“Background knowledge is too often neglected in our push to raise test scores, despite the fact that we know background knowledge is a critical component of comprehension. Background knowledge simply has to become an instructional focus if we want to help students make sense of school. We will lose a generation of learners if we don’t act now.”

—Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey

Because the Grapes of Wrath is dry reading if students don’t know about the Dust Bowl.

Because the Boston Tea Party is a non-event if students don’t know loyalists from patriots.

Because knowing a triangle has 180 degrees isn’t the same as knowing why.

Because content-area comprehension depends on it, you and your students need Background Knowledge.

Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey help you develop lasting subject-area understanding with ideas for modeling, guided practice, productive group work, and independent work that effectively engage adolescents. You’ll learn to:

- distinguish incidental knowledge from core background knowledge
- check students’ understanding prior to a unit with tools such as opinionnaires, interest surveys, and anticipation guides
- model how to activate and apply prior knowledge so kids can wrestle with new content
- build up students’ background knowledge through virtual fieldtrips, YouTube, guest experts, and more
- provide collaborative ways for students to develop expertise, show what they know, and own their learning.

Doug and Nancy also build your background knowledge with multimedia book-study resources at books.heinemann.com/backgroundknowledge.
"As teachers our job is not to simply fill students’ heads with facts. We need to have students manipulate and apply information so that it becomes a permanent understanding. That’s why the time is now for Background Knowledge."

**Background Knowledge** grew out of Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey’s interest in the connection between language and learning. Their previous two Heinemann titles, *Word Wise & Content Rich, Grades 7–12* and *Learning Words Inside & Out, Grades 1–6*, have helped teachers nationwide implement a five-part framework for building students’ vocabulary. With word learning so important to comprehension, Background Knowledge takes the next step toward deeper understanding. In fact, Doug and Nancy are long-time collaborators, and they have focused on supporting deep understanding and improved literacy across the content areas in three other books: *Checking for Understanding*, *Better Learning Through Structured Teaching*, and *Improving Adolescent Literacy*. They are both classroom teachers and faculty members at San Diego State University and Health Sciences High & Middle College.

**You may also be interested in...**

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