

## Strategy 6: Building Background Information Implementation Guide

### Overview

Social studies teachers find the Predicting and Confirming Activity (PACA) very compatible with their content. The purpose of the strategy is to help build background information when students are going to read about something they know very little about so they will be more successful and have a context for understanding the ideas presented. For students to learn anything new, they must connect it in some way to something they already know.

The Predicting and Confirming Activity uses student predictions to set a purpose for reading. Students make these predictions based on an initial set of information provided by the teacher, even if they have very little knowledge about the topic to be studied. Given additional information, students can revise their predictions (or hypotheses) and pose them as questions to be answered during reading. After reading, they have an opportunity to revise their predictions.

### The Strategy in Action

Students should complete the following steps to practice the strategy. Be sure to pass out copies of Activity Guide 6 before students begin their work.

**Step 1: Provide Some Initial Information and Pose a General Question.** A word list and a question is usually enough to assist students in making predictions. But, if it is not, you can couple this word list with a short overview of the topic. For this activity the word list and question are provided on the activity guide.

**Step 2: Students Write Predictions Based on the Initial Information.** You may want to discuss these predictions and write them on the board. Or, you may decide to have groups or students write their predictions.

**Step 3: Provide New Information.** Have students look at the map of Japan. You can either print it out or have students view it online.

**Step 4: Students Review Predictions.** In question 2 of the activity guide, students may revise, confirm, or reject their original predictions. They then, in question 3, turn them into questions for reading. Based on the new information, students discuss as a class or in small groups which of their original predictions they want to keep and which they no longer think apply. They may also revise some predictions to be more accurate. They then turn these predictions into questions they want answered during reading.

**Step 5: Read the Text.** Have students read the text on Japan's economy.

**Step 6: Students Revisit Predictions and Answer Questions.** Students once again look at their predictions and answer the questions they generated earlier.

## **Discussion**

Once students have finished the activity, you may want to have a brief discussion with them about the assignment. Encourage students to probe which predictions were later confirmed, which were rejected, and which were revised. From here, you may wish to ask students to write about their new learning, formulate study questions and answers, or use some graphic representation of their learning.

## **Answers to the Student Activity Guide**

### **Part A:**

1. Answers may vary but, students may make some of the following predictions:

Japan exports a lot of cars and cameras.

People work in factories in Japan.

Fish is a major product of Japan.

The Japanese import oil.

2. Answers will vary, but after studying the map, students may add these predictions:

The Japanese import petroleum, food, minerals, wood, cotton, and coal.

The Japanese export cars, iron and steel, electronics, machinery, chemicals, textiles, and ships.

The major industry in Japan is in the major cities.

The cities are mostly on the coast.

3. Sample questions could include:

What do the Japanese eat?

How many Japanese work in factories?

How much money do the Japanese make?

How many Japanese products are sold in America?

### **Part B:**

Students will evaluate their predictions by placing a check mark next to those they believe to be true after reading and drawing a line through those that are no longer correct.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Part A:** Answer the following questions BEFORE you read the text.

1. Study the word list and make predictions or guess about Japan. You may wish to use two or three words in the list to write your predictions.

resources	fishing	automobile	success
Tokyo	cameras	employers	countries
oil	industry	CD player	jobs
sea	Japanese	work	industry
product	import	ethic	raw materials
food	goods	investments	nuclear
sell	entertainment	energy	natural
economic	television	money	export

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2. Now look at the map of Japan accompanying the text. What changes to your original predictions seem appropriate based on this new information?

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3. What questions do you want answered about the reading?

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**Part B:** Read the text on Japan's economy, and complete the activity that follows.

## Japan's Economy

Japan has few natural resources. It therefore imports many of the raw materials it uses to run its industries. Oil is one key material that Japan must import. The country produces about one third of its energy through nuclear power.

The sea is an important source of food. Japan has the world's largest fishing industry. It also imports fish from all over the world. Fish is a major part of the Japanese diet. In fact, Tokyo's largest fish market sells about 5 million pounds of fish each year. In contrast, the average American eats less than 5 pounds each year.

Japan imports most of its raw resources. These resources are then used to make goods to sell in other countries. For example, Japan is known for its high-quality automobiles. Japan also makes televisions, cameras, and compact disc players.

There are many reasons for Japan's economic success. Most Japanese have a strong **work ethic**. This is the belief that work in itself is worthwhile. Most Japanese work for large companies. Most workers have respect for leaders. In return, employees look after workers' needs. For example, large companies offer job security, exercise classes, and other benefits.

The Japanese have also benefited from investments in other countries. For example, some Japanese companies have built automobile factories in the United States. Other Japanese companies have invested in the American entertainment and real estate industries.

Look back at the predications you made earlier. Mark the predictions that you now think are correct with a check mark (  ). Draw a line through any prediction that you now think is incorrect and rewrite any prediction that needs revision.

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[add map of Japan here]