



BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE CHANGES READING

What you already know helps you understand.



THE IDEA

What you already know about a topic helps you make sense of a text.

The more background knowledge you have, the easier it is to understand.

1

ACTIVATE WHAT YOU KNOW

Think about what you already know.

- What do you know about this topic?
- What have you learned before?
- What can you predict from what you know?



2

USE YOUR KNOWLEDGE WHILE READING

Use what you know to make meaning.

- How does what you know help you understand this text?
- Which parts make sense because of your knowledge?
- What is still confusing?



3

GROW YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Reading can also teach you new things.

- What new information did you learn?
- How does this change or add to what you knew?
- What questions do you have now?



IN THE CLASSROOM

Build students' background knowledge about topics before reading.

Connect new texts to what they already know.

Talk about how background knowledge helps them understand.



EAL UPGRADE

Learn key vocabulary for the topic before reading (e.g. topic words, technical terms).



TRY IT TOMORROW

Choose a new topic, find out what students already know, and read a short text together.



TEACHER LANGUAGE

"What do you already know about this topic?"
"How does that help?"
"What did you learn?"