

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING SESSION GUIDE

# Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Background Knowledge

Enhancing Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Instruction  
Through Integrating Students' Funds of Knowledge



# Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Background Knowledge

## Enhancing Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Instruction Through Integrating Students' Funds of Knowledge

### Overview

*This Collaborative Learning Session (CLS) is intended to complement and extend the learning in the Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Background Knowledge module, an asynchronous online learning experience.*

### Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Background Knowledge Module Review

The [Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Background Knowledge module](#) focuses on instructional techniques and strategies across these three related literary concepts. It aims to help participants expand their understanding of reading comprehension strategies and the gradual release of responsibility model, foster intentional strategies for building vocabulary, and identify students' funds of knowledge. It also emphasizes the importance of integrating students' interests, experiences and funds of knowledge into reading comprehension and vocabulary classroom instruction. The module includes activities such as watching videos, reading brief articles, reflecting on practices and selecting strategies to implement in the classroom. Overall, the module provides resources and opportunities for reflection to support educators in enhancing their instructional practices related to reading comprehension, vocabulary and background knowledge.

Participation in the Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Background Knowledge module is not required for participation in the CLS, but it is highly recommended.

### Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Background Knowledge Collaborative Learning Session

This CLS builds on the Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Background Knowledge module by exploring strategies more deeply for integrating students' funds of knowledge, including background knowledge, into reading comprehension and vocabulary strategy instruction. Participants will reflect on and share with partners their current familiarity with funds of

knowledge. Participants will be given time to review reading comprehension and vocabulary strategies with time to examine vignettes highlighting the teachers' use of student funds of knowledge. Then, they will engage in small group discussions and share current practices with ideas for integrating funds of knowledge into reading comprehension and vocabulary instruction.

## Preparing for the Collaborative Learning Session

This CLS is scheduled to take 40 minutes with an opportunity to extend the meeting up to 90 minutes.

### Facilitator Preparation

#### Review Oregon Early Literacy Framework (OELF) Resources

- Revisit the Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Background Knowledge module as a refresher.

#### Schedule the CLS

- Confirm the time and date for the CLS.
- Communicate with your team about the session date, time, location and goals.
- Consider sending a meeting invitation and reminder one to two days prior.

#### Prepare for Facilitation

- Closely read the facilitator agenda below.
- Get acquainted with the session resources including the Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Strategies handout, the Funds of Knowledge handout and the vignettes.
- Plan for partnering and grouping during the CLS. (For example, will you select partners/ groups? If participants will self-select, what guidance will you provide?)
- Print or set up access to digital copies of the handouts.

#### Optional Pre-Work

- If all participants have completed the Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Background Knowledge module, they should bring their completed Funds of Knowledge module handouts to discuss during the CLS.
- For the optional add-on activity, teachers should bring an upcoming lesson to incorporate funds of knowledge.

## Session Overview

This CLS focuses specifically on how to recognize and integrate students' diverse funds of knowledge into reading comprehension and vocabulary strategy instruction. To effectively incorporate students' funds of knowledge, educators must proactively learn about their students' backgrounds and cultures to tailor engaging and relevant lessons. This effort requires time, a willingness to step outside comfort zones and a commitment to move beyond one-size-fits-all approaches, offering opportunities for students to teach us as well.

The concept of funds of knowledge, introduced in the Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Background Knowledge module invites participants to begin thinking about how to identify funds of knowledge in themselves and their students. This information can be used to inform their reflections and discussion during this CLS.

## Responsive Facilitation

The agenda in this guide serves as a reference. As a facilitator, you may want or need to adjust the flow to better meet the needs of your team. This may include additional reflection time, work time for educators to engage in activities, review of materials and/or feedback opportunities.

# Suggested Meeting Agenda

## Materials

- **HANDOUT:** [Funds of Knowledge in the Classroom](#)
- **HANDOUT:** [Review Handout: Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Strategies](#)
- **HANDOUT:** [Funds of Knowledge—Example Vignettes](#)
- **EXTENSION HANDOUT:** [Integrating Funds of Knowledge Into Lessons](#)

## Learning Goals

- Participants will strengthen their understanding of ways to integrate students' funds of knowledge, including background knowledge, into reading comprehension and vocabulary instruction.

## Success Criteria

Participants will:


- discuss key elements for students' funds of knowledge and
- reflect on their practice and ideas for further incorporating students' funds of knowledge into reading comprehension strategy instruction.



## Essential Questions

- How can the concept of funds of knowledge help you identify and better understand the numerous and varied assets that your students bring into the classroom?
- How can your instruction utilize students' funds of knowledge to support their reading comprehension and vocabulary development?
- What supports would be helpful in order for you to try this out?


# Agenda

TIME	TOPIC AND FACILITATOR GUIDANCE	MATERIALS
3m	<p><b>Welcome, Purpose and Goals of the Session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⦿ Welcome participants to the space/session.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If there are participants who don't know each other, start with simple introductions (name, role and grades) before diving into the meeting agenda.</li> </ul> </li> <li>⦿ Introduce the topic: Integrating student funds of knowledge into reading comprehension and vocabulary strategy instruction.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review learning goals and success criteria of the session.</li> <li>• Share handout with defining and descriptive language for funds of knowledge</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Funds of Knowledge in the Classroom</a></p>

TIME	TOPIC AND FACILITATOR GUIDANCE	MATERIALS
5m	 <p><b>Pair-Share</b></p> <p>If not all participants have completed the module prior to the CLS, ask participants to talk with a partner using the following prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◉ How familiar are you with the concept of funds of knowledge?</li> <li>◉ How might they be useful for classroom instruction and student learning?</li> <li>◉ In what ways have you integrated them into classroom activities or instruction?</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>If all participants have completed the module prior to the CLS, ask participants to talk with a partner using the following prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◉ How familiar were you with the concept of funds of knowledge prior to completing the module?</li> <li>◉ What stood out to you from the module’s introduction to funds of knowledge? What questions do you have?</li> <li>◉ How might funds of knowledge be useful for classroom instruction and student learning?</li> <li>◉ In what ways have you integrated them into classroom activities or instruction?</li> </ul> <p><b>Share Back</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◉ Invite participants to share any key insights from their talk with partners.</li> </ul>	

TIME	TOPIC AND FACILITATOR GUIDANCE	MATERIALS
5–10m	 <p><b>Optional Pair–Share:</b></p> <p>If all participants have completed the Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Background Knowledge module, educators can share their completed Funds of Knowledge module handouts with their partners and discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⦿ What funds of knowledge do you bring to the classroom?</li> <li>⦿ What funds of knowledge do your students bring to the classroom?</li> <li>⦿ If funds of knowledge is a new concept for you, how did this framing encourage you to think of your own assets or students’ assets differently than you have before?</li> </ul>	Completed Funds of knowledge handouts from the module
5–10m	  <p><b>Read and Reflect</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⦿ Share the second handout that reviews six reading comprehension strategies followed by/in conjunction with a few example vignettes highlighting educator use of students’ funds of knowledge within reading comprehension and vocabulary strategy instruction. Samples will include information on how educators identified the funds of knowledge they incorporated.</li> <li>⦿ Provide participants time to review.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Review Handout: Reading Comprehension &amp; Vocabulary Strategies</a></p> <p><a href="#">Funds of Knowledge: Example Vignettes</a></p>
15m	 <p><b>Discuss</b></p> <p>Have participants form groups of three to four. Ask them to discuss and reflect using the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⦿ How did the sample teachers use student funds of knowledge to enhance their instruction on reading comprehension strategies?</li> <li>⦿ How might this benefit students?</li> <li>⦿ What do you know about your students’ funds of knowledge? How might you learn more?</li> <li>⦿ What ideas do you have for integrating information about students’ funds of knowledge into your reading comprehension strategy instruction?</li> </ul>	



TIME	TOPIC AND FACILITATOR GUIDANCE	MATERIALS
10m	 <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring participants back together.</li> <li>• Ask groups to share key ideas, insights, and any questions that arose from their discussions.</li> </ul>	
2m	<p><b>Closing</b></p> <p>Thank participants for their time and engagement.</p>	

## Extension Idea: Integrating Funds of Knowledge Into a Lesson

After completing the activities listed in the CLS above, the facilitator can schedule an additional CLS for the extension activity or extend the existing CLS with this activity.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Educators will need to bring an upcoming lesson for use with this extension.

**HANDOUT:** [Integrating Funds of Knowledge Into Lessons](#)

- Provide time for participants to complete the handout individually.
- Ask participants to pair with a colleague and share the following:
  - An overview of the lesson they are using, the funds of knowledge they've decided to integrate and why.
- Partners will provide feedback and ideas for consideration after their peer has shared. For example:
  - Are there other areas of the lesson that these funds of knowledge might be applied?
  - Are there other funds of knowledge that might be a good fit for the lesson?
  - Are the funds of knowledge integrated in a way that supports comprehension and vocabulary learning?

# Suggested Participant Agenda

## Learning Goals

- Participants will strengthen their understanding of ways to integrate students' funds of knowledge, including background knowledge, into reading comprehension and vocabulary instruction.

## Success Criteria

Participants will:

- discuss key elements for students' funds of knowledge and
- reflect on their practice and ideas for further incorporating students' funds of knowledge into reading comprehension strategy instruction.

## Essential Questions

- How can the concept of funds of knowledge help you identify and better understand the numerous and varied assets that your students bring into the classroom?
- How can your instruction utilize students' funds of knowledge to support their reading comprehension and vocabulary development?
- What supports would be helpful in order for you to try this out?

## CLS Meeting Agenda

TIME	AGENDA
3m	Welcome, Purpose and Goals of the CLS
5m	Pair-Share
5-10m	Optional Pair-Share
5-10m	Read and Reflect on Classroom Vignettes
15m	Discuss Vignettes
10m	Whole Group Discussion
20-35m	Optional Extension Activity: Lesson Plans
1m	Closing

# Funds of Knowledge in the Classroom

## What Are Funds of Knowledge?

Funds of knowledge is a conceptual framework for thinking about, and making explicit, the assets that students bring to the classroom. It encompasses the knowledge, behaviors, practices, routines and interests of families and cultural groups. Funds of knowledge are intricately linked to how we see, express and understand ourselves. They are shared socially and passed down within families and communities. See the quote below for another description of Funds of Knowledge.








Funds of knowledge refers to “knowledge and resources that come from [people’s] background—ethnic, cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, and/or educational.”

Gonzalez, N., Moll, L. C., Floyd-Tenery, M., Rivera, A., Rendon, P., Gonzales, R., & Amanti, C. (1993). Teacher Research on Funds of Knowledge: Learning from Households. *UC Berkeley: Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence.*

Categories of funds of knowledge include but are not limited to:

- Family life
- Health
- Economics
- Cooking and nutrition
- Immigration
- Art
- Politics
- Child care
- Religion
- Language
- Household management
- Medicine
- Technology
- Hobbies and leisure
- Scientific knowledge
- World knowledge

Some of the categories from the previous list are depicted in this graphic. The graphic provides questions that support identifying funds of knowledge for ourselves and our students:

HOME SKILLS	LABOR HISTORY	IMMIGRATION	RELIGION	FAMILY LIFE		
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who does the cooking?</li> <li>How do you handle repairs?</li> <li>Do siblings help care for other siblings?</li> <li>How are children cared for?</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What did your grandparents do?</li> <li>What did your parents do?</li> <li>What do you do?</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where did your family come from?</li> <li>Have your parents lived in another country?</li> <li>Have you lived in another country?</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What were your parents' religious beliefs?</li> <li>What are your religious beliefs?</li> <li>Do you participate in a religious community?</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the roles in your family?</li> <li>What is the network of your extended family?</li> <li>What does "family time" mean to you?</li> </ul>		
<th>HEALTH AND NUTRITION</th> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;"> <h2 style="color: #0070C0;">Funds of Knowledge</h2>  </td> <td> <th>ECONOMICS</th> </td>	HEALTH AND NUTRITION	<h2 style="color: #0070C0;">Funds of Knowledge</h2> 			<th>ECONOMICS</th>	ECONOMICS
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is your knowledge of first aid?</li> <li>What do you do when you are sick?</li> <li>Do you participate in sports or fitness?</li> <li>Do you choose healthy food options?</li> </ul>				 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do you organize your budget?</li> <li>How are consuming behaviors balanced with savings?</li> <li>Are you aware of the economic situation on a national/international scale?</li> </ul>		
ANIMALS	SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE	WORLD KNOWLEDGE	TECHNOLOGY	HOBBIES AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES		
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you own or care for pets?</li> <li>Did you grow up with pets?</li> <li>Are you comfortable with animals?</li> <li>Have you interacted with many animals?</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you understand the natural world?</li> <li>Do you often ask "Why"?</li> <li>Do you engage in scientific, or science fiction entertainment? (movies, books)</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you travel?</li> <li>Do you watch the news?</li> <li>Do you engage in activities or entertainment from other parts of the world?</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How often do you use technology?</li> <li>How comfortable are you with technology?</li> <li>Have you had any training in technology?</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do you do in your spare time?</li> <li>What are your hobbies?</li> <li>Are these activities social?</li> <li>Do you need training for this?</li> </ul>		

Graphic adapted from Feldman, A., Nixon, D., & Shah, J. (2008) Funds of Knowledge [Graphic], in Gonzalez, N., Moll, L. C., & Amanti, C. (Eds.). (2005). *Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households, Communities, and Classrooms* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Examples of funds of knowledge include culinary traditions—how members of a community care for each other and family pastimes.

*Read the statements below for examples funds of knowledge.*

*How might you integrate these funds into reading and vocabulary instruction?*

- *I'm familiar with **plant care** and a **variety of vegetables** because my family keeps a garden. My family uses produce from the garden for some of our favorite **family meals**.*
- *A student learned to **play piano** from their mom, who learned it in school when she was growing up.*
- *My **grandparents live with us** and **help take care of the young children**. They make breakfast for the kids in the morning, dress and get them ready for school, and pick them up at the end of the school day.*
- *A student is **learning how to cook** from their dad, who works in a restaurant kitchen as a line cook.*
- *A student **speaks Spanish** with their family. Their family has books in English and Spanish. The student has been **exposed to multiple languages** though living in a **neighborhood** where multiple languages are spoken in stores, libraries, parks, houses of worship and other community spaces.*

## References

Feldman, A., Nixon, D., & Shah, J. (2008). Funds of Knowledge [Graphic].

Gonzalez, N., Moll, L. C., & Amanti, C. (Eds.). (2005). *Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households, Communities, and Classrooms* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Gonzalez, N., Moll, L. C., Floyd-Tenery, M., Rivera, A., Rendon, P., Gonzales, R., & Amanti, C. (1993). *Teacher Research on Funds of Knowledge: Learning from Households*. UC Berkeley: Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence.

# Review Handout: Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Strategies

*This handout provides summary information on reading comprehension and vocabulary strategies for use in the Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and Background Knowledge Collaborative Learning Session (CLS).*

## What Is Reading Comprehension?

Reading comprehension involves creating meaning by engaging with a text to grasp what the author has communicated, both explicitly and implicitly. This process also relies on factors that support meaning making but are specific to the reader—their background knowledge, current skills and experiences (Snow, 2002; Shanahan, et al., 2010).

## What Are Reading Comprehension Strategies?

Strategies are deliberate mental actions and efforts used by readers before, during and after reading to help them better understand text and remember what they read (Shanahan, et al., 2010).

Strategies are not instructional activities or exercises. Activities and exercises often provide practice to students with reading skills but don't include explicit instruction on the mental actions students need to do while reading (Shanahan, et al., 2010).

## Comprehension Strategy Descriptions and Examples

EFFECTIVE STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE STRATEGY PRACTICE*
<p>Activating Prior Knowledge/ Predicting</p>	<p>Students think about what they already know and use that knowledge in conjunction with other clues to construct meaning from what they read or hypothesize what will happen next in the text. It is assumed that students will continue to read to see if their predictions are correct.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pull out a main idea from the text and ask students a question that relates the idea to their experience. Ask them to predict whether a similar experience might occur in the text.</li> <li>2. Halfway through the story, ask students to predict what will happen at the end of the story. Have them explain how they decided on their prediction, which encourages them to make inferences about what they are reading and look at the deeper meaning of words and passages.</li> </ol>
<p>Questioning</p>	<p>Students develop and attempt to answer questions about the important ideas in the text while reading, using words such as where or why to develop their questions.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Put words that are used to formulate questions (e.g., where, why) on index cards and distribute to students.</li> <li>2. Have students, in small groups, ask questions using these words.</li> </ol>

EFFECTIVE STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE STRATEGY PRACTICE*
Visualizing	Students develop a mental image of what is described in the text.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain to students that visualizing what is described in the text will help them remember what they read.</li> <li>2. Have students examine objects placed in front of them and later a picture depicting a scene. Remove the objects and picture and ask students to visualize and describe what they saw.</li> <li>3. Read a sentence and describe what you see to the students. Choose sections from the text and ask students to practice visualizing and discussing what they see.</li> </ol>
Monitoring, Clarifying and Fix Up	Students pay attention to whether they understand what they are reading, and when they do not, they re-read or use strategies that will help them understand what they have read.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Relate each strategy to a traffic sign (e.g., stop sign—stop reading and try to restate in your own words what is happening in the text; U-turn—re-read parts of the text that do not make sense).</li> <li>2. Write different reading comprehension strategies on cards with their signs and have students work in pairs to apply the strategies to text they do not understand.</li> </ol>



EFFECTIVE STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE STRATEGY PRACTICE*
Drawing Inferences	Students generate information that is important to constructing meaning but that is missing from or not explicitly stated in the text.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teach students how to look for key words that help them understand text and demonstrate how they can draw inferences from such words. For example, a teacher might show that a passage that mentions “clowns” and “acrobats” is probably taking place in a circus.</li> <li>2. Identify key words in a sample passage of text and explain what students can learn about the passage from those words.</li> </ol>
Summarizing/ Retelling	Students briefly describe, orally or in writing, the main points of what they read.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask a student to describe the text in their own words to a partner or a teacher.</li> <li>2. If a student has trouble doing this, ask questions such as “What comes next?” or “What else did the passage say about [subject]?”</li> </ol>

**\*NOTE:** Students, especially those in younger grades, will not spontaneously understand how to execute these strategies. For example, a kindergartener may not on their own understand how to visualize. This section offers explicit suggestions for teaching students to visualize and guide their practice.

This table is an excerpt from Shanahan, T., Callison, K., Carriere, C., Duke, N.K., Pearson, P.D., Schatschneider, C., & Torgesen, J. (2010). *Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade* (NCEE 2010-4038). National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

## What Is Vocabulary?

Vocabulary refers to a body of words used in a particular language or dialect. Vocabulary allows students to express themselves and understand others' oral and written communication.

## What are some approaches that teachers can use to build vocabulary?

Vocabulary building strategies can include the following:

- Purposefully selecting grade-level academic vocabulary to teach in context—during read alouds and within content-area curricula
- Using child or student-friendly explanations to introduce word meanings during instruction
- Providing opportunities for students to pronounce new words
- Providing visual spellings of new words for students to see
- Integrating multiple opportunities for students to review and use new vocabulary
- Discussing multiple and nuanced meanings of words across different applicable contexts
- Discussing how new vocabulary words relate to one another
- Supporting students in connecting new vocabulary words to their existing knowledge and schema
- Encouraging students to use new words in different ways across contexts
- Supporting talk among students, including during content area learning and in response to texts or new learning
- Explicitly teaching the meaning of word parts (morphology)

## References

Michigan Department of Education (n.d.). *Accelerated Learning*. [https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Flexible-Learning-Options/Accelerated-Learning-Assessment-Practices-for-Acceleration/Assessment\\_Practices\\_for\\_Acceleration.pdf?rev=39b0cbf13af74c33ab5b869897e50917](https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Flexible-Learning-Options/Accelerated-Learning-Assessment-Practices-for-Acceleration/Assessment_Practices_for_Acceleration.pdf?rev=39b0cbf13af74c33ab5b869897e50917)

Oregon Department of Education. (2023). *Oregon's early literacy framework: A strong foundation for readers and writers (K-5)*. [https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/standards/ELA/Documents/Literacy%20Framework\\_2023.pdf](https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/standards/ELA/Documents/Literacy%20Framework_2023.pdf)

Shanahan, T., Callison, K., Carriere, C., Duke, N.K., Pearson, P.D., Schatschneider, C., & Torgesen, J. (2010). *Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade* (NCEE 2010-4038). National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

Snow, C.E. (2002). *Reading for understanding: Toward an R&D program in reading comprehension*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Pollock, M., Deckman, S., Mira, M., & Shalaby, C. (2010). "But What Can I Do?": Three Necessary Tensions in Teaching Teachers About Race. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 61(3), 211–224. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487109354089>

# Funds of Knowledge— Example Vignettes

*The following vignette provides examples of a teacher using funds of knowledge within reading comprehension instruction. Several example funds are highlighted. Can you identify additional examples? Are there other places the teacher could incorporate funds of knowledge to support learning?*

## Interactive Storybook Read Aloud in Kindergarten

In the following vignette, Mrs. Williams uses interactive read-alouds to build her students' skills in understanding and using reading comprehension strategies.

### Background

Mrs. Williams is an experienced second-grade teacher. Her classroom is a tapestry of diversity, with children from a variety of backgrounds within their close-knit community. She understands that each child brings unique experiences from their family life and community, which can be leveraged to enhance learning. Her teaching approach is centered around the idea that when students see their identities and experiences reflected in the curriculum and the classroom, their engagement and understanding deepen, leading to more meaningful and successful learning.

### Lesson Excerpt

In Mrs. Williams' second-grade classroom, the buzz of excited voices filled the air as students talk amongst themselves before the start of the lesson. Today's lesson is centered around the reading comprehension strategy of drawing inferences—a skill that can build students proficiency as readers.

With the sun streaming through the windows, Mrs. Williams warmly gathered her students on the rug. "Today we will be continuing to learn about and practice our skills in inferencing," Mrs. Williams says. "Remember, inferencing is like being a detective," she explained. We use clues from the story and what we already know to figure out something that the author doesn't tell us directly. Mrs. Williams provides an example to illustrate. "Think about when you're playing soccer

and you see a teammate heading toward the goal with the ball. Even if they don't say it, you can infer that they want to score!" she said.

Next, she modeled inferencing by reading aloud from a story about the relationship between a boy and his grandfather or abuelo, pausing to think aloud in both English and Spanish, honoring the languages students bring to the classroom and the linguistic diversity of their community. At the first few stopping points, Mrs. Williams pointed out the phrases in the text she was thinking about, the inference

**NOTE: This approach incorporates students' languages as an asset when learning in the classroom.**

she was making and her reasoning for this inference. She then found phrases where she asked students for help in developing an inference. Hands shot up as students made connections and Mrs. Williams affirmed their contributions.

For collaborative practice that day, Mrs. Williams arranged her students into small groups, ensuring a mix of different student strengths. Each group received a different text, but all texts

related to their current unit's theme of family and friends. The texts were carefully chosen to reflect aspects of the students' interests and experiences. Students each selected a role for collaborative working time. Group roles drew on students' family lives and values, such as the 'encourager,' 'connector,' or the 'summarizer,' showcasing students' involvement in constructing parts of their classroom routines.

As the groups discussed their texts, Mrs. Williams circulated among them, offering targeted support and celebrating students thinking and collaborative skills. She encouraged them to explain their thinking by asking, "How did you know his brother was important to him?" or "What clues tell us they are feeling disappointed with their friend?" The classroom was a chorus of animated voices, as each group pieced together the clues from their texts, using their own understanding of their families and friends and the subtle cues provided by the text.

By the end of the lesson, each group had identified several inferences with supporting evidence that they wrote in their notebook, on a laptop, or recorded with their voices. As a final task, Mrs.

**NOTE: Mrs. Williams makes sure to tailor examples to connect with students knowledge and experiences.**

**NOTE: In addition to the rich language, ideas and compelling plots, Mrs. Williams' also considers the characters, settings, messages, and themes of the texts. She wants students to see themselves, their families, communities, and interests positively in the books**

Williams asked each group to take a minute to highlight how each group member contributed to their work with inferences. This not only reinforced the strategy of inferencing but also the value of collaboration. Mrs. Williams wrapped up the lesson by reminding students that they will continue to be “inference detectives,” applying these skills to their independent reading time. She smiles, excited to see their skills in drawing inferences support them as thoughtful, independent readers.

This vignette was created in collaboration with WestEd AI, which uses Chat GPT 4 Turbo 2023.



**INSTRUCTIONS:** As you consider the chart below, think about the components of your lesson from above and your students’ identities, languages and dialects, interests, and experiences. Add students’ funds of knowledge in the first column and, then, think about how you might integrate a few of these into your lesson. Write those ideas in the second column.

<b>Student(s) fund of background knowledge</b>	<b>Idea(s) for integrating into your lesson</b> <i>What will you do? How will you do it? How does this integrate the fund of knowledge?</i>