Effective Instruction of English Language Learners:
Moving Beyond the Basics
Day 2: Instructional Effectiveness

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Acknowledgements

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Outline of Content

* Review of Day 1: Foundations
* Academic Language
* Vocabulary
* Read Aloud
* Paragraph Shrinking
* Background Knowledge

Academic Language: What is it?

* Academic language is the language of the classroom, academic disciplines, and of reason and discourse.
* Academic language is more abstract and decontextualized than conversational English.
* Academic language needs to be taught and reinforced across all disciplines.
* (IES, 2007)

When Do We Teach Academic Language?

- Instruction in academic language must be done consistently, early, and simultaneously across core content areas.
- Fragmented instruction will not accelerate learning as quickly as the above approach.
- In the primary grades and upper grades, students benefit from explicit instruction of academic English
- (August & Hakuta, 1997;Proctor et al., 2005)

Academic Language

- ELs do not need to master conversational English oral language before teaching academic language.
- In reading, knowledge of academic English helps students understand what they read by following logical lines of thoughts.
- Reading, discussing, and writing needs to be a part of English language development instruction daily.
- (IES, 2007)

Teach Academic Language in the Early Grades

Create classroom conditions to instruct students on the following:
- A) Telling stories
- B) Describing events
- C) Define words and concepts
- D) Explaining problems
- E) Retelling and summarizing content
- F) Building comprehension knowledge

Use Explicit and Deliberate Instruction

- Teach structure of the English language
- Teach structure of narrative and expository texts
- Teach grammar skills
- Students need practice in using these features in the context of meaningful communication (oral and written)
- Do not forget about social language

How to Teach Academic Language

- Teach academic language during reading instruction.
- Focus on the development of academic English can come after a challenging text has been read and discussed, so that the vocabulary and meaning are clear.
- Then the teacher can come back to the story and focus on the particular aspects of language that may be problematic for English learners (e.g., sentence construction, word usage, prepositions) using the familiar text.

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Teaching Academic Language

- Language-focused activities will have more meaning for ELs if they already have a general understanding of the material in the text.
- Effective vocabulary and academic language instruction is difficult, particularly when common and consistent approaches are expected across teachers, subject areas, and grade levels.

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Systems Level Support of Academic Language

- Because this type instruction is not currently common in many classrooms, teachers may struggle learning how to implement it (Baker et al., 2006; Gersten et al., 2006).
- Therefore, concerted professional development and coaching will be necessary to ensure that all teachers learn to provide effective vocabulary and academic language instruction for English learners (IES, 2007).

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Oral Language Development

- Schedule a separate time from academic language
- Programs: e.g. Language for Learning, Language for Thinking, Spoken English, Language!
- Use the core book anthology as the central point for text discussion.
- Consider extending/maximizing time for students to speak and share ideas.
- (IES, 2007)

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Effective Vocabulary Instruction

Routine Card

(Note: Teach words AFTER you have read a story to your students and BEFORE students read a selection.)

Step 1: Introduce the Word

A. Write the word on the board.

B. Read the word. Students repeat.

C. Repeat for unfamiliar words.

"This word is incredible. What word?" _____

Step 2: Present a Student-Friendly Definition

A. Tell students an explanation, *or*

B. Have the students read the explanation with you.

"When something happens that you can't believe or is a surprise it is incredible. So if something happens that is a surprise, you would think it is _____."

Step 3: Illustrate the Word with Examples

✳ Concrete Examples
✳ Visual representations
✳ Verbal examples

"When you were worried about the spelling test but you earned 100% anyway, it is incredible!"

"If your bedtime is 8pm but your mom let you stay up until midnight you would think that is incredible."

Step 4: Check Students' Understanding

✳ Option 1: Deep Processing Questions
✳ Option 2: Examples and Non-Examples
✳ Option 3: Students Generate Examples
✳ Option 4: Sentence Starter

Option 1: **Ask deep processing questions.**

When the students finished playing tag Rose said, "I almost couldn't believe it. That was incredible!" *What happened that is incredible?*

When Manny came downstairs his mother said, "You were so fast. That was incredible!" **What did his mother think was incredible?**

Option 2: **Have students discern between examples and nonexamples.**

"If today just like everyday you got a peanut butter and jelly sandwich would that be incredible?"
No. "Why not?" **It would not be different or unbelievable.**

"If the President of the U.S. called you to tell you what a good student you are would that be incredible?"
Yes. "Why?" *The President doesn't normally call students.*

Option 3: **Have students generate their own examples.**

"Tell your partner a time when you saw something incredible happen."

"My big brother told me I was a good little sister. That was incredible!"

"It was incredible when my pet snake ate my pet rat."

Option 4: **Provide students with a story starter.**

Have them say a complete sentence.

Sometimes incredible things happen in your neighborhood. Tell your partner when something incredible happened in your neighborhood. Start your sentence by saying, "In my neighborhood it was incredible when_____."

Instructional Routine Checklist:

Did the teacher:

1. Introduce the word?
2. Present a student-friendly definition?
3. Illustrate the word with examples?
4. Check students' understanding?

Vocabulary Review

After teaching the group of vocabulary words, review the words using a "word association" activity.

- Words written on board or overhead:

enemy, disgusting, invited, relieved

"Tell me the word that I am thinking about.
   Someone that hates you might be called an _____.
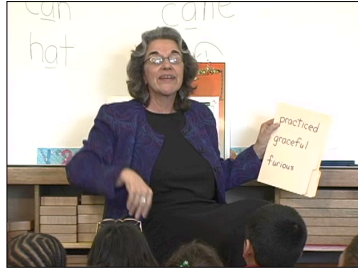   **If you didn't like a food, you might say it is _____.**
   When a test is over, you often feel _____.
   When you are asked to a party, you are _____."

Teach the Meaning of Critical, Unknown Vocabulary Words
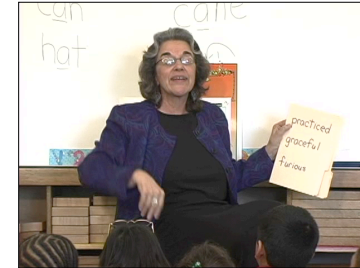
Did the teacher:

1. Introduce the word?
2. Present a student-friendly explanation?
3. Illustrate the word with examples?
4. Check students' understanding?
5. Review the words?

Teach the Meaning of Critical, Unknown Vocabulary Words

- What other good practices did you observe?

Your Turn

K-1 Bear Snores On / 2-3 Alejandro's Gift

- Use your Routine Card
- Pick 2 vocabulary words to teach
- Plan a mini-lesson

Read Alouds for English Language Learners

ELL Students and Reading Aloud

Beneficial to ELL Students:

- Aids in development of social and academic language
- Increases vocabulary
- Teaches students to determine between important and unimportant points about the text

ELL Students and Reading Aloud

Especially important instructional strategies for ELL students during Read Aloud:

- Use of background knowledge will support comprehension and vocabulary retention
- Use of words students are already familiar with to define new words (fast-mapping & pre-teaching critical vocabulary)

Read Aloud: The Why

- Enhances academic language development (CALP)
- Increases vocabulary (predictor)
- Enhance comprehension abilities

Read Aloud: The Why

- Gives students exposure to *rich vocabulary*
- Provide students with a model of effective reading strategies
- Models for students how to think about text in their journey towards becoming fluent and independent readers

Read Aloud: The What

Teacher reading a text in front of students in small and large groups.

+ Strategically chosen text
+ Well-prepared teacher talk
+ Strategic opportunities for students to interact with each other, the teacher, and the text

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High Quality Literature

Selections should (when possible):

- *reflect students' cultures.*
- reflect students' interests.
- be above the independent reading level of students.
- have ample rich vocabulary.

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Structured Text Talk

Integral to Effectiveness:

- Focus on important story ideas
- Construct meaning from decontextualized language
- Analytic in nature

Teacher Challenge:

Students tend to ignore text information, instead relying upon pictures and background knowledge.

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Highlight on Active Engagement

Increase the effectiveness of reading aloud by:

- Giving students opportunities to reflect
- Asking questions that require more than an easily retrieved answer

Think, Pair, Share During the Read Aloud!

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Parts of the Read Aloud

1) Background Knowledge
2) Pre-teach Vocabulary & Key Concepts
3) Fast Mapping
4) Check for Understanding

Step 1: Role of Background Knowledge

Overall Goal:

• Integrate it with text content in order to assist comprehension. (Beck & McKeown, 2001)

• Avoid student attempts to introduce irrelevant or tangential background knowledge.

• Does the background knowledge assist to establish major story concepts?

Step 2: Teach Critical & Unknown Vocabulary Words

Fill in the blank:

Students' comprehension will be enhanced if they _____.

Step 3: Fast Mapping

Direct, brief explanation of meaning can establish initial "fast mapping" of meaning.

Substitute critical unknown vocabulary with a student friendly synonym or brief phrase.

As initially mapped words are encountered in other contexts, their meaning is extended and deepened.

Fast-Mapping

Example: *"How I Spent My Summer Vacation"*

The text reads, "Each day I *discovered* some new cowboy tricks."

- What is a student-friendly synonym or phrase for discovered?

The text reads, "It will do you some good to *relax* for awhile."

- What's a student-friendly synonym or phrase for relax?

Step 4: Check for Student Understanding

- Think, Pair, Share
- Choral Responses
- Signaling

Purpose of Active Engagement:

1) Teachers - Monitor student understanding
2) Students - Practice thinking and **talking** about text

Expert Example: Read Aloud

Video Model

1. Which words are fast-mapped?

2. What other good practices did you observe?

Read Aloud - The "We Do"

"Amelia's Road" by Linda Jacobs Altman & Enrique O. Sanchez

- Look for and take notes on the 4 critical components we discussed. Which best practices were employed?

Notes on Model of
"Amelia's Road"

1. Background Knowledge

2. Teaching Critical Vocabulary

3. Fast-mapping

4. Check for Understanding

"I do. We do. YOU DO."

- K-1
- 2-3

Your Turn! Taking Stock.

Take out your teacher's manual. Let's look at what you CRP already has prepared for you.

Step 1: Go to the read aloud and/or anthology story. Find the suggested vocabulary words and consult your lesson map.

Your Turn! Taking Stock.

- **Step 2:** Find or create student-friendly definitions. Which words will you teach?
  – Which words are the most and least important for your students?
  – What do you notice about the provided student-friendly definitions?

Your Turn! Taking Stock.

- **Step 3:** Create examples of your vocabulary words.
  - Don't forget non-examples.

Your Turn! Taking Stock.

- **Step 4**: Check for student understanding.
  - Which active engagement strategies are suggested by the CRP?
  - What could you do to increase student practice and opportunities to check for understanding?

Quick Write

Paragraph Shrinking

*A strategy designed to develop comprehension through main idea identification.

Paragraph Shrinking

- Originally developed as *part* of the Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) for Reading Program Grades 2-6.
- Designed to develop comprehension through a summarization and main idea identification strategy.
- Paragraph Shrinking is also a strategy that can be modeled for students in earlier grades.

Routine Card

ROUTINE FOR TEACHING PARAGRAPH SUMMARIZATION — PS

B
D
A* (S)

PROCEDURES: Model through read-alouds for Grades K and 1
Use template #15 to teach strategy in Grades 2 and 3

STEP 1 — Teacher Tells the Students the "What" of Paragraph Shrinking:
Example:
"Today we are going to learn a new reading strategy called Paragraph Shrinking. When we think about the word "shrink" we think about something getting smaller. That is exactly what we will do with paragraphs that we read. We are going to select the most important information in paragraphs we read. The most important information is called the main idea. So, we will "shrink" the paragraph down to tell (or write) the most important information or main idea."

STEP 2 — Teacher Tells the Students the "Why" of Paragraph Shrinking:
Example:
"The reason we are learning about Paragraph Shrinking is that it will help us understand what we are reading. We do this by finding the main idea of the paragraph."

STEP 3 — Teacher Uses Explicit Instruction to Teach the "How" of Paragraph Shrinking: (I Do It, We Do It, You Do It)
"Name the who or what." (The main person, animal, or thing)
"Tell the most important thing about the who or what."
"Say the main idea in 10 words or less."

STEP 4 — Teacher Assists in Helping Students Generalize the Strategy Across Time and Texts with Corrective Feedback, Reteaching, and Refinement as Needed

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Adapted from PALS Program by Fuchs, Mathes, and Fuchs

Explicit Comprehension Strategy Instruction: Essential Steps

1. **What:** What is the strategy?
   - **Describe it in "kid friendly" language.**

Example:
   - **"Today we are going to learn a new reading strategy called Paragraph Shrinking. When we think of the word "shrink," we think about something getting smaller. That is exactly what we will do with paragraphs that we read. We are going to learn how to pick out the most important information in a paragraph or set of paragraphs that we read. The most important information is called the main idea. So, we will "shrink" the paragraph down to tell (or write) the most important information or main idea."**

Explicit Comprehension Strategy Instruction: Essential Steps

2. **Why:** Why are we doing this?
   - **Provide a rationale for learning the strategy.**
- **Example:**
   - **"The reason we are learning about Paragraph Shrinking is that it will help us understand what we are reading. We do this by finding the main idea of the paragraph."**

When Can I Use This Strategy?

Kindergarten and Grade 1

– **During Read Alouds**

– **Model during passage reading later in Grade 1**

Grades 2 and 3

– **Follow the lesson maps. Use during "main idea" identification.**

– **Partner reading.**

Example of CRP Main Idea Instruction/Grade 2
Is this instruction explicit enough?

Main Idea   (Focus Skill)

▲ The Mixed-Up Chameleon

The most important idea of a paragraph or story is the **main idea**. Other sentences tell about the main idea.

Read the following paragraph.

Mel and her mom made a tasty soup with many things in it. Mel did not know if she wanted noodles or rice, so she added both. Mel did not know if she wanted carrots or celery, so she added both. Mel did not know if she wanted potatoes or beans. Again, she added both. They called it mixed-up soup.

To find the main idea, think about what the story is mostly about.

Pre-teach Paragraph Shrinking with Pictures
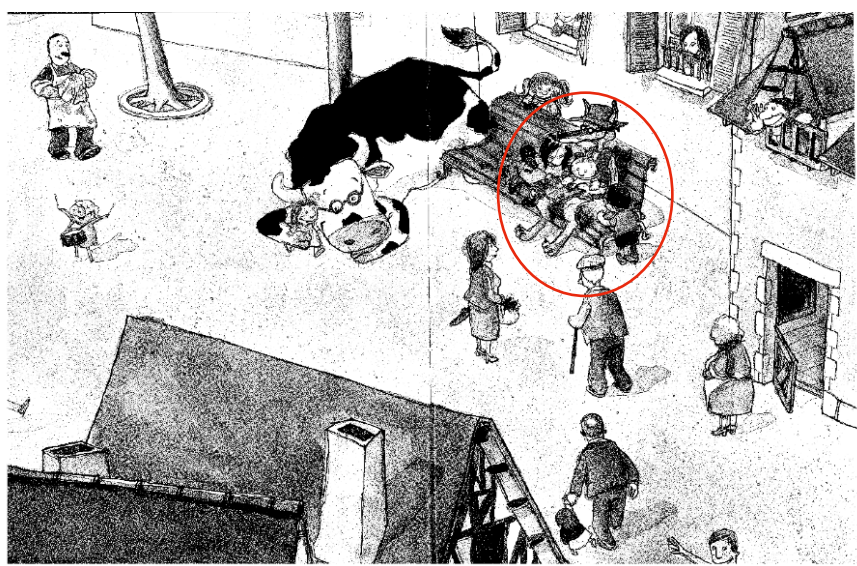
• After you read a paragraph, you'll first figure out who or what the paragraph is mainly about.

• Here is a rule that will help you:

– The main who or what will always be a person, place, thing, or animal.

• Remember that in Paragraph Shrink, you'll first pick out the most important who or what.
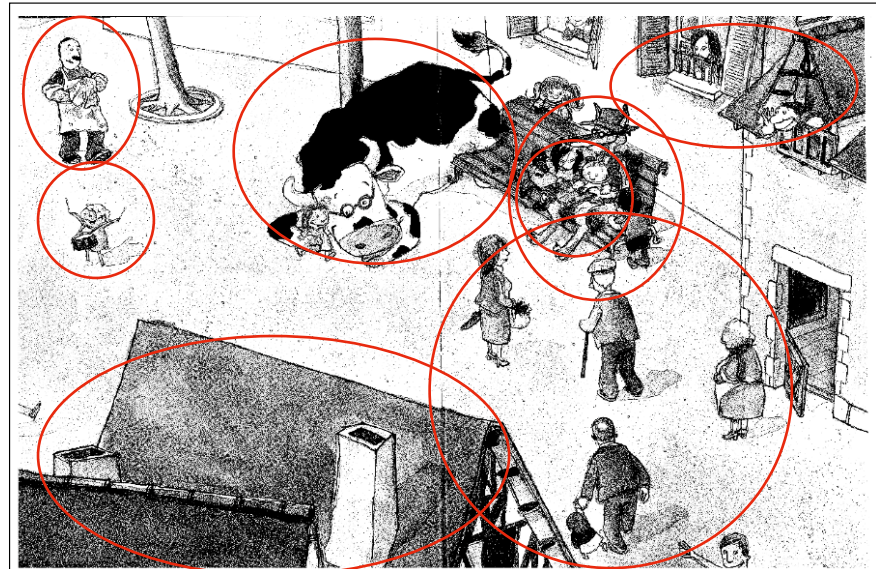
The Wolf

(Who or What)   (Most Important Thing About the Who or What)

The Wolf

(Who or What)   (Most Important Thing About the Who or What)

The members of the Elm Street Kids' Club were feeling glum. "Our clubhouse is falling down, and our piggybank is empty," Meg said. "I know how we can make some money," said Matthew. "Let's sell lemonade."

The members of the Elm Street Kids' Club

(Who or What)   (Most Important Thing About the Who or What)

Many people have jobs. People who work earn money. When people are paid for their work, they can use the money to buy things. People buy things they need, such as food and clothes. People also use money to pay for services. A doctor is someone is paid for a service.

People

(Who or What)   (Most Important Thing About the Who or What)

Example from Open Court Social Studies Connections Materials Grade 2   63

What do animals eat? Some like to eat meat. Tigers use their sharp teeth to tear meat into smaller pieces. Sharp, pointed teeth are good for biting into meat. Some animals like to eat plants. Rabbits eat clover. Cows have flat teeth which are good for chewing grass.
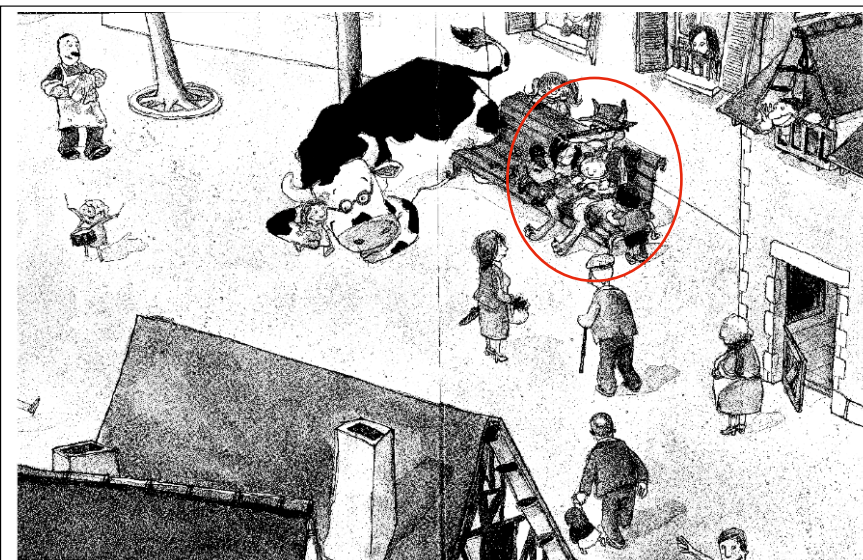
Animals

(Who or What)   (Most Important Thing About the Who or What)

Example from Open Court Social Studies Connections Materials Grade 2   64

The wolf is reading a story to the children.

(Who or What)   (Most Important Thing About the Who or What)

The members of the Elm Street Kids' Club were feeling glum. "Our clubhouse is falling down, and our piggybank is empty," Meg said. "I know how we can make some money," said Matthew. "Let's sell lemonade."

The members of the Elm Street Kids' Club needed money to fix their clubhouse.

(Who or What)   (Most Important Thing About the Who or What)

Paragraph Shrinking

- **Main Idea Statements:**
  - The fewer words you use, the better.
- **Here's a rule that will help you make better main idea statements:**
  - Good main idea sentences can be made with 10 words or less

Paragraph Shrinking

- **First Part of Main Idea Statements:**
  - The most important who or what.
- **Another Important Rule:**
  - No matter how many words describe or name the who or what, when you make your main idea statement, the who or what will count as one word.

Paragraph Shrinking

Paragraph Shrinking Card

Questions to Ask

1. Name the Who or What

2. Tell the most important thing about the who or what.

3. Say the main idea in 10 words or less.

Chaparro & Preciado, 2008   69

Paragraph Shrinking

Coaches Help:
- If not right, say: "That's not quite right. Try again."
- If too many who's, say: "Remember to choose the *most* important who or what."
- If main idea is more than 10 words, say "Shrink It."

- If Coach and Reader both do not know the answer to a main idea question, the Coach should raise his or her hand and both of you should keep working until I can come and help you.

Chaparro & Preciado, 2008   70

Alejandro's small adobe house stood beside a lonely desert road.

Beside the house stood a well, and a windmill to pump water from the well. Water for Alejandro and for his only companion, a burro.

It was a lonely place, and Alejandro welcomed any who stopped by refresh themselves at the well. But visitors were few, and after they left, Alejandro felt lonelier than before.

Example from *Alejandro's Gift.* Chaparro & Preciado, 2008   71

Building Background Knowledge for ELL Students

Chaparro & Preciado, 2008   72

Why Background Knowledge is Important

- **An Example:**

  I approached the carnival game hesitantly. The goal was to throw a ping pong ball toward a table on which sat dozens of small bowls. If your ball landed in a bowl, you won one of the enormous stuffed bears that lined the top of the booth. Three throws for a dollar. The bowls seemed close together--how could I lose? The man working the booth was old, and had uneven, tobacco-stained teeth. When he noticed me lingering nearby, he winked and said, "Come along. You look like a winner."

- **What background knowledge does a student need?**

Activating Background Knowledge

- **How?**

|	STRATEGIES FOR SCAFFOLDING AND ACTIVATING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE	
PROCEDURES:	Use to enhance background knowledge activation in Comprehensive Reading Program.	
STEP 1	Teacher pre-reads material for the upcoming lesson to determine background knowledge students need to maximize understanding of the text.	
STEP 2	Teacher determines if comprehensive reading program provides sufficient background knowledge.	
STEP 3	If yes, introduce background knowledge as outlined in the comprehensive reading program. Actively engage students in this process. If no, prepare to "front load" by: 1) teaching additional background knowledge needed to better understand the passage and/or, 2) selecting and reading aloud a short story or passage that provides the necessary background knowledge.	
STEP 4	If students have prior knowledge, choose a procedure to activate that knowledge: 1) Ask students questions and engage them in a discussion to activate their background knowledge. 2) Activate prior knowledge using the KWL strategy. 3) Brainstorm the topics/questions that might be covered in the upcoming reading selection.	

Step 1: Prepare & Identify Background Knowledge

Step 1	Teacher pre-reads material for the upcoming lesson to determine background knowledge students need to maximize understanding of the text.

Example: HM Level 2.1 Theme 3 Around Town

Background Needed: cities, community, family, subways, transportation

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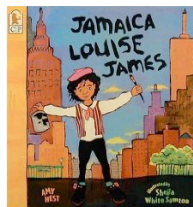
Step 2: CRP Provided Background Knowledge

Step 1	Teacher pre-reads material for the upcoming lesson to determine background knowledge students need to maximize understanding of the text.
Step 2	**Teacher determines if comprehensive reading program provides sufficient background knowledge.**

Example: Jamaica Louise James

- CRP provides: "Preparing to Read" - Subway stations
- Ask yourself is this enough information for my students?

Step 3: Introduce or Front Load

Step 1	**Teacher pre-reads material for the upcoming lesson to determine background knowledge students need to maximize understanding of the text.**
Step 2	**Teacher determines if comprehensive reading program provides sufficient background knowledge.**
Step 3	**If Yes,** introduce background knowledge as outlined in the comprehensive reading program. Actively engage students in this process. **If No,** prepare to "front load" by: 1) Teaching additional background knowledge needed to better understand the passage and/or, 2) Selecting and reading aloud a short story or passage that provides the necessary background knowledge.

Step 4: Activate Necessary Background Knowledge

Step 1	**Teacher pre-reads material for the upcoming lesson to determine background knowledge students need to maximize understanding of the text.**
Step 2	**Teacher determines if comprehensive reading program provides sufficient background knowledge.**
Step 3	**If Yes,** introduce background knowledge as outlined in the comprehensive reading program. Actively engage students in this process. **If No,** prepare to "front load" by: 1) Teaching additional background knowledge needed to better understand the passage and/or, 2) Selecting and reading aloud a short story or passage that provides the necessary background knowledge.
Step 4	**If students *have* prior knowledge, choose a procedure to activate that knowledge:** 1) **Ask students questions and engage them in a discussion to activate their background knowledge.** 2) **Activate prior knowledge using the KWL strategy.** 3) **Brainstorm the topics/questions that might be covered in the upcoming reading selection.**

Step 4: Activate

KWL Chart

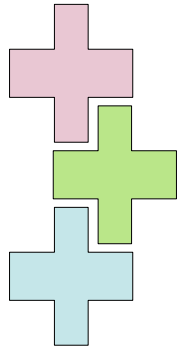| What we know	What we want to know	What we learned

Working With Grade Level Teams and Coaches

Application: As you return to school, use these steps on an ongoing basis to examine the need for scaffolding background knowledge in your CRP anthologies and read-alouds.

Putting All the Pieces Together

Your Turn! Taking Stock.

- **Take out your teacher's manual. Let's look at what your CRP already has prepared for you.**
- **Step 1:** Find where or if your CRP directs you to develop **background knowledge**.
  - Does the suggested activity meet the needs of your students? Why or why not?

Your Turn! Taking Stock.

- **Step 2:** Find the **vocabulary** word list to teach in conjunction with this story. Check your lesson map for the list.
  - Which words are the most and least important for your students?
  - What do you notice about the provided student-friendly definitions?

Your Turn! Taking Stock.

- **Step 3:** Quickly peruse the story.
  - Which words would be helpful to fast-map?
  - Are these words from the CRP provided vocabulary list or not?

Your Turn! Taking Stock.

- **Step 4**: Find where the CRP directs you to engage the students.
  - Which active engagement strategies are suggested by the CRP?
  - What could you do to increase student practice and opportunities to check for understanding?

Thank You!

Thank you for your work in the schools and for you participation today!

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