**Script for Background Knowledge Part 1:**

**Slide 1:**   
*Welcome to Supercharged Storytimes. In this module, we look at background knowledge, our last but not least early literacy component.*

**Slide 2:**  
*Background knowledge is what children know about the world before they enter school. World knowledge.*

*Although it helps them to understand the meaning of words, it is deeper and broader than vocabulary. The experiences that children bring to school influence their background knowledge. Background knowledge is critical to their understanding of what they read.*

*It is broad and includes three subtopics.*

***Conceptual thinking:*** *abstract thinking*

***Content knowledge:*** *facts and information on a variety of topics*

***Book/story knowledge:*** *purposes of books, how stories work, narrative skills—retell stories and events, print motivation—enjoyment around books and reading*

**Slide 3:**Photo: The wonder of a book by [Ben White](https://unsplash.com/@benwhitephotography) on Unsplash: <https://unsplash.com/photos/qDY9ahp0Mto>

*Research notes: the more a person knows, the easier it is to learn new things in each step of a three-stage process: as you take in new information, as you think about the information, and as the information is stored in memory*

*Children bring their knowledge of the world around them to interpret the words they are decoding in order to make sense of what they are reading.*

**Slide 4:***Let’s look first at conceptual thinking, the ability to think abstractly.*

**Slide 5:**Images:  
Dragon by [ArtsyBee](https://pixabay.com/en/users/ArtsyBee-462611/) on Pixabay: <https://pixabay.com/en/asian-dragon-scary-fire-mythical-1527234/>  
Dominoes by [3dman\_eu](https://pixabay.com/en/users/3dman_eu-1553824/) on Pixabay: <https://pixabay.com/en/mikado-domino-stones-pay-steinchen-1013877/>

*Conceptual thinking includes knowing concepts like colors, size, opposites.*

*However, it is broader than that. It is the ability to think abstractly, about things that are not immediately in front of you.*

* *Symbolic thinking, representational thinking—progression: sippy cup, block, no symbol*
* *Ability to pretend and imagine*
* *Ability to understand ideas—truth, fairness, responsibility*

*It is the construction of thought processes, including remembering, problem solving, and decision-making.*

* *For an infant, the beginning is object permanence—the concept that an object exists even if you can’t see it*
* *You need memory to then notice patterns, to learn from past experiences for problem solving—not 2 + 4 = 6, but how can I reach my toy?*
* *Make connections between experiences and knowledge—text to self, text to text, text to world*

*It is observing objects and their relationships.*

* *Infant is feeling objects, tasting them, manipulating them to see what they do*
* *Toddlers and two’s can sort by one or two characteristics—color or size, for example*
* *Preschoolers can sort by 3 or more characteristics including the function of the object, not just how it looks. So, things that cut, gardening vs. cooking*
* *Ability to sequence, put things/events in order—concrete (sock/shoe) to telling a story*
* *Ability to predict and hypothesize*
* *Recognizing cause and effect—the younger the child, the more concrete and immediate the effect must be to the cause*

**Slide 6:***Where’s the Kitten?* by Cheryl Christian, Star Bright Books, 1996

*Flap books are a kind of peek-a-boo to support object permanence*

**Slide 7:***Eating the Rainbow*, Star Bright Books, 2009.

Begin Smart *All Gone!*

*The concept of “all gone” is one infants and toddlers can understand. This book shows cereal, juice, and cookies and then for each one, all gone!*

*Books that look at color support conceptual thinking.  
Having the real item, a lemon or banana, to show that the picture represents the real item also supports conceptual thinking.*

**Slide 8:***Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear?* by Nancy White Carlstrom, Aladdin, 1996

*Big Bigger, Biggest*—size

*Relating the pictures in a book, and what is happening in the book, to the child’s world develops comprehension*

*We can do this in a number of ways, as you can see here.*

* *Encouraging the child to talk about the pictures. You can do either or both of these—have the children talk about their experiences, or if they do not have that much language, then you can offer the words to do so.*
* *Having children child draw a picture about the book and tell you about it allows them to be in charge of what was important to them, so you are following the child’s lead, building on what they know and adding to it.*

**Slide 9:**Image: Book Dreams by [Comfreak](https://pixabay.com/en/users/Comfreak-51581/) on Pixabay: <https://pixabay.com/en/narrative-history-dream-tell-794978/>

*Read slide*

*For example, make up a different ending*

**Slide 10:***Jamaica’s Find* by Juanita Havill, 1987. *Jump, Frog, Jump* by Robert Kalan, Greenwillow, 1981. *Flight School* by Lita Judge, 2014.

*Jamaica’s Find—honest, returning a lost stuffed animal puppy dog, talk about ideas*

*Reflect their experiences or expose them to new experiences*

*Flight School—perseverance and problem solving*

*Jump, Frog, Jump:*

*This is the snake that dropped from a branch*

*and swallowed the fish . . .*

*Cumulative tales support sequencing and prediction*

**Slide 11:***Let’s look now at the second area of background knowledge, content knowledge.*

**Slide 12:**

Annotation Tools – adapt as desired

**Slide 13:**  
*As we begin to explore more information around content knowledge, or the facts and information on a variety of topics, we thought this would be a good opportunity to explore some common behaviors of adults when reading different types of books with preschoolers.*

*\*\*\*INTERACTIVITY – adapt as desired*

* + *Ask participants to place a check mark on either “factual” or “story” for each question*

*A study in Reading Research Quarterly\* noted that parents talk with their children twice as much during shared book reading of informational texts than with storybooks.*

*The talk around informational books was at higher levels of cognitive demand.*

*Parents also allowed children to talk twice as much with informational books than with storybooks.*

*This occurred without any training or teaching for the parents.*

*Factual books are more “interruptible”. Consider suggesting factual books for parents to share with their children.*

*Push this citation in chat:*

*\*STUDY: Lisa Hammett Price, Anne van Kleeck and Carl J. Huberty. Talk during Book Sharing between Parents and Preschool Children: A Comparison between Storybook and Expository Book Conditions. Reading Research Quarterly, Vol. 44, No. 2 (Apr. - Jun., 2009), pp. 171-194 .* www.jstor.org/stable/20462724 (abstract)

**Slide 14:**  
Photo: Fieldwork by [Nanthapongs](https://pixabay.com/en/users/Nanthapongs-2549700/) on Pixabay: https://pixabay.com/en/the-person-view-stance-kids-book-2887609/

*Content knowledge is knowing information and facts on a variety of topics. This knowledge can be gained in different ways.*

*Children who have strong content knowledge will find it easier to later understand what they read.*

*We often choose topics that are of interest to the children, and that is certainly a good start. It is important to expose children to topics they may not be aware of. So, topics that interest you, or the adult, are good ways to expand their horizons.*

*Using books to explore beyond their own world is important. If they live in a farming area, we would also want to introduce books about what it is like living in a city, for example.*

**Slide 15:**  
*Tip Tip Dig Dig* by Emma Garcia

*Food: Los Alimentos* (Say and Play Bilingual), Sterling Press

*Here you see the book characteristics that babies and toddlers respond best to.*

*Any book you read with infants and toddlers provides an opportunity to talk about the world. Yes, it may just say “banana” but you can add information on how it feels, the skin is smooth and hard, and inside it is mushy; what can we make with bananas, how do they grow*

**Slide 16:**  
*We can use lots of print materials to share content information. Even a catalog offers opportunities, not just to talk about the names of the objects, which would support vocabulary, but also to talk about what they are used for, what they are made of, when you might have used them.*

**Slide 17:**  
*We use factual books as great conversation starters. We can read some of the information offered in the book, adding any information we may have.*

*And relate the topic to the children’s own experiences.*

*No need to read the whole book. Even modeling with a page or two is fine.*

*For each storytime targeting ages 2 and up, we should include at least one factual book, even if you don’t read the whole book through.*

*It is important for parents and caregivers to understand the value of sharing factual books with their children. They often think of the non-fiction section as “the homework section.”*

*I have found a lot of books go out when I have a display of them at storytime.*

**Slide 18:**  
*Preschoolers are curious about so many topics and it varies from child to child.*

*They are often avid collectors and like to collect facts as well.*

*We often see a sense of pride as they share information they know.*

*Dinosaurs—don’t worry Mr. Jim, he’s a vegetarian!*

*Introducing children to topics and information not in their immediate world helps them learn about our world which will later help them understand what they will read.*

**Slide 19:**  
*Closing and acknowledgements*