

Language Arts

Prior Knowledge of Subject to Make
Meaning of What Is Being Said



Grade 7

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This book belongs to:

Name:

Grade:

School:

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When we listen to someone speak, we do more than just hear the words. We use what we already know to help us understand the message. This is called using prior knowledge.



What Is Prior Knowledge?



Prior knowledge is:

- What you already know about a topic
- Your past experiences
- Things you learned at home, school, or in daily life

This background information helps you make sense of new information.

Why Do We Use Prior Knowledge?



Using prior knowledge helps you:

- Understand messages more clearly
- Make connections between ideas
- Predict what may happen next
- Follow instructions more easily
- Improve listening and comprehension skills

How Do We Use Prior Knowledge While Listening?



- A Think about the topic**
Before you respond, ask yourself:
“What do I already know about this?”
- B Listen for clues**
Pay attention to tone, key words, and the situation.
- C Connect new ideas to old ones**
Use your experience to figure out meaning.
- D Use common sense and context**
Your everyday knowledge helps you interpret what is being said.

Examples of Using Prior Knowledge

Example 1:



Someone says: *“The sky is getting dark. Looks like rain.”*

Prior knowledge: Dark clouds often mean rain.

Understanding: You know it may rain soon.

Example 2:



Teacher says: *“Rewrite the sentence in Standard Jamaican English.”*

Prior knowledge: You know the difference between SJE and Jamaican Creole.

Understanding: You know exactly what type of sentence to write.

Example 3:



A friend says: “Mi hungry bad!”

Prior knowledge: Jamaican Creole expressions.

Understanding: Your friend is very hungry.

Tips for Using Prior Knowledge



- Pay attention when listening
- Think about what you already know
- Ask questions if unsure
- Practice connecting new ideas to familiar ones
- Use clues from the situation to help you understand meaning

