

Literacy Strategy

PReP - The Pre-Reading Plan

The PreReading Plan, or PReP (Langer, 1981), is a before-reading strategy that helps teachers assess student's prior knowledge. How students' prior knowledge is organized can be determined as well as the quality and quantity of language that students use to express their knowledge about a particular topic.

There are three phases in the PReP procedure:

Phase One: The Initial Associations with the concept

Students brainstorm what they know about the topic or a key vocabulary term and hear their classmates' associations. This activity helps students think about what they already know and sets the stage for more critical analysis of content.

Phase Two: Reflections on the Initial Associations

Students are asked to reflect on their Initial Associations with questions such as, "What made you think of...?" or "Why did this response come to mind?"

Phase Three: Reformulation of Knowledge

After the discussion and before reading, ask for new ideas. Students have the opportunity to verbalize associations that have been elaborated or changed. This discussion helps students understand how others are constructing meaning.

There are three levels of responses to these questions:

Responses at the **first level** indicate students have "much prior knowledge" about the concept or topic being discussed. Student responses during the three phases will be of main idea-type concepts, definitions, analogies, or linkages of one concept to another.

Responses at the **second level** indicate "some prior knowledge" about the concept or topic. Students are able to discuss the concept in terms of examples, attributes, or characteristics. Students responding at this level and the first level should be able to successfully comprehend text with some guidance by the teacher.

Responses at the **third level** indicate "little prior knowledge" of the concept or topic being discussed. The students do not have the prior knowledge needed to establish connections to the topic. Responses exemplify low-level associations such as words that sound like the targeted word, or unrelated experiences. Students responding in this manner will *need additional information* to fill in gaps in prior knowledge to make sure they are understanding the text.



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