**EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION**

**Activating Prior Knowledge**

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<td><strong>How can I activate my students' prior knowledge?</strong></td>
<td><strong>How can I teach students to use their prior knowledge during reading?</strong></td>
<td><strong>What can I do after completing the reading selection?</strong></td>
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| - Students think about (recall) what they already know.  
- Brainstorm what they already know about the topic.  
- Organize their prior knowledge using graphic organizers (charts, graphs, etc.)  
- Select familiar vocabulary words to trigger their prior knowledge.  
- Create questions that will draw on prior knowledge that do not have yes or no answers (broad questions).  
- Make predictions.  
- Link personal experiences to content.  
- Pose questions to be answered.  
- Scan the content material to see how it is organized.  
- Look at the pictures and titles.  
- Make inferences: If this... then this...  
- Skim the vocabulary. | - Teach them to link their knowledge to information in the text.  
- Use analogies to help them retrieve prior knowledge (if students have trouble understanding volcanoes, begin the lesson with a discussion of explosions).  
- Help them to identify important information.  
- Check, change, or confirm their predictions while reading for clarity. (“I thought this would be about... I was right/I was way off target/I had part of it right.”).  
- Assist them in identifying new information that was not in their prior knowledge.  
- Have them think and recall what they are reading so they are constantly summarizing.  
- Use the term "prior knowledge" in your instruction | - Consolidate information learned.  
- Summarize and organize information so that it is easier to remember (through the use of a graphic organizer).  
- Link/integrate new knowledge with old knowledge.  
- Understand the big picture (highlights of the selection).  
- Connect information so it will be transferred to other situations and content areas.  
- Review the material in relation to your goals/outcomes.  
- Use answered questions to pose additional questions. |

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