



Building Background Knowledge

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Objectives

- + Content Objective: TWBT...identify and explain the key characteristics of an indirect approach to developing background knowledge.
- + Language Objective: TWBT...compare what they currently do to access/develop background knowledge in their students with the indirect approach to developing background knowledge and write a plan to better access/develop background knowledge in their students.

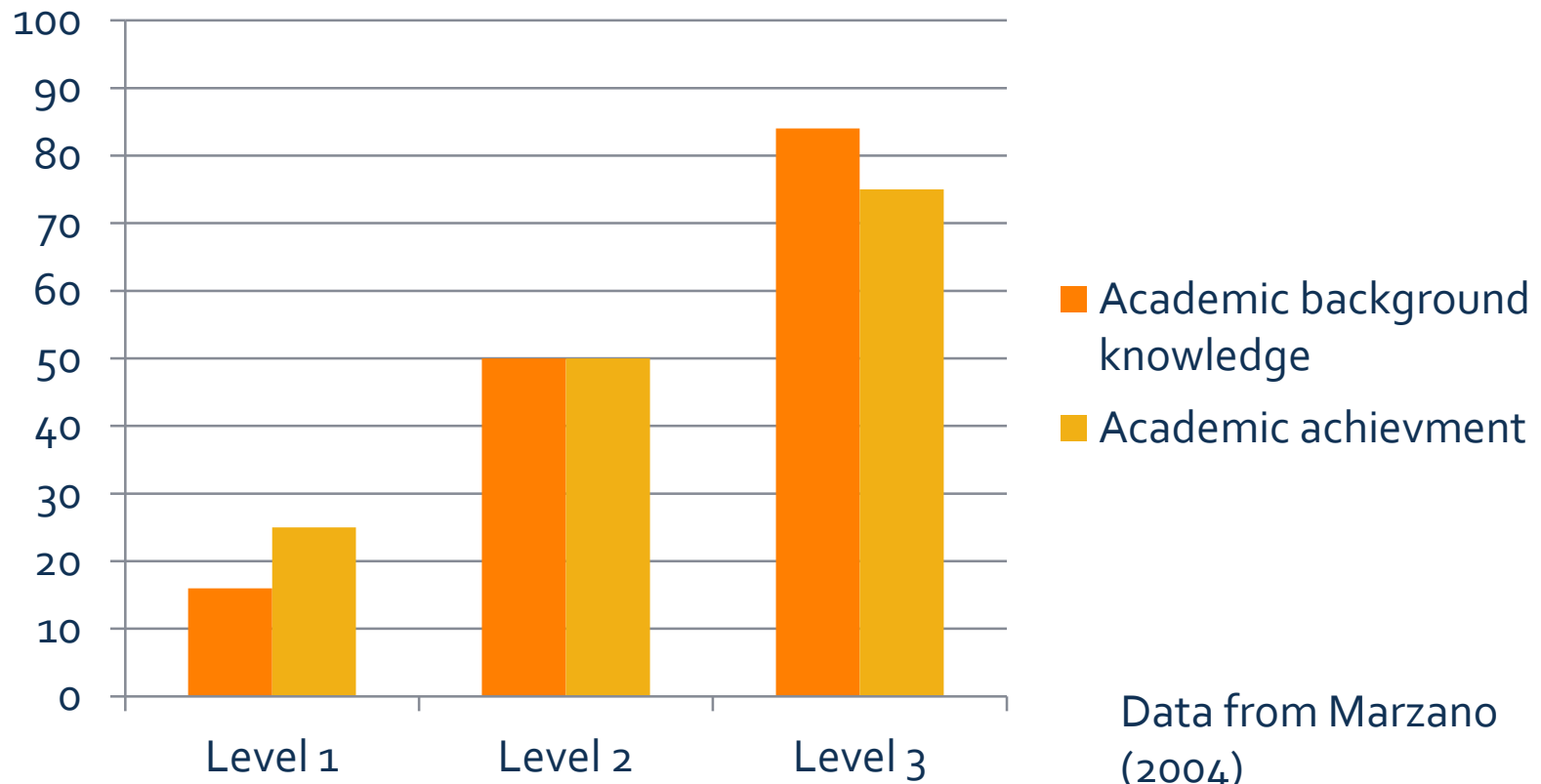
Activity: Gallery Walk with KWL

- + What do we already **KNOW** about the importance of background knowledge and how we access it?
- + What do we **WANT** to learn about building background knowledge in our students?

Background on Background

- + What an individual already knows about a topic
- + Acquire background knowledge through 1) ability to process and store information and 2) the number and frequency of our academically oriented experiences
 - + Fluid intelligence
 - + Crystallized intelligence
- + The role schools play
 - + Direct approaches
 - + Indirect approaches

Academic Achievement at Three Levels of Academic Background Knowledge



6 Principles for Building an *Indirect* Approach

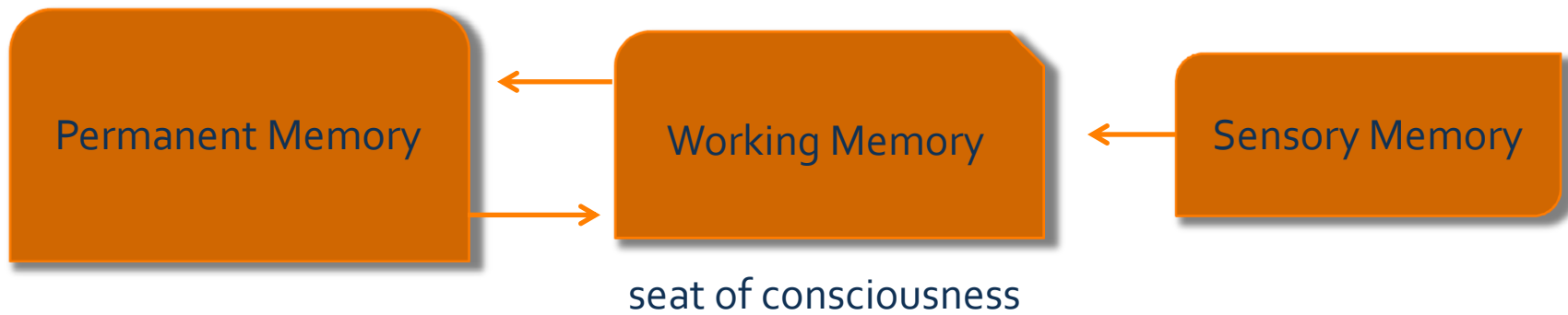
1. Knowledge is stored in bi-modal packets
2. Storing experiences in permanent memory
3. Contextualizing knowledge
4. Surface-level background knowledge
5. Manifestations through vocabulary knowledge
6. Virtual experiences for enhancement

Storing Knowledge in Bi-Modal Packets

- + Linguistic descriptions as memory packets
 - + Information stored as propositions in networks
 - + Shift from episodic memory to semantic memory
 - + Memory packets begin as specific information about specific learning episodes but become more generalized over time
- + Non-linguistic descriptions as memory packets
 - + Dual Coding Theory (DCT)
 - + Images, emotions, smells, tastes, touch, and movement
- + What does this mean for instruction?

Permanent Memory

- + Memory typically thought of as long term and short term. However, most current research suggests that there is one type of memory, and it has different functions.
- + Three functions of memory: sensory memory, working memory, and permanent memory (4×2) + Depth + Elaboration = BK



Knowledge is...

Multidimensional and Contextual

- + Cultural literacy
- + Every student has background knowledge, but it varies
- + What does this mean for instruction?
 - + Culturally congruent/responsive teaching practices

Surface-level Knowledge is Useful

- + Goal should be to develop a surface-level understanding of the target information
- + Creates schema to anchor new learning

Manifestation through Vocabulary

- + Background knowledge has labels associated with it
 - + Singular terms (eagle)
 - + General terms (bird)
- + Teaching vocabulary is synonymous with teaching background knowledge

Utilizing Virtual Experiences

- + Generating academically oriented experiences through
 - + Reading
 - + Language Interaction
 - + Television/Multimedia
- + “Anything that creates representations in working memory is a potential source of background knowledge.” – Marzano (2004)
- + “Reading provides windows on other worlds and experiences, windows that become virtual experiences as we read. These virtual experiences are then added to children’s knowledge of the world. This increase in knowledge, in turn, increases the possibilities for responding to the world...Reading extensively...increases students’ storehouse of experience.” – Galda and Cullinan (2003)

The *Indirect* Approach for Developing Background Knowledge

+ Characteristics

- + Goal of installing background knowledge in permanent memory
- + Facilitate the storage of information in permanent memory and ensure multiple exposures to target information
- + Focus on the development of surface-level but accurate knowledge across a broad spectrum of subject areas
- + Focus instructional techniques on linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of background knowledge
- + Focus on developing label for memory packets of experiential knowledge in the tradition of direct vocabulary instruction
- + Utilize virtual experiences in working memory through wide reading, language interaction, and educational visual media

Instructional Purpose

- + According to the SIOP Model...
 - + Linking concepts to students' backgrounds
 - + Linking past learning and new learning
 - + Developing key vocabulary (i.e., academic language)
- + How do you do this in your classroom?
- + Using the aforementioned characteristics, how can you better construct an indirect approach to developing background knowledge in your students?

Summarizing Activity: Gallery Walk with KWL

+ What did we **LEARN** about
building background
knowledge?