Concepts addressed in this course: *Techniques for creating effective bridges between curriculum goals and students’ experiences: activating students’ prior knowledge, predicting*

Review constructivist approach to teaching:

- Involve students in meaningful activities that activate prior learning.
- Use many types of learning activities that reflect students' diversity and the capacity for multiple intelligences.
- Use graphic organizers to help students activate their prior knowledge and use it to facilitate learning.
- Use heterogeneous grouping and cooperative learning to facilitate the sharing of prior knowledge and engage students in their own learning.
- Involve community members and rich resources
- Utilize authentic assessment strategies

Excerpted from *The Strategic Teaching and Reading Project Guidebook* (Kujawa & Huske, 1995): Prior knowledge can be explained as a combination of the learner's preexisting *attitudes*, *experiences*, and *knowledge*:

**Attitudes**

- Beliefs about ourselves as learners/readers
- Awareness of our individual interests and strengths
- Motivation and our desire to read

**Experiences**

- Everyday activities that relate to reading
- Events in our lives that provide background understanding
- Family and community experiences that we bring to school with us

**Knowledge**

- Of the reading process itself
- Of content (literature, science, and math)
- Of topics (fables, photosynthesis, fractions)
- Of concepts (main idea, theory, numeration)
- Of different types of style and form (fiction and nonfiction)
- Of text structure (narrative or expository)
- Of the academic and personal goals
Predicting is often viewed as one of many strategies used by a reader to aid in comprehension of a text. The reader will use the text to decide what will happen next. The prediction is confirmed or rejected as they continue to read. One way to do this is the THINK, PAIR, SHARE technique where students formulate predictions, share their predictions with partners, and participate in class discussions. This strategy is used before and during reading. To successfully predict, students must activate their own relevant background knowledge regarding the topic. Students can then link what their new knowledge with existing knowledge. Students use headings, subheadings, pictures, and questions imbedded in the text as cues for making predictions.

We also discussed predicting as a science process skill that children in the primary grades are practicing. Children make and test predictions as they experiment and manipulate outcomes.