 5 – The Plague!
 - Grade 5 – What is Water Worth?
- **Additional Resources**
 - Strategy 1 Instructions & K-W-L-S Chart
 - Strategy 3 Instructions: Preview-Predict-Confirm
 - Strategy 4 Instructions: Relevance
 - Strategy 4 Article: What is the Point?
 - Strategy 6 Instructions: Realia
 - Strategy 7 Instructions: Virtual Field Trips
- Workshop Sign-in
- Workshop Evaluation

Facilitator Note: Kathleen identifies seven strategies for building a student's background knowledge. Kathleen demonstrates two of these strategies in the video (Strategy 2 – Contrast Charts and Strategy 7 – Picture Predictions). Find instructions and handouts for the rest of the strategies listed under "Additional Resources."

GETTING STARTED

(Video: 11 minutes. Stopping for the Practice Activities: additional 10 – 15 minutes.)

1. Disseminate handouts and supplies.
2. Start the Video Presentation: *Comprehension: Building Background*

Why Build Background Knowledge?

- Provides students with a focal point.
- Eases processing.
- Facilitates learning.

Key Points about Selecting the Background Knowledge to Build

- Important to the story.
- Help Students link new ideas to known ideas.

For example:

Big ideas in stories (sharing, being kind, sacrifice)

Characters in stories (attend to how the character solves a problem)

Concepts (explain rebellion in social studies by connecting it a known topic/pictures/videos)

Funds of Knowledge (what students already know)

Facilitator Note: The presenter, Kathleen, demonstrates Strategy 2, Using Contrast Chart. After the demonstration, there will be time for participants to practice the strategy demonstrated. You will hear a bell tone when Kathleen starts giving directions for a practice activity. The graphic on the video will say, “STOP HERE AND PRACTICE.” A brief musical riff will play when the directions are complete and it is time to stop the video for participants to practice the activity.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Strategy 2 – Using Contrast Chart

Key Point

- Activating Knowledge
Handouts: Instructions for Strategy 2 and Contrast Chart
- Reading A-Z Readers (or substitute with other books) – Use a mixture of the Literature/fiction and Non-Fiction/informational text.

Non-Fiction/informational text	Literature/fiction
Grade 1: Elephants: Giant Mammals	Grade 2: The Drum
Grade 2: Coral Reefs	Grade 3: Carlos’s Puzzle – in English and Spanish
Grade 3: Soccer	Grade 4: The Gossip Monster
Grade 5: The Plague!	Grade 5: Leaving Home
Grade 5: What is Water Worth?	

Practice, process and return to the video.

Facilitator Note: For groups, process the activity as a large group before returning to the video. Possible questions for processing: How did it go? What student could you use this with?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Strategy 5 – Picture Prediction

Key Point

- Building Knowledge

Handouts: Strategy 5 Instructions for Picture Prediction

Wi-Fi/Internet Access: Search with Google or other search engine. (Use the pictures in the story if Wi Fi or Internet is not available.)

Practice, process and return to the video.

Facilitator Note: For groups, process the activity as a large group before returning to the video. Brainstorm how to use this in different tutoring settings.

FOLLOW UP – Additional Resources to Share

Facilitator Note: Students and teachers can be overwhelmed when given too much. You can let participants practice with the handouts used above, and save the additional resources below for future professional development as an opportunity to return to building background knowledge and increase their strategies. Plan 10-15 minutes for each activity in order to walk through the instructions and practice the strategy.

FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE

Key Points

- Students have a wealth of information and experiences before entering school.
- Educators need to tap into these “Funds of Knowledge” to help students connect to new stories and texts.

Handout: Funds of Knowledge

Source: This handout is from the US Department of Education website – Early childhood Learning and Knowledge Center
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/spring2spring-funds-of-knowledge-eng.pdf>

Facilitator Note: Head Start programs use this with families in order to find common “funds of knowledge” they can use to support English Learners and all students in their preschool classrooms.

Migrant Educators can use Page 2 as a guideline for some common types of information that students may have. Educators will need to ask questions in these areas and then be able to use these experiences and knowledge in order to help students connect to main topics and themes in a given story or text.

Older students will accumulate academic experiences.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Strategy 1 – K-W-L-S

Key Point

- Activating Knowledge

Handouts: Instructions and K-W-L-S Chart

A-Z Readers: Use a mixture of Literature/Fiction and Instructional/Non-Fiction stories.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Strategy 3 – Preview-Predict-Confirm

Key Point

- Activating Knowledge

Handouts: Instructions for Preview-Predict-Confirm

A-Z Readers: Use a mixture of Literature/Fiction and Instructional/Non-Fiction stories.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Strategy 4 – Discussion: Relevance Questions

Key Point

- Activating Knowledge

Handouts: Instructions for Relevance

A-Z Readers: Use a mixture of Literature/Fiction and Instructional/Non-Fiction stories.

For additional information, read the article *What's the point? Using relevance instructions to support comprehension*, Lord, K. M. & Hickey, P. J. (2015). *English Journal* 104(4), 93-95. Copyright 2015 by the National Council of Teachers of English. Used with permission.

For group discussion ideas, refer to the “Reading Comprehension Article Studies” on www.nysmigrant.org with the On Demand Professional Development Resources.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Strategy 6 – Realia

Key Point

- Building Knowledge

Handouts: Instructions for Realia

A-Z Readers: Use a mixture of Literature/Fiction and Instructional/Non-Fiction stories.

Facilitator Note: Ask staff to bring phones or computers so they can select a reader and search for “free images” of an important object or place from the story.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Strategy 7 – Virtual Field Trips

Key Point

- Building Knowledge

Handouts: Instructions for Virtual Field Trips

A-Z Readers: Use a mixture of Literature/Fiction and Instructional/Non-Fiction stories.

Facilitator Note: This handout works best in an email instead of a printed handout, so Educators can click on the links to try out the sites.

Closure for Group Workshops

- Facilitators are welcome to use the Workshop Evaluation provided on the website or you can use your own version.
- *Continuing Teacher Leader Education (CTLE)* – Follow the CTLE process at your METS program center for staff who are tracking credit.

Closure for Individual Access/Self-Serve

- Complete the Workshop Evaluation and give it to your Director.
- *Continuing Teacher Leader Education (CTLE)* – If you would like to request credit for this module, please follow the CTLE Credit Request process. Find the link for this process on the NYS-MEP website: <https://www.nysmigrant.org/resources/pd>