

## **PRIOR KNOWLEDGE**

Prior or background knowledge is the knowledge a human being gathers prior to experiencing or engaging in, something. A student, for example, may have background knowledge in spelling or math prior to arriving in kindergarten; this is prior (or background) knowledge. Assessing students' prior knowledge allows an instructor to focus and adapt their teaching plan. For students, it helps them to construct connections between old and new knowledge. Power previewing is an effective reading strategy that can activate prior knowledge. Before actively reading a text, students skim the text strategically. This may require some scaffolding on the instructor's part. For example, ask students to preview section headings, boldface words, and definitions.