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| <http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/activate.tp>[Previewing and Using Text Structure](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/preview.tp)  |
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| [Activating Prior Knowledge](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/activate.tp)  |
| [Previewing and Using Text Structure](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/preview.tp)  |
| [Setting a Purpose for Reading](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/purpose.tp)  |
| [Adjusting the Rate of Reading](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/rate.tp)  |
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| [Using Cueing Systems Effectively](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/cues.tp)  |
| [Employ Vocabulary Techniques](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/vocabulary.tp)  |
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| [Check for Understanding](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/check.tp)  |
| [Teaching Reading Strategies](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/teaching.tp)  |
| [More Reading Strategies](http://www.thinkport.org/career/strategies/reading/more/default.tp)  |

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| **Thinkport Tools:** |  |

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| My Calendar | [**My Calendar**](http://www.thinkport.org/Tools/Calendar/CalendarViewEvents.aspx) |
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| My Web Site | [**My Web Site**](http://www.thinkport.org/Tools/MemberWebPage/MemberWebPageAdmin.aspx) |
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| Lesson Builder | [**Lesson Builder**](http://www.thinkport.org/Tools/LessonEditor/Welcome.aspx) |
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| Student Activity Builder | [**Student Activity Builder**](http://www.thinkport.org/Tools/StudentActivity/Welcome.aspx) |

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| Project Builder | [**Project Builder**](http://www.thinkport.org/User/MyAccountLogin.aspx?applicationID=1) |

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 | You are here: [HOME](http://www.thinkport.org/default.tp) >> [Think Career](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/default.tp) >> [Reading Strategies](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/default.tp) >> [Investigate Strategies to Help All Readers](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/default.tp) >> Activating Prior Knowledge**Activating Prior Knowledge**

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| Curriculum Strategies for Reading**In this section:*** [View the video](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/activate.tp#1)
* [When to use](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/activate.tp#2)
* [Support the Strategy](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/activate.tp#3)
* [Find out More](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/activate.tp#4)

http://www.thinkport.org/5edf4751-4b05-489e-bae3-a1c0e6c75908.assethttp://www.thinkport.org/5a9405e0-4261-412c-a28d-e7ee4cf3bd89.assethttp://www.thinkport.org/23ab9120-4c1a-4b6a-95fd-9c3eead59be1.asset**http://www.thinkport.org/b5697a43-8ac6-4399-9e1f-133f1e774590.assetStrategies for Helping Readers****Activating Prior Knowledge**Thinking about what you already know about the topic, author, or title.**Watch a Video About This Strategy**[Video Link](http://www.thinkport.org/microsites/reading/video/activate.mpg)**Suzanne Clewell**"Activating prior knowledge is something that we do naturally as adult readers, as mature readers. We always relate what we're reading to something we know. As a matter of fact when we read we really have to think about those connections. Sometimes students don’t access their background knowledge because they never think that it's important or if they don’t have the background knowledge the teacher doesn’t have an opportunity to really build that background knowledge.""If a student were reading about let's say Zeus and Greece and those first games on Mt. Olympus maybe the Olympics would never come to mind. But if there were a brief discussion in class about what the Olympics were, and most students can recall seeing at least one Olympics, that knowledge would help that student to understand the passage.""So it's finding out if the students have the background knowledge. Then if they don't being able to expose them to some information that's going to help them to be able to think about those connections with what they're reading."**When Can It Be Used?**Before, during, and after reading.**What You Can Do to Support This Strategy:**Choose materials that support this strategy. To help students activate prior knowledge, use texts that contain familiar contentAsk questions such as these to begin a reading assignment:* What do I already know about?
* Have any of you ever experienced?
* What have you read before about?

Use a [Preview Guide](http://www.thinkport.org/8292dfce-cd3a-4294-8286-7bf09b59b667.asset) based on the assignment to help students start to explore their opinions or knowledge on as topic.A [K-W-H-L Chart](http://www.thinkport.org/61657e4c-8d95-4f6a-832f-20583ca3387d.asset) can help students organize their thoughts before they begin reading. They should concentrate on completing the first three columns of the chart.Brainstorm with your students about the topics or ideas in a reading assignment, using a [graphic organizer](http://www.thinkport.org/1145da55-c922-4716-828c-7ff0e4e1bf5c.asset) such as this one.**Find Out More**[Critical Issue: Building on Prior Knowledge and Meaningful Student Contexts/Cultures](http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students/learning/lr100.htm)NcREL’s page of rich information and links to exemplary sources on the web about activating prior knowledge.[Prior Knowledge: Activating the ‘Known,’ a step-by-step lesson plan in activating prior knowledge](http://www.jimwrightonline.com/pdfdocs/priorknow.pdf) Next Strategy: [Previewing and using](http://www.thinkport.org/CAREER/STRATEGIES/READING/preview.tp) text structure  |

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